

**Monmouth County Library  
Commission Minutes  
April 10, 2018  
Headquarters Library**

**Present:** Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Grace Abramov, Peter Doyle, Nancy Grbelja and Frank Wells. Also present: Director Judi Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici.

**Absent:** Don Burden, James Gray; Also absent Freeholder Lillian Burry

**Guests:** Stewart Fife, Frank Gomes, Glenn Goble, Christopher Marion.

The meeting convened at 11:05 am.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of April 10, 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 open public meeting minutes of February 13, 2018, was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.**

**A Motion to approve the executive session meeting minutes of February 13, 2018, was made Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle. Grace Abramov abstained. Approved.**

### **Headquarters Renovation Update**

Stewart Fife of Library Interiors shared that additions had been made to the Headquarters renovation project, including lighting, electrical, ceiling tiles, etc. He shared that he had spoken with Chris Marion about the increase in the scope of the project. He stated that he had submitted a letter to purchasing which detailed what kind of financial budgets would be needed to cover the cost of the newly introduced expanded needs of the project. He shared that, within the new scope, electrical engineering would need to be accomplished for the project to move forward, including moving outlets and lighting, which would, unfortunately, lead to delays in the timeline of the project. He shared that the electrical engineer had stated that the electrical engineering would take six or seven additional weeks. He shared the quote for electrical engineering with Chris, and stated that as soon as the purchase order was issued then the electrical engineering could begin.

Chris shared that a request had been submitted in March to the Freeholders as part of 2018 Capital Request. He stated that an ordinance for additional funding in the amount of roughly \$500,000 should be introduced in May, with a bond ordinance adoption in June, and funds becoming available in late June or early July. He stated that, in the interim, they would continue to meet regarding the scope of services, the need for an electrical engineer, and to insure that needs were being met both for the library renovation and for future potential expansions, so that more changes would not be needed further down the line. He stated that he had met with Buildings & Grounds to make sure that they were ready to be on board with all that the project entailed. He stated that because additional electrical work required core drilling, the acquisition

of permits, etc., it would require a plan and specifications by an electrical engineer. He stated that the quote was submitted through cooperative purchasing contract method, and that he would have it verified with Helen Fiore of Purchasing and Jaqueline Trainor, Assistant County Counsel. He stated that he did not want delays but that it was important to do the project correctly.

Stewart stated that the delay would really be only a few weeks due to the lead time between carpeting orders and installation, furniture orders and delivery, and that the library would only be delayed for about four weeks. Chris suggested a sequenced timeline for the board, to talk about dates and timeframes as the project moved forward. Nancy stated that she was relieved that the project had all come together. She stated that she was glad that Stewart and Chris were making sure that everything was done correctly, and that nothing was being done halfway. She stated that she would rather have a delay and have the work be done appropriately with a great product at the end. Grace suggested that the timeframe be presented in order of how things should be done. Chris agreed that project sequencing was important. He also shared that he felt it was important that an electrical engineer be contracted to correctly deal with permits and other issues than have Buildings & Grounds tackle the work. Judi stated that she was glad that the expanded electrical panel would allow the library to move into the future. Renee agreed that additional power would be needed in the future and it was better to have it done now, at once, so they would be in a good position when future needs arose. Nancy stated that she was relieved that the Freeholders understood the issue and that she expected no problems in acquiring the additional funding to complete the project correctly.

Grace asked if a decision had been made about painting. Chris stated that Buildings & Grounds supervisor Bob Compton would be coming out to see if the wallpaper could be painted and that he would return with a recommendation. Chris stated that the project sequence would allow the work to be parceled out.

