

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 25, 2022

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah (Arr. 8:14)
JoAnn Chmielowicz
Wayne Christie
Mayor Brad Cohen
Dr. Ken Freedman
Patricia Palumbo
Aarti Punjabi
Nicole Tibbetts
Ashish Verma

John Arthur, Library Director
Michael Bobish, Assistant Library Director
Debbie LeSeur, Co-President, Friends of the Library
Sofia Sepulveda, Student Representative
Melissa KR Hozik, Adult Programming Librarian
Angel Albanese, CFO, Township of East Brunswick

Mr. Bobish called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Mayor Cohen 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

The following names were submitted for nomination:

President: JoAnn Chmielowicz
Vice-President: Patricia Palumbo
Secretary: Wayne Christie
Treasurer: Aarti Punjabi

All Trustees accepted their nominations.

Mayor Cohen moved to accept the slate of officers. Mr. Christie seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Minutes of November 23, 2021:

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

Public Participation:

Debbie LeSeur, co-President of the Friends of the Library, reported that the Friends are currently holding a Krispy Kreme fundraiser to benefit the library. Purchased donuts can be picked up at

the library on Sunday, February 13th. The Friends are also preparing for their Bling Sale fundraiser, to be held on March 19th and March 20th. They are collecting donations for this event at the library's circulation desk. The Bling Sale will be hosted at the library.

Sofia Sepulveda, the student representative, read the teen report for December 2021. Ms. Sepulveda reported that 61 volunteers completed a total of 115 volunteer hours in December. In addition, four teen programs were held with a total of 34 attendees. Ms. Sepulveda described more initiatives happening within Teen Services, including a bulletin board the teens made for children and an upcoming therapy dog program. Mayor Cohen asked Ms. Sepulveda if teen volunteers would be available to assist with the Township's upcoming Lunar New Year event. Ms. Sepulveda offered to check and report back.

Mr. Arthur reported on behalf of the Library Foundation. During their January meeting, the Library Foundation determined that Howard Sorkin would join the library's Strategic Planning Committee. The Foundation will decide on their current fundraising focus based on the results of the strategic planning process.

Mayor Cohen shared more details about the Township's upcoming Lunar New Year event. This event, to be held on February 12th, 2022 at the library, will celebrate the diversity in East Brunswick. Mayor Cohen also reported on the status of COVID-19 vaccination and testing sites in the Township. He shared that use of these services is sporadic, with some days seeing more use than others. Mayor Cohen noted that COVID-19 infection rates are dropping in New Jersey, and that the Township's indoor masking requirement for businesses is set to expire at the end of January.

Treasurers Report:

Mr. Arthur shared that Passport revenue increased in November and December 2021. He also reported that the library is encumbering and spending remaining 2021 funds. Ms. Chmielowicz said she appreciates the new, easier-to-read format of the library's financial reports. Mr. Arthur offered that Trustees can always call, email, or visit him with questions relating to financial matters.

Mayor Cohen made a motion to approve the January 26, 2022 bill list. Mr. Christie seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

The library's standing committees did not provide a report. Ms. Tibbetts used this time to commend the efforts of library staff, who assisted with library books and other support when a water pipe burst in Hammar skjold Middle School's media center.

Director’s Report:

Mr. Arthur spoke about new Youth Services Manager Sadé Green-Puik, who started at the library in January. Sadé comes from a strong management background, and she most recently worked at the Ocean County Library in a variety of roles. Mr. Arthur also shared that the library was recently awarded a grant from the Arts Institute of Middlesex County to hold an outdoor multicultural music series in spring / summer 2022. This grant totaled \$6,375, which represents over half of the \$12,500 originally requested by the library. While the scope of the program of the program will need to be scaled back somewhat, this grant will allow the library to bring a diverse array of performers from around the state to East Brunswick.

Mayor Cohen made a motion to approve the November 2021 and December 2021 Director’s Reports. Ms. Tibbetts seconded. Voting yes: Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

Old Business:

There was no old business to report.

Consent Agenda:

A. Resolution #10,793 Naming Authorized Banks

Resolution #10,793

To Name Authorized Banks

BE IT RESOLVED that the Library Board of Trustees approves the following and their successors and assigns as its authorized banks in which funds may be deposited or invested in the name of the East Brunswick Public Library.

