

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
July 19, 2018
Headquarters Library

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Don Burden, Grace Abramov, Frank Wells, James Gray, and Nancy Grbelja; Also Present: Freeholder Lillian Burry, Director Judi Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici.

Absent: Commissioner Peter Doyle.

Guests: Stewart Fife, Glenn Goble, Chris Marion, Mike Aravich, Publicity Consultant Muriel Smith

The meeting convened at 11:21 am.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of July 19, 2018 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.” Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

A Motion to approve the edited open public meeting minutes of May 8, 2018, was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Grace Abramov abstained. Approved.

A Motion to approve the open public meeting minutes of June 19, 2018, was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. James Gray abstained. Approved.

Headquarters Renovation Update

Library Interiors Presentation- Stewart Fife

Timeline: Stewart shared the revised timeline and installation schedule. He stated that the project was moving along well and that the electrical engineering was ahead of schedule. He stated that the furniture approval for purchase was necessary, due to a time constraint as New Jersey State contracts would expire on July 31, 2018, and while they would be reinstated, the prices which were from 2012 may be increased. He stated that if purchasing went through today then the prices would be as expected. Stewart thanked the staff for their tireless work towards the project. Renee shared her thanks to Judi and the staff.

Stewart shared the schedule which outlined each day of work, stating that it would begin on the day after Labor Day. He stated that the entirety of the work would be done in September and October. He stated that the project would be substantially complete by October 31st through November 2nd. He also stated that ordering furniture at the end of July would mean that it would arrive by the end of October and could be installed by the beginning of November. He stated that he had taken his workers through the library and looked over the schedule and sequencing. He shared a numbered map showing the 16 phase installation of the flooring, which corresponded to the schedule. He stated that small parts of the library would be closed for short periods, and that the work in between the stacks would be continuously ongoing through the schedule, closing individual aisles one at a time. Grace stated that while portions of the library would need to be

closed at that time, patrons may need something in that area. Stewart stated that staff members could go into the aisles and retrieve the media for them.

Grace asked if electrical work would be done during the day. Stewart said that it would be done both during open and closed library hours, and that once the project came back from the engineering and electrical departments, they would speak to whoever was awarded the contract. He stated that projects such as the basement work could be done during regular business hours, but that core drilling and other disruptive work would be during off hours. He stated that the electrical engineers would work together with the flooring workers. He stated that the glass wall installers had been to the library today and that the glass walls would be installed in October. James asked why carpeting was done first. Stewart stated that the carpeting would need to be done first to make sure that it would be under the stacks in case they were ever removed. He stated that the carpeting would be protected and cleaned.

Chris Marion asked Stewart whether the permits were going through. He stated that John Marino had said that permits would be issued quickly once the architect had reviewed the project. Stewart stated that the architectural review would come after the electrical engineering review and would take much less time. Stewart stated that it was important not to disrupt the library for an extended time such as 4 months, and rather to do so for the least amount of time as possible, which is why the schedule is only 2 months long. Stewart stated that the schedule would allow the staff to prepare. He stated that the carpet had been delivered to the contractor and would be installed beginning the day after Labor Day and that things were moving along very well.

Judi stated that a significant number of changes were made to the original plan. She requested a seating area in the front of the library near the circulation desk for senior citizens or parents with children to take a break. She stated that the wall for the DVD room was moved from the original plan to keep it from obstructing the library. She stated that the art wall would include seating to better utilize the space. She stated that the blinds in the quiet study were removed. A proposed laptop area was moved from behind stacks for less privacy. She stated that the use of the library was investigated and a considerable amount of thought went into the plan. She stated, for example, that patrons were pulling soft chairs across the library to use them, so soft chairs were being considered rather than hard chairs. Stewart stated that the term "seating opportunities" was used, giving many diverse seating height options so that each person could find the seat most comfortable for them. He stated that frosted glass partitions would be added to some tables so that people would sit closer with privacy, and that larger tables would also be used for multiple users. He stated that 99% of seats would have an electric outlet adjacent to the seats.

