

WESTWOOD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: Monday, June 28, 2021

CALLED TO ORDER: at 7:05 p.m. by Vincent Fitzpatrick via Zoom.

PRESENT: Martha Urbiel (MU), Vincent Fitzpatrick (VP), Suzanne Gorham (SG), Linda Phayre (LP), Mike Violano (MV), Frank Zimmerman (FZ), Noeline Grefrath (NG), Dennis Farrell (DF), Claudia Gonzales-Doell (CGD), and Rob Bicocchi (RB).

SUNSHINE LAW: Read by VF.

PUBLIC FORUM: No members of the public were present.

MINUTES: LP made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 24 meeting; DF seconded.

TREASURER'S REPORT: MV presented the treasurer's report and cash management fund. The total of the checking account, cash management fund, and capital account is \$96,737.86. A motion to accept the report was made by DF; seconded by FZ. The motion carried.

The current bills list (6843-6864) was reviewed. CGD questioned the two checks to Suez Water. MU clarified that they are for two different lines, the water and the fire. A motion to accept the bills list was made by SG; seconded by DF. The motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Building and Grounds Committee. MV shared that the committee met with the new Borough Administrator, Durene Ayer, to get clarification on the budget and expenses. A letter had been sent previously regarding the roof, brick, and masonry work. RB recently informed the Board that money had been set aside by the Borough to complete the work. Durene clarified that the \$50,000 grant money was not budgeted by the Borough, but represents a grant that would come from a state, federal, or third-party agency.

The optic ring will need to be explained by an individual with technological expertise. The leak in the adult area appears to have been alleviated. The leak on the lower level was inspected by Deer Roofing, who believes that there is a problem with the seal of the circular window. The repair seems to have alleviated the leak, but the seal should eventually be permanently replaced. Durene will engage someone for an overall library building assessment, then prioritize projects. Funds will be set aside for bathroom repairs in 2022. Durene clarified that maintenance of the Library building is the Borough's responsibility.

VF opened discussion regarding the use of the Library's bathroom facilities during Recreation sponsored events in Veteran's Park. RB shared that Durene is working with NJ Transit to open the bathroom facilities. In the meantime, the Borough has requested for the Library to be open until 9:30 p.m. on Thursday nights for concerts in the park. Historically, the train station bathroom was open for use during events in the park. While it remains closed, the Borough has requested that the Recreation Department be granted permission to use the Library after closing, as the concerts run until 10:00 p.m.

The Board collectively agrees that opening the Library beyond normal operating hours places its assets at unnecessary risk and sets a new precedent for its use in this manner. The Board feels responsible for protecting the Library's assets and making decisions in its best interest and that alternative solutions should be pursued by the Recreation Department that do not require the alteration of established Library operations. The Board's position was detailed in a letter the committee sent to the Mayor and Council and Borough Administrator, Durene, on the Board's behalf. The letter explains the Board's position and requests an open dialogue in order to better understand the request and come to an amicable resolution.

Budget Committee. VF opened discussion regarding projects that will need to be completed. Since Durene clarified that the Borough is responsible for maintaining the Library building, an assessment will be completed and project needs will be established and prioritized in accordance with the report. Durene agreed that quarterly meetings with the committee will help keep all parties informed.

MV addressed an issue the Library has encountered this year with the receipt of operating budget funds. In the past, a quarter of the funds were received at the start of each quarter. Currently, the funds are received one quarter in arrears. This change was made without notification. RB will discuss the allocation of funds with Durene.

Additionally, the Borough's contribution for staff pensions is a new expense this year. It was not previously included in the Library's budget as a line item. This year, workers' compensation and liability insurance payments have greatly changed. The committee will begin 2022 budget planning in September and would benefit from meeting with Durene at that time.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: MU shared that the Shy Touba garden project was approved. The Friends decided to rename the annual scholarship in Shy's name.

MU worked with Armand Marini on quotes for the roof and repointing of brick and masonry. MU is gathering grant information to be put toward hold lockers and digitizing historical documents and photos.

Udemy was renewed and will be promoted through the Library. Two ESL tutor training workshop sessions were held. A Culture Club program ran, allowing people to share information about their native countries.

The Friends resumed donation collections. Donations will be on hold for the summer and restart in September in preparation for a possible book sale in October.

Twenty-three children's programs and 13 teen/adult programs are running with 598 attendees.

TRUSTEE EDUCATION REPORT: None.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: None.

OLD BUSINESS: Previously covered by MU under Director's Report.

NEW BUSINESS: Janet Dunn will retire July 2. A part-time employee has been temporarily hired to replace her while a suitable long-term replacement can be hired.

VF questioned the mask policy. MU clarified that the mask mandate will remain until the fall, particularly because children under 12 are not yet eligible to be vaccinated.

MEETING ADJOURNED: A motion to adjourn was made by DF; seconded by FZ. The meeting was adjourned by VF at 8:26 p.m.