Renee asked when the renovation work would realistically begin. Stewart shared that in April, they would put in the order for electrical engineering, present the quotes for flooring, and make a plan for moving shelving and furniture. Frank G. stated that the lead time for the carpet would be six weeks but could possibly come in sooner. Stewart stated that he would like the carpeting to coincide with the electrical engineering, and that those two would likely be underway by June. Grace asked when the work would be done. Frank G. shared that the majority would be done during normal business hours with some overtime done on areas that needed to stay clear while the library was open, such as main areas or staff areas. He stated that it was possible to complete the renovation without ever closing the library as he had done in Old Bridge. Renee shared that the library did not typically close if they could help it. Grace asked if carpeting was chosen. Renee said that it was selected.

Nancy requested the timeline. Stewart shared that April would be dedicated to electrical and carpeting. He shared that in May he would like to bring in a presentation on products and palettes for furniture. He stated that he had been working with staff on recommendations. He also lauded the staff on the incredible job that they had done with weeding. Stewart also shared that in May they would like to come in with the glass wall quote, which would have a six week lead time, and the furniture quote, which would have a 12 week lead time, with the furniture arriving in August.

Renee asked if it was possible for the project to be finished by October. Stewart shared that the project could possibly be finished by September but October would be a safer bet, and would take into account time for possible issues. Renee suggested pairing the Eastern Branch 50th

Anniversary celebration with the grand re-opening of the renovated Headquarters library in October. Renee suggested scheduling a summer meeting to go over details. Stewart stated that the last selection could be made in May, and a meeting need not be made after then. Renee said that it could be added if necessary. Renee stated that she wanted to share publicity and did not want to announce a premature date for the finished product.

Renee stated that though the electrical had not been thought of originally, she was glad that it had been accounted for and the oversight fixed. Stewart shared that he had designed around the existing electrical and the idea that the electrical could be brought not only into the present but into the future really made a difference. Nancy asked about acquiring new ceiling tiles for the library. Stewart stated that the estimates he shared were not definite. He shared that exact pricing for the ceiling tiles could be acquired after the electrical engineering was done. Renee shared that she would like to submit the library for a prize in the spring. Frank G. asked about the process to order for the flooring. Chris stated that the quote would be taken to purchasing that day. Peter asked Chris if he was considered the project manager for the project. Chris stated that Stewart would be considered the project manager.

### **Scheduling of Closed Session May 8, 2018**

**A Motion to schedule the Closed Executive Session on May 8, 2018 was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.**

### **State & National Report**

Renee shared how glad she was that the commission had been so astute in putting together a renovation team that was well-prepared for any situation that may arise. She stated her relief that the project was on target and that Chris Marion, Deputy Administrator, was taking an active role to make sure it was done in a thorough and efficient way. Nancy agreed that Chris was helping to get things done quickly and efficiently. Peter asked where the commission was with the hiring of a project manager. Renee stated that the current team was sufficient and that the commission had chosen not to move in that direction. Judi stated that Stewart Fife had been awarded the contract as project manager. Peter stated that a resolution had been passed in the previous meeting to hire a project manager. Renee stated that the decision was that a project manager was needed, not that a new one be hired. Peter stated that Chris had pulled the team together, but shared his concern that no one would be in a position to manage the electrical contract. Judi stated that finding another project manager would force the project to start again from the beginning; Peter stated that as long as Chris was involved, they would stay on target for the project.

Peter asked who would be the point of contact for the electrical plan. Judi stated that it would go through the county. Peter asked who would hire the electrical engineer. Judi stated that they would be on state contract, and stated that the contractor that was associated with Stewart was Murray Paving & Contracting Company, who participate in many contracts under the state contract, including construction. Judi stated that Stewart was working with Murray and Gordian to engage the electrical engineer. She went on to state that Stewart had been awarded the contract as project manager at a cost of \$0 provided the work was done by state contractors, and to go back on that would be to revoke the contract to a certain degree. Peter stated that Chris' position insured credibility to the project. Judi stated that Chris had seen many large projects go through at the municipal level and brings a great amount of expertise to the table. She stated that Chris had called for the meeting of associated county departments to discuss the topics that needed to be brought forward, including technology, engineering, buildings &

grounds and purchasing. Renee stated that the renovation was poised to begin putting into motion what had been planned for more than a year. Renee suggested researching a project manager to have in case something happened.

