

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 27, 2021

Attendees:

JoAnn Chmielowicz	Mike Bobish, Acting Library Director
Mayor Brad Cohen, President	Daragh McAuley, Exec. Administrative Ass't.
Dr. Ken Freedman	Karen Karnchanapee, Pres., Friends of the Library
Patricia Palumbo, Vice-President	Angel Albanese, EB Township CFO
Aarti Punjabi, Treasurer	Martha Hess, Reference Librarian
Kathy Spadafino	Melissa Hozik, Adult Programming Librarian
Nicole Tibbetts, Secretary	Alpesh Shah, IT Manager
Ashish Verma	

Note: The meeting was held via Zoom conference.

Mayor Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Mayor Cohen stated that the meeting was advertised and the Open Public Meetings Act requirements were met.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda:

Dr. Freedman made a motion to adopt the April 27, 2021 agenda. Ms. Punjabi seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: none.

Minutes of March 23, 2021:

Ms. Chmielowicz made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2021 meeting. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Public Participation:

Karen Karnchanapee, co-President of the Friends of the Library, reported that the Friends are winding down for the year. The spring general meeting on May 13 will feature a talk by Steve Hirdt, a sports statistician, and a vote on the slate of officers for the Friend's Board for 2021-2022. A yard sale has been set for May 22, at Linda Carbley's house, and Ms. Karnchanapee asked that if anyone had any items they would like to donate, to just contact the Friends. They are looking to hold a small outdoor book sale sometime in the near future. The Book Sale has been set for October 10-17, 2021 at the East Brunswick Mall.

There was no teen representative in attendance.

Mr. Bobish reported that the Foundation Board met on April 7. The discussion centered on the Construction Bond application and finding new members to serve on the Foundation Board. The library staff, in collaboration with the architect, will prepare a glossy handout for their fundraising. Mayor Cohen asked the Board to forward the names of anyone they feel would be a good candidate for the Foundation to him. They do not need to be East Brunswick residents.

Mayor Cohen reported that the 2021 budget was introduced earlier in the month, and the township is in a decent financial position. This is due to the high tax collection rate in the township, a low debt ratio, the CARES Act money received in 2020, and reduction in payroll costs due to attrition. He also reported that 65% of eligible adults are fully vaccinated in the township.

Treasurers Report:

The Board reviewed the Treasurer's report, the monthly statistics, and the reserve and bank reports. Ms. Tibbetts made a motion to approve the March 31, and April 28, 2021 bill lists. Mr. Verma seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

Building Committee:

Mr. Bobish reported the Construction Bond grant application is well underway, and he is working on completing several parts of the application. He is waiting for the plans and cost estimate from the consultants. He also attended the technical assistance webinar.

Finance Committee:

Mayor Cohen stated that he would like the Finance Committee to meet in the next few weeks to review the budget.

Director's Report:

Mr. Bobish reviewed some highlights of the March Director's report, and reported that after opening again on March 1, over 41,000 items were checked out, which is up 150% over the previous month. Programming remains robust, with large attendance at many programs. The Youth Services department is looking into having some outdoor programming in May. He mentioned the loss of Paul Metroke, a member of the Maintenance Department, and the resignation of Director Melissa Kuzma, both of whom will be missed by staff. Mayor Cohen asked what is being done about reaching out to seniors in the community. Mr. Bobish responded that library staff works hard to bridge the digital divide, as computer access is a problem for many of them, and he will set up a meeting with the Senior Center Director to see what more can

be done. Mayor Cohen also mentioned that there will be relocation of some township departments out of the municipal building, allowing EBTV to move over there. He asked Library Administration to look into installing a demonstration kitchen.

Mr. Verma made a motion to approve the staff changes in the March Director's Report. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Old Business:

A. Covid-19 Update

Mayor Cohen asked Mr. Bobish to run an analysis on current library attendance and circulation statistics, to see about possibly increasing the library hours. It was determined that attendance drops after 6pm at night, and after speaking with the Mayor, he is recommending that the Library keep the current open hours for the time being. The one recommendation is to add a second passport agent on during the day to help with the large demand of passport appointments. It was decided to keep the current hours through the summer.

B. Application for Construction Bond Round 2

Mr. Bobish reiterated that he is working diligently on the application to meet the tight time frame.

New Business:

A. 2021 Library Budget

Mayor Cohen asked Ms. Kuzma, before she left, to provide the township with a detailed budget to see how much money is required from the township. Mayor Cohen then reduced this number by the amount saved from not having a director for several months, and using some money from the donations account, which is earmarked for books and materials. He requested adding an 'actual spent' column to any future budgets. Ms. Albanese reported that the township received CARES Act reimbursement for the October 1- December 30, 2020 time period, and the library should receive approximately \$54,000. Mayor Cohen would like for the Finance Committee to meet in the next few weeks to review the budget, and hopefully put the budget for a vote at next month's meeting.

B. Annual Financial Disclosure- Reminder

Mayor Cohen reminded all of the Board members that a link to this form was sent out from the town clerk, Nennette Perry, earlier this month, and it is required that all complete this.

C. Resolution #10,781 Executive Session

Resolution #10,781

Executive Session

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees wish to move to executive session to discuss the following matters:

Library Director Search

WHEREAS, minutes will be taken during the closed session and once the confidential matter has been resolved, then the minutes will be made available to the public;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees will hereby move to closed session and that the public will be excluded from this meeting in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Ms. Tibbetts moved to approve the above resolution. Ms. Chmielowicz seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Spadafino, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

The Board moved into closed session at 8:25 pm.

The Board returned to open session at 8:45 pm.

Mayor Cohen reported that the Search Committee will recommend some candidates for the entire Board to interview. These interviews will hopefully occur this month, and a new Director may be named at next month's Board meeting.

Information Items:

There being no further business, Ms. Chmielowicz made a motion to adjourn at 8:47 pm. Mr. Verma seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Ms. Nicole Tibbetts, Secretary