

## **Minutes of the Regular Library Board of Trustees Meeting by Zoom November 17, 2020**

**Attendance:** Board members John Bertoni, Patrice Cummings, 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, Leslie Brown-Witt, President, Bernardsville Library Foundation, and library staff members Laura Cole, Jill Hackett and Tammy Shaw and were also present. Dr. Gretchen Dempsey was absent because of a conflicting school district meeting.

President John Bertoni called the Board of Trustees (“Board”) meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and read the Open Meeting Notice as follows:

- In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-8 *et seq.*), 1975), written notice of this regular meeting has been sent to the following newspapers: *The Bernardsville News*, the *Courier News*, and the *Star-Ledger*. Written notice has also been sent to the Borough Clerk, posted on the Library web site, and posted on the principal entrance door of the Library. The meeting will be conducted by Zoom, and the public has been invited to participate, and told how to participate via Zoom or telephone, in the notices on the Library web site and the principal entrance door.
- The agenda and documents to be discussed at this meeting are available for review on the Library’s web site, [bernardsvillelibrary.org/home/board-meetings/November 17](http://bernardsvillelibrary.org/home/board-meetings/November-17)
- They are also available at the Library’s circulation desk on Monday, November 16 and Tuesday, November 20, during regular library hours (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
- Members of the public are invited to comment either during the public comment period of the meeting or by submitting written or emailed comments in advance of the meeting. All commenters should identify themselves by name and street address.

The notice was followed by the roll call.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the October 2020 meeting were approved with one correction.

**Director’s Report:** In addition to the items mentioned in her report, Ms. Arnold noted that shingles and an end cap came off the roof in the recent high winds, that the New Jersey Legislature had unanimously approved the Construction Bond Act awards (A4942) and that the library had received donations in memory of Ann Sharko and Bernard Ehn.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Mark Krook noted that the October spending is in line with normal library spending. There were multiple bills from Comcast and JCP&L, but no unusual bills or income amounts. He noted that the library is expecting to function in its present Covid environment through June of 2021, and that expectation has been factored into the proposed budget. He moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report, to pay the new bills received from November 1 to November 17, and to ratify the payment of bills received and paid from October 21 through October 31. Terry Thompson seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous roll call vote.

**Committee Reports: Finance:** Mr. Krook said that the Finance Committee had met on November 3,

with Ms. Brown-Witt present. The Finance Committee has completed a draft budget for 2021, which recommends reducing the request to the Foundation to \$60,000 for 2021 and also reducing the request to the Borough because of underspending this year, transferring the surplus to reserves and using it next year. Mr. Krook reminded that that no raises were given in 2020 so that the 2021 budget would include a 4% salary increase. He also addressed the 2% salary discount that has been in place for several years, which assumes personnel turnover and vacancies during the year of about 2% of the personnel budget lines. Ms. Arnold said that full hours for the second half of the year had been calculated into the budget numbers. Mr. Diegnan asked about the current closing on Wednesdays and whether it would be possible to reopen for some time on Wednesdays. Ms. Arnold explained that it has been difficult to replace the staff members who chose not to return after the furlough, but agreed to take another look at having some open hours on Wednesdays

Ms. Brown-Witt pointed out that the library would be receiving half the amount collected in the 50/50 raffle as part of the Foundation's virtual event, approximately \$1,900.00. There was agreement that the ask to the Foundation for the remainder of the year would be reduced by the amount coming from the raffle proceeds, and also that that amount would be spent in an area with which both the Foundation and the Friends are comfortable.

Mr. Krook moved to approve the draft budget; Ms. Thompson seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous roll call vote.

**Personnel:** No meeting.

**Policy:** No meeting, but Mrs. Orfan mentioned that the Policy Committee will meet before the next board meeting.

**Planning:** No meeting.

**Public Participation:**

Nancy Verduin, for the Friends, reported that the Friends had had their annual reorganization meeting, reelected members and officers, and approved a preliminary budget including some expenses to meet the changes that will be necessary for joining MAIN. The annual fund-raising letter will go out shortly. They are looking at a family event during the winter, perhaps at the movie theater.

Leslie Brown-Witt, for the Foundation, reported that the virtual event had brought in more than \$14,000, and that the appeal letter was continuing to bring in contributions. The endowment stands at more than \$517,000. She expects a motion to amend the Foundation bylaws to allow members to continue to serve during the Covid emergency.

**Communications:** There was a thank-you for the use of the library for the flu shot clinic, and a confirmation from Polaris that the invoice for 2021 maintenance was not due because of joining MAIN.

**Unfinished Business:** None.

**New Business:** Dr. Hammond mentioned that the Borough has been told that there may be interest in some of the storage space currently assigned to the library in the basement. Ms. Arnold described the library's serious needs for the storage space. Dr. Hammond said he would convey those concerns.

At 6:29 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry A. Thompson, Secretary