

Board of Trustees Minutes – September 20, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, NJ, was held in person and remotely via Zoom on September 20, 2022. Acting President Lorraine Tidd called the meeting to order at 5:39 pm. A quorum was established by roll call.

ROLL CALL

Present: Lorraine Tidd, Ted Freedman, Earnestine Smith, Michael Ojeda, and Kenyetta Jackson
Absent: Eloy Delgado, Pearl Serratelli, Martin Weingast and Lisa Torres.

Also present were Mary Faith Chmiel, Library Director and Assistant Director, Robert Barbanell, taking minutes.

Ms. Chmiel, Library Director, announced that adequate notice for this meeting was sent to The Star Ledger, and posted at City Hall, and that we are in compliance with the sunshine law.

Ms. Chmiel announced that there were no minutes from the August 3, 2022, meeting due to staff turnover.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

- Mr. Freedman reported the current budget spending (as of September 15, 2022) as \$427,537.85, and that there is \$3,894,537.42 left in the budget for FY 2022-23.
- Ms. Chmiel reported that city hall has not allocated budget monies as of yet and that there is over \$1.58 million in capital reserves.

It was moved by Ms. Tidd, seconded by Ms. Smith to accept the Treasurer's Report. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.

PRESENTATION OF BILLS AS OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2022:

- Ms. Chmiel spoke about the process of billing for the EMID program (Voucher # 33304), which is \$2,306.78 for the current month.
- Ms. Tidd questioned Voucher #33354 to Signarama. Ms. Chmiel explained the cost of \$857.58 is part of the Pergola donation at Elmora in conjunction with the Louise Fliger Memorial.
- Ms. Chmiel explained Voucher # 33360 to AmTrust North America in the amount of \$3,448.00. AmTrust is our new company handling workers' compensation claims.
- Ms. Chmiel explained our current transition away from paper employee scheduling using Microsoft Word to scheduling software via When I Work. The cost is \$5,000 plus and we will realize savings using their time & attendance rather than ADP.

It was moved by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Ojeda to accept the Bills List. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Consult your packet for the complete report.

- Celeste Layton, Office Manager, resigned, effective September 9.
- Ms. Chmiel explained that the asbestos abatement in July totaled \$76,000, which was not part of the original estimates for the HVAC replacement. Some of these monies may have to come out of our budget.
- Ms. Chmiel updated the Board of Trustees that the air conditioning system has failed to start on some days, and that Paul has successfully brought back online each time.
- Ms. Chmiel explained water damage above the staff elevator was due to issues from the parapet flashing, and that monies from the Library Construction Bond will help resolve.
- Ms. Chmiel relayed that work is temporarily halted on the staff elevator as a legal issue has arisen with the company who lost the bid (they are contesting the award of the bid to Jersey Elevator saying there is no corporate seal on one of the documents).
- Ms. Chmiel spoke about the need for new cameras both outside at Main and at Elmora.
- Ms. Chmiel explained that Jeff will be in the process of setting up lockers for those in need to secure a small amount of possessions while they use the library and that the County will be providing a one-day event involving portable showers outside.

It was moved by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Ojeda to accept the Director's Report. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS

- A funding-raising breakfast will be held on Saturday, September 24 (National Council of Negro Women)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Ms. Chmiel spoke regarding the HVAC Upgrade.

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion ensued regarding making it optional for staff and visitors to the library to wear a mask. A motion was brought forth to make it optional for staff and visitors to the library to wear a mask by Mr. Freedman, and seconded by Ms. Smith. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.
- Ms. Chmiel explained revisions to the personnel manual which can be found in the board packet. Discussion ensued to permit all employees to keep their cell phones on their persons at all times as effective October 3, this will be the method by which to clock in and out. Ms. Chmiel will survey local libraries on their policy in this instance, and discussion is tabled until the October meeting.
- Under revisions to the personnel manual, a discussion ensued about the drug & alcohol policy. Ms. Smith suggested this policy be sent for legal review, and will be under discussion by the Board's policy committee.
- Jeff has put together a 48-page work titled Unbanning History. This is a work of various sites in New Jersey and impositions placed on different items.

CLOSED SESSION

- It was moved by Ms. Tidd, seconded by Ms. Smith to move to closed sessions. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.
- It was moved by Ms. Smith, seconded by Ms. Tidd to move out of closed sessions. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.
- It was moved by Ms. Tidd, seconded by Ms. Smith to accept the resignations of Celeste Layton and Lois Javier. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.
- It was moved by Mr. Freedman, seconded by Ms. Tidd to hire Frankie (Hanis) Mehis as Lead FT Security Guard at a rate per annum of \$38,000, and Mary Ann Attaban as full-time library assistant at the hourly rate of \$16.48. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.
- It was moved by Ms. Tidd, seconded by Ms. Smith to hire Helen Speros as Office Manager at a rate per annum of \$60,000, and Daniel Cano as part-time library assistant at the hourly rate of \$16.48. Vote: Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd, and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Ojeda to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 pm. Vote:
Ayes: Ted Freedman, Kenyetta Jackson, Michael Ojeda, Earnestine Smith, and Lorraine Tidd,
and Nays: None. Abstentions: None.

Submitted by Robert Barbanell (September 21, 2022)