APPROVED MINUTES
CLIFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MAY 17, 2023

The monthly meeting of the Trustees of the Clifton Public Library was held at the Main Library, 292 Piaget Avenue, Clifton, NJ. The meeting was called to order at 6:32 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 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, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Vivian Semeraro, Karen Sommers, Tracy Sterni, and President Patricia Vasilik, Library Director Justine Tomczak, and Library Counsel Michael A. Cerone, Jr. Absent: Marianna Gozdz, David White.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the April 19, 2023 meeting. On motion made by Trustee Polk and seconded by Trustee Semeraro, the minutes of the April 19, 2023 meeting were approved on roll call vote. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Vivian Semeraro, Karen Sommers, Tracy Sterni, and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one addressed the Board. On motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee White, the Board, with all present being in favor, voted to close the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

AARP thanked the Library for allowing them use of the community room for tax preparation assistance. They were booked solid this year.

The auditors spend two days at the Library the first week in May.

Administrative Clerk Christine Althawabta is researching the process for making payments through ACH (Automated Clearing House) instead of paper checks sent through the mail. The Library is experiencing an increasing problem with mailing checks. The City has resolutions establishing policy and procedure, and this method is mentioned in their cash management plan

and their cyber security plan. They also have vendor authorization forms. In short, a lot of work will need to be done to make this happen.

The Eleanor Weisbrod CD matured on 4/30/2023. The previous interest was .25%. It was rolled over at Spencer for 18 months at 4.50% APY / 4.40% APR and will mature 10/30/2024.

A donor had a question about acknowledgements of larger amounts. Upon review of our policy, the Library needs to get up to speed with acknowledgements on our plaques.

Library Assistants Jennifer Bello and Devin Sogluizzo represented the Library at the Bloomin' 5K run/walk on Sunday, April 30. Despite the bad weather, people stopped by the library table and received information.

Devin also represented the library at the Community Baby Shower in Main Memorial Park on Saturday, May 6, sponsored by the Clifton Health Department and Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine. At events such as these, staff is able to hand out a lot of flyers and brochures. This type of outreach results in people attending programs and signing up for library cards.

All maintenance staff attended training at city hall on May 9. Two topics were covered: Bloodborne Pathogens (training is every year), which covers safety when handling situations where bodily fluids might be involved, making sure certain PPE (personal protective equipment) is stocked up.; and Right to Know (training every other year), which covers purchase of chemicals/hazardous substances, their proper use, and record keeping and staff/public information on what is being used.

The Allwood van recently had a flat tire. Maintenance staff was able to re-inflate it enough to bring to the mechanic. They found a hole and were able to patch it.

Outdoor gardening/cleanup work has begun.

DPW repainted lines in the Allwood parking lot.

The Main gallery door and walkway project is underway. In general, it is moving along well, but some issues have come up. The architect comes by periodically to inspect work in progress and advise the contractor of fixes or adjustments that need to be made and provides the Director with reports. The electrical subcontractor pointed out a few things to Nick and the Director that needed attention, which were passed along to the architect for follow-up.

Regarding the old boiler: The insurance company sent a follow-up query to the manufacturer. The manufacturer sent materials samples to a third-party lab for full failure analysis on April 28 and expects reports by May 26.

In using the City's Qualified Purchasing Agent on the chiller repair project, all have learned that the quotes for this work must be addressed to the city directly, and needs to be approved by resolution of the City Council.

The Director met with two officers in Clifton's Community Policing Division recently to get some clarity on types of behavior that are problems as compared to merely being a nuisance.

Librarian Vivian Ungerleider and Sr. Library Assistant Joel Colon went to Chelsea Senior Living on May 11. They brought books for residents to check out and chatted and sang with them.

Librarian Kathy Grimshaw, Head of Reference, is finalizing plans for a Seed Library. She sought advice from other libraries doing this. We're starting small, with an online form for patrons to request a capped number of vegetable, herb or flower seeds. Next year she hopes to grow our inventory of seeds packets to have them available for walk-in requests.

