

WASHINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting
Library Board of Trustees
October 28, 2019

AGENDA: Reading of the Open Public Meeting Act

ROLL CALL: Scott McDonald, Jeanine Gleba, John Valentine, Ron Duryea, Rosemarie Rosati, and Mayor David Higgins - A quorum was present

Absent: Michelle Norris and Jacqueline Nassry

Also in attendance: Usha Thampi-Lukose, Library Director and Tracy Quamme, Account Clerk.

The regular monthly meeting of the Washington Public Library, Board of Trustees was called to order by President Scott McDonald at 7:01 PM.

PUBLIC HEARING: A motion was made by Jeanine Gleba and seconded by John Valentine to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Washington Public Library Board of Trustees held on September 23, 2019.

Approved with 6 ayes.

COMMUNICATIONS: none

AUDIENCE:

President Scott McDonald opened up the audience portion of the meeting. Seeing no one, Scott closed this portion of the meeting.

REPORTS:

1. President's Report

Scott McDonald was not able to complete a report in time for the meeting, but he will email the report next week with a copy of the report being sent for inclusion in the Washington Borough Council packet for their next meeting.

2. Treasurer's Report - No discussion.

Jeanine Gleba made the motion to approve the report and Rosemarie Rosati seconded the motion. No discussion

Approved with 5 ayes; 0 nays; 1 abstentions by David Higgins.

2. Director's Report

Usha Thampi-Lukose highlighted several items from the written report that she had already forwarded to all Board members. The Director noted that the Library had received the funding amounts for the state aid and the borough allocation. She also

reported that the New Jersey State Librarian visited the Library and reviewed some new ILL (Interlibrary Loan) features from the upgrade of the JerseyCat. Ms. Thampi-Lukose also highlighted the visit by Fire Chief Dirk Higgins for Fire Prevention Month. The children in attendance thoroughly enjoyed the entertaining Fire Chief visit which included story time and the opportunity to see a firetruck.

Rosemarie Rosati made the motion to approve the report. Scott McDonald seconded the motion.

All in favor with 6 ayes.

3. Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

Rosemarie Rosati, Usha Thampi-Lukose and Tracy Quamme reviewed three proposals for the submission of the Library budget to the Borough. Rosemarie noted that the clerk salaries would have to be raised to the new minimum wage and that all proposals included this cost plus a 2.5% increase for the Director and the Bookkeeper. These salary increases were especially difficult to absorb given the reduction in the Borough appropriation of 1/3 mil along with the need to reduce the current large deficit on the in-house budget side.

1. The first proposal included all current staff hours and all non-salary operational expenses, including \$7,000 for security camera replacements, resulting in the need to request an additional \$60,313 from the Borough.
2. The second version of the budget submission reduced clerk staffing by 41 hours per week resulting in a reduction in the number of hours that the library could remain open. The three staff lines eliminated included the maintenance/cleaning person. The operating lines eliminated included audit, building maintenance, etc.
3. The third version reduced the Director and Bookkeeper hours from 29.5 hours per week to 24, a reduction of five hours each per week. It also reduced clerk hours, but maintained sufficient coverage to keep the library open with the current schedule, unless call outs occurred when staff were already scheduled for time off thus necessitating periodic closings. Cleaning staff would be available, but on a more limited basis. The operational budget would cover the audit.

The in-house budget proposal was then reviewed to ensure there was complete understanding of what expenses would need to be covered by Library funds. This budget was kept very tight, and only exceeded expected revenue by less than \$3,000 vs. the current deficit of approximately \$25,000. As an example of the tight budget is that there was no money budgeted for programming costs. The only programming offered would be dependent upon the availability of reduced staffing, and the only programming cost that would be covered would be dependent upon donations.

Rosemarie Rosati stated that she did not endorse the first Borough budget proposal since she believed that the Borough would not approve the additional \$60,000 in requested funding since there was a belief that we could cut administrative staffing. Ms. Rosati made the motion that the Library submit the third proposal to the Borough. Jeanine Gleba seconded the motion.

During discussion Ms. Gleba expressed gratitude to Usha Thampi-Lukose and Tracy Quamme for volunteering to reduce their work hours. She also wanted to go on the record stating that staff can only do so much so the cuts may result in reductions in what staff is able to get done. Jeanine Gleba also emphasized that staff is only to work the hours paid. They cannot volunteer to do more or work from home. She said that they should track what is not getting done.

