

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
September 19, 2023

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah	John Arthur, Library Director
Dr. Joyce Boley	Karen Parry, Manager of Information Services
Wayne Christie (arr. 7:35 pm)	Stephanie Filippone, Manager of Adult Services
Dr. Ken Freedman	Maria Carmelo, Exec. Admin. Assistant
Joseph Palombit	Debbie LeSeur, Friends President
Verne Whitlock	Zainab Jaorawala, Teen Representative

Township Attendees:

Mayor Brad Cohen
Angel Albanese, Director of Finance

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

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of August 22, 2023:

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2023 meeting. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Dr. Freedman, Mr. Palombit, and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Mr. Whitlock made a motion to approve the closed session minutes of the August 22, 2023 meeting. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Dr. Freedman, Mr. Palombit, and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Public Participation:

In the August Teen Report, Ms. Jaorawala announced that summer reading totaled approximately 1,100 hours. The August TAG meeting took place on August 3rd and the teens discussed furniture ideas and changes to the structure of the meetings. The teens also introduced two new members.

In The Friends Report, Ms. LeSeur announced the exciting news that the 2024 allocation to the library will be \$50,000! Also, some left over Bling Sale jewelry was sold at the successful Pop Up Bling Sale. The next Bling Sale is scheduled for May 2024. The Friends are also running a Sticker Fundraiser Sale, stop by the library to pick up some cool stickers for \$5.00 per sheet. The stickers can be used on water bottles and laptops among other items. On October 1st, at East

Brunswick Day, The Friends will be holding a raffle for new members where participants can win prizes such as a gift basket or candy.

In the Foundation Report, Mr. Arthur reported that the book locker is now available to the public all day and night for pickups.

Mr. Whitlock provided the Township Report and announced that garbage pickup will increase to two times per week in 2024, and advised all departments to adjust their 2024 budgets accordingly to account for the additional cost of the service. Mayor Cohen visited the Tices Lane development site and believes that it would be a great location for a library branch. The East Brunswick Chestnut Hill Cemetery will be having tours of the site on October 14th and 15th. Entrance fees are \$10.00 and \$5.00 for children 12 and under.

Dr. Boley provided the School District Report. The school year kicked off on a happy note, welcoming 80 new staff members. Staff attended a 3 day orientation prior to the commencement of the school year and everyone is excited and expecting a great year.

There were no public comments.

Treasurers Report:

In the Financial Report, Mr. Arthur reported no major changes to the revenue account and balance sheet. Depletion of reserves will need to be discussed, possibly to be used on library branch start up costs and the HVAC renovation as the HVAC grant will cover 2/3 of the cost of renovation. The budget document was lost in the ransomware attack the township fell victim to earlier in the month but we will hopefully be able to get most if not all of the documents that were lost.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the September 20, 2023 bill list. Mr. Whitlock seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Mr. Palombit, and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

The 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan is included in tonight’s board packet.

Director’s Report:

Mr. Arthur reported that the library has been nominated by Senator Corey Booker for the National Medal for Museum and Library Services for the second year in a row. Karen Parry’s initiative, “Just For the Health of It!” is the highlight of the nomination. The library has submitted the grant application for funding for its third annual “Concerts in The Courtyard” series in the summer of 2024. Special thanks to Stefanie Filippone and Melissa Hozik for the

program's success! The summer was busy and much of August was spent focusing on preparations for the fall. Mr. Arthur reported that he met with Karen Parry and Stephanie Filippone to prepare for their Interim Director roles while he is on paternity leave. Orders for the Magic Table and Right to Hear System are expected to take place in the next few days.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the Director's Report. Mr. Whitlock seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Mr. Palombit, and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Old Business:

Mr. Arthur presented to The Board a number of different scenarios for the opening of a branch library. Start up and operating costs were discussed as well as the location. The Board decided to create a Library Branch Task Force. The members of the Library Branch Task Force are: Dr. Freedman, Mr. Christie, Mr. Whitlock and Mr. Palombit.

The East Brunswick Public Library's 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan was presented to The Board.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Mr. Palombit, and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

New Business:

The board voted to approve the revised Minutes of the July 2023 Board Meeting.

Mr. Whitlock made a motion to approve the revised Minutes of the July 2023 Board Meeting. Mr. Christie seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Mr. Palombit, and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Mr. Christie made a motion to move into closed session. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Mr. Palombit, and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

The Board moved into closed session at 8:37 pm.

Mr. Christie made a motion to move out of closed session. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Mr. Palombit, and Mr. Whitlock. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

The Board returned to open session at 9:13 pm.

Information Items:

There were no information items.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Palombit made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 pm. Mr. Whitlock seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary