

BOARD of TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting
November 21, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.

Board Members Present: Renee Boyer, President. David Clemens, Vice President. Jenny Shore, Finance Officer. Ellen Rieger, Secretary.
Library Staff: Ryan Athanas, Library Director. Linda Meglio, Assistant Director. Katherine Rath, Senior Account Clerk.
Absent: Joyce Hilgeman, Ph.D., Trustee. Cristina Spinelli, Treasurer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by David Clemens, Vice President.

AUDIT REPORT

The regular order of business was suspended so that Mr. Al Coster could present the annual audit to the Board. Mr. Coster stated that the Library is in excellent financial shape and that all the basic financial procedures were in accordance with the accounting principles generally used.

Motion by Mr. Clemens to approve the Harborfields Public Library Audit Report for the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, as prepared by our auditors, Baldessari & Coster.

Second, Mrs. Shore.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

CALL FOR NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business added to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mrs. Rieger to approve the minutes of the Board meeting of October 26th, 2023, as presented.

Second, Mrs. Shore.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Motion by Mrs. Rieger to approve the financial reports for the period ended October 31st, 2023, as presented.

Second, Mrs. Shore.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Shore to approve the payment of the following Warrants for November, 2023:

Supplemental Warrant for Payroll, dated October 31st, 2023, in the amount of \$180,068.35.

Warrant 11-23-1 \$ 412,007.72

Warrant 11-23-2 Gift Fund \$ 649.19

Second, Mrs. Rieger.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

Mrs. Spinelli, Treasurer, reviewed the financial statements, warrants and payroll records for the November 10th and the November 24th, 2023, payrolls. Mrs. Shore, Finance Officer, reviewed and approved the Payroll Registers for the November 10th and the November 24th, 2023, payrolls.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Mr. Athanas began by thanking the Board of Trustees for their dedication to the mission of a Public Library. The administration and staff acknowledge the impact of their unwavering support through the years.
- **Partial Tax Exemption for Volunteer Firefighters and Ambulance Workers:** Mr. Athanas has spoken with Peter Miller, Chief of the Greenlawn Fire Department, who seeking the Library's support in regard to the revised law § 466-a of the Real Property Tax Law (RPTL) property tax exemption of up to 10% for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers. The Town of Huntington passed a resolution (2023-534) adopting the tax 10% tax exemption. Mr. Athanas contacted the Assistant Town Tax Assessor, who confirmed that when the School District adopts the resolution, the Library, which holds no taxing authority, will be covered as well.
- **Staff Appreciation Breakfast** – The Library held its annual Staff Appreciation celebration. Sarah Schnepf was honored for reaching her 30 year milestone. Sarah has held almost every job that the Library offers - Children's Page, Librarian Trainee, Children's Librarian, Head of Teen Services, Reference Librarian and Head of Computer Services, Head of Technical Services and now Head of Reference. Sarah has had a profound impact on the library and its services. The Library also said goodbye to two staff members, Peter Sostarich and Samuel Lellis who are leaving to pursue other opportunities.
- **Studio 31:** The studio is getting close to completion. We are awaiting sound panels, insulated curtains and glass installation for the doors.
- **NYSLRS Annual Retirement Invoice:** Mr. Athanas and Mrs. Rath discussed the newly received NYS Retirement and NYSHIP Health insurance estimates and they are much higher than anticipated. This will have an effect on budgeting for 2024-2025.
- **Annual Friends Craft Fair** – Sue Hope and Jennifer Handler once again did an amazing job running the Friends' Craft fair with an estimated 1000 Shoppers.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **Brainfuse:** Scheduled a *Brainfuse* Workshop for staff that was well attended. *Brainfuse* is the online homework help service offered through SCLS. Their President, Jack Rothstein, conducted an in-house demonstration of some of the new features *Brainfuse* has to offer including the ability to speak to an online tutor which, for the younger student, is very helpful. After the presentation, Kim was able to share this with parents who were very impressed. Uploading essays, especially for college applicants, is another important feature.