Stewart shared the new circulation desk with lighted three-form panels that would spread out the area and include an ADA/children's checkout area. He shared that an information desk had been added for questions that did not deal with circulation, which would be mobile and say "Information" across the front. He stated that it would be the same color and form as the tables, bringing the aesthetic through the library. He shared the new book displays at the front of the library which would be a mixture of moveable and adjustable displays and would be done in the same color palette as the rest of the library. He shared that the side tables would all include electrical power. He shared the tables with cantered legs, frosted acrylic screens, electrical outlets and concealed electrical floor boxes would be the same design but different sizes. He

shared the CAL tables which would be used in the new showcase Reading Room to give the room its own flavor. He stated that the tables would include frosted acrylic partitions and some tables would include lighting. He shared carrels for the back of the library would have frosted partitions and electric hook ups. He shared that the computer work stations that would be unique to the library, including partitions. He shared that the computer areas would include diverse seating options with soft coverings of krypton fabrics. He shared the furniture for the YA room including break-apart mobile tables and moveable chairs, a big screen TV and headphones for gaming and trivia, booth seats, stools, resin top tables, and benches with electric hookups. Stewart shared the new DVD room where the red wire shelving would be moved into. Judi stated that the flooring in the DVD room would be changed so that when the DVD shelves were removed, the carpeting squares could be changed, and that the hard flooring would now be moved to the front of the library. Stewart stated that the old DVD room- now the Reading Room- would include lounge seating, chairs at the back window, and carrels. He shared the YA area behind the circulation desk that could be easily monitored by circulation and reference. He stated that the windows would be visible through the entire library, as it would be cleared of high furniture. He stated that the library computers would be placed near the reference desk so that they could be monitored, and that microfiche readers and magnifiers would be moved behind the reference shelving. He stated that 90% of lounge chairs had moveable tablet arms.

Stewart shared options for the 29 visible end panels of the stacks at the front of the library. These included, frosted acrylic end panels with a wood frame, and colored laminate end panels. He stated that the quote did not include the end panels and that the price of those would be added to the quote. He stated that it must be decided whether laminate or frosted acrylic would be chosen, with laminate costing \$14,453.36 and acrylic costing \$57,869.96.

Stewart shared that the lounge furniture would mostly include a tablet arm and wood arm caps and electrical hookups between almost every chair. He stated that the chairs at tables were also available at a café height for the high table with color panels at the back in navy for the main library and colorful in the YA room. He shared the chair options of originally proposed thermo plastic chairs and cushioned chairs, based on comfort and durability. He stated that there was a \$16,000 difference between two chairs but that the cushioned chairs offered much more comfort. He shared information about the new chairs for the circulation and reference desks.

Stewart shared that the Agati pods with frosted acrylic that would be added to the reading room. He stated that there would be a significant price difference between a table with three sides of frosted acrylic and the pods. He suggested 10 pods for the room which would cost \$67,000. He stated that the commission would need to decide on the financials for the carrels versus the pods, acrylic or laminate end panels, and thermo plastic or cushioned chairs.

Stewart shared a board of color samples including the chairs, tables, upholstery, and carpeting. Renee asked if it would be all blue or colorful. Stewart stated that it would be mostly blue and include other colors. He shared the bright modern maple wood tone for the edges of the tables, wood frame on end panels, arm caps for chairs, etc. He shared a laminate for the end panel with a raised pattern. He shared the silver leg color, the laminate table cover, and the end cap options. He shared two color palettes for the YA room, either red and blue or yellow and green. The commissioners voted for the yellow and green color palette. Stewart presented the fabric for the

seat coverings, the large lounge chairs, the lounge chair seats, and the computer chairs. He also showed the laminate top for the computer area. He suggested bringing color into the palette by adding colorful mesh backings to the chairs. He presented the fabric choices for the Agati pods and other chairs in the reading room.

