

## Hillsdale Free Public Library

**Board of Trustees**

**September 11, 2023**

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In attendance were: Judy Atchison, William Berde, Carol Schepker, Mary DeChiara, Elizabeth DiLorenzo, Warren Harris, Al Metz, Amanda Miller, Janetta Trochimiuk

Also present: David Franz, Director of the Library

Excused: Barbara Wertheim

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Ms. Schepker called to order a 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.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM. A motion to approve the June 12, 2023 minutes was made by Ms. Miller, seconded by Ms. DiLorenzo. Unanimous vote of approval.

Public invited to speak: No one was present.

President's Report: Ms. Schepker: She welcomed back all Trustees after the summer break. The Library Social will take place on September 21<sup>st</sup>. The roof needs repair. She deferred the rest of her comments to the general meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Franz spoke on Ms. Wertheim's behalf.

The Library is ahead by approximately \$7,000 from projections for Woodcliff Lake memberships. We are on target for collection development and we are on par with utilities costs. We await the final audit invoice; that will cost \$5,000. For our regular operating budget, we are on par. *The Friends* of the Library reimbursed \$5,041.21 for programs and purchases they sponsored.

Donations: The Library received a total of \$16,000 in donor gifts from the estates of Carolyn Handloser, Janet Jalenski and the donation from Mr. Gainer. Additionally, the friends and family of Zachary Blair provided funding for the two new ceiling globe lights in memory of Zachary Blair. The donations were made directly to the Library.

Mr. Metz signed the checks on Ms. Wertheim's behalf.

A motion was made by Mr. Metz to accept the operating bill list, seconded by Mr. Harris. Unanimous vote of approval.

Director's Report: Mr. Franz:

- There will be will be a "Small Bites and Beverages Library Social" on September 21<sup>st</sup> from 7 – 9 PM.
- There was a slight increase in the summer reading program and a slight increase in completion of said program.
- The AC is not working totally efficiently; some repairs are being made.

- On Friday, the town had a significant hail storm and as a result there was some water leakage coming from the roof through a yet to be identified seam. The roof replacement was funded by the Borough and is in the planning stages.
- September is National Library Card Sign-Up Month; Staff are promoting this and offering a raffle of library swag as an incentive to sign up.
- Saturday, Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> is Hillsdale Day, and he is seeking volunteers for the library information table at Beechwood Park.
- A robust list of activities from June through August was shared with attendance for each. For example, Eyes of the Wild, an animal program, had 120 children attend.
- Programs hosted by volunteers such as Mah Jongg and the Scrabble Club are doing well. Volunteers share their talents, and Mr. Franz aims to encourage this more.

Damaged Book/Items Policy: Library overdue fines is a set, explicit policy, and differs from the lost/damaged policy.

Mr. Franz discussed the damaged books/items policy, which is posted on the library's website. For items owned by Hillsdale Library:

- If an item gets damaged, the current policy permits the patron to replace the item (new copy, vendor of their choice, i.e. Amazon).
- or
- Pay the default cost of \$30. for a hardcover book.
- or
- Pay for the damaged book and keep it.
- If the damage is slight, it is put back into circulation.
- Currently, if an item is somewhat damaged, but still usable, Hillsdale Library staff will place a note under the item's barcode indicating the nature of the damage so that future borrowers will not be held responsible.
- Some books remain in circulation, even with heavy wear and tear, if obtaining a replacement copy could be difficult. Some high demand titles may be out of stock; older titles may be out of print.

For items owned by other Libraries:

- The patron must make payment, by check, to the owning Library. The item will be removed from the patron's record and the payment will be forwarded to the owning library. The Hillsdale Library will not refund any payment for items owned by other libraries.

Mr. Franz discussed the status of books with water damage and showed two examples. Damaged items occur at least once a month. A lengthy discussion ensued among all of the Trustees. Ms. Trochimiuk asked several clarifying questions. Mr. Metz suggested that some amount should be assessed given the relative damage to the book. Mr. Franz suggested that the Director has the discretion to reduce the cost of the book commensurate with the damages to the book. Mr. Berde suggested that if the book is damaged, there should be a partial damage charge. Is the book deemed still acceptable for circulation or does it have to be removed from circulation because of its condition?

A motion was made by Mr. Harris, that in the event a Hillsdale owned damaged item is deemed still serviceable by the Director, the Director may, at their discretion, reduce the fine to a flat \$10 damage fee. The motion was seconded by Ms. DeChiara. Unanimous vote of approval.

Use of High Interest Resources: We have some high interest programs. We are one of the only libraries with study rooms. How many uses of the study rooms go to local patrons vs. other towns? Demand is high in the afternoons. Hillsdale's current policy says that a study room can be reserved for an hour and if no one signs up for it afterwards, the patron can use it for up to 3 hours. Priority could be given to Hillsdale cardholders and they could register with their library card. Ms. Miller suggested that this be piloted with new upcoming events. One element of the policy should be to reduce the burden on the library staff and Director so that there is no conflict as to who can use the study rooms or register. High interest programs to consider limiting to Hillsdale residents are the art and ceramic programs that require purchase of materials ahead of time by the presenter. Many programs are not limited, including The Carole King Tribute concert was open to the general public and was well received with over 60 attendees.

Coffee Station: Mr. Franz is requesting to move the coffee machine closer to the staff and remove the current coffee bar. This will free up space in that area for other items. No one disagreed.

The Friends/The Foundation: The Friends met this evening, and their donor solicitation letter will be mailed out in early October. It effectively highlights the many services that the library offers to the community.

The Library, The Friends and the Foundation are hosting a *Small Bites and Beverages Library Social* on September 21<sup>st</sup> from 7 - 9 PM. 25 restaurants have graciously offered savories and other 'bites'. Mr. Franz will make tent cards for the food vendors. The David Kopec Trio will entertain on the main floor. The event is free and most of the 200 tickets have been spoken for. There is a nominal charge for beer from the Westwood Five Dimes Brewery. He is asking all Trustees to be of assistance that evening. Events like this are wonderful for community building and highlighting the many attributes of the Hillsdale Library.

New business: None reported.

The next regularly scheduled Library Board meeting will be on October 16, 2023. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Atchison, seconded by Mr. Harris. Unanimous vote of approval. The meeting officially adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Deirdre Danaher*  
Recording Secretary

