

**Asbury Park Public Library**

**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Minutes**

**February 24, 2021**

Call to order at 9:01 am.

**Attendees:**

Board Members: Diane Shelton, Jen Souder, Kerri Martin, Werner Baumgartner, Jan Sparrow, Janice Kroposky, Angela Ahbez-Anderson, Anita Weiner, Ericka Uter

Attorney: Mr. Richard Shaklee

Staff: Kathleen and Mr. Stewart

**3. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of January 27, 2021**

***Motion to accept the minutes: 1<sup>st</sup>: Jen Souder 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan Sparrow [Motion withdrawn after discussion]***

Discussion: Werner brought up the same comment he did last time. He objects to the script style of minutes. At the end, he indicates that the motion he made was not correct. His motion is that a resolution be created directing the director to cooperate with the president and the president is in charge of the agenda.

Jan asks Shaklee what the official minutes are. Shaklee said that the written minutes are official. The recording is an aid for the person taking the minutes.

***Motion to accept the minutes with corrections: 1<sup>st</sup>: Jen 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jan Kerri: No Diane: Yes. Werner: Abstain. Janice: Abstain. Angela: Yes Anita: Yes***

***Motion to accept Treasurer's Report: 1<sup>st</sup>: Janice 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jan All in favor: Yes***

Jen said the documents are in the packet. Profit and Loss document and the Check Detail document. She points out that the form looks different because they are re-formatting it. It is the same information we see every month. It is not a bill list that reflects future payments. Diane questions the Baker and Taylor expense. She wants to know what period that covers. Kathleen answers that the library is still circulating books and offering curbside services. That expense is an accumulation of orders. Angela asked about an expense for \$4800 at the beginning of last year. Did we ever get an explanation for that expense? Jen said that it hasn't be produced yet. We don't have a date for when we will receive this. Kathleen responded that they will be sending something out by the March meeting. Mr. Stewart added that when the question originally came up that they did present a report but it was deemed unacceptable. They asked several times to get an example of what kind of macro report the board was looking for. Werner states that the original idea was brought up by Jan and they thought that an itemized list would be helpful but then realized that a macro report is what they needed. They wanted to see number of books in a particular subject and their cost. Mr. Stewart

reiterated that this is a time-consuming task and they don't have the computer capacity to do this. Kathleen commented that Matt and she are in the process of training to use the new system that would help produce reports for books that are already in the collection. That is one part of the board's request. There are also the books that are purchased and in the middle of being processed. What the board wants to see is what the collection looks like and the cost which are two different things. Angela would like to see the invoice of the books that were purchased. Mr. Stewart said that what would be helpful is to find a similar report from another library. The staff doesn't understand what the board is looking for.

[Erica joined meeting.]

***Motion to be sent copies of all the invoices from 2020 for Library Materials before the March meeting:  
1<sup>st</sup>: Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup> Angela. Diane: Yes Jen: Yes Kerri: Yes Werner: Yes Janice: Yes Anita: Yes***

## **5. Approval of Bills**

Discussion: Jen Souder thought we were doing a dry run for today. Kathleen said they are still working on it and Mr. Stewart wants to discuss the language and the process. Maybe they can schedule a call. Jen sent out a committee report and would like to resolve this before this meeting. She wants Darlene and Jen to have clarity moving forward. After a phone call, Kathleen can send out an email after the phone call and before the next meeting. Jen Souder is concerned that if she and Mr. Stewart have a call then they have to report it to the committee. Jen said there is a document in the packet with one paragraph stating the objective. Jen says we will table this until Mr. Stewart gets back with the document.

## **6. New Business**

***Motion to accept the resolution to amend the by-laws to add the position of Vice-President:  
1<sup>st</sup>: Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> Diane All in favor: Yes***

***Motion to accept the resolution to amend the by-laws to add standing committees: 1<sup>st</sup>: Jen  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Jan All in favor: Yes***

***Motion to accept the resolution to amend the by-laws to change the order of business at  
regular meetings: 1<sup>st</sup>: Werner 2<sup>nd</sup>: Anita All in favor: Yes***

### **B. Personnel – Proposed Mediation**

Discussion: Shaklee said that the City Manager contacted the board president regarding some matters which were described as certain issues with the Library Director. There are specific items that he doesn't recall. She thought she could facilitate a discussion.