Renee stated that she was pleased with the presentation and the fact that there was a timeframe for the project to move in. She suggested that Muriel write an article about the renovation when she returned from vacation.

Renee shared her concern that the library had not been vigorous enough with programming. She stated that she had come across programming in other libraries and wanted to share ideas. She shared that fake news was a timely concern and that many library programs around the country were tackling information literacy, defining truth and how people make up their minds. She shared the literature with Judi and suggested an educational process as a public service. For example, she called upon the Ulysses S. Grant impersonator that would be sharing a library program on a weeknight. She suggested that, instead, it be done on a weekend when more people would attend, and that other facets could be added to make it a larger program. She suggested pairing it with an author visit or a new book release to make it the focal point of a larger program for a larger audience.

Renee shared that there was going to be a Volunteer Recruitment Fair coming up at Eastern Branch, and stated her concern that the Friends of the Library were not participating, though they were actively searching for volunteers. She suggested that someone share the idea of participating with the Friends. Grace stated that membership in volunteer organizations was often limited to older generations, as younger individuals may be spread too thin between work, children, and other responsibilities. Judi stated that she would invite the Friends to the event.

Renee shared that the American Association of University Women was in the process of spearheading a program of STEM courses for women. She suggested that we offer to host one of the courses at the library, as well as creating similar programs for our patrons. Judi shared that Makers Day, which had included over 1,200 people, was highly focused on STEM. Renee also suggested getting more involved with the current culture and keeping programming attuned with what was going on in the community. Heidi stated that Veronica Stevens had created many STEM programs for teens and that they were very popular. Renee stated that the publicity for these programs should be improved.

### **February & March 2018 Financial Reports**

Judi submitted the Financial Reports to the commission including the Detail Budget, Grant Budget, Check Writing, and Reserve Budget.

**A Motion to accept and approve the 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.**

### **Sirsi Voucher Approval- Authorization for Director to Sign**

Judi shared that there had been a holdup in purchasing for Sirsi. She stated that the purchase had already been approved by the commission, but, since it was over the \$10,000 signing threshold, she required permission to sign the voucher.

**A Motion to allow Judi to sign the Sirsi voucher of \$145,000 was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.**

#### **Revisiting the Founding Era- \$1,000 Grant Approval**

Judi shared that Donna Mansfield had applied for a Founding Era grant of \$1,000 and requested approval.

**A Motion to approve the Revisiting the Founding Era Grant in the amount of \$1,000 was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.**

#### **Authorization for Funds for Learning, LLC to act as agent for Monmouth County Library for E-rate Application Assistance**

Heidi shared that the state of New Jersey sponsored a program to help with discount internet pricing for libraries, and that the state library had consultants to assist with applications. She requested authorization to sign the letter.

**A Motion to approve the Authorization for Funds for Learning, LLC to act as agent for Monmouth County Library for E-rate Application Assistance was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Nancy Gbelja. Unanimously approved.**

#### **Authorization to Seek Quotes for New Website**

Heidi stated that the current website was dated in its aesthetics and that the technology needed an upgrade. She also shared that Joomla had opted not to continue the project, and that the website would be moving on to Wordpress. Judi stated that the cost would not be under the \$10,000 limit that would allow her to sign for it but she expected that it would be under the \$17,000 purchasing threshold. Peter asked why the Joomla connection did not want to continue. Heidi stated that the website technology had moved on but that the Joomla consultants were antiquated in their ideas. Renee stated that a new library website would be a great addition, especially coinciding with the library renovation, and suggested including areas on the website to promote information literacy. Heidi stated that the goal was to have the new website by the end of the year. Judi stated that it was important to move forward quickly to move onto the new server, and because of online security issues that needed to be addressed.

