

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes

April 18, 2017

Headquarters

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Don Burden, Peter Doyle, Grace Abramov, and Frank Wells; also present: Freeholder Director Lillian Burry, Library Director Judi Tolchin, and Assistant Library Director Heidi Amici.

Absent: Commissioners James Gray and Nancy Grbelja,

Guests: Muriel Smith and Stewart Fife of Library Interiors Inc., Design and Furnishings

The meeting convened at 11:16 am.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of April 18, 2017 with the following statement: “The Library Commission has complied with the regular requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act by giving written notice to the Press and County Clerk’s Office and by posting on the Library web page the date, time, and place of the meeting.”

A motion to accept the minutes from the March 16th meeting was made by Grace Abramov and seconded by Don Burden; Frank Wells abstained, majority approved without changes.

A motion to accept the closed executive minutes from the March 16th meeting was made by Grace Abramov and seconded by Peter Doyle; Frank Wells abstained, majority approved without changes.

Mrs. Swartz stated that several members of the Commission would not be able to attend the May 9th meeting. She suggested the meeting be rescheduled to Tuesday, May 23 at the Howell Branch. Director Judi Tolchin stated that she would speak to the Howell Branch Manager and determine if the meeting room would be available. Freeholder Director Lillian Burry suggested moving the meeting to the Colts Neck Library if Howell is unavailable.

Motion to schedule meeting on May 23 at the Colts Neck Library and hold a closed executive session at that meeting was made by Peter Doyle and seconded by Don Burden; unanimously approved.

State and National Report

Renee Swartz stated that Saturday, April 22 is a Volunteer Day program at the Eastern Branch Library. Renee stated that she would like to ensure publicity for the event.

The April 13th edition of the Two River Times contained an article about finding a job through the library. Mrs. Swartz stated that the Career Connections grant helped patrons tremendously. Director Judi Tolchin stated that the state librarian was impressed that the Career Connections center at Headquarters was located in the lobby, which was front and center to patrons, and extremely busy. Judi Tolchin also explained that Rosemary has had repeat patrons ask for more help or even to tell her of their success obtaining jobs. The State Library has requested an extension of this grant from the Department of Labor. Mrs. Swartz stated that she wanted a resolution sent to the State of New Jersey Library to support continuation of the grant and explain how pleased the commission was with this grant.

A motion to draft a resolution to the State Library and Department of Labor was made by Don Burden and seconded by Frank Wells; unanimously approved.

Mrs. Swartz congratulated Commissioner Don Burden regarding his work with the Shrewsbury Historical Society. She also explained that the NJ Center for the Book, which is funded by the Library of Congress with each state hosting their own center, has a program entitled Route 1 Reads. Each state on Route 1 contributed a book title by a local author encouraging citizens to read. The 2017 theme was Biography and New Jersey chose Bruce Springsteen's autobiography.

Renee stated that Freeholder Director Lillian Burry received the 52nd Silver Gull Award. Mrs. Swartz presented Lillian Burry with an orchid on behalf of the library commission.

Mrs. Swartz noted that the Commission agreed to require two to three large Sunday programs a year as stated in previous Commission meetings in 2016. She was concerned the April 23rd Hamilton Debate and Music program would not be a big enough event. Renee spoke with Director Judi Tolchin earlier about making the program bigger and inviting Tim McLoone to perform with his band. Director Judi Tolchin stated that Tim McLoone and the Shirley's would be performing after the historical Jefferson versus Hamilton debate event. Mrs. Swartz invited the commissioners to attend the program.

Freeholder Report

Freeholder Lillian Burry stated that the library tax levy was passed on April 13th at the Freeholder meeting. She asked Frank Wells about the Union Beach Library because she received an invitation to attend a ceremony on April 22. Frank Wells stated that the Head Librarian of the Union Beach Library has been awarded Citizen of the Year. There would be a dedication and recognition ceremony on April 22.

Renovation Presentation

Mrs. Swartz introduced **Stewart Fife of Library Interiors Inc., Design and Furnishings** for the renovation presentation. Stewart met with Director Judi Tolchin, received a tour of the library, and created the presentation based on his suggested changes. A few library commissioners previewed the presentation in a subcommittee meeting and wanted the full commission to view it as well.