Scott McDonald recommended that the funding request for the security camera replacement be submitted separately. Rosemarie Rosati amended her motion to include the funding for the security cameras as a separate capital request submission, and Jeanine Gleba seconded the amended motion.

The amended motion was approved with 5 ayes, 1 abstention (David Higgins) and 0 nays.

- b. House Committee – Ron Duryea discussed the need to upgrade the outdoor lighting because the type of bulbs used in the old system can no longer be purchases.
- c. Policy Committee – Jeanine Gleba stated this work would be addressed under new business.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Friends of the Library Update – John Valentine reported that the next Tricky Tray event would be held in June. Additionally, there will be small events held in the library at the end of November and in December. Beyond raising funds the small events aim to raise public awareness of the Friends of the Library.
2. Update Regarding Replacement of the Rosebush – Scott McDonald gave an update stating that the DPW supervisor only requested that the bush be well marked and planted in a location that would not interfere with their grounds maintenance. Scott provided assurance that the bush would be planted no later than the spring, even if he has to plant it himself. John Valentine noted that rosebushes can now be purchased for half price and that the Friends of the Library could cover the cost. There was a discussion about considerations with planting the bush in the fall. Ron Duryea offered his assistance with planting the bush.
3. Strategic Plan – Discussion regarding the potential items to be included that had already been circulated. Rosemarie Rosati and Jeanine Gleba were confident that a proposed plan could be submitted for consideration by the Board at the January meeting.
4. 2020 Calendar of Board of Trustee Meetings – A proposed calendar that had been created by Usha was circulated for review. The approval of the calendar would enable posting of the full year of meeting dates in the

newspaper in January to satisfy the “Sunshine Law” without having to post meeting dates each month.

Jeanine Gleba made the motion to approve the 2020 calendar for public posting, and Ron Duryea seconded the motion.

All in favor (6 ayes).

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Josh Melchor from Merrill Lynch Wealth Management – was not present.

A discussion ensued about the restricted nature of investments that can be made by a public entity like the library as detailed in the scanned document attached to the email Rosemarie Rosati sent on 9/25/19 with subject “Investment.” Rosemarie reported that she had obtained this scan from the New Jersey state contact recommended by Matt Hall: Christine Zapicchi in Municipal Budgets and Finance, who can be reached by calling 609-292-4806 or by emailing her at Christine.Zapicchi@dca.nj.gov Rosemarie stated that she was not able to engage this person in a detailed discussion, but she was able to tell Ms. Zapicchi that she was calling about the Washington Borough Public Library investments.

The scanned document is relevant to investments made by a municipality or county. In last month’s minutes a quote relevant to New Jersey municipal public libraries was included that stated that: ****the Old Supreme Court Ruled that Trustees form ‘a branch or a board of the municipal government,****

(Matt Hall has confirmed that it is not the source of the funds that determine how they can be invested, but rather it is all funds that are invested by a public entity like the library that are restricted.)

2. Discussion and Approval of Library Job Descriptions –

- Jeanine Gleba made the motion to approve the Library Director job description, and Ron Duryea seconded the motion.

Approved with 5 ayes with David Higgins abstaining.

- Rosemarie Rosati made the motion to approve the revised Custodian job description, and Ron Duryea seconded the motion.

Approved with 5 ayes with David Higgins abstaining.

- Rosemarie Rosati made the motion to approve the Bookkeeper job description, and Jeanine Gleba seconded the motion.

Approved with 5 ayes with David Higgins abstaining.

- Jeanine Gleba made the motion to approve the Library Clerk job description, and John Valentine seconded the motion.

Approved with 5 ayes with David Higgins abstaining.

3. Discussion and Approval of the Employee Handbook – Jeanine Gleba reported that we obtained confirmation that our staff do have Civil Service status. The Borough Administrative Clerk informed Jeanine that Matthew Hall, the Borough Manager, is the Appointing Authority for the Library staff. The Administrative Clerk has recommended that we use the Borough's Employee Handbook since it has already been reviewed by their attorney.

Jeanine stated that she did use that manual as the basis for the one she developed for the Library, but that she eliminated parts that were not relevant to the Library and made some revisions to better match our situation. Jeanine will forward the document that she developed. Members should review it and come to the next meeting prepared to vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (as needed):

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM with all in favor.

The next regular monthly meeting of the Washington Public Library, Board of Trustees, will be held on Monday, November 25, 2019 at 7:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosemarie Rosati
Secretary