

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ASBURY PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING**

**January 29, 2020**

**Attendance**

Mr. Werner Baumgartner, President, called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. Board members present were Ms. Angela Ahbez-Anderson, Ms. Kerrin Martin, Ms. Diane Shelton, Mrs. Jennifer Souder, Ms. Jan Sparrow, Mrs. Anita Weiner, Kathleen Melgar, Assistant Library Director, and Library Director Robert Stewart. Ms. Shelton left the meeting at 10:00 A.M.

**Notice**

Mr. Baumgartner announced that pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq, notice of the meeting was given in the Annual Notice issued January 1, 2020.

**Special Agenda Item – Oath of Office**

Mrs. Jennifer Souder and Ms. Jan Sparrow were re-appointed by the Mayor to new five-year terms extending from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024. Assistant Library Director and New Jersey Notary Public Kathleen Melgar administered the following oath of office to Mrs. Souder and Ms. Sparrow:

I, Jan Sparrow, & I, Jennifer Souder, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully, impartially, and justly perform all the duties of the office of library trustee of the Asbury Park Public Library to the best of my ability, and that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the governments established in the United States and in this State, under the authority of the people, so help me God.

Board members congratulated Mrs. Souder and Ms. Sparrow upon their re-appointment and thanked them for their willingness to continue to serve as library trustees.

### **Special Agenda Item – Election of Officers for 2020**

Motion by Mrs. Weiner, seconded by Ms. Martin, that Mr. Baumgartner serve as manager of the election. Carried, all voting yes.

Mr. Baumgartner asked for a nomination for Secretary and there was a motion by Ms. Ahbez-Anderson, seconded by Mrs. Souder, that Kerrin Martin be elected Secretary. Carried, all voting yes.

Mr. Baumgartner asked for a nomination for Treasurer and there was a motion by Ms. Ahbez-Anderson, seconded by Ms. Sparrow, that Jennifer Souder be elected Treasurer. Carried, all voting yes.

Mr. Baumgartner asked for a nomination for President and there was a motion by Mrs. Weiner, seconded by Ms. Sparrow, that Werner Baumgartner be elected President. Carried, all voting yes.

### **Minutes**

Motion by Ms. Shelton, seconded by Ms. Ahbez-Anderson, that the minutes of the meeting of November 27, 2019 be approved as distributed. Carried, all voting yes.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Motion by Ms. Shelton, seconded by Ms. Ahbez-Anderson, that the treasurer's report for November 2019 be approved as distributed. Carried, all voting yes.

### **New Business**

### **Special Presentation**

At 10:00 AM the employees of the library joined the meeting for a presentation by Sergeant Michael Casey of the Community Relations Unit of the Asbury Park Police Department assisted by Captain David DeSane. The library had requested their attendance at this joint board of trustees and library staff meeting to address concerns and questions that arose following an unprovoked attack by a library user on a staff member at about 7:00 PM Wednesday December 4, 2019.

What most people questioned and were concerned about was the fact that the perpetrator was not arrested and jailed by the officers responding to the call but was released after information was obtained from him, the victim, and several witnesses. Sergeant Casey reported that the library employee filed a complaint in municipal court the next morning December 5<sup>th</sup>, a warrant was issued for the perpetrator's arrest, and he was located and arrested about a week later and taken to the Monmouth County jail. At his trial this month he was convicted, fined, and sentenced to three months in jail.

Captain DeSane then distributed copies of the relevant section, *2C:12-1(a) Simple Assault*, of Title 2C of the N.J. Code of Criminal Justice and reviewed the criteria police are **required** to use to distinguish between simple assault and aggravated assault. Acknowledging that to the victim so called simple assault is a serious matter, he noted that the factors that influenced the responding officers were: (1) although the victim suffered injuries and was treated by responding EMS personnel he declined further immediate treatment, i.e. emergency room or hospital; (2) no weapon was involved; (3) victim did not lose consciousness; (4) his injuries did not fit the legal definition of "serious bodily injury" or "significant bodily injury"; thus they classified it as a simple assault which not having witnessed it they could not file a complaint or arrest the attacker.