On April 26, the Cornerstone College Solutions group returned to give a virtual presentation to parents of college bound students on the best strategies to pay for college without jeopardizing retirement. There were about 8 attendees. Another virtual presentation, this time by My College Planning Team, is scheduled for May 17.

On April 27, LibraryLinkNJ offered an hour-long webinar entitled "Libraries & AI." Teen Librarian Khusboo Rana learned how AI works, about AI learned biases and hallucinations, how AI can be integrated in libraries and how it can enhance library services and operations. Librarian Heather Nilsen and the Director also attended online AI webinars.

The 8-week MAGIC (Media-Advertising-Graphics-Intro Course) which began in March will be ending on May 10, 2023. The kids in the Tuesday sessions and the teens in the Wednesday sessions have learned a great deal about graphic novel design and anime art creation from the instructor, Brian Sledge. There is a celebration event scheduled on Monday, May 22 to show the student's families and friends as well as the Clifton Community their final projects.

On May 4, Christopher Columbus Middle School's Visual Arts and Communications Club held an anime convention called Mustang Con. This is the second year they have planned this event and their first year introducing community tables. Teen Librarian Khusboo Rana and Sr. Library Assistant Danielle Sonye-Reising attended the event signing up people for library cards and informing them of upcoming library events.

The Teen and Children's Department is working together to bring a 3-session dance class program to the library. The group is called Kennedy Dancers, a non-profit, and they will be teaching kids and teens ages 7-17 different Latin dances such as Bachata & Merengue. This program is scheduled to begin May 15.

Khusboo is prepping for the Summer Reading Program. Programming is being explored as well as joint activities with the Children's Department. The program will begin in July.

The Children's Department staff has had meetings to set up their Summer Reading programs, including the kick-off and grand finale, a library tournament (competition between Main and Allwood) joint with Teens, a special educational music show sponsored by a donation through

Trustee Charsky, a computer art program series for young children by 4-H, and a series of four art programs (two in each building) by Daniel Esposito. They reviewed last year's summer reading logs and evaluated the most popular activities. They decided to replace those the children were not interested in. They are going to keep the same successful format. The prize store has proved to be a great incentive for children, so that they will bring it back this summer. This time the store will open in both libraries. They will post requests for patrons to donate toys to use as prizes.

The Children's Department is recruiting volunteers for the Summer Reading Partner program and it's going well so far. Registrations will begin in June.

Children's Supervising Librarian Gloria Abero and Librarian Heather Nilsen visited five classes at St. John Kanty private school for 75 kids. They briefly discussed the library and library card and performed a short story time.

On April 24 and 26, Gloria and Librarian Juliana Schicho received students (35 total over two days) from Bright Academy preschool in the library. Each time they provided a story time and craft, a library tour, and time in Adele's corner in the children's room.

Gloria contacted K-8 Language Arts Supervisor Valerie Kropinack to schedule school visits; Dr. Kropinack put her in touch with trustee David White, High School Language Arts Supervisor who is now also the K-12 Media Technology Supervisor. He directed the school library media specialists to contact her to arrange.

The Children's librarians welcomed six volunteers from the 501st Legion who attended our May the Fourth Star Wars party in costume. The kids and parents were very excited and enjoyed meeting them and taking pictures with them.

At Allwood, the evening all ages story time continues to have very good attendance. Attendance at morning story times for babies and for 1 & 2 years olds tends to fluctuate.

The Read to a Therapy Dog program is going strong at both libraries. There is a lot of interest from both people new to the program as well as regulars who attend as often as they can.

Juliana and Heather attended a Performers Showcase on May 9, which introduced them to many Northern New Jersey based performers who do school and library performances and workshops. They were able to see snippets of what the performers do, helping them evaluate how they relate to an audience, the level of audience interaction and get a sense of which shows would be a good fit for our community.