Budget

Stewart shared the furnishing quote. Judi stated that, in addition, \$494,000 from the operating budget would be used for furnishings. She stated that there were certain options that would take the price above the budget. She stated that anything above the budget would take money from the capital and could take away from other options. Stewart stated that the three issues that required a decision were the thermo plastic chairs vs. the cushioned chairs, the vinyl endcaps vs. the frosted acrylic endcaps, and whether or not to include the Agati pods.

Judi shared the capital budget. She stated that \$977,000 had been received for phase one of the project, and that, of that \$977,000, the electrical engineering costs would be \$42,000, the Concord products (glass walls) cost would be \$67,000, the Murray Paving & Concrete costs was stated to be \$35,000 (though the cost would only be \$11,000 with the full amount encumbered), and the Direct Flooring cost would be \$623,502. She stated that the bronze tablet cost had been added mistakenly and would be removed from the capital account and moved to another budget line. She stated that, after these costs, there would be \$207,122 remaining. She stated that furnishings would come from the \$494,000 that had been set aside within the operating budget, bringing the total project cost higher than \$2.4 million. She stated that any expenditures over \$494,000 would use the \$207,122, which should be used to cover other parts of phase one including painting the walls, and all of the core drilling which would likely utilize most of \$207,122. She stated that going with the higher end choices would use funds allocated for the next phase of the project. She stated that the remaining \$1.4 million would include all of the children's area as well as the ceiling, lighting, lobby, meeting rooms, the high tech meeting room, and the staff areas.

Nancy asked what the cost for those would be. Stewart stated that there had been some estimates made including \$500,000 for lighting and ceiling. He also stated that, while the children's area furnishings had been budgeted for the same amount as the adult area furnishings- \$500,000- it was very unlikely that the children's area furniture would cost that much due to its smaller size. Nancy asked for the estimate of what it would cost all together including the high end furnishings. Judi replied that the estimate would be \$576,603, which would include 29 frosted acrylic endcaps, cushioned chairs, and 10 Agati pods. Nancy stated that after the \$494,000 taken from the operating budget, there would only be \$82,000 taken from the capital budget for phase two. She asked Stewart if the amount that was estimated for the children's room furnishings was at least \$82,000 overestimated. Stewart stated that it was reasonable that the children's room furnishings could come in around \$400,000. Nancy stated that this would even out the over-budget furnishings in the adult area. Nancy suggested moving forward with the higher end furnishings and that the adjustment would come from the money that would be made available during phase two. Judi shared her concerns about the unknown future costs of the ceiling and the lighting. Stewart stated that as soon as the electrical engineering was done, then that package could be put out for pricing. Lillian asked if the bathrooms would be included in phase one. Judi stated that the bathrooms, the water fountain, removal of the curved wall and flooring near the

bathrooms would take place concurrently with the renovation project but would be a completely separate project, handled by the county.

Judi stated that there would have to be two separate bills so that one could be allocated from operating and one from capital. Stewart stated that direct state contract which included the chairs, community lounge and Agati pods would have to come out of the same budget. He stated that the ESENJ contract could bill on two separate bills. Judi suggested using all of the Agati pods under one bill. Stewart agreed that asking vendors to split bills was difficult. Judi suggested holding off on the ceiling and lighting areas and go out for a grant for those for matching funding. Nancy agreed.

Don asked how the library would convey to the patrons that the library would be under construction. Heidi suggested signage with dates and the plan out front for patrons to see. Don asked how the message would be sent out to taxpayers. Nancy stated that it had been released in the paper. Stewart thanked the commission for their dedication to the project. Renee thanked the board, Judi, Heidi and the staff for their hard work. She also thanked Lillian for her support of the project.

Stewart stated that he would rework the quotes to include what had been decided and send them to Judi, Chris Marion and Helen in Purchasing so that they would have them by the next morning. James asked who the point person would be in-house while the work was going on. Stewart stated that there would be two people, Glenn Goble and his head installer Robert, who would be overseeing the project on a daily basis. James asked for Stewart to provide a weekly report to Judi of updates as the project was going along. Stewart agreed.

