In Attendance

Trustees: Holley Barreto, Robert Ginsberg, Carol Kelley, Jeffrey Liao, Eve Niedergang, Stephanie Oster, Sebnem Tuzun, Chris Van Buren

Library Staff: Erica Bess, Becky Bowers, Susan Chernik, Susan Conlon, Janie Hermann, Jennifer Podolsky, Karen Rackley, Sonja Vloeberghs

Teen Reps: Lily Dodds, Sophie Feldman, Mitalee Pasricha, Emma Tully

Others: Rosalind Muir (Friends & Foundation), Allison Trimarco (Creative Capacity) - via Zoom

At 6:16 p.m. Ms. Kelley nominated the following officers: Robert Ginsberg – President, Stephanie Oster – Vice President, Chris Van Buren – Treasurer; all Trustees present approved the slate of officers.

Mr. Ginsberg called the meeting to order and announced that in accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act and State regulations governing public meetings, adequate notice of this meeting was provided on Jan. 2 as part of the annual schedule. It was sent to the Municipal Clerk, Princeton Packet, Town Topics and Trenton Times, posted in the library, on the library’s and municipality's websites and distributed to the standard distribution list.

Those attending the meeting introduced themselves.

Strategic Plan Overview – Ms. Trimarco provided the Trustees with an overview of the strategic plan noting it is an adaptable, flexible plan. She reviewed the three goals and their objectives. Ms. Trimarco noted that with this type of adaptive plan, annual planning is important. She will provide tools to help organize a 6-18 month rolling plan. She noted the implementation plan is developed by the library’s senior staff as part of their annual planning with elements where the board can plan a role. Ms. Trimarco recommends a dashboard to keep track of the measurable goals derived from the objectives and to track their progress.

Ms. Niedergang recommended a few minor changes. The Trustees agreed with the changes; Ms. Trimarco will make the recommended changes.

There was discussion about an advisory committee. It was decided that there would be no committee appointed at this time. The Trustees would like to wait for the retreat to make any further decision on this, as well as ask for Jennifer’s guidance.
Approval of Consent Agenda – Ms. Niedergang moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Ms. Tuzun seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Dec. 21, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Final December Bills
- Preliminary January Bills
- Resolution 2022-30: Cancellation of Unexpended Appropriation Balances
- Resolution 2022-31: Acceptance of Designated Gifts and Grants Q4 2022
- Resolution 2023-01: Cash Management Plan
- Resolution 2023-02: Bank Account Signatures
- Resolution 2023-03: Vendor Contracts
- Resolution 2023-04: Library Attorneys
- Resolution 2023-05: Library Auditors
- Resolution 2023-06: Open Public Meetings Act
- Resolution 2023-07: Official Newspapers
- Resolution 2023-08: Temporary Operating Budget

Board Materials – There was no discussion on the Monthly Director’s Report; the Monthly Statistics will be included in the February board meeting packet.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Staff Spotlight - Ms. Podolsky introduced Karen Rackley, Administrative Associate. Ms. Rackley noted that she has worked for the library since 2011. She started part-time, 15-hour per week and became full-time seven years ago. She noted her main responsibility is to support the executive director, she also supports and works with those in Administration including, finance and accounting, marketing and communications, HR and IT. She noted she supports the Board of Trustees and manages meeting room rentals.

President’s Report – Mr. Ginsberg thanked the board for re-electing him as president and for electing Mr. Van Buren and Ms. Oster. He noted the Board will elect a Secretary once the Bylaws have been revised.

[Ms. Kelly left the meeting.]

Mr. Ginsberg welcomed Mr. Liao, Ms. Barreto and Ms. Tuzun to the Board and noted that later in the meeting, the Board will discuss having a Board retreat at which the Trustees can get to know each other better. He noted that after discussion with Ms. Podolsky, senior staff will be setting goals with their staff in alignment with the strategic plan; the Board President will discuss Ms. Podolsky’s goals with her in February.

Friends and Foundation Report – Ms. Muir noted that three new board members started Jan. 1 and all members are being assigned to committees; the Book Lovers Luncheon, chaired by Audrey Egger, will be on April 28 at the Nassau Inn with author Lynne Olsen; the bookstore committee and bookstore manager, Claire Bertrand, are planning two volunteer recruitment events: Feb. 16 and March 18 from 10 a.m.-noon to find volunteers to sustain the more than 2700 volunteer hours the bookstore volunteers contributed in 2022. Mr. Ginsberg asked whether the committee has considered high school students; Ms. Muir noted she will pass along the suggestion to the committee.
Ms. Muir noted that since a replacement for Ms. Gordon, who is currently working PT remotely, will not occur until after the hiring of a development director, she and Ms. Podolsky discussed hiring a temporary administrator.

**Teens Report** – The teens noted that TAB will be hosting its annual Chill Out from Jan. 27-Feb. 3 from 4-6 p.m. Ms. Warren and Ms. Chuong have been helping plan activities which include video games, a photo booth and a craft table to help students destress from exams.

