APPROVED MINUTES
CLIFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
October 19, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by President Patricia Vasilik. President Vasilik 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 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, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Tracy Sterni, David White, Mayor James Anzaldi and President Patricia Vasilik, and Library Director Justine Tomczak. Absent: Library Counsel Michael A. Cerone, Jr.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Main Library gallery door project –
  The Director & Board stepped out of community room in order for the Director to point out some things for the gallery doors to be accessible:
  - the vestibule space between the outer & inner doors would accommodate an automated system
  - doors swing outward; hardware needed
  - 2 emergency lights outside building will be replaced for better lighting
  - hand-free sensor installed on a post outside
  - hand-free sensor installed on an inside part of the door
  - uneven threshold of the outside doors – pavers sinking
  - meet ADA accessibility requirements
  - redo walkway with pavers or concrete & make slightly wider leading to the side parking area
  - lip uneven for wheelchair to go over
  - redo small portion of walkway with pavers or concrete (on path to the main walkway)
  - lights, fixtures & post at these area would not be disturbed
  - suggest to re-mark one space for handicap parking in the side parking area
  - bidders will be asked to submit bid with 2 pricing: 1 using pavers; 1 using concrete

The Board reconvened in the Community Room.

The Director informed the Board under the Bond Appropriations-AB ADA Accessibility Project there is $20,000 remaining that was for the AB auto-doors project, however, the City had the AB doors done under COVID, so these funds and the funds remaining (after expenses) in the G.R. account line #405 would fund this project. On a motion made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Sterni, the Board, on roll call vote, voted to approve 'going forward redoing the walkway areas & door project to meet ADA Accessibility to the Main Library through the gallery doors.' Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Tracy Sterni, David White, Mayor James Anzaldi and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

The Director informed the Board of the time line:

- Nov. 7, 2022 – bid phase
- Dec. 6, 2022 – open & review
- Dec. 21, 2022 – award contract

The Mayor suggested the Director reach out to the CFO to inquire if there is any remaining federal funds through ARPA.

Mr. Ruggiero asked about re-using existing pavers. The Director will discuss with the architect.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the September 16, 2022 meeting. On motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee White the minutes of the September 16, 2022 meeting were approved on roll call vote. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Tracy Sterni, Mayor James Anzaldi, David White and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one addressed the board. On motion made by Trustee White, seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board, with all present voting in the affirmative, closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director reported the following updates since the last Board meeting.

The fully executed NJ Library Construction Bond grant agreement was sent to us on October 11. The next steps will be for me to contact architect George Held to get the project on his calendar and have him go over the timeline with me. I will then contact Crane regarding the HVAC project to see how the grant project will fit in with that timeline. We are obligated to work on the grant project (wallpaper and ceiling tile replacement) within a certain amount of time so we can't necessarily hold off on it until after the HVAC project.

George Held met with me and maintenance supervisor Nick Alectoridis a few more times to finalize plans for the bid specs for the gallery door project. We'll step out into that area at the beginning of the board meeting so I can point some things out to you.

A few weeks ago, the air conditioning unit in the PALS Plus server room died. Fixing/replacing it was critical to keeping the servers functioning. A temporary unit was installed as they waited for parts. This is all something that PALS Plus takes care of.

We have a few outdoor lights (pole lights in the parking lot, lights above the front door) that are out but need electricians with bucket lifts to access them. We're working on getting quotes.

The Master Gardeners continue to work hard at both locations. While working on Terri's Garden in front of Main, they talked to us about one tree that needs pruning. I will reach out to DPW about it.

Staff's time has really been taken over by the number of incidences we've had over the past year.

Some recent examples:

As I'm trying to finish writing this report on October 14, a patron backed out of a handicap spot and knocked a bollard clear off its base, and it rolled a little within the traffic circle. I will now have to spend my time following up on that.

On October 3 at Main, a man we refer to as "stolen ID man" that we have been dealing with since August was given a notice by me, in the presence of an officer, not to come back for a few months after weeks in which he tried to use someone else's ID, damaged library materials, continually left garbage behind, and left other people's mail and documents behind. He returned on October 11 and police were called as soon as he stepped foot in the building. Before they arrived, he was seen removing library books from the building. While one officer was in speaking with me, another found him down Main Ave. Nick went with police to positively identify him. They wound up taking him in as he was wanted. We got our materials back and he is being charged with theft. If he returns again, he will be charged with trespassing. (This is the short version of events!)