Freeholder Approval

Purchase Authorization- Furnishings

A Motion to recommend to the Freeholders to approve a furniture expenditure for a total of \$576,603 using \$494,000 from the operating budget and the remaining amount of approximately \$82,603 from the capital project expenditures that would include the 29 frosted acrylic end caps, cushioned chairs, and 10 Agati pods was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously Approved.

State & National Report

Renee stated that New Jersey Center for the Book had been selected to have the Ambassador from the Library of Congress for Children's Literature and the 2017 Poet Laureate Jaqueline Woodson would visit the state in 2019. She stated that New Jersey had been selected for the visit because, in the last 14 years, the New Jersey Center for the Book has had nine winners of the national essay contest in various grade levels- more than any other state in the United States. Renee stated that she would be attempting to secure the visit to happen at the Monmouth County Library Headquarters. She stated that it would be a great kickoff event for the grand opening of the newly renovated library in 2019. She stated that the Commission would need to pick a date if the library could accommodate the event.

Library Liaison Report

Lillian stated that she had been watching people come and go from the library and stated that she was impressed with the volume and diversity of patrons. She stated that it might be a good idea to set up a camera to capture a day in the life of the library and see how many different people utilized it. Renee agreed and stated that such photos could be used to create a photo-based annual report.

Lillian stated that the Commission had invited artist Franco Minervini to present his ideas for a sculpture to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Eastern Branch Library. She stated that neither she nor the artist had heard back from the Commission. Renee stated that the Commission had not voted to hire him to create a sculpture. She stated that he had been invited to meet the board and share an idea of what kind of artwork he would be interested in creating but that he had not been hired. She stated that he had sent in an idea for a \$56,000 sculpture and that she and other Commissioners agreed that they were not interested in the sculpture. Lillian stated she had been told that the sculpture would be in the range of \$30,000 but would need to be mounted and lit. Judi stated that Mr. Minervini had stated that the price of the stone alone would be \$18,000, and the labor cost would be \$34,000. He also stated that the sculpture would be simple because the time frame would not allow him to do anything more elaborate. Judi stated that the Commission could ask for a different design without the time limitation that it be ready by October, and present a mock-up at the anniversary event. Lillian asked whether she should tell Mr. Minervini that the commission was not interested in the project. Grace suggested that they may be interested in a different design. James asked whether the Commission was still looking into having Mr. Minervini design a sculpture.

Lillian stated that the library had received money in a bequest from Charles Raffetto amounting to approximately \$80,000. She suggested using that money to commission artwork for the 50th anniversary of the Eastern Branch library and incorporate thanks to the family during the ceremony. She requested that whether or not the library was not interested in his services that they let Mr. Minervini know. Nancy stated that there had been some confusion because both the artist and the commission had expected the other to present their ideas and budget for the sculpture. Don asked if there were restrictions on how the money could be used. There were no restrictions listed in the will. Don suggested that the Commission could purchase a pre-made piece in the Donald DeLue collection. Renee asked whether they would have the choice for selection of a sculptor given purchasing requirements or if they could choose Mr. Minervini without competition. Lillian stated that choosing a specific sculptor should not present a problem. Renee asked whether the Commission should follow through with Mr. Minervini. Grace stated that before they could follow through, they had to decide what they wanted. Renee stated that she believed the artist should come up with what was wanted. Grace asked if the Commission had come to a conclusion about what they wanted to do with the bequest. James stated that Mr. Minervini's sculpture of the eagle on Mount Mitchell had been a long process that took many meetings to figure out what exactly was wanted. Renee asked if Mr. Minervini should be asked back to talk to the Commission. Grace agreed. James stated that they would need to come up with some ideas before he returned. Lillian agreed that direction was needed. Don suggested that Mr. Minervini be invited to the Eastern Branch to look at the site.

