

The Johnson Public Library Board of Trustees held their meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, November 10, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Ms. Kristi Izzo, Presiding
Mr. Anthony Marseglia
Laura Kirsch, Esq.
Ms. Cindi Ortiz
Ms. Robin Coles
Ms. Sonia Recarte

Ex-Officio

Mr. Robert Sanchez, Supt. of Schools

Also Present

Ms. Tara Cooper, Director
Mrs. Ann Bowen, Principal Account Clerk
Ms. Genesis Jais, Librarian

Not Present

Ms. Linda Flynn
Ms. Stephanie Von Rudenborg, Council Liaison

2. Meeting Notification Statement

1. One copy posted on the bulletin board of the Library
2. One copy filed with the City Clerk
3. One copy posted to the Library's Webpage-noting meeting will be conducted via Zoom
4. One copy sent to the Record

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, October 13, 2020

Ms. Izzo said on page 3 number 8 last sentence the word expended should read expanded.

On motion of Mr. Marseglia, seconded by Ms. Ortiz, the minutes of the October 13, 2020 Board meeting were approved as corrected.

4. Public Comment

No report

5. Treasurer's Report: Ms. Kirsch

a. Report: Ms. Kirsch

October 31, 2020

Year-to-Date

Operating Account

Income:	\$248,235.47	\$2,548,224.55
Disbursements	253,605.97	2,367,703.33
Cash balance October 31, 2020		\$ 180,521.22

October 2020

Capital Account:

Income:		\$ 6.27
Disbursements:		<u>00.00</u>
Cash balance October 31, 2020		\$30,589.09

October 2020

Donation Account:

Income:		\$ 00.27
Disbursements:		<u>00.00</u>
Cash balance October 31, 2020		\$ 1,310.89

October 2020

Paver Account:

Income:		\$ 1.69
Disbursements:		<u>75.00</u>
Cash balance October 31, 2020		\$ 8,154.94

On motion of Ms. Ortiz, seconded by Ms. Recarte, the reports were accepted.

6. List of Bills: Ms. Cooper

November 2020 Budgetary Account Bills	\$219,098.65
November 2020 Paver Account Bill	75.00

On motion of Ms. Coles, seconded by Mr. Marseglia, the bills were approved for payment.

7. Budget and Finance Committee: Ms. Kirsch

Ms. Kirsch said everyone should have gotten a copy of our 2021 budget request. Once the Board approves the budget we will send to the City.

We have asked for a 4% increase over what was allocated for 2020, some things have gone up some have gone down; we are trying to hold the line. You will note the request is not much greater than what we initially requested than last year. The third of a mil for Hackensack has gone down a little unfortunately. Most of our costs are fixed so we really don't have too much play. We are just going to have to see what happens.

Ms. Kirsch asked if anyone had any questions.

Ms. Ortiz asked if once all the construction is done, do you think the situation with the third of a mil will change.

Ms. Kirsch said yes, I believe the assessments will start going up, but it is going to take time.

Ms. Cooper said it will start going up at some point but it may take five or ten years.

Ms. Kirsch said the City Council has a five year plan not to raise taxes.

Ms. Izzo asked if we are in year two of the plan.

Ms. Kirsch said we are in the second year, but we asked for 4% - we will see what happens. Hopefully they will give us something and not cut us again. Last year we did not make waves, but this year we may have to go out to the public and let them know what is going on.

Ms. Cooper thanked Ms. Kirsch for all her hard work and time spent working on the budget.

Ms. Izzo thanked Ms. Kirsch and Ms. Cooper for their work on crafting the budget. Having the descriptions with the line items is very helpful for the Board and Council to understand what is fixed and why some items have gone up.

Ms. Cooper said you may have noticed that the salary line is essentially flat, but does include our contractual increases. However, some folks have left and with our decreased operations I have chosen to not fill the vacant positions yet. I think it is a number we can work with, as the first six months of 2021 our hours are probably going to be limited.

On motion of Ms. Kirsch, seconded by Ms. Coles, the budget was adopted as the library's preliminary 2021 budget.

Ms. Cooper said since the Board has approved the budget, she and Ms. Kirsch will craft the narrative to send to the city with the budget.

8. Building and Grounds: Ms. Kirsch

Ms. Kirsch said we are getting new drapes for the Marketing Office; we are having our air filters upgraded to improve air quality and doing basic winter maintenance. Laurie and Genesis are updating signage throughout the building.

Our paver for Mayor Meneses has arrived and been installed. We hope we can open the courtyard and do some kind of formal presentation in the spring. It will depend on health issues and where we are with Covid.

You all received the email from Tara informing you we did not get any grant money. It is a major disappointment. I agree with Tara about talking to our architect about breaking up our requests into separate pieces for the second wave. Hopefully we can get some money. We will keep you posted on that.

Ms. Izzo asked if you could find out if Mr. Iovino worked on any of the projects that were approved and if so to try to get an inkling of what would be the best phases to work on.

Ms. Cooper said Mr. Iovino has already been in contact. He said we had a very worthwhile project and was surprised we were not chosen. If you looked at the list you will see that most of the awards went to libraries for straight repairs or for projects that were to bring the library up to ADA code. None of them were for enhancing community spaces. One other project that Mr. Iovino worked on was Englewood and their request was similar to ours and they were not chosen.

I find it interesting as to what they chose to fund and what they didn't. Seven out of ten projects were rejected.

I think that Ms. Kirsch and I should go over the projects; one project which I was surprised they didn't fund was the sprinklers. I do think the sprinklers and the lower level we can get done. I am sure Ms. Kirsch agrees with me. We should speak with Mr. Iovino to see what else he thinks should be included.

Ms. Kirsch said the bathroom upgrades should also be included.

Ms. Kirsch asked if we know what the timing is for the second wave and applications.

Ms. Cooper said at this time, all we know is the applications will open in early 2021. They have not given a time frame for how long we will have to apply. All the narrative is finished - we would not have a ton of work to do. Mr. Iovino would have to work on the plans to take out the parts that we are not applying for this time.

Ms. Izzo asked if all the applications were approved in full.

Ms. Cooper said yes, they only funded complete projects. So it seems it would be best to go low on the amount of the request and keep it under \$500,000, as that is what are other libraries are planning to do when they apply a second time.

Ms. Cooper said if she gets any more information she will share it with the Board.

Ms. Cooper said it may take more time but the projects will get done.

Ms. Kirsch said she and Ms. Cooper will be talking about fund raising and timing and putting together a campaign. Obviously the Board will be involved and be an integral part of our campaign. We will reach out to some of the community leaders – Main Street Business Alliance and so on. We wanted to start this last year, but until we get a firm feeling to where we are going it is not a good time to start asking for money. We can start talking, planning and putting together a budget. We have talked about hiring someone to do fund raising, but mostly you pay them and get little in return. We will keep it in mind, but at this time we are not going in that direction.

Ms. Cooper said an alternative to outside help is to hire someone who could do work on capital projects, but could also help secure grant money for individual programs that the librarians are promoting. It might be costly as a full time employee would have benefits, but we could think of hiring someone on a part time basis.

Ms. Kirsch said we do have community support and that is important, Tara and I will work on what our fund raising program could look like. There are certain grants that the library can't apply for, but the "Friends" can and they will work with us. We will keep the Board posted.

9. Community Affairs:

Ms. Ortiz read from the November Press Release.

(See attached.)

Ms. Cooper reported that our social work intern, Valerie, is working with Genesis on a series of health care videos, to get people ready to apply during open enrollment on the health care marketplace.

10. Librarian's Report: Ms. Cooper

Ms. Cooper said thanks should go to the staff for their help with the narrative and statistics that are in the Director's Report.

Ms. Cooper said our circulation is great - last month we circulated almost 6,000 items. We are continuing to offer in-person services, it is not jammed, but it is a steady flow. This past month the staff answered over a 1,000 reference questions. We will miss the lawn and look forward to opening it in the spring for

programming and eventually to the public. Halloween was a big hit, it was not quite the Haunted Library, but it was still enjoyable.

Staff Day is tomorrow and I have created longevity awards, a certificate and a pin, for people who have been here five, ten, fifteen, and twenty five etc. years, and all employees will receive a team pin. It is a nice way to recognize their years of service.

We received a draft of the audit, it was perfect. Thank you Ann for your work, no comments or recommendations.

We should have hard copies soon; I will let you know when. If anyone wants a copy please let me know. We will send a copy to the City.

I am researching how to implement a "Library by Mail" service, it will be helpful, especially now. There will be a cost involved, but we get the postage at a reduced rate and I'm sure it will be very popular. I will get back to you when I have more information.

We recently entered into a handshake agreement with Englewood and Teaneck to share the cost of performers and expert programmers for adults. We may end up doing this with children's programming also. We need to consider this as we probably will be doing digital programming for the next several months.

We are dialing back about our digital programming and focusing on other projects.

Generally everything here is going well, and the staff is doing an amazing job.

Ms. Cooper said on the 15th it will be her two year anniversary. She thanked the Board for their support.

The Board expressed their appreciation for the excellent job she has done as Director.

11. Old Business

No report

12. New Business

a. January 2nd 2021

Ms. Cooper asked the Board's approval to close on Thursday December 31st 2020 and Saturday January 2nd 2021.

On motion of Ms. Kirsch, seconded by Ms. Ortiz, the Board approved the request.

13. Adjournment

On motion of Ms. Ortiz, seconded by Ms. Coles, the meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Cynthia L.C. Ortiz
Secretary