The Provident Savings Bank

TD Bank

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the following individuals be authorized as signatories and empowered to invest funds on behalf of the Library Board of Trustees: The Board Treasurer; John Arthur, Library Director; and Chris Collado, Accounting Clerk.

B. Resolution #10,794 Naming Official Newspapers for 2022

RESOLUTION # 10,794

Naming Official Newspapers for 2022

BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that the *Home News Tribune* and the *Sentinel* are hereby designated as official newspapers for the East Brunswick Public Library.

C. Resolution #10,795 to Approve State Contract Purchases

Resolution #10,795

To Approve State Contract Purchases

WHEREAS, the purchase of goods and services by local contracting units is authorized by the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12; and

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library purchases commodities from authorized vendors under the State Of New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Program 1-N.J.C.P.; and

WHEREAS, utilization of State contracts represents the best prices available;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that the aggregate purchases in 2022 from the following State contract vendors may exceed \$26,000:

BFI, Inc.
Central Jersey Office Equipment
Dell Computer Corp.
Demco
HP
W.B. Mason
SHI

D. Resolution #10,796 Authorizing Library Director to Make, Negotiate and Award Contracts up to the Bid Threshold

Resolution #10,796

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR TO MAKE, NEGOTIATE, & AWARD CERTAIN CONTRACTS UP TO THE BID THRESHOLD

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3 provides that when the cost or price of any contract awarded by the contracting agent in the aggregate does not exceed in a contract year the total sum of \$17,500.00, the contract may be awarded by a purchasing agent or other employee so designated by the governing body when so authorized by resolution without public advertising for bids; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees may designate the Library Director as the contracting agent and the governing body of any contracting unit, in this case the Board of Trustees of the East Brunswick Public Library, may adopt a resolution to set a lower threshold for the receipt of public bids or the solicitation of competitive quotations; and

WHEREAS, effective January 1, 2022, the bid threshold has been established at \$17,500.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Library Board of Trustees ratifies its designation of the Library Director as the contracting agent so authorized to make, negotiate and award contracts in the amount up to the bid threshold without the need for advertising for bids, but all such contracts in excess of \$15,000.00 shall be furnished to the Board of Trustees before they are signed and all change orders shall be governed by New Jersey Administrative Code, including, but not limited to, N.J.A.C. 5:30-11.1 through 5:30-11.10, and change orders shall not be used to substantially change the quality or character of any items or work to be provided.

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

New Business:

A. Proclamations Honoring Outgoing Board Members Barbara Wendell and Kathy Spadafino

Mayor Cohen thanked former Library Board Members Barbara Wendell and Kathy Spadafino for their great service to the East Brunswick community, and to the East Brunswick Public Library. He read proclamations honoring these two individuals to the Library Board.

Dr. Freeman moved to approve the resolution honoring Barbara Wendell. Mr. Christie seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

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

B. Updated 2022 Salary and Wage Table

Ms. Chmielowicz asked Mr. Arthur to give an overview of updates to the salary and wage table. Mr. Arthur explained that the new table removed outdated job titles, and that it reflected salary increases per the discussion with the Library Board during the November 2021 meeting. He also noted that the included job title change from “Page” to “Circulation Customer Service Representative” better describes the duties of employees working under these titles.

Ms. Tibbetts moved to approve 2022 Salary and Wage Table. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

C. Internet Policy and Youth Safety Policy

Mr. Arthur explained that the included revisions to the library’s already robust Internet Policy better align it with the proposed Youth Safety Policy. Verbiage prohibiting illegal activity on library computers was added to the Internet Policy, and restrictions on limited commercial activity on library computers were lifted in the proposed policy.

Mayor Cohen moved to approve the revised Internet Policy and Youth Safety Policy. Mr. Verma seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

D. 2022 Committee Assignments

The Library Board decided to table this matter until a future date. Ms. Chmielowicz asked Trustees to email her with their desired committee assignments, in order of preference.

E. Resolution #10,797 Appointing Library Board Attorney

Resolution #10,797

Appointing a Library Board Attorney

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees authorized the Township of East Brunswick to utilize its website for the benefit of the East Brunswick Public Library and to publish a legal advertisement for Requests For Quotations for the position of Library Board Attorney; and

WHEREAS, the Library Board received a Qualification Statement from Weiner Law Group- Douglas Zucker, Esq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints Weiner Law Group- Douglas Zucker, Esq., as Library Board Attorney, effective January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022, in accordance with the response to the Request for Quotations for the provision of professional services for the position of East Brunswick Public Library. In the case of a conflict for Weiner Law Group, Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC will serve as Library Board Attorney.

