APPROVED MINUTES
CLIFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
FEBRUARY 19, 2025

The monthly meeting of the Trustees of the Clifton Public Library was held on February 19, 2025, at the Main Library, 292 Piaget Avenue, Clifton, NJ. 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 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, Rosmunda Kenning, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Karen Sommers, Tracy Sterni, President Patricia Vasilik, Library Director Justine Tomczak, and Library Counsel Michael A. Cerone, Jr. Absent: Vivian Semeraro and Suzanne Sia.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Counsel temporarily assumed the chair to conduct the election of officers.

Trustee Polk nominated Patricia Vasilik as President. The nomination was seconded by Trustee Sommers. There were no other nominations. Ms. Vasilik was elected as President on roll call vote as follows: Vasilik - Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni, and Vasilik. Other – None; Abstain – None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

Trustee Ruggiero nominated Thomas Charsky as Treasurer. The nomination was seconded by Trustee Kenning. There were no other nominations. Mr. Charsky was elected as Treasurer on roll call vote as follows: Charsky - Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni, and Vasilik.; Other – None; Abstain – None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

Trustee Sterni nominated Barbara Polk as Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Trustee Charsky. There were no other nominations. Ms. Polk was elected as Secretary on roll call vote as follows: Polk - Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni, and Vasilik.; Other – None; Abstain – None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 15, 2025 meeting. On a motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the Board on roll call vote approved the minutes of

the January 15, 2025 meeting. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one addressed the Board. On motion made by Trustee Sommers and seconded by Trustee Polk, the Board, with all present being in favor, closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director updated the Board on issues regarding unhoused patrons.

The Board was advised that the City's warming center had a bedbug problem. The Director advised that upon consultation with Board President Patricia Vasilik the Library contracted with Marrone Pest Management Services for monthly preventative maintenance for each building. This company will also be available to quickly respond should a bedbug situation develop.

Maintenance Supervisor Nick Alectoridis and the Director attended the annual Exposure Control Plan meeting at city hall on January 22.

The staff began using the new system for clocking in/out in their Primepoint accounts, either by using their phones, a stand-alone tablet, or their desktop computers. There were a lot of snags in the first week.

The Director met with Supervising Library Assistants Cheryl Conselyea and Melissa Carrasco of the circulation department regarding use of special patron library card options and the computer guest pass process, which is very outdated. The Director plans on presenting a revised policy for guest passes for approval next month.

The Main Library elevator was out of service from February 4-6 as it had a malfunction that required service by Jersey Elevator.

On February 6, the Library opened at 10:00am after a snowfall, although early staff had a delayed arrival of 10:00. There were a few other days when maintenance staff had to do some shoveling and salting, including Sunday, February 9.

Garden State Mechanical completed a repair on Allwood's quiet study room heating.

DPW created a concrete pad for the outdoor book return bins at Allwood; the new location, next to the ramp from the parking lot to the walkway in front of the building, is working out well.

Modernfold came in as previously approved to service the folding wall in the Main Library community room.

Unitemp contractors were in for about two weeks, making their way through the Main Library pulling wires through the ceiling as part of the HVAC project. Small areas of the library were blocked off at a time while wires were dangling and ladders were positioned.

Passaic County Board of Elections supplied the Library with dates for early voting in 2025. This allows the staff to book the Main Library community rooms.

Allwood Branch Manager Barbara Altilio reports that AARP tax help has started up for the season and has been busy, as usual. New people have been coming to Mah Jong and Bridge. The Woman's Club of Allwood will have a display in the cases this March for Women's History Month. Barbara and Children's Supervisor Gloria Abero have started getting ready for Makers Day on March 22. City Green and 4H will be coming, Gloria will have a coding project for the day and Barbara is getting crafts together.

Main Circulation Supervisor Melissa Carrasco reports staff have been busy with lots of new patron registrations. Sr. Library Assistant Joel Colon has done some visits to Mira Vie assisted living to read to the residents. Library Assistant Tess Lazo-Iwachow has been working with the FRIENDS of the Library (on a volunteer basis on her own time) on their logo and anniversary promotion.

Both Main and Allwood report increased photocopier and printer use. There are also less people coming in with change or bills and asking about paying for copies by credit card. Staff will investigate this type of payment option for the future.

Tech Services Supervisor Carol Loden reports that she and Library Assistant Grace Giunta are working together to pick up tasks left by Darlene Olenkewich's retirement. She advised the Director that there are delays in the publishing supply chain that have been frustrating for both staff and patrons.

Children's Supervisor Gloria Abero reports that upcoming school visits are scheduled:

> 02/27 – Two HeadStart preschool groups will visit the library
>
> 02/28 – Librarian Kaitlin Koch will visit School 5 to read during the "Read Across America" event
>
> 03/04 – Gloria will visit a private preschool organizing a Pete the Cat reading event. Different community representatives will read, and the library will provide the book copies.
>
> 03/06 – Kaitlin will attend the Literacy Night at Passaic Arts and Science Clifton Primary School.

Winter programs are underway. Planning for the spring season, which will run from April 23 to May 31, is completed; and planning for summer reading has begun. Contingency plans, to the greatest extent possible, are in place for moving programs to Allwood if work on Main HVAC is intrusive.

Children's Librarian Heather Nilsen reports that story times have been going well. She is bringing back Sensory Storytime as a once-a-month program. She is adding time after the program for the parents and children to sit quietly and read together.

Heather attended a performer showcase/workshop put on by Mad Science & Crayola Imagine Arts Academy. The presentation was excellent; it spoke about ways they collaborate with librarians to write grants or find sponsorship.

