

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
February 21, 2023

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah
JoAnn Chmielowicz
Ken Freedman
Aarti Punjabi
Nicole Tibbetts
Ashish Verma
Verne Whitlock

John Arthur, Library Director
Michael Bobish, Assistant Library Director
Maria Carmelo, Exec. Admin. Assistant
Donna Forte, Co-President, Friends of the Library
Adrian Levine, Member, Friends of the Library

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

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Treasurer: Ms. Punjabi was nominated by Ms. Tibbetts. Mr. Whitlock seconded.
Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Tibbetts, Mr. Verma and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining None

Minutes of January 17, 2023:

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2023 meeting.
Mr. Whitlock seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Tibbetts, Mr. Verma and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Ms. Punjabi.

Public Participation:

Donna Forte, The Friend of the Library Co-President introduced Friend's member Adrian Levine, who has worked with Ms. Forte on The Friends' last 2 fundraisers. Ms. Forte read the Friend's report, announcing that last month's Bunco event was a success with 41 attendees, the most attendees to date, raising \$400.00. The Friend's partnered with Cinnaholic for their Super Bowl / Valentine's Day Fundraiser and made close to \$300.00 with the sale of 39 packages.

The Friend's next big fundraiser event is their Handbag Bingo / Tricky Tray, which will be held at The Library on Friday, March 10th. Ms. Forte reported that tickets for the event are presently half sold out and tickets can be purchased at circulation and online for \$25.00. The Friends are also looking for donations of new and unwanted items for the tricky tray portion of their event.

The Friends Spring photo fundraiser event is coming up on April 22nd & 23rd. The event will be advertised as soon as the details are worked out.

Lastly, The Friends will be present at The Library during our Maker's Day event taking place on March 25th & 26th. They will be selling tote bags and letting people know what The Friends do in hopes of increasing their membership.

Mr. Arthur reported that the Foundation did not meet, but they are working on scheduling a date on which all members can attend.

Mr. Whitlock reported that the township is working to approve the budget which should be finalized in March or April. The township has hired a new Marketing Director, who will be reaching out to all township directors to introduce herself and to discuss marketing in each department.

Mr. Whitlock also brought up security concerns regarding recent crimes in neighboring towns and stated that Mayor Cohen is working with the East Brunswick Police Department to discuss security protocols for potential threats to the East Brunswick community. Mr. Arthur mentioned that he and Mr. Bobish had met with the police chief last year and Mr. Bobish also recently spoke with a township official per The Board's recommendation to discuss security protocols as well.

Ms. Tibbetts, the Superintendent of Schools reported that they are working with the National Education Association on creating and celebrating a nation of diverse readers on Reading Across America Day which is going to take place in the beginning of March and the middle school will be performing The Wizard of Oz musical in mid-March.

Ms. Tibbetts also announced the exciting news that the orchestra has been invited to perform at Carnegie Hall and tickets are on sale to the public to those who would like to attend.

Treasurers Report:

Mr. Arthur reviewed the reserve reports, and reported that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Youth Services renovation project has been completed, approved and paid for. Mr. Arthur also reported an increase in revenue to date as compared to 2022 resulting from increased passport and meeting room revenue as well as other services provided by The Library, starting the year off on a good note. Mr. Arthur was happy to announce library administration and staff have resolved the issues with the credit card processing company and was able to recoup most of the charges that were denied last June and July. A contract with a new credit card company was signed mid-February and library administration is working with IT in setting up the account.

Mr. Amankwah made a motion to approve the February 22, 2023 bill list. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, Mr. Verma and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None.

Correspondence:

Ms. Chmielowicz reported that a package of book returns was sent to her attention.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

Mr. Arthur reported that the strategic planning survey is almost complete, awaiting one translation before it is ready.

Director’s Report:

Mr. Arthur was pleased to announce the library will be awarded \$10,000 from the Middlesex County Arts Institute. This, along with The Friends of The Library’s match of \$5,000, will double the budget from last year for the library’s second annual “Concerts in the Courtyard: A Multicultural Music Series.” The series is anticipated to run 10-12 weeks this summer. The Library is also eligible to receive double the funding of last year for its English Immersion Program. Last year’s funding was \$19,000 and 20 individuals completed the 6 week, 30 hour per week program. Six of those individuals were promoted or hired at new jobs and some were hired by the school district.