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

F. Resolution #10,798 Appointing Library Labor Counsel

Resolution #10,798

Appointing Library Labor Counsel

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees authorized the Township of East Brunswick to utilize its website for the benefit of the East Brunswick Public Library and to publish a legal advertisement for Requests For Quotations for the position of Library Labor Counsel; and

WHEREAS, the Library Board received Qualification Statements from Andrew P. Oddo, Esq., Weiner Law Group- Douglas Zucker, Esq., and Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees that it hereby appoints Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC as Library Labor Counsel, effective January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022, in accordance with the response to the Request for Quotations for the provision of professional services for the position of East Brunswick Public Library. In the case of a conflict for Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC, Weiner Law Group will serve as Library Labor Counsel.

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

G. Resolution #10,799 Appointment of Auditor for 2021

Resolution #10,799

Appointment of Auditor for 2021 Audit

WHEREAS, NJSA 40A:5-4 requires that the Board of Trustees appoint a registered municipal accountant to audit the library's financial records; and

WHEREAS, Wiss & Company has submitted a quote of \$7,500 to perform the audit for 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Brunswick has appointed Wiss & Company to perform its 2021 audit; and

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (NJSA 40:11-1 et seq.) requires that the Resolution authorizing the award of a contract for professional services without competitive bids be publicly advertised;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that

1. The Board of Trustees of the East Brunswick Public Library appoints Wiss & Company to perform the library's 2021 audit at an estimated fee of \$7,500.
2. This contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a professional service [NJSA 40A:11-(1)].
3. Notice of this contract award shall be published in the *Home News Tribune* within ten (10) days after passage of same.

I certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees at a meeting held on January 25, 2022.

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

H. Resolution #10,800 To Apply for and Accept Grant Funds

Resolution #10,800

To Apply and Accept Grant Funds

BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees hereby certifies that permission has been granted to apply for and accept the FY22 Grant Opportunity: *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 NJHealthConnect @ Your Library* in the amount of \$323,000.00.

This grant will have a start date of approximately December 1, 2021 and end date of September 30, 2022.

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

I. Resolution #10,801 Approval of Temporary 2022 Library Budget

Resolution #10,801

Temporary 2022 Library Budget

WHEREAS, the library administration reviewed the 2022 budget with the managers, the Board of Trustees, and township administration; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Brunswick does not pass the municipal budget until later on in the year; and

WHEREAS, the library needs funding in order to operate; and

WHEREAS, it was determined that 26.25% of the 2021 budget is sufficient funds for the 1st quarter of the year.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees approves a temporary budget of \$1,126,577.00.

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

J. Revision to Library Budget Lines

Mr. Arthur shared that Township Finance has suggestions for additional changes to the library budget lines, and he suggested this item be tabled until February.

Mr. Christie moved to table this discussion. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

K. Request to IRS for Exemption from Form 990 Filing

Mr. Arthur noted that it is unusual for a public library to have 501c3 status, and he requested to work on closing the library's 501c3. Dr. Freedman asked if the library donates to charitable organizations. Mr. Arthur and Assistant Director Bobish indicated that this is legally prohibited. Ms. Albanese asked whether the library can also remove its tax ID number. Mr. Arthur said he would inquire with the attorney about that matter.

Ms. Tibbetts moved to approve the request to the IRS for exemption from Form 990 filing. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Ms. Chmielowicz, Mr. Christie, Mayor Cohen, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Punjabi, Ms. Tibbetts, and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None.

L. Approve Amendment to Bylaws: Moving Board of Trustees Meeting Date

Mr. Arthur suggested amending the Library Board bylaws to remove the specific date and time language for Library Board meetings, and to replace that language with more general verbiage that leaves flexibility for setting future meeting dates and times.

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

Information Items:

A. November and December Social Media Statistics and links to articles.

Mr. Arthur noted the strong engagement numbers with the library's social media accounts.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Dr. Freedman made a motion to adjourn at 8:51 pm. Mr. Christie seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary