

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
August 7, 2018
Eastern Branch Library

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

Absent:

Guests: Glenn Goble, Franco Minervini, Donna Mansfield, Kim Avagliano

The meeting convened at 11:13am.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of August 7, 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 July 19, 2018, was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Peter Doyle Abstained. Approved.

A Motion to approve the closed executive session minutes of July 19, 2018, was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Peter Doyle Abstained. Approved.

State & National Report

Renee reminded the commission of her participation in the New Jersey Center for the Book stating that, 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. She stated that the National Book Festival, a free festival, would be held on September 1, 2018, in Washington, D.C., and that 60,000-70,000 people typically attended. State centers display literary materials from their states and many famous authors lecture.

Headquarters Renovation Update

Library Interiors Update

Judi stated that Glenn was in attendance because the preliminary architectural review had found some issues that included egress space and crowding. Glenn stated that Stewart had left the cost of 10 lounge chairs and 10 tables out of the original budget. He stated that there were some small changes to be made to remove or change fixtures, and that the savings would cover the oversight of the chairs which amounted to \$36,000, with an additional \$6,400 in savings. He stated that the changes, made to increase egress and space within the library, would be:

- One four-person table removed
- One four-person table changed to one six-person table
- One lounge chair removed from the circulation seating area, changing the plan from six chairs to five
- Two Agati Pods removed from the Reading Room, changing the plan from 10 pods to eight

- Two tables added to Reading Room
- Ten lounge chairs and tables added to the back of the library
- A change of displays from two 5' x 6' displays to two 4' x 24" displays

Renee asked if these replacements and revisions would fit in with the aesthetic of the library. Glenn stated that the aesthetic and quality would be the same. Nancy stated that the plan had been approved with what was necessary and was not in favor of changing the plan. Renee stated her concern that other costly items could be removed if these items were deemed necessary and then changed. Nancy asked if the budget would stay the same. Judi stated that it would. Nancy agreed but stated that she did not want to go back and change decisions. Judi stated that the overall plan would stay the same with about \$6,000 in savings. Lillian asked what would be done with previous Headquarters furniture once it was replaced. Judi stated that the library would have to follow whatever disposal methods that the county agreed to but that it would be ideal to offer the furniture to branches. James stated that, to alert the public of the change, there should be a rendition of what the renovation would look like including dates of area disruption. Don stated that it would be better to put on the TV screen so that it could be easily updated and changed. James requested that Glenn supply a visual display to show patrons what was being done in stages and asked when it would be delivered. He also requested a weekly progress report. Renee stated that Stewart should be at every monthly meeting

A Motion to accept the changes to the plan was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

Purchase Authorization- Furnishings

A Motion to approve the purchase of furnishings from the following state contract vendors:

- Agati \$51,571.19 charged to Operating Budget**
- Library Interiors \$1,600 charged to Operating Budget**
- Library Interiors \$6,560 charged to Capital Budget**
- Exempless corp \$45,346.56 charged to Capital Budget**
- Exempless corp \$2,879.21 charged to Capital Budget**

was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously Approved.

Eastern Branch 50th Anniversary Celebration & Sculpture

Sculpture

Lillian introduced Franco Minervini, stating that the Commission was interested in a more detailed idea of his design. Franco stated that his design would be a seven foot limestone circle coming out of a book representing the endless knowledge that comes from books. He stated that he would deliver the sculpture, but that it would be up to the library to mount, install and light it. Lillian stated that the public works department would likely install the sculpture. Renee asked if this was the only idea. Franco stated that he had many ideas but this was the one he had chosen. He stated that there could be changes and that the book would be more intricate, but the circle would be open to interpretation. Renee asked what the cost would be. Franco suggested that it would be in the mid \$40,000 range depending on the cost of stone. Lillian asked if he would mount it. Franco stated that he would bring it to the site but that the library would need to provide the base and install it. Lillian asked if he could provide a base. Franco stated that he would speak with the architects and see if he could find a base. Lillian suggested an inscription

on the base. Grace asked about the location of the sculpture. Franco stated that the location would be up to the Commission and the Mayor. Peter asked if the sculpture could be done by October. Franco stated that it would be impossible at this point to be finished by October. Grace suggested a dedication celebration when it was completed. Don asked what the color would be. Franco stated that it would be beige. Judi stated that if the bequest was going to be used then it would be nice to reach out to the family. Lillian stated that the family was not interested in approval or a plaque but that they should be honored in a dedication. Frank suggested a plaque stating that the sculpture was a gift from an anonymous donor.

A Motion to move forward with the sculpture as described today as an open book and seven foot tall circle was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.

Franco stated that the ballpark cost for the sculpture would be \$45,000. He stated that many customers asked for a small model of the sculpture to fully visualize it, which would cost \$2,000 and would be deducted from the total cost if he was awarded the full contract. Peter stated that the cost of the installation, crane, base, etc. should be considered. Lillian suggested a small subcommittee including herself and Don Burden.

A Motion to accept the model cost of \$2,000 to be deducted if the contract was awarded was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.

Anniversary Celebration

Kim presented the month of programs leading up to the October 28th presentation. These included Mike Attardi, a former NFL player, author, composer, Disney imagineer, and more, who would present both adult and children's programs on overcoming adversity on Wednesday, October 10th. Grace suggested making the children's program at 3:00pm to allow children time to return from school. Kim agreed. She presented more programs including Paul Zigo on October 16th, the Air Force Quintet on October 19th, Jack Livingstone's History of Jazz on October 20th, The Traveling Lantern Theatre presents Sherlock Holmes Solves the Case on October 21st, Phil Bruschi presents Bobby Darren on October 21st, and a musical presentation on stage on October 28th to include a plaque dedication, photo ops, contest winners and prizes.

Judi asked how many chairs for audience members would fit. Donna stated 250-275 chairs would fit and that people could also sit on the mezzanine and in other areas of the library. Donna stated that she had asked three bands to keep the date open, including a Jimmy Buffet tribute band (\$2,500), Billy Joel tribute band (\$2,400), and The Intentions, a band that could play hits of the 60's era (\$1,400). Renee stated that they should focus on the music of that time. The Commission chose The Intentions.

Renee suggested having a large tent in the parking lot, with the concert, food carts, and rides to show that the library was for everyone. Donna stated that the largest tent available from the parks department would be 30' by 50', and could seat about 150 people but would need to go in a grassy area to be staked. Donna stated that a tent with enough room for 300 people would need to be at least 40' by 80'. Renee stated that she would speak to a commercial vendor.

Kim suggested an outdoor program on September 30th as the kickoff celebration for the month of programming with touch a truck, rides, refreshments, etc. Renee stated that articles showcasing these events needed to go out soon. Grace suggested adding the information to Facebook groups for the towns. Lillian suggested a banner across Route 35. Kim suggested banners for the front of the library. Renee suggested putting them up at Headquarters as well. Lillian stated that the utilities company would have to put up a banner across Route 35. Renee stated that during the Olympic presentation they had asked for flags from local towns. Renee suggested asking food stores to donate and thanking them in a program. Don stated that he would provide the public relations contact. Lillian shared a program from the Monmouth County Parks Department showcasing the events that were occurring. She suggested that the library create a similar program. Renee asked if something could be given away as a drawing prize. Heidi suggested inexpensive tablets or flash drives, with one prize for adults and one for children, and stating that they must show or open a library card to receive an entry ticket. Heidi suggested a budget of \$500, and James agreed. Renee thanked Donna and Kim and stated that the Commission was looking forward to the programs.

Library Liaison Report

Lillian expressed concern with the Kids Congress event. She shared a program that was being done at the Eastern Branch, Ocean Township, and Colts Neck libraries that taught children about how the New Jersey government worked. Judi stated that the event was not co-sponsored by the library and was free to be presented under the code of meeting room use and had been approved by Branch Manager Kim Avagliano and Eastern Branch Children's Librarian Dawna McClendon. Renee stated that they were not qualified to approve their meeting room use. Lillian stated that the programmers were bringing refreshments in order to attract adult voters. Judi stated that many programs provided refreshments. She stated that meeting rooms had to be open and available for all public use, or could not be used by any groups. Renee stated that the library was apolitical and did not take sides. She cited a protest that had occurred at the Headquarters library as a reason not to allow this program, wherein she stated that Chris Smith had been protested against because he was a Republican. Peter asked what could be done. Renee stated that controversial meeting room use should have to be approved at a higher level than branch management. Judi stated that the meeting room use either allowed it to be used by all members of the public or none. Lillian asked why the definition had to be so broad and allow everyone. Judi stated that there would be constitutional challenges with the civil liberties union if the library were to allow one group and not others. Lillian stated that all groups were not comparable. Renee stated that the library could not be a forum for political parties unless a speaker was being presented. Judi stated that campaigning was not allowed but programming was. James stated that if they passed out information for parents then it should be considered campaigning. Judi stated that constituent services often presented programming, including incumbents such as Chris Smith and Christine Giordano Hanlon, and therefore if the library was to accept one group then they must accept the other. Renee asked why the library had approved the flyer. Judi stated that the flyer was acceptable but should have to include a caveat stating that it was not sponsored by the library. Lillian stated that it should have to include a caveat stating that it was paid for by the Democratic party. Renee suggested cancelling the event. Judi stated that cancellation could result in a civil liberties challenge to the Library Commission as there was no precedent for cancellation in the meeting room policy. James asked if County Counsel had looked into the proposed changes to the meeting room policy. Judi stated that an answer had

