



LIBRARY BOARD of TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting
October 24, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Board Members Present: Jenny Shore – President, Ellen Rieger – Vice President, Renee Boyer – Finance Officer, Joyce Hilgeman, Ph.D. – Secretary, David Clemens – Trustee

Library Staff: Ryan Athanas – Library Director, Linda Meglio – Assistant Library Director, Katherine Rath – Senior Account Clerk

Absent: Cristina Spinelli – Treasurer

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Jenny Shore, President.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

CALL FOR OLD/NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business added to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Dr. Hilgeman to approve the minutes of the regular Board meeting of September 26th, 2024, as presented.

Second, Mr. Clemens.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Motion by Mrs. Rieger to approve the financial reports for the period ended September 30th, 2024, as presented.

Second, Dr. Hilgeman.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Rieger to approve the payment of the following Warrants for October, 2024:

Supplemental Warrant for Payroll, dated September 30th, 2024, in the amount of \$181,116.28.

Warrant 10-24-1	\$	147,941.77
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Warrant 10-24-2 (Gift)	\$	2,400.00
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Second, Dr. Hilgeman.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

Mrs. Spinelli, Treasurer, reviewed the financial statements, warrants and payroll records for the October 11th and the October 25th, 2024, payrolls. Ms. Boyer, Finance Officer, reviewed and approved the payroll registers for the October 11th and October 25th, 2024, payrolls.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Meetings:

- a. Huntington/Smithtown Zone Meeting (Special):** Our Huntington / Smithtown Zone has two members of the Board for the Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS). One of our seats, currently filled by retired Half Hollow Hills Community Library director Michelle Lauer-Bader, will be vacant after her term ends. It was suggested by Kevin Verbesey, SCLS Director, that our Zone hold a special meeting to discuss the position since there were multiple interested potential candidates. After much discussion, Brianna Baker-Stines, currently a member of the Smithtown Library Board, was put forth as the lone candidate. Voting will take place at an upcoming meeting.
- b. Golf Outing:** On Monday September 30th, Mr. Athanas participated in the Annual Suffolk Public Library Director's Association (PLDA) Golf Outing. This golf outing raises the most money in New

York State for the New Yorkers for Better Libraries PAC. The PAC lobbies with the New York Library Association (NYLA) in Albany on behalf of all Libraries in NY. With their help, Construction Grants and state aid have improved or stayed relevant in the minds of State Legislators.

c. 33rd Annual Conference on Libraries and The Future – The Future of Reading:

The conference was held on Friday, October 18th and featured the following speakers:

- i. Dr. Joanna Christodoulou reviewed the science of reading through the lens of cognitive neuroscience. She specifically discussed the activity occurring in the brain while reading and the positive effects reading has on brain functionality.
- ii. Dr. Kathi Inman Berens and Dr. Rachel Noorda from Portland University discussed how the nature of reading is changing including what is read, how it is read, and where it is read. The reading transformation is especially interesting for Gen Z and millennials, 92% of whom check social media daily, and who read emails, text messages, and chats in games, but who also partake of more traditional reading like print books, e-books, and audiobooks.
- iii. Carol Ann Tack, Adult Fiction Librarian and Podcaster from Merrick Library, discussed how she navigated the twists brought about by COVID-19, the resilience of readers, librarians, and what tomorrow may bring.

d. Town of Huntington Anti-Bias Taskforce: The Huntington Youth Bureau, a Department in the TOH, has a department under them called the Huntington Youth Court. They are training volunteer HS teens of all schools in the Huntington area to serve on the Youth Court. Huntington School District and the Youth Court are using a Restorative Justice model instead of suspensions for some of the minor infractions (trespassing, fighting, damage to school property). Using this model, teens can opt to go before a jury of their peers (from other districts) in a trial like format. They are held accountable but are given sanctions to better their circumstances, such as community service, and are given links to appropriate services. They are assigned to a case worker to ensure they follow up and, if successful, the infraction is kept off their record.