Stewart Fife began the presentation by explaining that his company was founded in 1934. Library Interiors Inc., Design and Furnishings is a full service firm that does not outsource any of their products and they are state contracted.

The first change Stewart would make to the Headquarters library would be to fix non-ADA complaint furniture. He noticed that the library currently has one ADA accessible table and no compliant access to the circulation desk. There needs to be an addition of electrical receptacles, one option would be on the table tops. Computer seating and laptop counters were proposed to have more aisles and no longer in a circular configuration. The library was viewed as too static,

there needed to be flexible work areas with more electrical outlets. Mobile collaborative tables and chairs were more common for young adults but are now common in the adult areas of the library.

Stewart also stated that he wanted to add more color, and redesigning the space would make it more exciting and functional. Lounge seating would have a tablet arm and vinyl fabric. There would also be a mixture of tables and chairs in the lounge areas. Stewart suggested the Warden Company's In Charge Furniture. This was electrified furniture with outlets and inductive tabletop charging; there would not be a need for more plugs because the electric ran through the furniture. He also suggested a full display of DVDs and CDs in the entrance of the library with A-Frame shelves and wheels for flexibility. A magazine box would make it easier for patrons to locate back issues of periodicals. Stewart stated that the Roselle Library used the Magazine boxes and had a 600% increase of magazine circulation.

A whole new look was suggested for end panels. Stewart suggested adding OPAC touchscreens in the end panels. The electric would run through the shelves and is very popular with larger libraries.

Young Adult Area

Stewart suggested moving the Young Adult area into a space that was visible from the reference desk. He wanted to make it a magnet for Teens, no sign would be needed to identify the space. He wanted fun funky chairs to be added to the space with a special gaming area. He suggested booth seating with computer stations and clear acrylic study carrels.

Children's Area

Stewart discussed the children's section of the library. He suggested adding curved shelving with chairs. The chairs in the children's section could have laser photographs, Stewart explained that a local photographer could take pictures of the area and these pictures could be printed on chairs. iPad tables might be suitable for all ages and Laptops could be available for patrons. Stewart also suggested a crawl through area, through the shelves, for children to play and cozy reading spots for children. These are usually placed at the end of the shelves with a small lounge area for

families. Stewart explained that the children's room could have colorful accent pieces, vinyl furniture that was a mix of children's and adult pieces which would be durable, long lasting and difficult for children to move.

Meeting Rooms and Technology Room

Stewart explained that the meeting rooms should have more flexibility. Thermoplastic stacking chairs would be colorful and comfortable. The technology center would have electrified mobile tables and comfortable conference chairs.

Budget

The estimated budget for furnishings was \$850,000 to \$1,00,000, which was based on a square footage calculation. Additionally, new carpet would be an estimated \$400,000 and the meeting room carpet would be \$100,000.

Commissioner Grace Abramov asked Stewart Fife for the lobby plan. Stewart suggested that the curved wall might be removed to give more space. He would create a better display area to show off local artists and make the space more comfortable for those waiting for a ride. Grace Abramov also asked about the TV monitors in the library. Stewart stated that he would put the TV monitors at the circulation desk, lobby, and other grab and go sections of the library.

Commissioner Don Burden asked about laminate flooring instead of carpeting. Stewart stated that laminate does not have a good lifespan, it scratches easily and hardwood is a big expense. Stewart suggested using hardwood laminate on small areas of the library or using vinyl tile floors. The roll out vinyl would be suggested at lobby entrances.

Stewart ended the presentation and explained that it typically takes three months of planning with library staff and board. The furniture has a twelve week turnaround time and the overall timetable would likely be a six month process. Stewart stated that he spoke with Director Judi Tolchin and decided the winter would be the best time for renovation to have the least impact on library operations and patron use.