On October 12 at Main, a man we refer to as "soda throwing man" due to a previous incident months ago (he also ripped pages out of library books, among other things) returned after an absence. Police were called. He left before they arrived, probably because we had staff spread out and he knew he was being watched.

In early October, staff observed a new homeless person using our facilities. While not overtly a problem, he also tends to hang out in our back staff entrance area. He will leave when asked, but returns. One day, he was around the Main Ave. side of the building outside and told a maintenance worker that he didn't feel well. That worker got a librarian, but the man was gone when they returned outside.

A woman (not homeless) has medical issues and twice has had medical episodes – once in the building (our special officer was there and paramedics were called, but help was rejected) and once upon leaving the building, in her car (again, officials arrived; staff is not sure of the outcome).

On October 6, a delivery person mistakenly pulled the fire alarm by the back door, causing the building to evacuate and the fire department to come. Totally Secure, our alarm company, also had to make a visit as we had trouble resetting the control panel.

On September 29, I attended the city's Homeless Task Force meeting at city hall. There were many people in attendance, including staff from various city departments, civilians/business owners, representatives from various local social service agencies, and three council members. Although the council members are aware of the homeless persons in the area of the park and library, they were not aware of the extent to which we deal with situations on a constant basis. It was good for us to have that be known. I learned a bit about what the city is doing to try to assist people. A challenge all around is what to do when people don't accept assistance.

On October 12, 2022, Children's Department Library Assistant Monica Pineda represented the library at the Downtown Clifton Fall Festival "Farmers Market". The event was sponsored by Caring People. There were vendors there giving information and small gifts to hand out to the community. The Downtown Clifton organizer was happy to see the library participating there. They gave us a table next to them, which was good because they were giving Halloween goody bags to the kids that approached them and it was an opportunity for Monica to give these families information about the library. The event was very organized with music and decorations, and kids got free ice cream and lollipops.

The Children's Dept. also has outreach scheduled at the Clifton Health/Police Dept. satellite office in Botany Village on October 19 (a story time) and at Literacy Night at Woodrow Wilson and Christopher Columbus middle schools (October 19 and 26, respectively).

The Children's Dept. had a Library Card Drive geared to school teachers. They invited teachers to the library on two different dates to learn about library services and how to get a library card. Not only did some of those attendees open cards, but the Circulation Department reported that more teachers

came afterwards to open library cards. The dept. is establishing a closer relationship with the school media specialists, agreeing to link the children's library blog to their newsletter and vice-versa.

On October 12, a Hispanic Heritage Month show was held: the performer Ben y Jaz (a father with his two teenage children) performed instrumental music from different Latin American countries. Children's Supervisor Gloria Abero was amazed by how engaged the young audience was; even the performer noted such afterwards. The program was a huge success. Not only people of Hispanic origin attended the program; there were Arabic, Americans, and Eastern European families. All of them were very enthusiastic about the music. We had 50 people attending.

A Diwali program will be at the Allwood Branch on October 18. The program will be run by Bhavna Singh, who will teach children the history and meaning of this celebration while making a related craft.

Plans for a bilingual Arabic-English Story Time series are underway along with volunteer Ruba Qasem. The first program will be on Wednesday, October 26.

We continue to work with other outside organizations on events, such as:

- A series of STEM programs in October with 4-H;

- An outdoor Halloween program on October 27 featuring the Headless Horseman, in coordination with Clifton's Community Policing officers and the Passaic County Sheriff's Department;

- Virtual Story Times for children 0 to 3 years old in coordination with Helpful Hands, an early intervention collaborative organization for families with children in that age range.

Gloria, a member of the PALS Plus Digital Services Committee, reports that a Tech Petting Zoo program on October 26 at 10:00 at in the Main Library will be open to any PALS Plus library staff who want to learn about using Libby and Hoopla on different devices.

At Allwood, the City Green Veggie Mobile continues visiting every other week. There are two more visits scheduled: October 19 and November 2.

Allwood Branch manager Barbara Altilio created a library bingo card with Hershey Kiss giveaways to give out during library card signup month in September.

Teen Librarian Khusboo Rana is working on programs for the coming months, including drop-in craft programs and a leadership program in conjunction with the Maxwell Leadership Team. She's also nearing completion on the next newsletter edition and has re-started the Book a Librarian program, where patrons of all ages can reserve time with a librarian to go over digital lending on their particular device, or get extended help with setting up email.

Reference Supervisor Kathy Grimshaw reports that the job board she's been working hard to maintain is getting good use and appreciation from patrons.