2. Staff:

- a. **Children's:** Aisha Khanfri has been working here for a few weeks and Patty Moisan is very pleased with her progress so far.
- b. **Technical Services / Adult Reference:** When we hired Rachel Bram for the technical service position, we knew she had her master's in Library Science. After being fully trained in cataloging, we are shifting her over to a part-time Librarian I. This will give us more flexibility for scheduling at Adult Reference and it will give her additional tasks including the ability to take on cataloging tasks that Civil Service typically reserves only for Librarians.
- c. **Social Worker:** We will start receiving statistics from Family Service League, providing a simple count of patrons that have used the service. So far, Gisella has continued to have appointments during every scheduled day she is at the library.

3. Building:

- a. **Leaking Fire Department Siamese Connection:** A significant leak was recently discovered in our water supply for our building's fire suppression system. A huge thank you to Mike Cronin for his diligence in looking for a solution to this issue. Our original estimate for repair was \$28,000. Mike found another company and the actual bill will be a small fraction of the initial estimate, saving the library thousands of dollars.
- b. **Cleaning the Outside / Bradford Pear Trees:** Mike and Vinny clean the outside parking lot almost every morning this time of year due to accumulating leaves, acorns and other tripping hazards that could affect our patrons and staff. One of the next landscaping challenges will be the necessary removal of (7) dead Bradford Pear Trees along the Wycoff parking lot.

4. Construction Projects

- a. **EV:** The electrician contracted by PISO will install a separate service for the ChargePoint EV equipment. The final step will be coordinating with PSEG to connect the new service.
- b. **MTG Room Wing Reno:** Mr. Athanas will be discussing the project with Architect, John Tanzi, and will provide an update at the next meeting.

5. Staff Appreciation:

- a. **Party:** This year we are combining our Staff Appreciation and Employee Milestone acknowledgements into one party. All staff and Board members are invited to the celebration on Friday, December 13th at 5 p.m. in the Large Meeting Room.
 - b. **Policy:** We are working on developing a policy that establishes what the library does to mark each employee milestone @ 10, 20, 30 & 40 years of service, how to tabulate the time served, and the gifts given. This will establish a fair and transparent procedure moving forward.
 - c. **Pins:** In the past, gifts given to employees were not clearly documented. Mr. Athanas believes there are two parts to acknowledging our employees; one is a gift of a milestone pin from the Library Board of Trustees and Administration to mark their time as an employee of HPL. The other could be a gift card from the Friends. Mrs. Meglio will discuss the possibility of the Friends sponsoring the purchase of these gifts at an upcoming meeting.
6. **History on the Web:** Mr. Athanas is working with Sarah Schnepf to put all of the amazing historical posters from the Centennial Celebration on the HPL website.
7. **Time Capsule:** Mr. Athanas has been in touch with the TOH Archivist, the Walt Whitman Museum and the Smithsonian to discuss creating another time capsule. Since this is an important part of the library's history and future, he wishes to make sure it follows modern procedures and history is preserved.
8. **Greenlawn Fire Dept. Engine Company:** The FD's annual Halloween 5k run will be held Saturday, October 26th at 9 a.m.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **The Polling Place Prep Webinar** offered by Common Cause NY's Executive Director, Susan Lerner, answered questions about issues that may arise for libraries that are polling places for the upcoming election. Some of the concerns that staff members from other libraries had included were 1.) what doors voters enter, 2.) signage placed identifying the "no electioneering" zone, 3.) expected foot traffic pattern and 4.) who from the poll site will help with line management. Working well with the poll site coordinator is important, as they help decide where the line will go, and they are the library's primary contact for vote-day issues. It was also recommended that we obtain a cell phone contact number for the Suffolk County BOE in order to avoid any problems should they arise. Our library actually has the ideal arrangement for a polling place since we can close the doors to the rest of the building and be somewhat contained.
- **The Assistant Directors Roundtable Meeting** was held at Comsewogue Library. A small group of Assistant Directors attended, discussed various building projects, the unfortunate flooding at Smithtown Library, and the sudden passing of a library employee at Brentwood Library. This unfortunate event has given their staff an awareness of never leaving a staff member alone in a room and to take notice if there's anything that seems unusual. Islip Library also celebrated its 100th year anniversary. They held a similar celebration to our Centennial and are celebrating throughout the year with programs that feature movies, books and music of that era.
- **The Great Give-Away** was a success! Thanks to the staff who helped with accepting donations of new and gently used items throughout the morning and early afternoon.
- **The Holiday Staff Party**, planned by the Library's Sunshine Committee, is scheduled for Friday, December 13th from 5 – 7 p.m. Similar to last year, Pages will be included in the festivities. We plan

to order food from L'ucello's in Greenlawn, but staff can also choose to bring a dessert or appetizer, and the festivities will include a round of musical Bingo, cupcake decorating and staff recognition.