Mrs. Swartz asked Assistant Director Heidi Amici about how she felt about Stewart's technology renovations. Heidi explained that she would be very happy with these changes and agreed that the library needs more plugs and electric. Director Judi Tolchin stated that she visited the Princeton Public Library and noted that they have the highest technology in the newly renovated second floor.

Financial Report

Director submitted the financial reports into the meeting record.

Peter Doyle motioned to approve the financial report, Frank Wells seconded the motion; unanimously approved.

Director's Report

Director Judi Tolchin stated that the Financial Disclosure Statement must be filled out by the end of April.

The reciprocal agreement between Monmouth County Library and Ocean County Library has shown that Ocean County has borrowed more materials and will be providing a net lender payment of \$15,000.

A patron has filed a complaint regarding the Howell Library's interior looking dated. Judi referred them to the Township of Howell because under the agreement with towns, the township is responsible for furnishings, fixtures, equipment and utilities. The township is responsible for renovating the library for municipally owned buildings. The Monmouth County Library system is responsible for staffing the facility.

Holmdel Library plans were progressing. Renee Swartz explained that the Township of Holmdel and the builder of the new library held a fundraiser for the renovation. She stated that it was a beautiful building and will be a wonderful town center with a post office, library, and retail stores in the area.

Assistant Director's Report

Assistant Director Heidi Amici stated that there is slow bandwidth at Eastern Branch and Headquarters. The systems were tweaked to give better service and it has been noticed. Heidi has looked into pricing for dedicated bandwidth and it would cost \$3,000 per month as opposed to the \$200 currently spent on shared bandwidth. Commissioner Grace Abramov stated that the library needed to have internet that was acceptable to patrons. Don Burden asked if the dedicated bandwidth would be a yearly agreement. Heidi explained that this would be a multi-year agreement. Heidi also stated that the Princeton Public Library has dedicated bandwidth and their internet is 2 ½ times faster than Headquarters and Princeton library is much smaller than Headquarters. Renee Swartz stated that the library should be updating the technology and trying to stay ahead of the times. She explained that she wanted to pursue dedicated bandwidth. Don Burden agreed and stated that with the renovation of Headquarters, the library should have the best internet for patrons.

Heidi stated that she has already received quotes for dedicated bandwidth and will continue to look into it. Eastern Branch may cost more because a line would have to be installed. Commissioner Peter Doyle asked about internet at the other branches. Heidi stated that the branches are smaller and do not feel it as much as Headquarters and Eastern Branch. Judi Tolchin also stated that the townships pay the utility bills at branch locations other than Headquarters and Eastern Branch.

Capital Improvement Plan

Director Judi Tolchin explained the current and future capital projects: the Headquarters interior renovation, canopy at Eastern Branch, HVAC controls at Headquarters and Eastern Branch, Electronic signs, and Eastern Branch stairs. The renovation of the Headquarters restrooms was approved and currently in the [County Engineering Department] planning process.

A motion to approve a request in the amount of \$1,975,000 to the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders for capital improvements to renovate the Headquarters building of the Monmouth County Library was made by Frank Wells, seconded by Peter Doyle carried unanimously and approved.

A motion to hold a closed executive session to discuss union negotiations, contracts and personnel was made by Grace Abramov, seconded by Don Burden; unanimously approved.

Closed executive session began at 1:26 p.m.

Closed executive session ended at 2:15 p.m.

A motion was made to end the closed executive session by Frank Wells, seconded by Peter Doyle and unanimously approved.

A motion to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Monmouth County Library Commission, the County of Monmouth, and Local 2514 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees for the period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2018. Authorize Judith Tolchin, Director to sign said agreement on behalf of the Commission was made by Don Burden, seconded by Frank Wells; majority in favor; Commission Abramov opposed; majority approved.

A motion to authorize the Director to sign an agreement with the Essex Regional Educational Services Commission to use two dedicated meeting rooms in the Monmouth County Library Headquarters from 7/5/17 - 8/15/17 for services to the Migrant Education Program was made by Frank Wells, seconded by Peter Doyle; unanimously approved.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Grace Abramov; unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

The next meeting will be on May 23 in the Colts Neck Library at 11:00am.

Submitted by Marissa Chimento