- **College Now:** On the heels of the *Brainfuse* demo, I scheduled a *CollegeNow* webinar and a few staff members attended. *CollegeNow* would be an addition to *Brainfuse* and is brand new. It offers FAFSA information as well as tips on the college interview and application process. It will be presented at SCLS in January and possibly be offered as a coordinated order if enough libraries are interested.
- **Word of the Week:** Something I saw at Sachem Library when Kim and I did our “Summer Tour” was *Word of the Week*. I thought this was a cute idea and our Page, Emily, happens to need the Art Honor Society service hours. I was happy to give her the assignment of putting together a chalk board that will feature one new hand-drawn word per week with its definition. She’s been doing a great job.
- **Peter Sostarich:** I’ll miss Peter Sostarich as he moves on but welcome Brian Lambert to the Tech Services Department. With Brian’s move to Tech, it left an opening at Circulation. I had pulled applications for Melissa thinking that we’d hire out before we offered the position to Brian, but instead shifted gears and interviewed Julia Collins for the vacated Circulation position. Julia seems to be working out fine.
- **Staff Appreciation Breakfast:** I helped Karen with the Staff Appreciation breakfast, honoring Sarah for her 30 years and saying farewell to Peter Sostarich and Sam Lellis.
- **Studio 31:** I’ve been enjoying the planning of the studio space with Ryan. It’s been great to see the room evolve into the space that we envisioned and, hopefully, that the public will find useful as well. I reached out to Vincent Ambrosio, the Mass Media/Video Production teacher at the high school, to schedule a time when we could meet to see his space and share our progress. We hope that we might be able to collaborate in some way in the future or, at the very least, hope that he might share the news of our space.
- **Goals for December:** Employee Handbook wrap up, just in time for LILRC’s webinar’s Guide to Crafting and Promulgating the Library Employee Handbook...very timely.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

The Board reviewed and discussed the Departmental Reports noting that our employees are truly changing the culture of HPL. The Board greatly appreciates the obvious enthusiasm shown in these reports.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Motion by Mrs. Shore to accept the Personnel Report dated November 21st, 2023, as attached.

Second, Mrs. Rieger.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence this month.

STATISTICS

The Board reviewed the statistics for October and noted the increase in library visitors, webpage activity and an impressive 25% increase in the circulation of books.

OLD BUSINESS

NYLA CONFERENCE

Motion by Mrs. Rieger to pay the NYLA registration fee for Mr. Clemens per the Board’s original motion on September 28th, 2023, although he was unable to attend the conference due to extenuating circumstances.

Second, Mrs. Shore.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

SCLS ANNUAL BUDGET

The Board discussed the proposed 2024 SCLS PALS budget and agreed with the proposed expenditures. Mr. Athanas will sign and submit the ballot on behalf of HPL.

STAFF REQUESTS TO ATTEND CONFERENCES

The Board reviewed requests from staff members wanting to attend major conferences in 2024.

Motion by Mrs. Shore to approve expenditures for Linda Meglio, Assistant Director, and Kimberly McCarthy, Young Adult Services Librarian, to attend the The ALA Library Learning Experience (LibLearnX) Conference in Baltimore from January 19th to January 22nd, 2024, for Patricia Moisan, Head of Children’s Services, and Brian Adams, Reference Librarian, to attend the 2024 PLA Conference in Columbus, OH, from April 3rd to April 5th, 2024, and for Mr. Athanas, Library Director, to attend the 2024 ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition in San Diego, CA, from June 27th to July 2nd, 2024 with maximum expenditures to be determined by the Library Director based upon current estimates, customary maximums and budgetary limitations, as discussed.

Second, Mrs. Rieger.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mrs. Shore, seconded by Mrs. Rieger, to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Rath for Ellen Rieger, Secretary