not yet been received from County Counsel. She stated that the ALA had amended their Library Bill of Rights to allow with an even broader definition of protected groups. Peter asked if the suggestion of the Commission was that meeting room use should be left up to the county. Renee stated that the library needed to remain autonomous and be in charge of its own meeting room use, but at a higher level than branch management. Judi stated that the three libraries had all approved the program. She stated that the new meeting room policy would need to be created and accepted by the Commission and then it could be distributed to all branches if changes were to be made. Renee asked what was to be done about the program. Lillian stated that nothing could be done but that it was something to be aware of in the future. Renee stated that a disclaimer was needed and that it must be specified the group would not be allowed to bring flyers. Judi stated that would be censorship of free speech, and that groups were all allowed to bring flyers. Don stated that it was not in the policy that groups could not give out flyers, and if that was to change it would have to be amended in the future. Judi suggested reviewing meeting room policy and editing it if necessary to be approved in full for the next meeting. Renee asked who was in charge of approving the meeting rooms. Judi stated that each branch manager approved the use of their own meeting rooms. Renee stated that the approval had not come from a high enough level and that branches should have to submit the meeting room requests once a month to Library Administration to be approved. Judi stated that such a decision would likely cause a backlash because patrons often asked to use the meeting rooms only days in advance. Don stated that the Commission should request that the programmers add to their flyer that the event is not sponsored by the library. Judi agreed that would be appropriate. Grace agreed that all flyers for all programs should include that. Lillian stated that it should include what party was paying for the program. Judi stated that the flyer stated that the New Jersey Legislature was presenting the program and which assembly members were hosting it and that was sufficient. Renee stated that the names were not enough and that their party affiliation should also be added. She also stated that the group should be told that they could not bring refreshments. Judi stated that there was no precedent for that, and they must be allowed to bring refreshments as other groups had. Peter stated that the new meeting room policy could include banning refreshments in the meeting rooms in the future. Grace stated that many groups brought refreshments. Judi stated that consistency was of paramount importance for meeting room use. Peter asked if Lillian would be willing to take on potential liability if the library refused the program for being political. Lillian stated that she would not but that full disclosure on the flyer was necessary. Peter stated that the library needed to reach out to the group and tell them that they must add to their flyer that the program was not sponsored by the library. He also stated that the meeting room policy had to be approved. Lillian asked who would be contacting the group. Judi stated that she would contact them. Renee requested a new policy requiring that someone in Library Administration approve all meeting room use once a month. James asked Judi what she felt comfortable with. Judi stated that considering requests often came in only a few days in advance, that there would be many complaints about use. Judi stated that she would bring the new meeting room policy next month for approval.

A Motion to contact the group and ask them to remake their flyers to include a disclaimer stating that the event was not sponsored by the library and note who the meeting was funded by was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report

July 2018 Financials: Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, & Grant Budget

Judi submitted the July 2018 Financial Report to the commission including the Detail Budget, Grant Budget, Check Writing, and Reserve Budget wherein the budget charged year to date was \$8,143,203.99, and the remaining unexpended for the year was 8,841,888.70. The remaining reserve unexpended was \$2,249,714.74. She stated that additional amounts had been encumbered for Phase One of the project including \$32,164.32 to Library Interiors. She stated that the remaining capital was \$174,958.29 which would be reserved for wall painting, core drilling and other electrical work, finishing the Phase One funds.

A Motion to accept and approve the July 2018 Financial Report including the Detail Budget, Grant Budget, Check Writing, and Reserve Budget was made by James Gray and seconded by Don Burden. Unanimously approved.

Grant- Raffetto Bequest

Judi stated that a grant had been created for the Raffetto family bequest in the amount of \$78,300.71. She stated that this money could be used for the sculpture for Eastern Branch. Grace asked what would be done with the money if there was any left over. Judi stated that she doubted that there would be much left over after the sculpture, base, and installation were paid for.

Director's Report

Holmdel Plaque

Judi stated that the Holmdel plaque would be installed. Lillian recommended an unveiling event. Grace asked when the event would be. Judi stated that the mayor and council would be invited. Judi stated that Karen Nealis had suggested the date of December 19th as the one year anniversary of the branch's opening, with a choir from Holmdel High School to perform. Grace suggested that the event be on Tuesday the 18th instead so that it could be the same day as the Commission meeting, and suggested holding the meeting at Holmdel. Renee suggested moving all of the typical December presentations to January. Judi stated that the high school performers would be unlikely to come before 6:00 PM.

