

Demarest Free Public Library
Board of Library Trustees Meeting Minutes
February 12th, 2024

1. Call to order at 7:05 pm

Secretary Shimokawa read the following:

This is a regular meeting of the Demarest Library Board of Trustees. The date, time and location of this meeting has been advertised in the Official Newspaper of the Borough, filed with the Borough Clerk and posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board. All notices of requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act for this meeting have been fulfilled.

2. Roll Call

Present: P. Desai; H. Shimokawa; L. Carson; E. Kass; S. Nankani; D. Hayden;
L. Ma; A. Keysar; Friends Board President Ruthie Nussbaum

Absent: A. Sandoval; Mayor Bernstein and Council Liaison Marks are attending the Mayor & Council Mtg

3. Approval of the Agenda

- Motion to approve the Agenda made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson
Agenda is approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the January 8th, 2024 Reorganization meeting

- Motion to approve the January meeting minutes made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by D. Hayden.
All present vote YES,
Minutes are approved.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the January 8th, 2024 monthly meeting

- Motion to approve the January monthly meeting minutes made by H. Shimokawa;
Seconded by E. Kass.
All present vote YES.
Minutes are approved.

6. The Friends of the Demarest Library Update

- Friends Board President, R. Nussbaum provides a recap on the launch of the Friends Group.
- Friends Board is focused on building membership- this effort is beginning with current Library patrons.
- Some upcoming fundraising initiatives for the 1st year include a Book Sale (Library collection edits or donations from residents), a Book sale with a third-party vendor, etc.
- The board discussed alternative placement of the potential book donation bin from the town center (Train Station) to possibly on Library or school property.

- R. Nussbaum is going to continue to explore this option for the future as it has potential to provide a passive income for the Friends Group.
- Community programming: upcoming Children's Author visit and an Adult Author visit.
- The Friends group donated a Cricut machine and heat press for Arts & Crafts programming.
- They are also looking into adding more museum memberships.
- TAB falls under the Friends umbrella. The President of TAB will be coming to the March mtg to present the TAB initiatives.
- The board inquired if the Friends group has looked into a brick sponsoring fundraising campaign--- perhaps celebrating the Library or Town anniversary, etc.

7. Buildings & Grounds Committee Report

- Construction Update: as the construction began it is clear that the floors are not level. They will need to level the floors before continuing with the planned construction. Additionally, the contractor's electrician provided a quote for updated LED lighting. However, the original quote needs to be updated to include the full room and include fixture changes to accommodate LED lighting.
- E. Kass is exploring whether the library can work with other contractors outside this bid to address some of the late-stage issues that arise.
- P. Desai is getting additional electrician estimates as the contractor rates for the lighting and Smart/USB outlets are quite high.
- S. Nankani and the board discussed that the Library should be trying to incorporate energy-efficient solutions, like Smart Outlets, wherever possible and within budget during this renovation.

8. Director's Report

- The End-of-Year Newsletter was reviewed by the Communications committee and is going to be sent out at the end of the month.
- In celebration of January being Muslim Heritage Month, the library hosted a Muslim Heritage story time and family event that was well-received and had over 50 people in attendance, including our mayor. Editorial coverage of the event is scheduled for the March issue of *Neighbors* magazine in addition to the Library Snapshot edition of *Cobalt* e-magazine for BCCLS libraries. This will become an annual event.
- Train Station & Library Programming update: on Jan 22nd and 23rd there were some Storytime events at the Train Station. During these sessions, it became clear that the heat was no longer working in this space. All programming has been suspended in the Train Station until the HVAC system has been repaired.
- The board discussed if space heaters should be allowed in the library or at library functions.
- Staff updates: The Saturday part-time Library Assistant submitted her resignation. But P. Desai was able to fill these hours with a new part-time staff member.
- Lissner & Lissner LLP confirmed that the library will be receiving a sizable donation from Nany Richman Estate.

9. Treasurer's Report

- L. Ma presented a summary of the quarterly appropriation checks. Unfortunately, for 2023 Q4, the Borough consolidated 2023's staff costs (Benefits) and it had a significant impact on the Q4 appropriation calculated.
- This should be corrected in 2024 and the appropriation and staff costs should be more consistent.
- L. Ma presented a summary of the state of the operating and capital accounts, the incoming construction estimates and the projected expenses for Q1 2024.
- Motion to approve the Bill List made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by E. Kass.

Roll Call Vote: All present vote yes.
Bill List is approved.

10. President's Report

- Personnel Committee (S. Nankani, D. Hayden) and the Board Treasurer, L. Ma, met to review the 2024 budget and salary recommendations.
- The Personnel committee also met with the Director to conduct her annual performance review and share recommendations. One of the tools we shared is a calendar planning tool provided by the Communications Committee. P. Desai will be meeting with H. Shimokawa to review the format, discuss customization and implementation.
- The committee is working with P. Desai on a revised annual review evaluation form based upon resources shared by librarian Jackie Mills, Director, Mt. Angel Public Library, Mt Angel OR (pop 3,500).
- The Communications committee reviewed the newsletter and provided feedback. The committee has some big picture, strategic recommendations and will share those suggestions for future newsletters with the Director.
- Library Mtg Protocol: Robert Keith, the Director of Library Law, State Aid, and Statistics at the NJ State Library to clarify about parliamentary procedure in the event that both the Council Liaison (appointed alternate) and the mayor were to attend a Board meeting. The following information was shared with Mayor and Liaison:

Per Bob Keith, the Mayor and their alternate can attend the board meeting at the same time. However, if the mayor is present, then the alternate reverts to being a member of the public with no power to vote or attend closed sessions and they may only speak during the designated public comment period of the board meeting. This is per NJSA 40:54-9 and the pertinent portion follows:

The mayor or other chief executive officer and the superintendent of schools or the principal, as the case may be, serving as a member of the board, may, respectively, appoint an alternate to act in his place and stead with authority to attend all meetings of the board and, in his absence, to vote on all questions before the board.

- 2024 Professional Development for Director 2024

-The American Library Association Annual Conference & Exhibition will be held in San Diego, CA, June 27-July 2, 2024. The Library Marketplace includes exhibitors; established and new authors who will discuss their recent and upcoming books; multimedia resources, popular stages, Meet the Authors, and much more.

-Our Library Director will attend various educational sessions and programs and spend time in the Library Marketplace to meet with our current vendors, while also discovering new expert vendors that serve the library industry. She will be looking for new, cost-effective, and innovative products. She will also have an opportunity to partake in networking activities at the conference and to engage with peers and leaders who can offer ideas and new strategies that can be implemented in 2024 and forward to benefit our library.

11. New Business

- a) Resolution to reallocate unspent funds from the Operating Budget to the Capital Account (vote)

- Motion to approve the reallocation of unspent funds made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by S. Nankani.

Roll Call Vote: All present vote YES.

Reallocation of funds is approved.

- b) Library Director Salary review – Closed Session discussion

- Motion to move to a closed session made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by E. Kass.

All present vote YES.

Closed session of the meeting commences.

- Motion to reopen the meeting by H. Shimokawa; seconded by E. Kass.

All present vote YES.

Closed session is concluded and the meeting is reopened.

12. Meeting Open to the Public for Comment

- Motion to open the meeting to the public made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson. The meeting is open to the public. No public was present.

13. Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Next Board Meeting will be Monday, March 18th at 7:00 pm.