

Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library, Inc.
Meeting Minutes
July 16, 2008

President Tom Shea called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Those in attendance were Mark Aronson, Karen Brodsky, John Deibert, Barbara Hyzer, Michelle Iossa, Fran Matson, Janet George Murnick, Kathy Redling, Maureen Robinson and Rita Stein. (Library Program Coordinator, Madelyn English was also in attendance)

Approval of Minutes- Maureen Robinson made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 13, 2008 meeting as submitted. Rita Stein seconded the motion and the minutes were approved with one member (John Deibert) abstaining.

President's Remarks- President Shea provided a Power Point presentation on the funding of library capital projects by the FBPL along with a complete history and stipulations in spending the Blumenshine Fund bequeathed to the library. Previous projects selected for long-range construction were:

1. community room/main entrance reflooring (completed)
2. circulation desk area upgrade (deferred due to cost)
3. technical services area project (deferred due to cost)

Current capital projects presently in the planning stage are:

1. reader's services office construction
2. move community room doors
3. open wall of circulation cubby/reorganize shelves and cabinets
4. refinish edges of circulation desk
5. replace flooring behind circulation desk

Karen Brodsky, the library director will obtain firm estimates for each of the five projects, review these estimates with the Ad Hoc committee and a full report will be presented at the next FBPL meeting, following review by the executive board. Karen will also be meeting with this committee to determine other library financial requests for the FBPL to provide funds for. Karen also stated that she would like the entire community to provide input, ideas and suggestions for ongoing library improvements.

Additional discussion regarding long range plans for other library improvements was brought up. Maureen Robinson asked whether it would be better for the library to switch from electric to gas heat. The first floor tenants have already done that at their own expense. Rita Stein asked if the lessee would be staying on, as it may be beneficial for the library to eventually consider taking over the lower level for additional space. Karen stated that she feels the current tenant will be staying on at this time. There is also the need to improve the substandard lighting in the stacks. These two areas are topics that the Board of Trustees is currently dealing with.

Barbara Hyzer asked if there was an inside entrance to the first floor of the library. There presently is only an outside entrance. The library would have to be retrofitted with stairs and an elevator if this were considered. Barbara also asked if ongoing maintenance needed to be done. President Shea said the FBPL and the Board of Trustees will need to work together as projects come up. Karen Brodsky said that currently, the FBPL does not fund any regular ongoing maintenance.

President Shea did state that computers were part of the capital expenses that the Borough has not funded and the FBPL has stepped in to provide funding. President Shea said that strategic planning is all the more important now as global economic conditions may affect overall funding.

Correspondence-Rita Stein stated that there was no correspondence received.

Director's Report-Karen Brodsky stated that the Youth Services Librarian, Megan Harley, has resigned as of the end of July 2008. A new staff member will be hired as soon as a suitable candidate is found.

Karen had one funding request: The Dear Reader Online Book Club to be funded through the Special Programs account. The FBPL approved the Director's request.

Treasurer's Report- No official report was presented as Jackie Somers, our treasurer, was not in attendance. President Shea did state that we currently have approximately \$340,306 in our treasury, which includes \$270,000 in the Blumenshine Fund. The FBPL is currently looking for an accountant to conduct a formal audit. As John Deibert has completed a significant amount of preliminary work in completing his internal audit, this should not be a tremendously difficult task. Both the federal and NJ state tax returns were filed by the end of June and an extension was granted by the IRS for the filing of the federal taxes.

Committee Reports

Finance: John Deibert went over the Internal Financial Review he completed for 2007. He stated that while we don't have to have an official audit, as we are a non-profit organization of that receives less than \$250,000 of annual donations; an official audit would be beneficial for the new treasurer. He explained the timeline he follows in determining budgeting needs and provided a handout showing the month-by-month breakdown of steps necessary to come up with a reasonable 2009 budget for the FBPL.

President Shea asked John if the FBPL has a contingency plan in case we don't meet our fundraising goals-- where would we cut back in providing funds? John stated that such a contingency would be considered in preparing the 2009 budget.

Construction Task Force: (included under President Shea's remarks)

Annual Fund Drive: Janet Murnick stated that our goal this year is to reach \$50,000. This would be including our Annual Giving along with other projects such as the Library Bricks, the Ghosting Bags and possibly other activities.

Program Committee: Unity Day is much earlier than it was last year and volunteers are needed to be involved in setting up, manning the library booth and then assisting with clean up.

Public Relations: Michelle Iossa stated that she would soon start working on the Ghosting Bag Project. Last year, this project raised over \$1200.00. We will not be selling them this year at Unity Day as the date (9/21) is much earlier than last year. Michelle said that the Ice Cream Social for the start of the Summer Reading Program was a great success. 80 people showed up for this event, which was paid for through money raised directly from the sale of Ghosting Bags. Additionally, the committee is working on a Silhouettes Project and also investigating a Lego Contest as fundraising activities.

Michelle also stated that the FBPL is now a member of the NJ Library Association Friends of NJ Libraries and also the FOLUSA. She is acting as our liaison to both of these organizations.

Michelle recently wrote an excellent article for the Bernardsville News about Jerry and Fran Fisher that highlighted their past volunteerism and publicized their present involvement in heading the Bricks Campaign. As of this date, \$7000.00 worth of bricks has been ordered, (12 @ \$500 and 6 @ \$250). A reception may be planned this fall to recognize the first group of participants who have ordered commemorative bricks. Michelle and the Committee will further explore this.

President Shea stated that the FBPL spends a lot of money on our Annual Solicitation letter. He feels that this may not be cost effective and we may be more successful putting an appeal in the Library Newsletter. Additional discussion took place as to whether folding this type of solicitation letter into our Newsletter would be a less expensive way to send it out to the community. This letter would have to go into the September/October Newsletter and a deadline for this decision would have to be made very soon.

Volunteers: No report

Bylaws: No report

New Business- A motion was made by Maureen Robinson to approve spending up to \$250.00 for a gift to honor Jay Parsons. John Deibert seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Another motion was made to approve reimbursement to Michelle lossa in the amount of \$177.00 for the Library Ice Cream Social. Janet Murnick made this motion and John Deibert seconded it. The motion carried with one abstention.

John Deibert made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Aronson seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Fran Matson