

Hillsdale Free Public Library

Board of Trustees

November 13, 2023

In attendance were: Judy Atchison, William Berde, Mary DeChiara, Warren Harris, Al Metz, Amanda Miller, Carol Schepker, Barbara Wertheim

Also present: David Franz, Director of the Library and Janetta Trochimiuk, Council Liaison (via Zoom)

Excused: Elizabeth DiLorenzo

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 7:36 PM. A motion to approve the October 16, 2023 minutes was made by Mr. Berde, seconded by Ms. Wertheim. Unanimous vote of approval.

Public invited to speak: Mr. Franz introduced Ms. Darlene Swistock who is the Executive Assistant for the Bergen County Cooperative Library System, BCCLS. Ms. Swistock highlighted some of the offerings for Trustee Development Continuing Education. BCCLS began a Trustee Mentor Program and she is seeking volunteers. They host Trustee Roundtables to discuss current issues for new trustees. They highlight other opportunities from the NJ Library system. Ms. Swistock thanked all the Trustees for their dedication.

Ms. Schepker thanked Mr. Franz for the excellent statistics about the library and the history of the library from 1998 for the 125th Anniversary Committee. She deferred the rest of her comments to the general meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Ms. Wertheim: The library is fiscally sound. She said that a number of categories have shown revenue increases. She asked for clarification of 'vendor refund' and Mr. Franz explained. The repairs and maintenance line is over what was budgeted for at the current time. All checks are signed. Mr. Berde asked about the larger than average increase in Woodcliff Lake memberships; Mr. Franz will re-examine to see if these are all renewals of memberships and see if any of them are new. He thinks some may be returning patrons after the dip due to Covid. WL patrons must join/rejoin yearly. We received a \$5,000 gift and the donor requested that it be earmarked for programming.

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

Director's Report: Mr. Franz: The Gifts and Donations account has \$27,000. The Foundation is seeking a CD for a higher return rate. Mr. Franz is recommending that \$15,000 of the gifts & donations funds be put into staggered short-term CDs. A secondary NJ Cash Management Account is currently fluctuating around 5.3%. Mr. Franz will arrange the transaction with Lakeland Bank. Mr. Berde suggested considering a local Credit Union.

Ms. Schepker made a motion to put \$15,000 of those donations into

a 6-month CD, seconded by Ms. Miller. Unanimous vote of approval.

Strategic Plan: Mr. Franz is examining measurable library benchmarks. He would like to increase the number of card users in relation to total population. Ms. Wertheim suggested seeing if there is a way to resort the data to measure usage by families as opposed to individuals. He could run a report by address. Mr. Metz asked if he could do a run of adult vs. juvenile cards. Mr. Franz is consulting with his staff to generate questions that would be sent in the survey to all town residents. He would like to know how to better serve our early childhood population. Ms. Wertheim suggested surveying parents, i.e., when would be the most ideal time for Story Hour? Would a Saturday morning be good? Ms. Miller suggested asking questions about card holders who do not historically use our Library.

Mrs. Geraldine Beatty asked for a photo of the Library Board for the 125th Centennial event. Photo was taken at the end of the meeting.

Capital request update: He discussed the HVAC status, the aging compressors and air handlers, and the R22 refrigerant. He will include these various capital needs in the Budget Request to the Borough. The Borough owns the building, but it is managed by the Library Trustees. Capital finance requests go to the Borough Finance Committee. The roof and carpeting replacements have already been approved. He will be working with the Borough about the roof replacement. Mr. Metz asked if any overage comes out of the library's operating budget, TBD. We received a quote for the carpet replacement. The retaining wall also needs replacement.

Budget 2024: Mr. Franz introduced the draft budget at the October meeting. \$14,520 is still unallocated. There are needed repairs; additional staff is needed. The NJ Treasury releases the 1/3 mil in October. The budget reflects an increase to collection development and the rest will be allocated to repairs. The 2024 presentation of the library's proposed budget to the Borough Finance Committee is expected to be in January.

Ms. Schepker made a motion to approve the proposed 2024 budget, allocating the additional \$14,520 into the repairs and maintenance line. Seconded by Mr. Harris. Unanimous vote of approval.

Strategic Plan: As previously discussed at the September meeting, trustees considered all points in the proposed Strategic Plan. Ms. Miller asked about optimal computer services. There will be a policy review about the use of the study rooms. Mr. Harris suggested adding something to the plan in the future about AI (Artificial Intelligence). Ms. Schepker suggested that we revisit this plan consistently throughout the year.

Ms. Schepker made a motion to accept the Strategic Plan, as presented, for the years 2024-2027, seconded by Mr. Metz. Unanimous vote of approval.

A spreadsheet was shared reflecting a number of parameters for all BCCLS libraries. He noted several new library directors who came through the ranks from Hillsdale. Mr. Franz will develop a spreadsheet showing the 1/3 mil increases for all towns.

The Friends/The Foundation: The next Foundation meeting is December 13th.

New business: Ms. Atchison said that a new mayor was elected and he may be selecting a new mayoral alternate as his representative on the Board.

The next regularly scheduled Library Board meeting will be on December 11, 2023. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. DeChiara, seconded by Mr. Harris. Unanimous vote of approval. The meeting officially adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Danaher
Recording Secretary