There were lots of recent opportunities for staff to attend workshops and continuing education:

- Administrative Clerk Christine Althawabta is halfway through the LibraryLink Super Library Supervisors series, which has resumed in person at the Monroe Township Library;

- Allwood Branch Manager Barbara Altilio attended New York Comic Con;

- Reference Supervisor Kathy Grimshaw attended a PALS Plus Reference Services Committee event featuring Passaic County Archivist and Historian Patrick Byrnes;

- I attended a full-day LibraryLinkNJ Fall Virtual Conference on Access and Accessibility (in your collections; in your physical space; on your website);

- I attended a half-day Statewide E-book Convening. The purpose is to discuss the feasibility, challenges and benefits of offering e-books through the state (in the same way that the state subscribes to some databases for all). The first one, held in the spring, was virtual; this one was held at the brand-new Montgomery Branch of the Somerset County Library System in Montgomery. We got to tour the facility afterwards (including the room housing their Sort-OMatic, an automated materials check-in system).

The PALS Plus membership meeting was held on September 29. Membership voted to allow updating of other libraries' patron information (except for residence) and to allow renewal of other libraries' patron cards provided the residence information on the ID shown matches their record exactly and the record is in good standing (not blocked or barred). Clifton is one of the only libraries that requires two documents to register for a card and to renew; now, we will still require two to sign up, but only one for renewal.

On Monday, October 17 at 1:30 in the Main Library community room, 99 year old Lillika Weinberger will give a presentation on handwriting analysis. She had a big program here many years ago and wanted to "retire" with another one.

The FRIENDS are holding a Gift Gallery Blowout Sale in the Main Library between 11-4 on October 19. Their semi-annual meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15 at 1:00 at the Main Library and will feature guest speaker Gianfranco Archimede, Director of Historic Preservation for the city of Paterson, discussing Alexander Hamilton and his influence in Paterson.

DONATIONS

Unrestricted:

$	16.96	Canister

Restricted:

$	65.00	Library Board of Trustees in honor of Adele Piela for books

Restricted – DEPARTMENTAL:

$ 10.27 Interest earned on EW Fund for juvenile program

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Board reviewed the Encumbrance List dated October 1, 2022 and the Claims List dated October 19, 2022. On Motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the Encumbrance List dated October 1, 2022, in the amount of $67,582.10 and the Claims List dated October October 19, 2022 in the amount of $47,884.50.
Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Tracy Sterni, David White, Mayor James Anzaldi and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

The Director reported that 1/3 mil numbers have gone up across the county, Clifton will be receiving $400,000 more next year. PERS up $8,000, at this time, don't know what our HEALTH cost will be.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

On a motion made by Trustee Sterni and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board on roll call vote to

- Approve adding 12 hours per week to schedule of Children's department Page Parul Shah to include hours in Reference department. New total for Parul will be 24 hours/week.

- Approve reduction of schedule by 3 hours every other week for part-time Library Assistant Megha Barot. Her schedule will go from 27 hours over two weeks to 24 hours over two weeks.

- Approve unpaid extended leave of absence, through January 21, 2023 for part-time Reference librarian Suzanne Peterson.

- Approve retirement of part-time Library Assistant Helen Talaniec effective November 1

Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Marianna Gozdz, Richard Ruggiero, Tracy Sterni, David White, and Mayor James Anzaldi. No: None; Abstain: Barbara Polk and President Patricia Vasilik.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (cont'd)

- Fine free discussion

The Director reported the standard late fine for books as .10 cents and for DVD's .50 cents. At a PalsPlus member meeting in the spring, a committee presented increasing the book fine to .25 cents and decreasing the DVD fine to .25 cent. The members passed both changes. This is not in effect and will need publicity. More than half of the libraries are fine-free. The President reported we need to think about it as the budget is concerned.

NEW BUSINESS:

The President reported she attended a virtual NJLT program on Oct. 8, 2022 and a session on Strategic Planning. She informed the Board we need to do our Strategic Plan in the next couple of months. The State recommended a 3 Year Plan. The President informed the Board she had completed the total 7 hours of educational training (a requirement for state aid). Perhaps, in the future, a NJLT program may be included on the agenda as a short presentation (15 minutes or) during the meeting.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Mayor James Anzaldi informed the Board he would not be attending the November Trustees meeting, and please do not cut any trees down. Mayor Anzaldi advised the Board the December meeting will be his final Clifton Library Board of Trustees Meeting as Mayor of the City of Clifton.

On motion made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Gozdz, with all present being in favor, voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Trustee Barbara Polk
Board Secretary