

Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library, Inc.
Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm by President, Tom Shea. Those in attendance were Mark Aronson, Karen Brodsky, John Deibert, Barbara Duffy, Rick Gallo, Barbara Hyzer, Michelle Iossa, Jos Kadam, Donald Kerdman, Harold Kuskin, Fran Matson, Theo Mulgrim, Janet George Murnick, Kathy Redling, and Rita Stein.

Approval of Minutes- Rita Stein made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 21, 2008 Annual Organizational Meeting. Shelly Iossa seconded the motion and the minutes were approved. Kathy Redling noted one change that was needed for the 2009 Organizing Meeting minutes that were sent out prior to the meeting. John Deibert made a motion to accept the revised minutes of the November 21, 2008, 2009 Organizing Meeting. Theo Mulgrim seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

President's Remarks- Tom Shea asked all board members to please check their calendars for three meeting dates that need to be changed. The General Board meeting would be changed from 5/20/09 to 5/27/09. The Executive Board Meetings would be changed from 2/18/09 to 2/11/09 and 4/15/09 to 4/8/09. President Shea then spoke of the Town Council's need to bring all expenses in line for 2009, and noted that the Library's funding would definitely see some level of impact. He reminded the board that our September-October 2008 Fund Raising Campaign took place prior to increased financial concerns. The proceeds of the 2008 Fund Drive are sufficient to meet the 2009 funding currently being requested by the Library Director, after she and her staff made adjustments to the original request (see also the report of the Finance Committee). President Shea next described the Library Board of Trustees' role in the Library's funding, 1/3 mil budget process and its relationship to property values. A discussion of future funding was held.

President Shea mentioned FBPL files that are stored in the Library and other Municipal buildings and asked Kathy Redling to compile these records and develop a Records Retention Schedule with assistance from other Board members. Next he mentioned the creation of a formal FBPL Handbook and circulated a proposed copy of the 7 section Index. He stated that most of the documents to be included were already in existence. The purpose of the Handbook was to institutionalize them and ensure smooth functionality for the FBPL. Discussions included possibly having the Handbook placed on the Library Website with password protection, the additional explanation of how the Library's funding is provided, the role of the Library Board of Trustees, details on several legal and tax questions, and the addition of a Conflict of Interest Statement. Karen Brodsky noted that a final copy could be kept in the Director's Reference Area.

Correspondence- none per Rita Stein

Treasurer's Report- Jackie Somers shared the Balance Sheet as of 1/5/09, and noted that it including matching gifts of \$4800 received as part of the \$30,428 from the 2008 Fund Drive to date. She also stated that a 5-month CD had been secured with a 3% rate of interest. Rita Stein asked about the number of new donors, and Janet Murdock confirmed that there were only 5 new donors, and fewer overall donors. Discussion was held regarding the Newsletter Envelope inserts, Mass Mailing and Prior Donor Mailing strategies.

Discussion also was held regarding the Public's understanding of how Library Programs are funded, and the need for letters and articles in the Bernardsville News, as well as information at Library programs. Karen Brodsky shared that there are about 9000 Library Card holders that some other Library Directors are the ones who send out their Library's annual Letter of Appeal, and that patron addresses and emails can not be used for solicitation purposes. The Board discussed the free admission to programs policy and that the Program attendees were our target audience for additional fund raising. Jackie noted that the total number of donors was about 200, with 2% of the donors being non-residents. Tom Shea asked Shelly Iossa and Janet Murdock to spearhead and organize a coordinated plan of public relations and fund raising. Janet asked that Fund Raising Strategies for the 2009 Campaign be placed on the March agenda.

Director's Report-Karen Brodsky shared the newly arrived "squish balls" with the new Trademark/Slogan "A world at your doorstep." She noted that Elizabeth Faulkner's dedication book, *China: 3,000 years of Art and Literature* had arrived and was checked out. She also shared two new sets of laminated Software Training Guides which were purchased with FBPL funds.

