

Hillsdale Free Public Library

Board of Trustees

July 7, 2020

In attendance were: Mary DeChiara, Elizabeth DiLorenzo, Warren Harris, Al Metz, Joanne Miano, John Ruocco, Mayor, Carol Schepker, Kathleen Scordato, Barbara Wertheim

Also present: David Franz, Director of the Library, Abby Lundy, Liaison to Council

Excused: Marie Hanlon

Mr. Harris called to order a special meeting of the Trustees of the Free Public Library of Hillsdale, Bergen County, New Jersey. Notice of this meeting was transmitted to the newspaper of record, filed with the Borough Clerk, and posted on the Library's website and bulletin board, in accordance with the Open Public Meeting's Law. Virtual meeting directions are appended below.

The virtual meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM. The purpose was to discuss options for cleaning the library.

Public invited to speak: No member of the public was present.

President's Report: Mr. Harris: It has been a difficult few months. We are holding this special meeting this evening to discuss the contract for cleaning services. Mr. Franz sent information to Trustees prior to this meeting.

Director's Report: Mr. Franz: He was notified by the Borough Administrator a week ago that the bill for the cleaning contract would be tripling from what we were previously paying for Excellent Building Services. He has considered hiring an individual employee for this purpose. The Library budget will be impacted if we are assessed this next year. With a new contract, our portion would be about \$22,000. In the past, the library was cleaned by a member of the DPW; more recently, it was an outsourced company from the Borough, Excellent Building Services. They have never done a stellar job and Mr. Franz has had repeated calls to them about services. Monthly charges were \$604. The new contract is significantly higher. Mr. Franz spoke with the director of a neighboring library, and they pay \$20 per hour, 3 hours a day, 5 days a week to their own employee. If the library pursued its own similar employee, with OASDI and minimal benefits added, it comes to \$17,261. However, we would still have to contract for carpet cleaning. Mr. Harris asked how much the carpet cleaning would cost. Mr. Franz said it could be \$1,000 - \$2,000 for the smaller rooms, but it would be higher if it included the entire building. The previous cleaning company shampooed the smaller rooms twice a year and were supposed to carpet clean the whole library once a year. An individual employee would also need sick and vacation time which would leave a cleaning gap. Mr. Metz asked about who handles complaints. There is an official complaint form which he sends to the Borough. He would reach out personally to the cleaning manager with reminders. Mr. Harris asked if it is an annual contract and it is. Mayor Ruocco said that there were no responses to bids.

The company being considered is Tropical Cleaning; they are used by other towns and our Borough Administrator has sought references from them with positive feedback.

Mr. Metz asked about COVID cleaning and would there be a separate charge for sanitization, and would it be an EPA approved cleaning disinfectant? Mayor Ruocco said he did not think that they did that type of work. Ms. Lundy said that she thought it might be covered by FEMA, but that type of cleaning would have to be done several times a day. There is a separate process through OEM. Internal doors handles and hand railings were not on the cleaning list. There is a paragraph for daily office cleaning, but it is not very specific. The cleaning contractor used to come in during early morning hours. However, Mr. Franz might not be there now to supervise given changes in work hours. Discussion continued regarding additional cleaning requirements.

Which is more cost effective? Previously, the library only allocated \$15,000 for cleaning, landscaping, and snow plowing, so this would be a substantial increase in next year's budget. Ms. Wertheim said we would still have those expenses (\$7,000 – 8,000 more for snow, landscaping etc.) on top of the cleaning services. Mr. Franz said that those contracts are negotiated by the Borough. She asked where this funding would be coming from? For this year, the Borough did budget the funds, though subject to release by the Administrator. A new contract would take effect in August. For next year, he was anticipating a budget based on a 1/3 mil, taking into account the loss of one staff member and reduced library hours.

Currently, staff are handling curbside pickup. Mr. Franz is taking the garbage to the dumpsters and cleaning the kitchen and bathrooms himself. Some libraries are opening up to the public, others are not. Ms. Schepker spoke about ventilation, keeping windows open, as COVID may be airborne. Most challenging is enforcement of mask wearing, resetting the restriction on unattended child policies, and setting a time limit for being in the library. Staff will wear masks full time.

