

The Johnson Public Library Board of Trustees held their meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, March 9, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call

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

Ex-Officio

Ms. Stephanie Von Rudenborg, Council Liaison

Also Present

Ms. Tara Cooper, Director
Mrs. Ann Bowen, Principal Account Clerk
Ms. Genesis Jais, Librarian
Ms. Gladys Cepeda, Library Associate

Not Present

Ms. Sonia Recarte
Mr. Robert Sanchez, Supt. of Schools

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, February 16, 2021

Ms. Cooper noted the name of the Assistant Secretary was incorrect and should be changed to Tara Marie Cooper.

On motion of Ms. Izzo, seconded by Ms. Coles, the February 16, 2021 minutes were approved as corrected.

4. Public Comment

No report

5. Treasurer's Report: Ms. Kirsch

a. Report: Ms. Kirsch

February 28, 2021

Year-to-Date

Operating Account

Income: \$236,296.74 \$550,784.02

Disbursements \$165,355.49 \$336,324.43

Cash balance February 28, 2021 \$214,459.59

February 2021

Capital Account:

Income: \$ 5.20

Disbursements 0.00

Cash balance February 28, 2021 \$30,612.22

February 28 2021

Donation Account:

Income: \$ 00.22

Disbursements: 00.00

Cash balance February 28, 2021 \$ 1,311.88

February 2021

Paver Account:

Income: \$ 1.39

Disbursements: 00.00

Cash balance February 28,, 2021 \$ 8,161.12

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

b. List of Bills: Ms. Cooper

March 2021 Budgetary Account Bills \$149,911.89

On motion of Ms. Kirsch, seconded by Ms. Ortiz, the bills were approved for payment.

6. Budget and Finance Committee: Ms. Kirsch

Ms. Kirsch said that the 3rd quarter 2020 medical bill for \$166,637.02 was received from the City. It is possible the bill will be paid in April if our cash flow stays steady. We are being careful with our money and will see where it goes. We have not heard from the City about our appropriation, hopefully our library campaign will be of some help.

Ms. Von Rudenberg said she has not heard anything from Mr. Mangin about the library appropriation, but she is requesting that the appropriation not be cut.

Ms. Kirsch said the budget is bare bones and it may be necessary for the Trustees to make some hard decisions about what times we are open and what services we can provide and the City Council should be aware of the situation.

Ms. Von Rudenberg said that the Council is aware.

7. Building and Grounds: Ms. Kirsch

Ms. Kirsch said that Mr. Lombardi and Mr. Schrock were kept busy with all the snow – shoveling and salting the property several times a day. They also oversaw the snow removal by our contractor MTS. Mr. Lombardi carried in and put up the new very large canvases in the art exhibit. Stern Environmental did a check for bugs and changed all the traps throughout the building. The maintenance staff has been and is continuing to collect and remove all the trash in the basement and recycling books. We have been upgrading lights to LED where needed. Otherwise the building is in pretty good shape.

Ms. Kirsch said she and Ms. Cooper have discussed opening the grounds in the Spring, hopefully we can do that. We can talk with the “Friends of the Library” about piggy backing on the event with a drive for membership and support and possible fund raising. Ms. Kirsch said she will keep the Board posted. It will be necessary to order benches and trash receptacles.

Ms. Flynn asked would it be an official opening, with ribbon cutting.

Ms. Kirsch yes, but with the pandemic there might be limits and it may be necessary to move the event to the summer, possibly the fall.

Ms. Cooper said some things completed last year in anticipation of a spring opening include expanding Wi Fi, installing two additional security cameras and finding a vendor to do safe insect spraying. We still have signage, furniture and possibly additional lighting to do.

Ms. Kirsch said we will also update the plantings.

Ms. Izzo said as the only green space on Main Street are picnic tables for staff and patrons being considered.

Ms. Kirsch said yes, we are still discussing the space and what will be possible.

Ms. Cooper noted that the space will also be used for concerts and additional programs.

8. Community Affairs: Ms. Ortiz

Ms. Ortiz read the press release for March 2021.
(See attached)

9. Personnel Committee: Mr. Marseglia

Mr. Marseglia reported that two staff members are due for recognition - Michelle Ferreira, Library Associate and Gavin Godbolt, Library Associate as both have achieved their Masters in Library Science.

On motion of Mr. Marseglia, seconded by Ms. Ortiz, the Trustees approved an annual salary of \$50,000 for Gavin Godbolt and a promotion to Librarian for Michele Ferreire with an annual salary of \$58,000 as of April 1st 2021.

Ms. Cooper said that Ms. Ferreira's promotion reflects the fact the she is basically a one person department which should have a Librarian in charge. Mr. Godbolt is a Library Associate in the Children's Department which already has a Librarian in charge, but a salary adjustment was necessary.

10. Policy Committee: Ms. Ortiz

Ms. Ortiz reported that the Policy Committee met via Zoom to discuss the "Working Remotely Policy". The library is scheduled to open more hours and it will be necessary to have more staff in the library. The Committee agreed to decrease the amount of remote work time to 40%.

On motion of Ms. Kirsch, seconded by Ms. Coles, the Trustees approved the change in the “Working Remotely Policy”.

11. Strategic Planning Committee: Ms. Izzo

Ms. Izzo said the Committee met and reviewed the Strategic Plan and the action items that Ms. Cooper had given us and we do not think it makes any sense to engage in a new strategic planning process right now because of the pandemic, we are waiting for the grant application to find out what is happening with that and the ongoing extensive renovations in the City all of which will impact a strategic plan. We are going to come up with a yearly action plan for every year. There are some changes we want to make to the original plan in the process of that action plan. Some measurements that are described in the original plan do not work for our library. We will bring the plan to the Board for review and adoption.

Ms. Cooper thanked the committees for their work.

12. Librarian’s Report: Ms. Cooper

Ms. Cooper asked if anyone had any questions about the report as written.

a. Overview of Director’s Report

Ms. Cooper reported the electronic circulation has doubled since last year, and once electronic circulation increases it does not usually go down. Going forward we may want to allocate more funds to this service. We are looking forward to the warmer weather and having programs on the lawn in the coming months. The State Report is due next week and is almost complete. She stated that she is keeping watch on the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act there is no new information on the second round of applications at this time. We have reopened for browsing in the last couple of weeks and even with the bad weather we have been busy. Next step is to add additional hours.

Ms. Cooper went on: “I have emailed the Mayor, Council, City Manager and all of you the “WeLoveJPL” responses we received with over 200 amazing and great stories about how our patrons feel about our library. I want the Mayor and Council to realize what our library means to the people we serve. I want to thank Ms. Meeske and Ms. Jais for helping us do this in such a short turnaround time. We are hoping to hear shortly about our budget request.” A gift of a small ceramic plate with an illustration of the library was received from a person in Pennsylvania. We are working on getting the lawn open and hope to plan a

kickoff event with the “Friends.” We will wait to see what happens in the next month before making any plans.

13. Old Business

Ms. Izzo said that the February meeting had actions approved when we did not have a quorum, so we should approved the actions now.

Mr. Marseglia said the only action in February was the approval to pay bills.

Ms. Kirsch said the approval of the February minutes by the Board was all that was necessary to comply with the state regulations.

14. New Business

a. Expansion of Services

Ms. Cooper said that with the rate of Covid transmission under an average of one she would like to expand the library hours by opening the library on Tuesday and Thursday at 9:00 a.m. instead of the present opening at noon. It would be a few weeks before we actually implement the new opening time and we would not advertise it until we are closer to the date of the change. Ms. Cooper said she suggests the change be planned for Monday April 5th to give the staff time for scheduling and to keep an eye on what is going on with Covid.

On motion of Ms. Ortiz, seconded by Mr. Marseglia, the Board approved changing the opening time from 12 noon to 9:00 am. as of Monday April 5th.

Ms. Izzo questioned if library workers are eligible for the Covid vaccine?

Ms. Cooper said no.

Ms. Cepeda said that at a meeting with state officials librarians were told they could list themselves as educators who are eligible to get vaccinated.

b. Juneteenth – New City of Hackensack holiday (June 18th)

The City has declared Juneteenth an official paid holiday this year for all city employees Ms. Cooper said we will have to add this date to our union contract.

On motion of Mr. Marseglia, seconded by Ms. Coles, the Board approved closing the library on June 18, 2021 in honor of Juneteenth.

c. Library lawn rules, name and signage

Ms. Cooper asked what should we call the area. All agreed that the “Lawn” will be the official name. Rules will include the banning of all sports, alcohol, music, smoking and vaping. There will be signage requesting people social distance.

Ms. Cooper said a library employee asked if the library should offer the service of finding people appointments for vaccinations.

After a discussion it was decided not to go forward with that service. But information on where more help might be found to get an appointment could be compiled.

Ms. Cooper said she would like to reschedule “Staff Day” which was approved for Friday April 16th.

The Board agreed that she can reschedule staff day.

15. Adjournment

On motion of Ms. Ortiz, seconded by Ms. Izzo, the meeting was adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Cynthia L.C. Ortiz
Secretary