A Motion to invite Mr. Minervini to return to meet with the Commission and present ideas in regards to a possible artwork commission to develop a sculpture for the Eastern Branch

library was made by Grace Abramov and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Holmdel Plaque

Lillian asked what about the bronze plaque that had been created for the Holmdel branch and had it been incorrect? Renee stated that it was titled "County of Monmouth - Holmdel Library" when it should have stated "Monmouth County Library- Holmdel Branch". Lillian stated that she had reviewed the plaque and made sure that the Commissioners names were on the plaque. Renee stated that the library was being charged for the plaque and its installation and asked what the price was. Judi stated that the library had been billed \$1,250 for the cost of the plaque and \$311 for engineering labor. Lillian and Judi agreed that the change was not significant enough to warrant a recreation of the plaque.

Programing- Military Band

Donna Mansfield stated that she had been asked by the Commission to acquire a Military Band to perform for Veterans Day, and that she had, after working on it since December of 2017, finally been able to get the 63rd Army Band to perform on Sunday, November 4th, at 2:00 PM. Renee thanked Donna and suggested that there should be publicity for the concert.

Eastern Branch 50th Anniversary Celebration

Donna stated that there would be exhibits throughout the month of October at the Eastern Branch including an exhibit featuring the fashion, music and books of 1968, a staff art show, showings of classic movies from 1968, Friends sponsored programs including a children's program by the Traveling Lantern Theatre of Sherlock Holmes Solves the Case, a scavenger hunt for teens, and Phil Brushci performing on Sunday, October 21st. Renee asked what the date would be for the big anniversary event. Donna stated that the Commission had chosen Sunday, October 28th. She stated that she had been asked to look for various bands and that all bands that she had found would provide their own sound, which was a necessity as the Eastern Branch did not possess such facilities. She stated that she had been asked to look for a Jimmy Buffet cover band and had found one called Parrot Head which included five musicians and would charge \$2,500. She also found a Billy Joel cover band called Danny V's 52nd St. Band, which was comprised of six musicians and would charge \$2,400. She stated that the band that Kim had liked the best and believed would be the best fit for Eastern Branch was a four musician band called The Intentions, who would charge \$1,400. She stated that they were very popular in the Eastern side of the county and had performed at Headquarters in February to over 500 audience members. She stated that they would play hits of the late 1960's including the Beatles. She stated that she had reached out to all of the bands and that they were all available on October 28th. Renee asked if there would be anything other than the band occurring. Donna stated that the other events would take place throughout the month. Renee asked about having a Jack Livingston program about Jazz on a Thursday, and that she didn't believe that the band would be a large enough program. Lillian stated that the commission should speak to the people at the Count Basie Theatre for contacts for a children's group. Donna stated that it would be necessary for groups to bring in their own sound which was a limitation. Lillian suggested a cocktail party with the band. Grace stated that they had had a wine reception and sculpture dedication after the library was closed in the past. Judi stated that serving alcohol in the library was a dangerous liability precedent, and that the library had been lucky that no accidents had occurred after the last event.

Frank suggested taking out a temporary insurance policy. Judi stated that the library was insured through the county. Grace suggested going through the Friends for a cocktail party. Renee asked what the Friends group was doing. Donna stated that they would be sponsoring the children's theater program, the teen scavenger hunt, and the Phil Bruschi concert. Renee shared a fundraising event that was being held for nonprofit organizations at Boscov's. Grace stated that the Howell Friends group would be participating. Renee stated that Donna should suggest the event to the Friends group. Renee suggested putting off the decision of the band until the August meeting.

Financial Report

June 2018 Financials: Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, & Grant Budgets

Judi submitted the June 2018 Financial Reports to the commission including the Detail Budget, Grant Budgets, Check Writing, and Reserve Budget wherein the Budget charged year to date was \$4,373,464.84 and the remaining reserve unexpended was \$2,263,68.31.