Old Business:

A. Committee Assignments

2023 Library Board Committee Assignments:

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Building</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Finance</u>
Aarti Punjabi	Verne Whitlock	Nicole Tibbetts	Wayne Christie
Verne Whitlock	Ken Freedman	JoAnn Chmielowicz	Patricia Palumbo
Wayne Christie	Aarti Punjabi	Ken Freedman	Otu Amankwah
Patricia Palumbo	Otu Amankwah	Ashish Verma	Ashish Verma

Mr. Amankwah moved to approve the above board committee assignments. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, Mr. Verma and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None.

B. Policy Updates- Glowforge 3D Laser Printer, Code of Conduct, Poster Printer

The policies for the Glowforge 3D Laser Printer, Code of Conduct and Poster Printer have been updated to reflect changes discussed at last month’s board meeting, including solicitation, interference with library patrons, damage of equipment and an updated hold harmless agreement.

Dr. Freedman moved to approve the policy updates. Mr. Verma seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, Mr. Verma and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None.

New Business:

A. Staff Appreciation – during National Library Week – April 23-29, 2023

The board discussed contributing to the recognition of staff during National Library Week in April. One idea that came up was a lunch for all staff from a local business, and another was an acknowledgement of staff members that have dedicated time in submitting grant proposals, possibly as a proclamation from town council. Mr. Arthur asked Mr. Whitlock to relay these ideas to the mayor.

B. Book Sanctuary Discussion

The board discussed the possibility of declaring The East Brunswick Public Library a book sanctuary and agreed to consult with the attorney in drafting a policy which states requests will only be taken from township residents.

C. Resolution #10,836 – Official Newspapers

Naming Official Newspapers for 2023

Resolution #10,836

WHEREAS, pursuant *N.J.S.A. 40:53-1*, the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees is required to designate official newspapers for the publication of advertisements and legal notices as required to be published by law; and

WHEREAS, Resolution #10,829, adopted January 17, 2023, designated the *Home News Tribune* and the *East Brunswick Sun* as official newspapers for the East Brunswick Public Library.

WHEREAS, the *Sentinel* newspaper has ceased all publication in Middlesex and Monmouth Counties effective January 31, 2023, which includes publication of the *East Brunswick Sun*; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 10:4-8*, adequate notice of meetings must be transmitted to at least two newspapers, one of which shall be the East Brunswick Public Library’s official newspaper; and

WHEREAS, the *Home News Tribune* will remain the East Brunswick Public Library’s official newspaper for all legal notices and publications.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees, pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40:53-1* and *N.J.S.A. 10:4-8*, that the *Asbury Park Press* is hereby designated as the East Brunswick Public Library’s alternate newspaper to satisfy any statutory publication as required.

Ms. Tibbetts moved to approve the above resolution. Mr. Whitlock seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, Mr. Verma and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None.

D. Resolution #10,837 – Accepting County Arts Grant

Acceptance of Middlesex County Arts Grant

Resolution #10,837

WHEREAS, Middlesex County awarded the East Brunswick Public Library a grant to hold an outdoor multicultural music series in the spring and summer of 2023.

Mr. Whitlock moved to approve the above resolution. Mr. Amankwah seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, Mr. Verma and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None.

E. Holiday Update

The board discussed and voted for the addition of Juneteenth as a Library Holiday. The Library would be closed in observance of Juneteenth beginning in 2023.

Dr. Freedman moved to approve the addition of Juneteenth as a Library Holiday. Mr. Amankwah seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, Mr. Verma and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None

Information Items:

Dr. Freedman inquired about looking into using a local bank that would be more involved in participating in township events and fundraisers than the library's current bank. All board members agreed that this would be something worth looking into and will request guidance from the township on if and how this can be done.

The Board moved into closed session at 8:42 pm.

The Board returned to open session at 9:04 pm.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Dr. Freedman made a motion to adjourn at 9:06 pm. Mr. Amankwah seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary