APPROVED MINUTES
CLIFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by President Patricia Vasilik. Library Counsel read an announcement which stated that pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of the meeting had been given in the annual meeting notice and the amended annual meeting notice to the Record, the Herald News, the Clifton Journal, posted on the Clifton Public Library Website and in the Clifton Public Library and filed with the Clifton City Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Present: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White and President Patricia Vasilik, Library Director Justine Tomczak, and Library Counsel Michael A. Cerone, Jr. Absent: Richard Ruggiero, Mayor James Anzaldi.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the October 20, 2021 meeting. On motion made by Trustee Gozdz and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the minutes of the October 20, 2021 meeting were approved on roll call vote. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White, President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the executive session of the October 20, 2021 meeting. On motion made by Trustee Polk and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the minutes of the executive session of the October 20, 2021 meeting were approved on roll call vote. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White; No: None; Abstain: President Patricia Vasilik.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one addressed the board. On motion made by Trustee Gozdz and seconded by Trustee Kennedy, the Board, with all present being in favor, closed the Public Comment.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director contacted two additional companies regarding mold on the furniture and items being stored in the story time room at Allwood. There have been on-site meetings with each, but no estimates have been received. On a related note, the city again has no bidders on their 2nd attempt to procure a vendor for ductwork cleaning.

The Director reminded the board of the issues with the new shelving at Allwood due to a defect in the painting process. Some shelving was replaced pre-pandemic. More defects were noticed recently. Creative Library Concepts is facilitating this 2nd round of replacement. They have received word of a shipping date in December; assuming that happens on schedule, replacement work should be done in the December/January timeframe.

The Main Library served as a polling location for the newly legislated Early Voting process. More people participated than the Library anticipated. The Director gave kudos to the staff who answered the same kinds of repeated questions with patience, and especially to the maintenance staff, who put in long hours of coverage and were a tremendous help in working under new circumstances.

One issue that arose out of the setup for early voting was the gallery doors not being suitable for general traffic. The threshold is uneven, causing one person to tumble, and the election supervisor took one written note (shared with the Library) regarding the doors not being handicap accessible, in terms of both having a bumpy threshold and not having automatic doors. To that end, the Director noted that the capital money previously intended to automate Allwood's front doors is available since that project was done last year through a city-wide project using CARES money. The Director can begin the process of getting quotes for fixing and automating that entryway.

AARP has been in touch with the Library to resume in-person tax preparation at Allwood next year. They have their own set of safety protocols and procedures for working with the public, which includes minimizing face-to-face time with the public.

The Gardeners continued their hard work into the fall season, including cleaning out Terri's Garden. They were recipients of a City Green grant for tulip bulbs, which they will plant on our grounds.

City Green's Veggie Mobile, which had been scheduled from late spring through October at the Allwood Branch, asked to do an additional visit on November 10 along with Rutgers Institute of Health, which wanted to provide free health screenings (including blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose) and nutrition counseling. The Clifton Board of Health also asked to have a presence to promote flu and COVID shots and various resource referrals. Staff took advantage of extra people milling about and, with the cooperation of Book Nook supervisor Sue Tereski, coordinating effort of branch manager Barbara Altilio, and muscle of the maintenance crew, held a "Book Nook Blowout Sale" in the community room. The whole event was a hit. The weather was beautiful. People were all around. The lot and the streets were full, the park was full, and we opened the exit door from the community room to the parking lot for easy access to the book sale (and the health tests, which are temperature-sensitive). We received many compliments from the public and all of the outside organizations were very pleased with the setup and location.

Gloria Abero, children's department supervisor, and Heather Nilsen, children's librarian, were invited by the public schools to be on Clifton's Early Childhood Education Advisory Council.

Next week, PALS Plus directors will be meeting to discuss a growing concern – calls to ban books. What seemed to be an issue elsewhere in the country is now happening in our area.

Current targets are children's and teens' books regarding race, sexuality, "alternative" families or anything that "causes discomfort." Although our collection development policies are specific to our libraries, we will be sharing concerns and suggestions that will help strengthen us all, especially since our patrons travel amongst us. The Director will be reviewing Library policies as well.

Several periodic maintenance routines were followed in the past few weeks in both buildings, including sprinkler testing, fire alarm and smoke head testing, quarterly HVAC maintenance, and winterizing of the chiller at Main. Garden State Mechanical was called in to examine a heating issue in the Main Library staff lounge.

The Library has had an ongoing problem with a new patron using the Main Library. After several documented incidences of ignoring or willfully disobeying staff, incoherent ramblings, approaching patrons for money, making staff uncomfortable by staring and pacing the desk and finally with talk that veered into violence, police escorted him out the next time he came in and the Director sent a letter, written in consultation with Library Counsel, banning him from the library for 60 days.

The FRIENDS are having their next semi-annual meeting on Tuesday, November 16 at 1:00. Featured guest is Michael Gabriele, speaking about his second book on diners.

The terms of the last Weisbrod CD end in October. Rates on different lengths of time from four different banks were examined. The money is staying at Spencer for 18 months at .25% interest/APY (up from the .17% of the previous CD).

DONATIONS

Unrestricted:

Restricted:

$ 3,077.50 Balance of NJ State Library CARES Act Mini-grant

Restricted – DEPARTMENTAL:

$ 7.55 Interest earned on EW Fund for juvenile programs

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence for the trustees.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Board reviewed the Encumbrance List dated November 1, 2021 and the Claims List dated November 17, 2021.

On Motion made by Trustee Gozdz and seconded by Trustee White, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the Encumbrance List dated November 1, 2021in the amount of $30,036.33 the Claims List dated November 17,2021 in the amount of $34,805.64. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky,

Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Tracy Sterni, David White, Mayor James Anzaldi, President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

The Finance Committee met to prepare and review a draft 2022 budget. The Director noted that both 1/3 mill and state aid has increased for 2022. The Committee will continue to review and report back in December.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

On motion made by Trustee Ruggiero, seconded by Trustee White, the Board, with all present being in favor, voted to meet in executive session to discuss personnel matters and the status of collective negotiations with CWA at 6:51 pm.

The Board reconvened at 6:59 pm with the following trustees present Thomas Charsky, Mariana Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White and President Patricia Vasilik.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Following the discussion from the October meeting, the Director presented a revised policy for criminal background checks for new hires.

On Motion made by Trustee Sterni and seconded by Trustee White, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the attached revised Criminal History Records Check Policy for new hires. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White, President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

NEW BUSINESS

The Director informed the trustees that on Saturday, December 4, the Children's Room will host an Author Visit program. Clifton school library media specialist Shanna Polan will read her first picture book, "Sammy the Sock," published on October 23. Ms. Polan has been an essential link between the Children's Department and schools. She has helped the Library to coordinate library visits to the schools as well as promote programs. Ms. Polan asked permission to sell her books after the program. The Director recommended approval to this request which would be an exception to existing policy.

On motion made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Polk, the Board, on roll call vote, voted to allow Ms. Polan to offer for sale copies of her book after her program on December 4. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

The Director presented the attached list of Library closings for calendar year 2022. On motion made by Trustee Gozdz and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the Board, on roll call vote, voted to

approve the list of Library closings for calendar year 2022. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White, President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

The Director presented two quotes for fall property clean up at both Main Library and the Allwood Branch. The First was from Unlimited Landscaping and Design in the amount of $4,500. The second quote was an estimate of $2,975 from Jack May TLC Services. Jack May indicated that the final bill would depend on the amount of work done. It was the consensus of the Board that the quote from Unlimited Landscaping was the most advantageous to the Library since the price was fixed, this contractor did the work last year at a price that was only $50 less than this year's quote.

On motion made by Trustee Sterni and seconded by Trustee Polk, the Board, on roll call vote, voted to hire Unlimited Landscaping and Design for fall property clean up at the Main Library and Allwood Branch in the amount of $4,500. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

The Board reviewed the report of Crane Associates regarding the conditions and replacement options of the Main Library HVAC system. The report concluded that the current system is at least 5 years past its useful life, that there are humidity control issues, poor temperature control and needs to be replaced. Crane estimated the cost to be $1,350,000. The Director informed the Board that Crane estimated that the design of the system would cost up to $81,000 and would take 4-6 months. The drafting and award of bid documents would take 2-3 months and cost up to $108,000. Thereafter the actual construction timeline would take up to one year. It was the consensus of the board that the Director should get a proposal from Crane Associates for the Design portion of the project. Since that cost would be expended before any bond proceeds would be available, it was the further consensus of the Board that the Director should present the report to the City and request that they bond a net of $1,700,000 to cover cost contingencies on the HVAC project, the cost of the bid and construction document phase as well as any capital projects from which Library money would be diverted to pay for design costs. Trustee Charsky asked that the Director, in speaking with the City Manager, highlight the fact that the HVAC system is as old as the building itself, some 31 years and is at least 5 years beyond its useful life.

On motion made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the Board, on roll call vote, authorized the Director to obtain a written proposal from Crane Associates to design a new HVAC system and to submit a request to the City for $1,700,000 in net bond proceeds to replace the Main Library HVAC system and other capital projects as necessary to account for the diversion of money reserved by the Library for capital projects to pay for the cost of an agreement with Crane Associates for the design of a new HVAC system. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Margaret Kennedy, Barbara Polk, Tracy Sterni, David White and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

The trustees wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

On motion made by Trustee Gozdz and seconded by Trustee White the Board, with all present being in favor, voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael A. Cerone, Jr
MICHAEL A. CERONE, JR.
Library Counsel

CLIFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS CHECKS POLICY

The Board of Trustees requires that all approved applicants 18 years of age and older for Library positions request a criminal history records check from the New Jersey State Police. As a governmental entity of the State of New Jersey, the Library is entitled to this service. The library's business office will provide a link to the website of the current private company under contract with the State of New Jersey. The approved applicant is responsible for following the link, completing an online form, and booking and attending their in-person appointment at the company. The approved applicant will pay for the service and hold on to the receipt. The results of the check will be sent to the Library Director. The approved applicant will be hired after the report is received. (A negative report will result in a continuing search for another candidate.) When the new employee completes the 90-day working test period, he/she will submit the receipt to the business office for reimbursement of the fee (minus any tax) at the next possible board meeting.