- **The Security Staff schedule** will be managed by Mrs. Meglio effective November of 2024. The (4) Security Guards are easy to work with and agree to help cover shifts amongst themselves as needed.
- **Emergency Procedures** will be reviewed by the Hazard Reduction Team who is scheduled to meet on Friday, November 1st to walk the grounds and go over all the safety upgrades. The Team will also review the established Emergency Procedures, as they may need an update.
- **Friends Update:** There are just (12) spots remaining for the *Friends* Holiday Bus Trip to the Met and Holiday Market at Grand Central Station thanks to the newly-formed Social Media Committee who promoted the event. There will be (3) staff positions open for election in December; Secretary, Vice President and President. Both Jane Irving and Margaret Staib have been involved with the Friends for many years and have decided to step down. We will miss them and their tremendous dedication to the library.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

The Board discussed the monthly Departmental Reports and noted that they encourage Elizabeth Lockwood, Head of Circulation, to write her own book! They truly enjoy reading her submission every month.

PERSONNEL REPORT

There was no Personnel Report this month.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence included a thank you email from Ann Romano for the wonderful leadership provided to the Book Club by Librarian Karen McHugh, a letter from Harborfields High School Interim Principal, Neil Lederer, requesting use of the Broadway parking circle for their Homecoming Parade line-up on October 19th, and a donation from the Shore Foundation with accompanying letter thanking the staff and administration for their tremendous service to the community.

STATISTICS

The Board reviewed and discussed the statistics & noted the significant increase in circulated materials, attendance in Young Adult programs and in the number of patron visits.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

APPOINTMENT OF ABSENTEE BALLOT DESIGNEE & ACTING DISTRICT CLERK – APRIL 8th, 2025

Motion by Ms. Boyer to appoint Mr. Ryan Athanas, Director of the Harborfields Public Library, or his designee, for the purpose of accepting absentee ballots for the Harborfields Public Library Budget Vote and Trustee Election to be held on Tuesday, April 8th, 2025.

Second, Mr. Clemens.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

Motion by Ms. Boyer to appoint Mrs. Katherine Rath to serve as Acting District Clerk at the Harborfields Public Library Budget Vote and Trustee Election on Tuesday, April 8th, 2025.

Second, Mr. Clemens.

AYES: ALL. Motion carried.

NYS RETIREMENT SYSTEM RESOLUTION

The NYS Retirement System requires us to pass a resolution which establishes the number of hours an employee works in a full-day in order to calculate appropriate service credit. NYSERS was supposed to provide the language for the resolution, but they did not. Therefore, this resolution is tabled until further notice.

SCLS BUDGET

A draft of the proposed SCLS 2025 Operating Budget was provided. Mrs. Rieger posed questions about some of the budget lines that had the largest increases. Mr. Athanas will inquire with Roger Reyes regarding the reason for the increases in those lines. A vote will be required at a future meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Mrs. Rieger to go into Executive Session at 11:39 a.m. to discuss a personnel matter.

Second, Dr. Hilgeman.

AYES: All. Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Rieger to come out of Executive Session at 11:55 a.m.

Second, Dr. Hilgeman.

AYES: All. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Boyer, seconded by Dr. Hilgeman, to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Rath for
Dr. Joyce Hilgeman, Secretary

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

The **November Board meeting**, originally scheduled for Tuesday, November 26th @ 10:00 a.m., **was RESCHEDULED to Monday, November 25th @ 10:00 a.m.** so that we may have a quorum. Ms. Boyer will be unable to attend. Mrs. Shore may have a conflict but will keep us informed of her schedule.