

MINUTES
OF THE EDISON TOWNSHIP LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING OF OCTOBER 12, 2021

Present: Patricia Massey, Fiona Meade, Lisa Krauze, Sue Cason O'Neill, Jyothi Pamidimukkala, Tony DePasquale, Mohin Patel (arrived at 7:07 PM)

Absent: David Ye (excused), Neville Arestani

Also Present: Dominick Bratti (Board Attorney), Allan Kleiman (Library Director), Debra Sarr (Assistant Director)

The President called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. She led the Salute to the Flag and read the Open Public Meetings statement; roll call was taken.

On motion and second (DePasquale, O'Neill), the minutes of the regular meeting of September 14, 2021 were approved with a correction on page 3. On roll call: yes – Massey, Meade, O'Neill, Ye, Pamidimukkala, DePasquale; absent – Arestani, Patel, Ye; Abstain: Krauze

On motion and second (DePasquale, Pamidimukkala), the September 14 Closed Session minutes were approved. On roll call: yes – Meade, O'Neill, Pamidimukkala, De Pasquale; abstain - Krauze; absent – Arestani, Ye

On motion and second (O'Neill, Pamidimukkala), the August 10 Closed Session minutes were approved. On roll call: yes, Krauze, Meade, O'Neill, Pamidimukkala, DePasquale; abstain: Patel; absent: Arestani, Ye

President's Report:

Ms. Massey reported it was yet again a busy month.

The Personnel and Finance Committees both met.

Ms. Massey attended the September Trustee Check-in. Another is scheduled for Thursday, October 14 at 7pm.

Ms. Massey attended the Fall Family Festival on Amboy Avenue and hopes other trustees were able to attend as it was a very nice event. Ms. Massey thanked

Allan, Debra, Jake, and Sandra for being present and Robbie for setting up the new library tent.

She hopes the Library and Trustees will participate in future community events.

Ms. Massey was happy to hear bilingual story times began, and thanked Kitty and Radha.

She stated that she has not yet heard of any Library Construction Bond winners.

She hopes community members continue to sign up for library cards and will consider joining as a Friend of the Library once it is up and running.

Financial Report:

Ms. Massey asked if there were any questions about the September report.

Mr. Patel asked questions regarding line items on the presented balance sheet.

Mr. Patel asked for additional documentation on line items from the bill list.

Mr. Kleiman stated the transition of Edmunds from the Township to the Library is almost complete. As the Board knows, several people were responsible for accounts payable over a relatively short period of time and the constant transitions created gaps in accomplishments and records. This was one reason to move to Edmunds as it ensures a cleaner audit for 2021.

Mr. Kleiman mentioned the Board may want, at some point, to consider moving the capital to a three to nine month CD.

On motion and second (Meade, O'Neill), the bill list was approved. On roll call: yes- Massey, Meade, Krauze, O'Neill, Pamidimukkala, DePasquale, Patel; absent – Arestani, Ye

On motion and second (Massey, O'Neill), the board approved a transfer of \$22,554.00 from capital to operating. Roll call vote: yes- Meade, O'Neill, Pamidimukkala, DePasquale, Krauze, Patel, Massey; absent: Arestani, Ye.

Mr. Kleiman noted that whenever money is transferred back and forth, the Board should anticipate a resolution as it is formal practice.

Director's Report:

Mr. Kleiman stated that the Library's circulation is starting to return to pre COVID-19 numbers. The Library began its first in-library programming. The participation trend tends to be 75% in person and 25% via Zoom.

Staff is engaged in working out new details and reengaging with the public as the public returns. The after school crowd is not as big as it used to be. Main and North Edison parking lots are being used as pickup locations, which offers a great opportunity to develop a PR handout with library information.

The Library has started working on a parent brochure and visits to schools have begun. Last week's visits included one to a middle school and one to a high school.

Mr. Kleiman noted that he has spent a large portion of his time focusing on the Edmunds finances and Debra did her first balance sheet.