**A Motion to procure quotes for the new library website including ADA compliance was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Nancy Gbelja. Unanimously approved.**

#### **Library Security**

Renee asked if anything was being done about security in the library in light of recent events. She stated that other public buildings and even department stores had security measures put in place. Peter agreed that security was vital. Renee stated that librarians may not be trained about what to do in a violent situation. Judi stated that 33,000 hours of service each year would be necessary to provide security guards to the library system. She shared that the library had daily issues with patrons with mental health issues that were addressed with the code of conduct that had been put into place and that police were called if problems persisted. She stated that both Headquarters and Eastern Branch had emergency action plans in place. She stated that if security measures were implemented at Headquarters and Eastern Branch but not

at the other library branches, employees may feel concerned that they are not as protected at other branches. She shared that some branches had panic buttons installed.

Renee stated that there was nothing in place to prevent an issue from occurring. Grace suggested installing metal detectors at the entrance doors. Judi stated that someone would then be needed to be stationed at the metal detector and check bags, and that many patrons were carrying metal laptops. She stated that the county had introduced active shooter training in 2016 for branch managers, but the county had not yet made it available for the general staff, though they may create printed materials to share. Judi also stated that security for the library would be a significant expense.

Renee suggested writing a letter to the Board of Freeholders, sharing their concern about possible safety and security issues that may need addressing. Heidi shared that they had been attempting to get active shooter training implemented for all staff members. Renee stated that she would like the commission to go on record stating that they were aware of the fiduciary responsibility that security is a concern, and that it should be brought to the county in case something happened. Nancy brought up the fact that it was necessary to sign in when entering other county buildings, such as the Hall of Records, but that the library was a public place. Frank agreed that a letter should be written. Renee stated that the letter should include that there were already measures in place, but that more were needed to keep the library safe. Judi stated that a draft would be brought to the next meeting.

**Motion for communication with Board of Freeholders of concern of security for library made by Frank Wells seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.**

### **Director's Report**

Judi stated that she had been at the Freeholder meeting the day that a presentation had been made for Freeholder Lillian Burry, celebrating her accomplishments in honor of National Women's Day. She stated that Freeholder Burry had been presented with a proclamation of thanks by Senator Vin Gopal, lauding her as a trailblazer and an inspiration to all women. Judi suggested that the commission send a letter of congratulations to Freeholder Burry. Renee suggested sending flowers or preparing a surprise to honor her at the next meeting.

Judi shared that the Sea Girt mayor was considering a withdrawal from the county library system to be decided by a referendum, citing the county tax of \$410,000. Judi shared that she had attended the meeting as the face of the library to share the many services that the library provides to support the community, and that there would be another meeting the following day that she planned to attend, and make a statement if the topic was presented. She stated that she had heard from patrons who were attempting to gather support to stay in the system. Renee shared her gratitude that Judi had been so proactive, attending every Freeholder meeting to represent the library, and that the library having such an active presence in county government boded well. She shared that going to the Sea Girt meeting was proactive, and that she was thankful to Judi for answering questions and ensuring that they were aware that they were getting great value as a part of the county system. She thanked Judi for her hard work.

Judi stated that the Tinton Falls library would require a significant amount of improvements, roughly \$200,000 if they hoped to reopen in the same location. She shared that no plan had been decided yet, but that the board was in favor of renovations and the town was as of yet undecided.

Judi shared an update on the recruiting activity. She stated that in 2017 there were 39 personnel actions. In 2018 there were 24 personnel actions thus far, with 7 recent personnel actions including filling two vacancies and 5 promotions. She stated that the library had continued the effort of focusing on personnel and bringing forth the commission's agenda to become fully staffed. She stated that a number of setbacks had been experienced including retirement, which is the main reason that employees had left the system. She stated that Heidi and Donna would be recruiting at the Rutgers SC&I Career Expo as well as the Brookdale Career Fair. She stated that the recent article in the Two River Times had been helpful, bringing forward at least one application. Judi stated that the Two River Times had been very gracious with publicity, putting forth another article about the library's new Kanopy streaming service as well. Renee stated that she had thanked the Two River Times for their coverage. She shared that she had been asked to be a part of the Monmouth County Arts Corridor, and that she would encourage a partnership with the library.