A Motion to accept and approve the June 2018 Financial Report including the Detail Budget, Grant Budget, Check Writing, and Reserve Budget was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Director's Report

Flooring Selection Authorization

Judi submitted the selection of the hard surface flooring to the commission for approval. The choice was approved.

Nonresident Borrowing Privileges

Judi presented a survey of county libraries whose borrowing privileges ranged from \$30 to \$200 to consider whether or not Monmouth County wanted to raise its non-resident borrowing fee of \$100 in light of Sea Girt library possible referendum to leave the County Library. Sea Girt's yearly taxation is \$411,000. Lillian invited Judi to the next Freeholder meeting in Sea Girt and Judi agreed to attend. Renee stated that she had asked Judi to create a survey of the county library nonresident borrowing prices in New Jersey, as Sea Girt's population may not realize that they would have to pay to get a card if the library were to leave. Judi stated that non-member rates varied with most libraries charging around \$100. Renee asked Heidi how many Sea Girt residents were utilizing the Wall Township library. Heidi stated that more Sea Girt patrons utilized the Wall Township library than the Sea Girt library. She stated that, while 1/4 of the households in Sea Girt were library users, there were not many households in Sea Girt. Lillian stated that Sea Girt would need a referendum to leave the county system. Judi stated that there could be a referendum on the November ballot. She stated that Sea Girt wished to run their library at \$250,000, tax at over \$700,000, and use the savings for future use of municipal tax relief by return of excess fund to the municipality. Lillian asked if Judi would like to give a report next Thursday on the Sea Girt library. Judi stated that they could work together and she would gather the facts and statistics. Renee stated that the library should create flyers on what the library offers and leave them at the meeting. Don asked if they should mail a position statement to Sea Girt residents. Judi stated that, while it was argued that the demographics of the town were changing to skew towards the older generation, she had spoken with residents who had previously lived in Middletown and had utilized the Eastern Branch library because it had the

resources that they needed. Renee stated that the Wall Township library was the counterpart to Eastern Branch in the Southern part of the county. Judi stated that a Sea Girt resident had encouraged other residents to acquire a Monmouth County Library card to see how much was offered and make an informed decision. James asked how cards would be voided if residents acquired a card and then the library chose to leave. Judi stated that the Sea Girt cards would be made invalid. Renee stated that it should be stated on the flyer that Sea Girt cards for Monmouth County would be voided if the town left the system.

Bequest Grant Fund

Judi suggested that the commission ask for the money from the Charles Raffetto Bequest be put into a grant fund so that it could be spent without restrictions and excluded from the general fund. Don asked if interest could be collected on a grant fund. Judi stated that she was unsure.

A Motion to establish a grant fund for the Charles Raffetto Bequest in the amount of \$78,370.71 was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Grace Abramov. Unanimously approved.

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Grant

Judi stated that Donna wanted to apply for a grant from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development “Community Library, Literacy and Career Pathway Grant Program” of up to \$100,000 for the fiscal year of 2019, announced on July 6th with an application date of August 3rd. She stated that it must be approved by the commission and then sent to the Freeholders for additional approval.

A Motion to approve the application for the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development “Community Library, Literacy and Career Pathway Grant Program” of up to \$100,000 was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Publicity Report

Closed Executive Session- Personnel, Contracts

A Motion to adjourn to Executive Session was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously Approved.

The commission adjourned to Executive Session at 2:57.

The commission resumed regular session at 3:06.

A Motion to resume Regular Session was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by James Gray. Unanimously Approved.

A Motion to approve the renewal of Muriel Smith’s contract at the rate of \$25 per hour plus reimbursement for the cost of travel and other expenses at the IRS rate was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by James Gray. Unanimously approved.

Next Meeting

A Motion to hold the meeting scheduled for Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at 11:00 AM at a changed in location to Eastern Branch Library was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by James Gray. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 3:12 PM.

Next meeting Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at the Eastern Branch Library at 11:00 AM

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Grace Abramov. Unanimously approved.