Committee Reports

Finance- John Diebert shared the committee's report, written following Karen Brodsky and her Department Head's review of their 2009 budget. Their objective was to identify expenditure reductions that could be made with the least impact, and the Finance Committee feels that they have done an outstanding job of looking forward and reducing the 2009 funding needed from Friends by \$4,962.00. This puts the budget directly in line with the current Friends fundraising level. The largest reduction will be the issuance of only 4 Newsletters instead of the previous 6 Newsletters. This reduction was discussed during the 1/20/09 Library Board of Trustees meeting and was accepted. John Diebert, who attended the Board of Trustees meeting, stated that significant discussion took place surrounding the NJLM (New Jersey League of Municipalities) plan to recommend a reduction from 1/3 mil to 1/6 mil of equalized valuation (home value) for Library Funding. Karen Brodsky noted that this would take Legislation as Library Funding is mandated by existing Legislature; therefore, someone needs to sponsor a specific Bill, like the previous one proposed several years ago.

John indicated that the Library Board of Trustees would forward their position paper to the Friends. Following discussion, Tom Shea asked that the Friends organization take the Draft Position Paper from the Board of Trustees and ask a subcommittee of Friends Board members to review it, followed by a review by all members prior to a set deadline.

Fund Raising- Janet George Murnick noted that besides the annual campaign that Jackie had spoken about previously, there had been close to \$12,000 received from the Brick Sale which was not listed in General Funds on the Balance Sheet. She also noted that there are no more envelopes for any future Fund Drive mailing.

Nominating Committee- Theo Mulgrum shared a spreadsheet with the Current and Prior Officers, Committee Chairs, and Members at large from the Friends of the Bernardsville Library and its predecessor, The Bernardsville Library Association since 2000. She asked that all members review their name on the sheet. She also explained how two 3-year terms

followed by a 1-year break allows members to continue to participate if desired. Questions came up regarding those who replaced prior members during an unexpired term, and it was noted that any part of a term would still be counted as a full 3-year term.

Program Committee: Jos Kadam noted that we have a program this coming Sunday, January 25th. He passed around a sign up sheet for volunteers to provide baked goods for refreshments and assisting in the clean up following the program. He noted that he would take care of the set up, but asked that all members help out at one of the Sunday Programs, given store bought goodies were more than welcome.

Public Relations: Shellie lossa passed around a two-sided proposal in favor of providing an electronic newsletter. In the proposal she shared existing cost data (\$7247.00/year), the approved 50% reduction in Newsletter publishing, and other key points. Discussion of the existing Library Web Site features, information, and functions was held. Karen Brodsky shared the existing Electronic Events Notification function, existing email reminders for patrons who have signed up for programs, and restrictions on personal information use. She also noted that the existing database of email addresses was for the purpose of alerting patrons to overdue materials. Discussion continued regarding the postage costs for the newsletter, and costs associated with selective mailing to patrons who still wished to receive paper Newsletters. Janet Murdock was to follow up on methods of mailing used at her university office. Shellie lossa and her committee were asked to follow up on a Public Awareness article covering free things to do at the library as well as a "thanks to you donors" letter in the Bernardsville News. Further communication between the Public Relations committee and the Library staff concerning the existing web site functions and possible uses will be ongoing.

Volunteers: Nothing at this time.

New Business: Mark Aronson noted that the Board wished to share their condolences and place a Walkway Brick in memory of Mr. Somers, Jackie's father outside of the Library. Personal wording will be etched into the Brick and arrangements for its installation will be made.

Old Business: John Diebert informed the Board that the Ad Hoc Construction Committee was not doing anything at this time, given the economic climate. Karen Brodsky noted that the reduction in Reader Services staff level will increase the amount of movement by management between their offices and the Reader Services area.

President Tom Shea asked if there was any further business. None was noted, and Rita Stein made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jackie Somers seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 8:57pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Kathy Redling