

Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library, Inc.  
Meeting Minutes  
March 18, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm 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, Theo Mulgrum, Janet George Murnick, Kathy Redling, Maureen Robinson, Tom Shea, Jackie Somers, and Rita Stein.

Approval of Minutes- Marc Aronson made a motion to accept the minutes of January 21, 2008 Board Meeting. Jackie Somers seconded the motion, Maureen Robinson abstained from voting and the minutes were approved.

President's Remarks- President Shea noted that Mrs. Ethel Schacht passed away recently. She and her husband had taken out an insurance policy on Mrs. Schacht with the Friends being the beneficiary. The policy's payout value is approximately \$27,000, though it was carried on the books with a value of approximately \$17,000. Tom Shea and Jackie Somers recently met with Mr. Schacht.

President Shea noted that this evening's reception with the Library Board of Trustees was a nice opportunity, and asked Rita Stein to send a Thank You letter on behalf of the Friends.

The 2008 Book Audit is underway by the Accountant we hired. The Accountant confirmed we are not required to complete the long IRS Form 990. Tom also shared the Library's recent ranking by the Library Journal, which uses Programs as a key measurement. He expressed his congratulations to Karen Brodsky and her staff on being ranked #1 in NJ and #5 in the USA for libraries with similar budget sizes, on behalf of the Friends.

During an upcoming trip President Shea will not be able to be reached, and asked Maureen Robinson to act on his behalf during this absence. Maureen indicated that she would also be unavailable during some upcoming weeks. President Shea noted that arrangements will be made to ensure that an officer of the Friends organization will be available during all upcoming weeks, prior to the Executive Board meeting on April 8, 2009.

Correspondence- none has been received per Rita Stein. The board discussed correspondence with Mr. Schacht, and Tom Shea asked that Rita extend an invitation to Mr. Schacht to attend the May Board Meeting. The board discussed ways to thank the Schacht family. It was decided that a Brick for Mrs. Schacht would be placed in front of the library and possibly dedicated at the same time as Mr. Somer's brick. Janet Murdock noted that there are several other Bricks pending installation, as well. It was agreed that a grid map showing the location of

a donor's brick would be mailed along with the ongoing letter confirming installations.

Treasurer's Report- Jackie noted that the Accountant recently hired is completing our State and Federal Tax Filings. We are not required to file the long 990 form, as we met the threshold limits: revenue less than \$1 million and assets less than \$2.5 million. Although it won't be needed for this year, Tom and Jackie requested that every board member review the new questions on the long IRS Form 990 to prepare for future years. Jackie indicated that she would email the link for the 37 questions, and asked that each board member review the questions, and then contact Jackie via email to confirm that they have reviewed the questions. If a member has any questions they should discuss these with Jackie.

Since the last meeting three \$1500.00 matching gifts have been received, and 3 \$50.00 matching gifts are still outstanding. Upon receipt of the Insurance Policy payout for Mrs. Schacht, we can decide where to put the funds. Jackie thanked the Board members who had pursued the possibility of closing out the Life Insurance Policy for additional cash that was much needed for the Library, for their efforts.

Director's Report- Karen Brodsky shared the newly released Newsletter covering a 3 month period and limited information on programs, and indicated that no concerns have been brought to her attention. Library staff has received lower bids for printing subsequent 2009 Newsletters and the possibility of a 6 or 8 page Issue will be pursued. The Library can not enter into any Multi-Year contracts to increase their possible cost savings.

Karen introduced her request for New Funding to provide a Low Vision Station at the Center Desk as you enter the Library. This services request was originally received from the Senior Citizens Organization, and is supported by the usage level of Large Print Material at the Library. Karen explained the 3 key components of the project, 1) capability for Visual medium to Audio medium conversion, 2) a 24" Flat Panel Monitor for easy viewing, and 3) a Large Print Keyboard for ease of use. John Diebert noted that he had met with Karen and stated that financially the plan was sound. Karen noted that originally profits from Brick sales were intended for this project, and answered Board member questions regarding the JAWS software and timing for Phase II. Further discussion covered the testing of Head Phones, Side Panels for Privacy, utilization of the 24" Monitor by other patrons and signage at the Station. It was noted that this Library Service should be included in the new Brochure.