The Library had its first Labor Management meeting with the Presidents of both unions and the Vice President of AFSCME to talk about library issues that are union related.

The Library is already beginning its preparations for summer reading 2022. Libraries can never start too early for summer reading. This upcoming year will have a committee with staff from every library department with the goal to increase participation numbers.

The Library attended a fantastic Fall Festival Day. It was an opportunity to chat with over 1,000 local residents. Allan, Debra, Jake and Sandra handed out 500 bags of library information to potential users of the whole library system. Mr. Kleiman continues to receive "we love the library" feedback.

Additionally, more people are visiting all three locations to study, read books, and use computers. The Clara Barton Branch is being used more for after school studying and the Main Library is sometimes entirely filled with people studying. People look to the library to study, use computers, and sit and read.

The 2020 audit is starting Thursday. It should take about a month as the auditing firm works with both the Library and the Township.

As Ms. Massey mentioned, there was a September Trustee Check-in.

After speaking with staff, Mr. Kleiman gleaned it has been a long time since there has been a holiday party for the staff and the Library Board. The Library will plan one for this year on a Friday in December. It is a good opportunity to start the new year with good vibes.

Mr. Patel raised a question regarding the marketing budget.

Ms. Krauze suggested, in relation to starting summer reading preparation early this year, that the Library involve the public schools. Mr. Patel concurred and, as the School Superintendent's Liaison, said he would work with promoting the Library's program.

Ms. Massey requested that Mr. Kleiman let the board know the date and time of the holiday party.

Committee Reports

Ms. Massey noted the Finance and Personnel Committees met. Much of what was discussed was already covered in the meeting.

The Personnel Committee met to review the Professionals Contract.

The Facilities Committee did not meet as they are waiting to hear who was awarded the Construction Bond Act funding.

The Strategic Planning Committee will meet next week.

Mr. Patel asked for an update on the Library Bookmobile. Ms. Massey noted it would be nice to have a small sized bookmobile for outreach events and referred the status of the bookmobile to Mr. Kleiman.

Mr. Kleiman stated he is beginning to investigate what is out there and available. It will have to go out to bid. The buzz he is hearing is that a bookmobile van will take at least a year due to shortage of vans everywhere. He noted the Library is trying to buy an extra van and cannot find any in New Jersey.

Mr. Kleiman also stated he is going to virtually attend the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Conference.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Ms. Massey noted the bill list was already approved.

Ms. Massey asked for a resolution to approve a professional contract for an accountant to review and oversee the Library's finances. A professional accountant will help with the transition to Edmunds and the annual audit.

On motion and second (Massey, O'Neill) the resolution was passed. Roll call vote: yes – Meade, O'Neill, Pamidimukkala, DePasquale, Krauze, Patel, Massey; absent – Arestani, Ye. Motion passes

Mr. Kleiman noted the Finance Committee agreement was that this would be, initially, a temporary contract for three months and in January it will be reviewed again for an annual contract.

Mr. Patel asked about the accountant fees.

Ms. O'Neill commented it is all about "checks and balances" which the Library lacked for several years. With the transition from town's Edmunds to Library's Edmunds, it will be good to make sure that everything is correct and being done by the law.

Mr. Patel stated the price is "100% reasonable."

Mr. Kleiman noted it will increase the Library's transparency.

Public Comments:

There were comments on library programs, staff, ballot boxes, and the Board of Trustees.

Announcements:

Mr. Patel raised a question regarding the architect's plans for the North Edison Branch.

Ms. Massey responded that everything depends on if the Library is awarded funds from the Construction Bond Act. If the Library does not receive the grant then it will be back to the drawing board.

Ms. Massey wished everyone a safe and happy Halloween. Also a healthy Fall. She hopes to hear about the Construction Bond Act awards soon.

The President asked if there was a motion to adjourn.

On motion and second (Massey, DePasquale), the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on November 9, 2021 at 7pm in person at Council Chambers.