Mr. Metz asked if there would be increased costs for cleaning in the event of exposure and a reported case. Would those costs be covered by FEMA? Would the cleaning company be able to do that without having to go to an additional bid? Ms. Lundy did not know if it would be covered by FEMA; she will check that out. Mayor Ruocco said that any expense that is tied to COVID can be submitted to FEMA; it is 75% covered, the remaining 25% not covered is covered by the CARES Act coverage. However, there is a finite time period and the county is monitoring that. The Borough office is handling the submission of said documentation.

Mr. Metz asked if a patron has COVID, is the Library required to do a deep cleaning? Local supermarkets have done a deep cleaning when someone reported that they were infected. Mr. Metz and Mr. Harris wondered what the separate cost of that would be.

Ms. DeChiara asked if the cleaning services provide periodic supervision? Would we be paying for their services only if the Library is open? Mr. Franz stated that there would always be some staff in the Library providing curbside services. He does not foresee the Library being fully shut down again. Would there be a reduced cost for less cleaning in the library if curbside only service continues? The Borough will be engaging in final negotiations with this company.

Mr. Franz asked if the Board wants to engage with a private contractor or a cleaning company that the Borough approves? Ms. Miano asked if these are our only choices. She asked if we could find our own cleaning company? The Board could do that, but it would still have to go through the bid process. She stated that the Library would not be getting daily traffic and would not require the same level of cleaning, so is the cleaning company's bid based on full daily library usage under normal times. Mr. Franz does not think it would be possible, given the great need by businesses for cleaning. Mayor Ruocco said he does not think that is in the contract. Ms. Lundy stated that no company bid on it. Ms. Miano said that this cleaning budget would greatly impact on our collection development budget. Today, Governor Murphy put a pause on many re-openings. Mr. Metz said that the company would be cleaning the same number of surfaces. Ms. Miano asked if the Borough could revisit this cleaning bid because they are not doing the same level of heavy cleaning because the building is empty. Mayor Ruocco said that if the Library is not open, they would still have to pay their contractual amount. Ms. Miano said that perhaps our share needs to be renegotiated with the Borough. Ms. Lundy said that it still needs some cleaning services. Excellent Building Services have not been in the Library for two months. It is hoped to have the public back by August. Mr. Franz must inform the Borough Administrator tomorrow as to a decision. What happens if the Library is closed for a month? Mayor Ruocco said if the Library were not allowed to open, would we ask the company for a price reduction? Can that be inserted into the contract? Mr. Harris asked would our contribution be reduced if the company is not cleaning the Library, if still closed? Mr. Franz said that if we pursued our own cleaning person, that, too, would require further pricing exploration. The contract will be renewed next year, so we could possibly bid on a different contract next year. Ms. Miano asked if there could be a bid for a six month contract? Mr. Metz said that if the company is not cleaning the Library for two months, could they be redirected to other town sites?

A resolution being considered is that the Library would choose not to pursue cleaning service on its own and would give the Borough Administrator authorization to include the Library in the Borough cleaning contract.

Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees is authorizing Mr. Franz, as Library Director, to not hire a separate cleaning employee at this time. A motion was made by Mr. Harris, seconded by Ms. Miano. Unanimous vote of approval.

The second part of the resolution is that Mr. Franz is authorized to represent the Library in a cleaning contract entered into by the Borough. He will discuss with the Borough Administrator to see if additional terms can be added with a clause that would allow for a reduction of the price of the services if the Library is closed for a certain period of time, or if it is not undergoing normal operations. Would the Library's contribution to the cleaning contract be reduced in the event the Library remains closed or is open-closed again? A motion was made by Mr. Harris, seconded by Ms. Miano. Unanimous vote of approval. The resolution was passed.

Ms. Lundy checked with the OEM (Office of Emergency Management) Coordinator and was informed that the DPW is using a spray and they could come in and spray the Library in the event of a COVID exposure.

Mr. Harris thanked Mr. Franz and the staff for their dedication and hard work. Mr. Franz said that the public has been very grateful for the curbside pickup and they look forward to the re-opening.

The next Library Board meeting will be on July 13, 2020. Mr. Harris moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mayor Ruocco. The meeting officially adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Danaher
Recording Secretary

A closed session may be held to discuss contracts.

Library Board - Special Meeting - 7/7/2020 7:30pm
Tue, Jul 7, 2020 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM (EDT)

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