Jan brings up a memorandum that was distributed by Mr. Stewart. On the final page, Jan is taking exception to the statement that most of the board of trustees simply don't care about the safety and health of the employees. She states that is patently false. Diane corrects another statement in the memorandum about Werner attaching his meeting to an existing meeting. She wants to clarify that the meetings were already scheduled. Werner sent an email to the board which expressed his opinion about this memorandum. Werner would like a

clarification of who speaks for the union because this is the way Mr. Stewart expresses himself in his writings. Angela agrees totally with Jan and feels like the statements are misleading and untrue. Jen felt shocked and disrespected as a whole for the board.

**Motion to draft a reply condemning this memorandum as completely inappropriate as a whole for attacking the board as a whole and individual board members with unfounded allegations and accusations: 1<sup>st</sup>: Werner 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jan Kerri: No Diane: Yes Jen: Yes Janice: Yes Angela: Yes Anita: Yes Ericka: Yes**

## 7. Committee Reports

### Budget and Finance:

Jen states that the committee report was in the packet. The reformatting of the Operational Budget was the first topic she brought up. She shared her screen and brought up APPL Profit and Loss Report. The idea is that the overall budget will include the revised categories. The document can be manipulated to see whatever information we need. There are different categories that we haven't always seen in the past. She feels as the committee chair it was best to share more information rather than less.

The next document she brought up was a list of new expense categories. The next document she brought up was the Updated Expense Approval Procedure. Mr. Stewart wants to discuss a proposal for approval of the invoices using the city's method as a model but adapting it for us. The process would involve a staff member sending the Treasurer the list of what would be paid. The Treasurer would then approve them or ask questions. The staff would then be able to pay those bills. Whatever was approved would be on the bill list and then presented at the monthly meeting. The problem Jen has with looking at the bills once a week is that the board will not be able to pre-approve any bills. Shaklee said it should be feasible that bills could be reviewed and voted by the board and then payments would be submitted. Only in an emergency situation would this be a different story. Jen would like to resolve this quickly so there isn't always a backlog.

*APPL Updated Expense Approval Procedure: Staff will generate a list of upcoming checks based on invoices. List will be presented at each board meeting for board's review and approval. If bill list approved, all checks can be cut and sent ASAP. If any questions/concerns raised regarding bill list, they will be addressed and reviewed by Treasurer prior to check being sent. If timing proves problematic, this procedure will be updated to add additional board review procedure mid-month. Treasurer will continue to review and initial invoices, but not necessarily prior to bill list being presented to board.*

**Motion to approve what was laid out in that paragraph: 1<sup>st</sup>: Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>: Werner All in favor: Yes**

### Buildings and Grounds:

Kathleen shared the 2 documents Werner sent by email this morning. He documented the Tree Pruning Contract timeline which dates back from 2019. In 2019, overgrown trees and bushes were identified as causing problems. In 2020, there was a large Building and Grounds committee meeting where actions were discussed. Later that year, the chair contact's Pete's Tree Service to proposal and receives bid to provide services as directed. Approval was given by the board to proceed with contract. In 2021, work was proposed during New Year's weekend and rescheduled for 1/18/2021. Contract cancelled entirely on 1/20/21 by Director without authority on claim of being "handled improperly." This was brought up at January meeting. He was directed to not interfere with the contract. Mr. Stewart emailed them to make changes to the contract. Werner reached out to Pete's Pruning and said they are still willing to proceed with the work.

A second document, Inspection Request, was brought up on the screen. Two times the committee requested access to the building and they were denied. Photographs were pulled up on the screen of the water damage on the exterior of the building.

Mr. Stewart said that the problem with the contract was that it did not contain a statement that is in every contract that they deal with. He has to remove all of the debris. The contract did not say that. The wording provided an out to leave any amount of stuff for somebody else to remove. They asked to have it re-worded several times but it wasn't done.

***Motion that Mr. Stewart carry out this contract as written by the end of March: 1<sup>st</sup>: Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>: Diane Jen: Yes Janice: Yes Angela: Yes Anita: Yes Kerri: Yes Ericka: Absent from the vote.***

#### Policy and Governance:

The chair reported that Kathleen and Mr. Stewart are working on the draft of the Collection Development policy. Several Governance issues were discussed at the committee meeting. One issue is restructuring our board meeting. Diane sent out a document outlining the proposed structure. We received edits to the Board Orientation Manual from Jen Souder and we will review these edits at our next meeting. Use of non-library email by board members was also discussed but a decision wasn't made. We also reviewed our election process and this is what we will use for the Vice-President position which was just created.

Diane shared the document called Proposed Order of Business. Werner feels like this structure is overly complex. Diane wants an Executive Session so we iron out any matters we have before we come back to the public.