For Valentine’s Day, TAB is planning programs and activities: This is Why We Heart You for younger children on Feb. 13; photo booths, and P.S. I Like You for teens on Feb. 10.

TAB’s podcasts for 2023 include an interview with young adult romance author Gloria Chow posted on Jan. 13, a Jan. 8 interview with young adult paranormal author Sara Glenn Marsh that is being edited and reviewed, and the upcoming Jan. 19 interview with New York Times best-selling author Nicola Yoon.

TAB is making a March Madness bulletin board/social media campaign whereby votes are cast for favorite media and pop culture from 2022.

**Bylaws and Policies Committee Report** – Ms. Oster noted that the committee invited Mr. Liao to participate in the Bylaws and Policies committee meeting. The committee has nearly completed its review and will meet in February to provide a final review.

**Finance Committee Report** - Ms. Chernik noted that the budget vs actual is usually presented at the end of every quarter; however, the budget vs actual for the fourth quarter 2022 will be presented at the February Board meeting, once all accounts are reconciled and it is reviewed and approved by the finance committee at their February meeting. Ms. Chernik provided a preliminary report noting that the library finished the year positive by approximately $43K, mainly due to a $300,000 annual appeal (for the third year in a row) which was about $50K higher than the goal. More details will be provided when the budget vs actual is presented at the February meeting.

**Fundraising Report** – Ms. Podolsky reported the approximate total for the Annual Appeal was $303,000. Ms. Podolsky noted the Development Director job has been posted with an beginning of February deadline and asked the Board to circulate the job description within their networks. Ms. Podolsky acknowledged Ms. Frost, development associate for helping the Development Office beat its goal for the Annual Appeal while being the only staff member working in that office. Mr. Ginsberg asked if Ms. Niedergang could mention the opening at a Council meeting.

**Director’s Report** – Ms. Podolsky referred the Trustees to the Monthly Director’s report included in their Board packet; she recommended they read the information on the programs and services that staff submitted. She also noted the format of the report may change in the next few months.

Ms. Podolsky mentioned that due to a delay with the distributor, the library did not receive its copies of “Spare” on its release date; she thanked Ms. Kishore, Access Services, for going to Barnes and Noble and purchasing several copies. Ms. Podolsky noted the Housing Justice Forum, available on the library’s YouTube channel, was a popular event. She showed the attendees “Cassie” the beautiful doll crocheted by staff member Cassie Smith in preparation for the “My Pretty Brown Doll” program with Ms. Smith in conversation with author Yolanda Jordan. There is a four-session, in person, crochet along program at which attendees will crochet a doll from Ms. Jordan’s book, “My Pretty Brown Doll.” Ms. Podolsky noted in February, the library has partnered with People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos and Princeton University’s Program for Community-engaged Scholarship inviting community members to join university students in a four-part “Crossing Borders” series, and on Saturday, Feb. 11 as part of National African American
Read, an effort to encourage communities to read together, the library will host intergenerational members of the community that will give presentations about books that made a lasting impression on them.

Approval of Second-term Members of Friends and Foundation Board of Directors – Ms. Niedergang moved approval of Audrey Egger, Jane Fransson, and Seva Kramer to serve a second three-year term on the Friends and Foundation Board of Directors. Mr. Van Buren seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Revision to Code of Conduct – Ms. Tuzun moved approval of revision to item #17 on the library’s Code of Conduct, as recommended by the Bylaws and Policies committee, to read as follows: “Bringing animals inside the library with the exception of service animals (as defined by the ADA or New Jersey law) or those allowed at a library-approved event. A service animal must be under the control of its handler and must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless the individual’s disability prevents using these devices or these devices interfere with the service animal’s safe, effective performance of tasks. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. The Library staff may request that the service animal be removed from the Library if the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or the animal is not housebroken.” Mr. Van Buren seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ethics Statement – Mr. Ginsberg asked all Trustees to sign an Ethics Statement and return it to Ms. Rackley. He noted this will be done each year.

Approval of the Strategic Plan – Ms. Niedergang moved to approve the Strategic Plan with minor edits as suggested; Ms. Oster seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Podolsky noted that she will plan a board retreat with Allison Trimarco to discuss the strategic plan. The Trustees agreed that during the retreat they can consider an advisory committee and ways to support the library staff.

Board Comments – Mr. Ginsberg noted that Ms. Trimarco provided her available dates for a board retreat which will be shared with the Trustees as an attempt to find a common date and time for all Trustees.

Ms. Podolsky asked the Trustees to let her or Ms. Rackley know if they are unable to attend any meetings on the annual schedule. There was discussion about excused absences and the number of consecutive unexcused absences (4) that would automatically terminate one’s membership on the Board. Mr. Liao noted that this was reviewed with the Bylaws and Policies committee while discussing the Bylaws.

Proposed Agenda Items – There were no proposed agenda items.

Meeting Schedule/Adjournment – Ms. Oster motioned to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Liao seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for February 15, 2023.