Demarest Free Public Library
Board of Library Trustees Meeting Minutes
January 13th, 2025

1. Call to order at 6:54 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 the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act for this meeting have been fulfilled.

2. Roll Call

Present: P. Desai; H. Shimokawa; L. Carson; L. Ma; Mayor Bernstein (departure at 7:40p); A. Sandoval; A. Keysar; E. Kass; D. Hayden

Absent:

3. Approval of the Agenda

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

All present vote YES.
Agenda is approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the December 16th, 2024 meeting

Motion to approve the December 16th, 2024 meeting minutes made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by S. Nankani.

All present vote YES.
Minutes are approved.

6. Treasurer's Report

- L. Ma summarized the 2024 balances. 2024 expenses came in under budget.
- Capital account is earning 4.3% interest with Fidelity.
- The Board discussed whether the budget allocations for programming costs are too conservative for 2025.
- P. Desai shared that she is working with the Friends of the Library to cover the costs of some of the Library programs for 2025 including but not limited to the Code Club (Approx. $1K annual membership fee) and activations such as Summer Reading kickoff, holiday parties, etc.

Motion to approve the January Bill List made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Ma.

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

7. Director's Report

- Friends of the Library organized a staff appreciation breakfast on January 7th. They generously presented each staff member with a gift card as a token of appreciation.
- Newsletter Discussion: The staff is working on the semi-annual newsletter that is regularly scheduled for a February mailing.

- The Board discussed the purpose of the newsletter: Proposed shifting the newsletter schedule from February and June to deploy in May and September with a focus on programming announcements. The President also suggested that the recent Facebook post which featured a Look Back on 2024 graphic (2024 Library Statistics) be incorporated into the newsletter.
- P. Desai shared that the new Information Services Associate would like to take the lead on the Newsletter production and may be able to execute the design of the newsletter which would provide cost savings on this initiative. Additionally, the Director is hoping to partner with the Friends Group to share the cost and is interested in doing a shared coop newsletter which will highlight activities sponsored by The Friends of the Demarest Library.
- PROGRAMMING RECAP:
    - In December, the library organized a diverse range of programs, including a holiday concert, STEM program, a TAB (Teen Advisory Board organized) holiday party, Hanukah story time and crafts, cookbook club and a recipe swap.
    - Muslim Heritage Month celebration this month (Sat) in the new community room
    - Artist in Residence program has launched- An installation of Demarest resident, Rakefet Krochmal's work is on display.
    - P. Desai is exploring if the artists would be interested in selling their artwork and donating a % of sales to the Friends group. If any of the artists are interested, the Friends would manage any transactions.
    - If any board members have referrals for this project, please reach out to Jennifer Grutta.
- Currently, the following have keys to the library:
    - DPW, DPD, Board Member (Ana Sandoval), and the Borough Administrator (Director is confirming with the BA to ensure that they have the key on-hand)

8. Old Business

a) Lighting Update

- The lighting upgrade has been completed.

b) Pibe Cleaning Service Contract (VOTE)

Motion to approve the new Services contract for Pibe Cleaning Services, LLC. made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by D. Hayden.

Roll Call Vote: All present vote YES.
Cleaning contract is approved.

c) Library Bylaws (Vote)

- President Nankani presented the board with the changes to the language of the ByLaws.
- S. Nankani and the Director worked with BCCLS and the Library Attorney to review and revise the language to address questions raised in our previous meeting.

Motion to approve the updated Demarest Library Board Bylaws made by E. Kass; Seconded by A. Sandoval.

Roll Call Vote: All present vote YES.
Bylaws are approved.

9. New Business

a) Annual Budget Presentation (Vote)

Motion to approve the 2025 Demarest Library Budget made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson.

Roll Call Vote: All present vote YES.
Budget is approved.

b) Vision Benefits Reimbursement (Vote)

- P. Desai budgets for a Vision Benefits reimbursement (annual allocation total of $1,000) for library staff as this benefit is not provided by the Borough.

Motion to approve the proposed Vision Benefits Reimbursement made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by E. Kass.

Roll Call Vote: All present vote YES.
Vision Benefits Reimbursement is approved.

c) Resolution to Authorize the Board President and Board Treasurer to sign and execute on behalf of the Demarest Library (Vote)

Motion to the Resolution to Authorize the Board President and Board Treasurer to sign and execute on behalf of the Demarest Library made by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson.

Roll Call Vote: All present vote YES
Resolution is approved.

10. President's Report

- President Nankani presented a recap of the board and committee activity over the last month.
- The 2025 Budget Review was completed in December in collaboration with the Board Treasurer, Director and bookkeeper.
- Last month, the board held a holiday party before the monthly board meeting for the Board, Friends, TAB and the Mayor. We hope this will become an annual event.
- The Personnel committee and Director will be presenting the Board with compensation review and proposed staff salary increases at the February meeting.
- The Director will be conducting a search for a new, full-time staff member for the Children's Dept. Part-time staff and TAB will help cover the Children's Dept while the search goes on.
- President Nankani reminded the board that they have been issued BCCLS email addresses and encouraged Board members to activate and check this new portal.

11. Meeting open for public 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.

Motion to close the meeting by H. Shimokawa; Seconded by L. Carson.
Meeting is adjourned at 7:57 pm.

12. Adjournment – Next Board Meeting Monday, February 10th at 6:45.