#### Strategic Plan:

Jan has been reviewing a few libraries' Strategic Plans. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is an important part of Strategic Plans especially in a place like Asbury Park. They recommend we need some Census Data.

Diane appoints Angela, Jen Souder and Ericka to be on the Personnel Committee.

## 8. Director's Report

### 1. Collection Inventory and Weeding Report – Better World Books

Kathleen mentioned that they ordered an additional 50 boxes and are currently working on filling them. 9 or 10 boxes are filled. There are 20-25 books in each box. They are moving non-fiction upstairs. Werner clarified that these are books that are being taken out of the collection. Kathleen said that the priority of the library is to clean up the shelves which the public has access to.

Werner is still concerned about all the boxes in the hallway.

Anita asked for the most recent fire inspection report. Mr. Stewart confirmed that Kevin Keddy was there last week to introduce the new fire inspector. They will be doing an inspection later this month.

### 2. Reports for 2019 and 2020

Mr. Stewart stated that this was not on his agenda. Diane asked if the staff can call her.

### 3. Annual Report to NJ State Library – March 15, 2021 – Approval

### 4. Downspouts – Maintenance Report

Mr. Stewart reported that he submitted a 2-page memorandum about the downspouts. There are a lot of problems on the west side of the building. Werner brought several contractors to the library in 2020 without giving the library notice. They asked to get the bids from Werner so they can contact them. Werner doesn't have any bids in regard to roofs, gutters and downspouts. Werner offered to write a memo for what he believes is the scope of the work.

***Motion that we ask our president to contact the city manager to see if she will allow us to use the city engineer to check out the building maintenance issues including roofing, gutter and downspout issues.***

***1<sup>st</sup>: Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Anita. Diane: Yes Werner: Yes Angela: Yes Jen: Abstain. Kerri: Yes Janice: Yes Ericka: Absent***

### 5. Revised COVID19 Library Access Rules

Mr. Stewart explained that the rules they are trying to follow are based on the Executive Orders from the state and the guidance we get from other library organizations. Last year, the library was totally locked down for a number of months. Non-employees' access should only be by appointment and be absolutely necessary. Coming to work puts you at risk. As a work group, we are required to follow very strict rules. People coming from the outside present a risk. We are not out of line as to what is happening in the outside world. What we are trying to implement is not out of line. The most recent executive order came out in February stating that the public health emergency is still in place.

***Motion to appoint Angela as our first VP 1<sup>st</sup>: Anita 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jan. All in favor: Yes***

## 9. Old Business

- A. Building Inspection by Building & Grounds Committee
- B. Computer Workstation Installation: Kathleen said that they are being installed this week.
- C. Continuing Education Requirements of Board of Trustee Members: Diane suggested that we table this issue. Hours can be sent to the chair of the Policy and Governance committee over the course of the year.

## 10. Items from Individual Board Members

***Motion to add \$1000 to the line item for December's invoice payment and to pay the December and January bill 1<sup>st</sup>: 1<sup>st</sup>: Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>: Angela. All in favor: Yes***

Anita asked for a further explanation about the mediation issue. Mr. Shaklee reiterated what he knew about the city manager meeting the board president to talk about staff issues.

Jen Souder opined that the Strategic Plan should include diversity.

Kerri asked what is happening with the idea of a board retreat for 2021. It was suggested that Angela will take this on as one of her first responsibilities as Vice-President.

Diane asked Mr. Shaklee to give us a presentation regarding ethics and the Sunshine Law. At the next meeting, we will start with that.

## 11. Public Participation

***Motion to open to Public Participation 1<sup>st</sup>: Diane 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jan All in favor: Yes***

Jen Cubias asked that the board trustees don't describe the library is not closed. They are open and offering many services. We should use that wording when relaying information to the public.

John Grant had a question about stained glass windows. He did research about the Tiffany glass windows. He wonders if they are damaged because of the building.

Thank you for providing audit. He sees expenses for \$160K. He looked at other audits which had supplemental information. Perhaps something can be added to next audit.

Jen Souder stated that we can have further conversation about that. All of the library's documents are public. How does the public access that information?

Werner is not sure how the computer systems are set up in the library. Can they be put on city website. Kathleen stated that our website is not set up as a normal website. We are using our catalog as our website. If people ask for documents, we send them out to them.

***Motion to close Public Participation. 1<sup>st</sup>: Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>: Anita All in favor: Yes***

***Motion to adjourn at 12:32pm 1<sup>st</sup>: Janice 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jen All in favor: Yes***

