

Demarest Free Public Library
Board of Library Trustees Meeting Minutes
April 29th, 2024

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 Meeting Act for this meeting have been fulfilled.

1. Call to order at 7:06 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present: A Sandoval (arrived 7:16 PM); P. Desai; Daniel Marks; L. Carson; A. Keysar; S. Nankani; L. Ma (arrived 7:34 PM) and Dorothy Hayden. (All were present for resolutions that required voting.)

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda made by D. Hayden; seconded by S.Nankani.
The agenda is approved.

4. Jennie Pu, Director of Hoboken Public Library made a presentation regarding Book Sanctuaries. She noted various states and cities that have become book sanctuaries and that it is taking hold in many parts of New Jersey. The idea was started in 2022 in Chicago in response to unprecedented censorship. She defined a book sanctuary space as the freedom to read and have access to endangered books.

Comments and questions from the board:

D. Hayden: What is involved in creating a resolution?

J. Pu: Spoke about various resolutions and noted that it is a statement of values.

D. Marks: Is it a policy or just ceremonial? Would it reach to the schools?

J. Pu: Yes, it is ceremonial in that it follows the values of the board. It would likely not involve the schools, but the library and possibly the municipality.

D. Marks: Does the library board have the ability to ban a book for instance about making bombs?

J. Pu: In any case such as this the director and board would look to the collection policy.

5. The meeting was opened to the public for comments and questions regarding book sanctuaries:

Joanna Fried of 179 County Road noted that she is excited about the initiative and supports the board's efforts.

6. Approval of Minutes of March 18, 2024 meeting

Motion to approve the March 18, 2024 meeting made by S. Nankani; seconded by A. Sandoval.
The minutes are approved.

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7. Committee Report

a) Buildings and Grounds Committee

P. Desai noted that the second phase of construction is almost complete. There are some issues in the circulation area as well as the work room. There were details missed by the architect.

8. Treasurer's Report

L. Ma reported that the 1Q check was received and that she questioned some deductions the borough made. She noted that the construction project may require more funding than planned and she will keep in contact with the director.

Motion to approve the Bill List made by L. Ma; Seconded by D. Hayden

Roll Call Vote: All present voted yes.

Bill List is approved.

9. Director's Report

P. Desai reported on the following:

- The Information Services Librarian has resigned. Rather than replace that position, she is reevaluating and considering a replacement of a professional librarian with an IT background in a lower-tier position (less supervisory) and a part-time cataloger. An exit interview was conducted.
- All staff are now trained in CPR/AED.
- Programming is going well although it has slowed a bit due to construction.
- The language of the donation plaque was discussed.

10. Old Business

a) Book Sanctuary (discussion) - see notes above

11. New Business

a) S. Nankani made a motion to approve an annual contract with Whalen and Ives, Inc. for Heating/Air-conditioning maintenance in the amount of \$800.00. It was seconded by D. Hayden.

Roll call vote: All present voted yes.

b) Programming room donation language update

S. Nankani made a motion to approve the following language for the donation plaque: This room was supported by a generous donation in loving memory of Demarest resident Barbara Bar-Nissim. It was seconded by D. Marks.

Roll call vote: All present voted yes.

12. President's Report

S. Nankani noted the following:

- There has been much frustration with the architect regarding the construction project. Contact has been difficult and a number of details were missed.

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- It was National Library Workers Day and a luncheon was supplied using donation funds. The staff were very appreciative.
- Worked with the director on the Book Sanctuary topic and tried to help with publicizing this meeting presentation.
- The restroom is often clogged and the director has been asked to look into the root of the problem.
- Personnel reorganization conversations with the director.

13. Meeting open to the Public

D. Hayden made a motion to open the meeting to the public; seconded by L. Ma
There were no members of the public present.

14. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Next Board Meeting Monday, May 20th at 7:00 pm.