

Minutes of the Regular Library Board of Trustees Meeting by Zoom September 15, 2020

Attendance: Board members John Bertoni, Patrice Cummings, Gretchen Dempsey, Rich Diegnan, Jeff Hammond, Mark Krook, Lucy Orfan and Terry Thompson were present at the meeting. Alexandria Arnold, Executive Director, Bernardsville Public Library, Nancy Verduin, President of the Friends of the Bernardsville Public Library, and library staff members Tammy Shaw and Christine Tropp were also present.

President John Bertoni called the Board of Trustees (“Board”) meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and read the Open Meeting Notice, followed by the roll call.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the July 2020 meeting were approved as submitted.

Director’s Report: In addition to the items mentioned in her report, Ms. Arnold mentioned that there are two new staff members, and that the library hopes to reopen on Saturdays on September 26. Roofing technicians and an architect will be at the library on Monday. The new leaks have caused some damage, staining and drywall crumbling. The snowguards on roof edges may be contributing to the problem. Attendance has been light but steady. The virtual 9/11 commemoration went well.

Treasurer’s Report: Mr. Krook noted that spending had increased since the library reopened, but is still not back to last year’s average level. in the last month had been just about as projected to the borough. He moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report, to pay the new bills received from September 1 to September 15, 2020 and to ratify the payment of bills received and paid from July 22 through August 31, 2020. Ms. Thompson seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Committee Reports: Finance: Mr. Krook will arrange a finance committee meeting to address the 2021 budget, to be discussed with the board by the November meeting and submitted to the Borough.

Personnel: No meeting.

Policy: Mrs. Orfan reported that the Policy Committee met on August 17, discussed capacity and time limits for patrons and the unaccompanied children rule in light of school reopenings, decided that no policy changes were needed at this time.

Planning: Mrs. Cummings reported that the Planning Committee had met on September 2 and September 14 to discuss the evaluation of three courses of action for the library, remaining independent, becoming part of the Somerset County Library System, or joining the Morris Automated Information Network “MAIN”. She reviewed a Service Comparison that Ms. Arnold had prepared, a copy of which is included with these minutes. She said that the Planning Committee was unanimous in recommending joining MAIN. There was thorough discussion and questions and answers on the patron services, impacts on staffing, and the financial aspects

of each possibility. Mrs. Cummings, for the Planning Committee, moved that the Bernardsville Library apply to join MAIN. The motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Public Participation:

Nancy Verduin, for the Friends, reported that the Friends are working toward their October 18 drive-in concert in the high school parking lot, working with the school district and hoping for good weather. Their reorganization meeting will be in November, they have lost some board members. Their fund-raising letter will go out in November.

Leslie Brown-Witt, for the Foundation, reported that they have a new executive assistant since Jill Hackett is now working full-time for the library, that donors are slowly coming in, and that the beer and wine tasting will be a virtual event; invitations will be mailed including a silent auction and raffle tickets. The Foundation will advertise the silent auction and virtual event around town and on social media. There will be an endowment committee meeting in October.

Communications: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: Mr. Krook moved to decommission the equipment listed in the agenda. Mr. Diegnan seconded the motion, which carried.

Mr. Bertoni announced that there would be a Red Cross blood drive on October 28, when the library is closed to patrons, in the Community Room.

At 6.51 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry A. Thompson, Secretary