New full-time Librarian 1 Kaitlin Koch dove right in. She has run multiple story time programs including baby story time and 1-2 years old story time that averaged 8 to 10 children and 6 to 8 adults. She conducted a story time at Allwood which was exciting to meet new patrons that only attend the branch, and she was able to meet and work with Allwood staff. She oversaw the African Drum Circle on Monday, February 3, which was a hit with over 50 people in attendance, as well as a story and craft time with local author Maureen Saan which had over 20 people.

Kaitlin is working on the new calendar system to book and modify programs and worked with Gloria to create new program registration forms. She took over updating the blog and already created a new video for our YouTube channel, highlighting upcoming programs. She is also learning how to edit the children's page of the website.

Heather and Kaitlin are on the Youth Services PALS Plus interest group this year; Librarian 2 Khusboo Rana is on the Reference Committee; Library Assistant Marta Feduniewicz is on the Circulation Committee; and the Director is on the Policy Committee.

The Director noted that Influenza has been at high levels in New Jersey – the highest in years – and there has also an uptick in RSV, and Covid is still around. The Library has been short staffed the last few weeks as staff members have fallen ill and taken a while to recover. A patron was taken out from the Main Library by ambulance on February 7.

The Director has been reading on-line discussions and joining webinars on ICE raids and what to do (or not do) if agents were to come into the library and will be speaking with staff.

The Director received a request from the auditors hired by the city (relayed by the city clerk) for information needed for the forensic audit.

Personnel:

Librarian Pat Ferro and the Director have been considering applicants for a vacant part-time Librarian 1 position; the selected candidate is undergoing the requisite background checks and paperwork.

DONATIONS

Restricted – DEPARTMENTAL:

$ 184.73 Interest earned on EW Fund for juvenile programs

BUILDING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The Board reviewed the Capital Improvements Plan for CY 2025-2027 as presented by the Director. On a motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Kenning, the Board adopted the Capital Improvements Plan for CY 2025-2027 (annexed) on roll call vote. Vote: Yes:

Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

The Board reviewed proposals from three vendors to provide tech support to the Library. On a motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Kenning, the Board, on roll call vote, authorized the Director to contract with Jim Dwyer for Tech Support services at an hourly rate of $120. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

The Director requested that the Board approve purchases necessary to upgrade the wireless equipment at both the Main Library and the Allwood Branch. The Director explained that much of the cost will be paid for through the E-Rate program and these purchases, while through PALS Plus, are all on state contract. The Library has been approved for $27,755.22 in E-rate funding, leaving the Library responsible for approximately $8,606.58 On a motion made by Trustee Kenning and seconded by Trustee Sommers, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the purchase of the equipment, licensing and services necessary to accomplish the upgrade of the wireless network at the Main Library and the Allwood Branch at a cost of $8,606.58. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Board reviewed the Encumbrance and Claims Lists. On Motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the Encumbrance List (2024 Budget) dated February 1, 2025, in the amount of $50,023.24, the Encumbrance List (2025 Budget) dated February 1, 2025 in the amount of $21,451.14, the Claims List (2024 Budget) dated February 15, 2025, in the amount of $159.37 and the Claims List (2025 Budget) dated February 15, 2025 in the amount of $55,044.89. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None. Absent Semeraro, Sia.

Trustee Charsky presented the 2025 Budget. On a motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Polk, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the 2025 Budget. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

The Director requested that the Board adopt a Resolution authorizing the transfer of funds in support of the Capital Improvement Plan adopted earlier in the meeting. On a motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board, on roll call vote, adopted the Resolution to Reserve Funds for Capital Improvements. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

On motion made by Trustee Kenning and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board, with Trustees Polk and Vasilik abstaining, voted to meet in Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

The Board reconvened at 7:25 pm. Counsel stated that the Board met in closed session to discuss personnel matters and that no action was taken in the Executive Session.

On motion made by Trustee Kenning and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the promotions of Jennifer Bello and Monica Pineda to Senior Library Assistant at an annual salary of $45,722.13 and the promotion of Marta Feduniewicz-Alborzi to Senior Library Assistant at an annual salary of $44,090.77 all effective March 1, 2025. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Ruggiero, Sommers, and Sterni; No: None; Abstain: Polk, Vasilik; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

STRATEGIC PLANNNG COMMITTEE

The Committee has a meeting on February 25 at 4:30 pm with 4 members of the public to discuss future plans for the Library.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

The Director proposed a 2025-2026 Board meeting schedule. Counsel advised that he had a conflict on May 21. The Director suggested that the May meeting be held on May 14. On a motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Kenning, the Board, on roll call vote, adopted the following schedule for meetings for the 12 months beginning March 2025 through February 2026 - March 19, April 16, May 14, June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17, October 15, November 19, December 17, January 21, February 18 (Reorganization meeting) with all meetings starting at 6:30 pm and held at the Main Library except the July meeting to be held at the Allwood Branch Library. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

The Director presented Pay-to-Play resolutions for two of the Library's book vendors. Counsel explained the concept of Pay-to -Play and the reasons why the resolutions needed to be adopted. On a motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the Board, on roll call vote, adopted the Resolutions Authorizing the Award of Non-Fair and Open Contracts to Bake & Taylor, LLC and Brodart Co. for the purchase of Books and Other Library Materials. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

The Director requested approval of a $1500 budget for volunteer luncheon, employee recognition luncheon and purchase of patron giveaways for the celebration of National Library Week and National Volunteer Week. On a motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the Board, on roll call vote, approved a budget of $1500 for celebration of. National Library Week and National Volunteer Week Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent Semeraro, Sia.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

There were no Trustee Comments.

On motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Kenning the Board, with all present being in favor, adjourned the meeting at 7:32 pm.

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