The officers then answered a number of questions about the law, safety measures they recommend for the library employees, the best procedures for contacting law enforcement, the role and use of surveillance cameras and other technology as preventative measures, and a number of other related topics. They stressed that workers should immediately call the police if they feel threatened by a patron's actions or behavior and that it is better to err on the side of caution because the police will never treat a call for help as frivolous or unwarranted. This portion of the meeting ended at about 11:00 AM.

### **Supreme Security Systems**

Board members were sent copies of a proposal from our security system vendor for an upgrade and improvement to our fire and burglary alarms. The library has been having service problems for over a year and was informed that our equipment is old and obsolete. The system problems recently became a system failure when water from a radiator malfunction entered one of the units. Thus it is now necessary to immediately replace the system as outlined in the proposal. The systems will be combined into one control center and hard-wired Verizon landlines will be replaced with wireless communication which will result in measurable savings on our telephone bills.

There was a motion by Mrs. Souder, seconded by Ms. Ahbez-Anderson, that the library accept the proposal of Supreme Security Systems, in the amount of \$4,415.83, to install a new, upgraded, and merged fire and burglar alarm system. Carried, all voting yes.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Buildings and Grounds**

Mr. Baumgartner distributed a report captioned “Meeting – January 24, 2020 – Discussion Points” which listed the items he discussed with the city manager on that date. He commented on several of the items that he received definite responses to from Ms. Vieiro. He also described the new procedure that she wants the library to follow in handling requests for assistance with buildings and grounds matters. She does not want to meet with a board member or committee to discuss such requests. Rather, she wants the board to transmit their requests through the director or assistant director and she will respond to them.

Mr. Baumgartner also expressed concern about a particular accumulation of books being reviewed for deaccessioning that were stacked in the last aisle of the lower stacks adjacent to the exterior wall at the southwest corner of the building. He escorted board members to the area he was referring to and recommended that the director and library staff be directed to clear the area by the next board meeting on February 26, 2020. There was a **motion** by Mrs. Weiner, **seconded** by Ms. Sparrow, that the director implement this directive by the date specified. Carried, all voting yes.

### **Strategic Plan Committee**

Ms. Sparrow reported that she reviewed materials about strategic planning that were available on the N.J. State Library website. Ms. Sparrow’s associate Scott Asalone recently conducted a SOAR exercise with the library staff. The results were recorded on a three-page report distributed to board members. Ms. Sparrow explained how the exercise was conducted and how the results can be used.

## **Old Business**

### **Library Construction Bond Act – Westside Branch Library**

The director distributed the 45-page “Solicitation for Grant Applications” which was released by the N.J. State Library on January 6, 2020. This is the actual application

package for grants. A webinar is scheduled for January 22 to explain the application process. Also there will be a period of time for libraries to ask questions about the application process. The question period will end February 14, 2020 and the State Library will post all questions received with their responses on the State Library's Bond Act website. Libraries will be able to file applications starting March 9 through April 6, 2020.

### **Minutes of the Board of Trustees**

Several board members have asked questions about the format, the preparation and distribution of the minutes. Ms. Weiner asked if they could be sent out earlier. Ms. Melgar noted that the present arrangement whereby the minutes and other materials for the board meeting are mailed out one week in advance was set by the board and can be changed by the board. An earlier mailing may result in financial reports and other materials not being included. The question is what advantage is there to an earlier mailing; how would it improve board operations.

As to questions about format, style, length, and what is included and not included Mr. Stewart said that his way of preparing minutes has evolved over a long period of time and has been influenced by preferences and suggestions of trustees in the past. He said that he has seen a very wide range in the type of minutes that organizations produce and that what would be most helpful is for critics of our minutes to bring to the board's attention minutes from other groups that one believes to be a better model or an improved example to consider.

### **Adjournment**

Motion by Mrs. Weiner, seconded by Ms. Ahbez-Anderson, that the meeting be adjourned at 11:40 A.M. Carried, all voting yes. Minutes of this meeting were prepared by Robert W. Stewart, Secretary to the Board, with the assistance of Kerrin Martin, Board Secretary, and Kathleen Melgar, Assistant Library Director.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerrin Martin  
Board Secretary