Karen Brodsky explained the history of the previous computer system shared by the Bernardsville Library, Clarence Dillon Library, and The Somerset Hills School District, and explained that she had recently approached the Bernards Township Library regarding shared computer services. Board members asked about Clarence Dillon Library, and Karen noted that the previous servers had been located at that library which has shorter operating hours.

Karen also shared that the Library staff is looking at a company who will update the Library Website at no charge. Input from Friends Board members on the Website's functionality was shared. Lastly, Karen noted that the Library was running very low on Brochures, and would need to print more. A draft was shared with all members and comments were noted.

### Committee Reports

Finance- John Diebert shared that the previously approved budget line item reductions, seem to be good given the current actual level to date.

Fund Raising- Janet Murdock indicated that she had written letters to those who gave in 2007 but not in 2008. It was learned that two of these donors had given directly to the Library. Janet shared details of the previous fundraising costs: \$1400.00 for the Mass Mailing to the Community and 300 signed letters with stamped return envelopes; \$712.00 for the Envelope inclusion in the Newsletter. She also shared that 85% or 181 of 208 donors had given previously, and that the average donation was \$50.00. It was noted that Bernards Township Library now has all Electronic Newsletters and sent fund raising Envelopes out in their final Newsletter mailing. No special letters to previous donors was sent. Michelle Iossa suggested putting a small panel in the Sept.-Nov. Newsletter about the Fund Drive in place of the previous donor letters.

Following discussions it was agreed to not decrease the budget for the 2009 Fund Raising campaign at this time, but to utilize non-card stock Thank You notes and eliminate the stamp on the return envelope. Janet noted that the committee would continue with the Brick Campaign, and was at work with Georgiana on a Tea Party fund raiser, possibly doing Ghosting bags again, and Silhouettes as well.

Lastly, Janet noted that a new Fund Raising Chair would be needed come fall, and it would be wise to recruit one soon so that she can work with them on the 2009 Campaign.

Nominating Committee- Theo Mulgrum introduced visiting prospective members Denise Fischer and Kate Lincoln.

Program Committee- Jos Kadam noted that the next program is on 5/3, and Seniors Day is set for 6/5. He circulated a signup sheet for baked goods and cleanup for the 5/3 date and asked members to not bring rather crumbly or messy items in order to minimize the rug cleanup. The two final programs will be held on 10/15 and 12/13, and discussion about any possible holiday program restrictions was held.

Public Relations- Shellie shared the recently published letter to the Editor of the Bernardsville News, as well as the "Top 10 Free Things to do at the Bernardsville Library" document that is posted on the Library Website and around the Library.

She reviewed an upcoming application for an award/prize money from the National Friends of the Library Association. Michelle asked Karen Brodsky about the possibility of on-line donations. Karen indicated that the Library has a Pay Pal account, but there is the question of which organization donations made online should go to, the Bernardsville Public Library or the Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library.

Old Business- A status discussion of the Handbook for Members of the Board of the Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library, Inc. was held. A conflict of Interest Policy is needed, and Tom Shea will research a good example to start from. Kathy Redling noted that Karen Brodsky and her staff had provided a thorough listing of documents currently stored at the Olcott Building. The FBPL Board does not have an excessive amount of paper; however, some old and interesting documents could be placed on display at the library such as Architectural Drawings of the old library. Rita Stein, Jackie Somers and Maureen Robinson offered to assist in sorting and selecting items for retention/recycling/donation. Jos Kadam was thanked for scanning several old incorporation documents to ensure their inclusion in the Handbook and retention.

New Business- President Shea asked all Committee Chairs to provide a short description of their committee's functions and events for inclusion in the Board Handbook. He asked that the short write-ups be provided to Kathy Redling before the May 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The Library Director's new funding request of \$3050.00 for a Low Vision Station covering stages 1 & 2 was introduced. Harold Kuskin made a motion to approve the funding request, and Maureen Robinson seconded the motion. The funding request for \$3050.00 was approved.

Volunteers- In Georgiana Depew's absence, Theo Mulgrum brought up plans for the annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. The date of Friday May 8<sup>th</sup> was previously noted on the Board calendar, and discussion about a possible change was held but no change was made. Maureen Robinson agreed to graciously host the Luncheon at her home again. A categorical menu will be planned and assistance in providing food and help during the event was requested of all members.

President Tom Shea asked if there was any further business. None was noted, and Marc Aronson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Maureen Robinson seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy Redling