Gloria and Heather are trying a 'hands on' book club program, a new type of book club Gloria discovered. They will explore the different parts of a cookbook with the children, and they will pick a recipe to try at home. At the second session, they will report back on the experience. If this program is a success, they will continue with art and craft books and other 'how to' style books.

Gloria and Heather are continuing outreach story times at Botany Village. Many attendees had no idea about the resources the Health Department offered before visiting for the story time. This partnership is connecting library patrons with an important community resource.

On May 18, Gloria and Heather are running an outreach story time in collaboration with Laura Washington of the Northeast Regional Early Intervention Collaborative. This virtual story time is open to families that are part of the NJ Early Intervention System and they already have 53 families from all over the state registered.

National Library Week was celebrated April 24-29 in our library. Treats were given out each day, and staff enjoyed lunch on April 25. The FRIENDS had a table with a representative in each building every day. The Volunteer Appreciation celebration was held April 29. The committee put together literary-inspired drinks and food bites.

The piano tuner came on May 12 to prep the piano for a FRIENDS-sponsored concert by Mike Luipersbeck and band on May 16.

Local beekeeper Brian Eromenok will present at Main on Tuesday, May 30 at 6:30 p.m. His programs have been hits in the past.

The Main Library will be an early voting site June 2, 3 and 4.

The 2nd Annual Passaic County Book Festival will be held in Weasel Brook Park June 10 from 11am – 4pm.

DONATIONS
Restricted – DEPARTMENTAL:
$ 10.41 Interest earned on EW Fund for juvenile programs

Other:
Train set (tracks, cars, figures, décor) from Frank Mastrodonato

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence for the board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FRIENDS LIASON

Trustee Semeraro reported that the spring concert held on May 16, 2023 was a success.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Trustee Ruggiero reported on the inventory of computers at both Main and Allwood. At the Main Library, the average age of public computers is 6.5 years, and the average age of staff computers is 5.5 years. At the Allwood Branch, the average age of public computers is 5.8 years (one brand new) and the average age of staff computers is 5.0 years (one brand new). The computers are mostly Dell computers with Windows 10 operating systems. The committee will explore leasing options and bonding for the purchase of new computers, converting some public computers from Windows to Chrome OS to extend their life and buying some Chromebooks for public use as these are less expensive.

Mr. Ruggiero noted that shortly before this meeting, five staff computers broke down and need to be replaced. On motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Sterni, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the purchase of five Dell computers at a cost not to exceed $5,500. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Vivian Semeraro, Karen Sommers, Tracy Sterni, and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Board reviewed the Encumbrance List (2023 budget) dated May 1, 2023, and the Claims List (2023 Budget) dated May 17, 2023. On Motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board, on roll call vote, approved Encumbrance List (2023 budget) dated May 1, 2023 in the amount of $ 43,634.83 and the Claims List (2023 Budget) dated May 17, 2023 in the amount of $30,776.88. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Vivian Semeraro, Karen Sommers, Tracy Sterni, and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

On Motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Sommers the Board, with all present being in favor, voted to meet in executive session to discuss personnel and collective bargaining matters. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Vivian Semeraro, Karen Sommers, Tracy Sterni, and President Patricia Vasilik; No: None; Abstain: None.

The Board met in executive session commencing at 7:10 pm. The Board reconvened at 7:51 pm with the same members present. The Board met in executive session to discuss personnel and collective bargaining matters. No action was taken in the executive session.

On Motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board, on roll call vote, denied the request of Christopher Peltyszyn for unpaid leave, approved the advertisement for Assistant Director and approved the salary range of $85,500 - $96,200 for Assistant Director. Vote: Yes: Thomas Charsky, Richard Ruggiero, Vivian Semeraro, Karen Sommers, and Tracy Sterni; No: None; Abstain: Barbara Polk, and President Patricia Vasilik

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

President Vasilik thanked Trustee Sommers for attending the meeting after recently sustaining a fractured shoulder.

On motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Semeraro, the Board, with all present being in favor, voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm.

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