Judi reminded the commission that Financial Disclosure Statements were due at the end of April or a fine would be imposed. Judi reminded the commission that they had decided to recognize volunteers including the Master Gardeners, the ESL teachers and the AARP tax volunteers, and suggested a reception for them in June at Eastern Branch. She suggested imposing criteria for recognition, such as 100 hours of service or a large service project.

Judi shared that a number of veterans programs had been put into place by Donna Mansfield. Renee suggested that there should be an article in the paper to publicize the programs. Judi stated that she would share the lineup with Muriel. Judi shared that Sue Domas, Wall Township Branch Manager had been featured in the Coast Star. Renee asked if the Food for Fines program for National Library Week had been publicized. Judi stated that the county was in charge of publicity for the program. Renee suggested a minimum of 3 articles be published per month for the library.

Judi shared that Buildings & Grounds would be working on acquiring banners for the front of the library and requested authorization, which the commission granted. Judi shared her thanks that Buildings & Grounds had worked hard to beautify the building, including parking lot repairs and repaving.

### **Essex Regional Education Services Commission Request**

Judi shared that the library had received a request from the Essex Regional Education Services Commission for the migrant education program to utilize the library once again for their classrooms in the summer, which the library had always granted before. She stated that it benefitted the local community as many students came from the Englishtown and Freehold area.

**A Motion to approve library facilities for the Essex Regional Education Services Commission for Summer 2018 was made by Peter Doyle seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.**

### **Closed Executive Session**

**A Motion to adjourn to executive session to discuss personnel and contracts was made by Frank and seconded by Peter. Unanimously approved.**

**The Commission adjourned to Executive Session at 2:06 pm.**

**The Commission resumed the regular session at 2:45 pm.**

**A Motion to resume regular session was made by Nancy and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.**

### **Renee Swartz Room at Eastern Branch**

Frank shared that he had been in contact with the County Attorney with the aim to name the Eastern Branch building after her. Unfortunately, the county only named buildings after people posthumously, but he suggested working to name a room after her. Freeholder Burry had suggested to Frank tying the dedication to the 50th Anniversary Celebration at Eastern Branch.

**A Motion to approve the dedication of a room at the Eastern Branch library to Renee Swartz in honor of her commitment to the library was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Grace Abramov. Unanimously approved.**

### **Assistant Director's Report**

Heidi shared that Makers Day program had been a huge success, with over 1,200 people attending. She shared that the event had been heavily reliant on Wi-Fi, and that the help of the information services teams of John Zawadzki and Nick Trotta were indispensable. She shared that Chris Pecci always worked hard to help the library, and that it made such a difference for the program, which included virtual reality, basketball, robotics, STEM, building and much more. Renee shared her concern that the Makers Day event did not receive enough publicity coverage, and asked why the event was not held more often. Heidi stated that Makers Day was held on a specific date during the year, and that the event takes a year to plan. Judi stated that the program incorporated many community partnerships- some at a cost to the library, some at no cost. Frank suggested that Muriel write up an after the fact report for the event. Heidi stated that she would be sending a letter of thanks to the county for their assistance, including pictures of the event. Renee asked how much it would cost to have a supplementary advertisement in addition to an article in the Asbury Park Press or the Two River Times.

Renee ended the meeting by thanking the commission for the honor of naming a room after her at Eastern Branch, and thanked Frank for coordinating the effort. She stated that she was delighted to be associated with such wonderful people and proud of the wonderful accomplishments that they had completed throughout the years. She congratulated the staff for the splendid job that they did running the library. Judi stated that she completed her work with a great team and a wonderful commission behind her.

### **Adjournment**

Next meeting Tuesday, May 8, 2018- Holmdel- 11:00 AM

**A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.**