Branch Member Update

Judi stated that the town of Oceanport was making progress on their new municipal complex and library at Fort Monmouth.

Judi stated that she had appeared on Comcast Newsmakers speaking about special needs services and sharing news of the Headquarters library renovation and bathroom renovation, and the importance of ADA-compliance.

Judi stated that Sea Girt would be holding a meeting on Wednesday, August 8th, and that they may introduce a referendum to leave the Monmouth County Library System. Judi shared a flyer that she had created comparing the services that Sea Girt received from the system. Peter stated that Judi and Heidi had done a great presentation to the mayor and council.

Judi stated that, if the Sea Girt Library was to leave, that books had been purchased through a member plan, and that the books and computer equipment should stay with the library as they had paid \$400,000 per year. Peter suggested it would be a gesture of supportive goodwill to allow them to keep it. Judi stated that, even if the library chose to leave the system, that they would remain for two years as they were in a contract to do so. She stated that the feedback seems split and that Sea Girt residents deserved the resources that the system provides. She suggested staying involved in the community and sending flyers to households to show what they would be giving up by leaving. Peter stated that he did not want the library to get in the middle of a campaign. Renee stated that she and Lillian had worked hard to promote Union Beach and West Long Branch libraries remaining in the system, going door to door with flyers. Judi stated that if one community were to leave, then other members would consider it because the tax rate would go up for other members. Lillian asked when the referendum would be brought up. Judi stated that it would likely be added at the meeting tomorrow.

Staffing Report

Judi presented the staffing report that included one resignation, one retirement, and five new seasonal employees moving to permanent positions, which brought the vacancies down from 19 to 16, the lowest that it had been in two years.

Judi stated that Donna had submitted a proposal for the New Jersey Department of Labor grant of up to \$100,000 and expected about a 50/50 shot of receiving it.

Judi stated that patrons had requested that the library provide museum passes. Renee suggested including museum tickets in the drawing for the 50th Anniversary at Eastern Branch. Heidi suggested discussing the possibility of museum passes at the next meeting.

Judi stated that the Trustee Institute would take place on October 27th, and stated that if one of the Commissioners were to attend then it would count as seven hours of necessary training. Grace stated that she would attend.

Judi stated that Federal Depository Librarian, Beth Miller, had submitted an out of state meeting request to go to Washington, D.C. to learn about changes being made to federal depositories, and that she was requesting some monetary assistance for travel. The commission agreed.

Judi stated that active shooter training had been offered to staff and that they would continue to participate to address safety issues in the library. Judi stated that a request had been made to the Freeholders to use libraries as cooling centers on Sundays. She stated that this posed an issue as Headquarters and Eastern Branch were only open 1pm to 5pm on Sundays and closed in the summer, and it would cost \$40,000-\$50,000 annually. The Commission considered the request but decided it was not fiscally prudent at this time.

Assistant Director's Update

Renee asked about the big-screen televisions that Heidi had requested. Heidi stated that she was asking for one for the YA room with a stand, and one for Administration Conference Room. She stated that the current Administration television would be moved to the children's area. She

stated that, all together, this would cost \$7,200. Heidi stated that another smaller television for the hallway would be ideal as well for another \$600-\$700. Grace asked what the televisions would be used for. Heidi stated that the YA room television would be used for teen programming, trivia, movies with wireless headphones, and more. She stated that the Administration television would be used for Commission meetings, training, and presentations.

A Motion to approve the purchase of three televisions and one stand for approximately \$8,000 was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells.

Heidi stated that two proposals had been submitted for the web-page update, and that she required a third quote to go out to Purchasing. She stated that she hoped there would be at least the beginnings of a new page by January.

Heidi stated that they were currently applying an Envisionware update for the computer booking system.

Commissioner Comments

Don stated the Mayor of West Long Branch had reached out to him and suggested they acknowledged the retirement of an employee. Judi stated that the employee was not employed by the County. Heidi stated that she had attended the retirement party to congratulate the employee. Don asked Lillian if a resolution of congratulations might be appropriate. The Commission agreed and Freeholder Burry said a resolution would be drafted.

Next Meeting

Next meeting Wednesday, September 12, 2018 at the Headquarters Library at 11:00am.

Scheduling of Closed Executive Session at Next Meeting

A Motion to schedule a closed executive session at the meeting on Tuesday, September 12, 2018, was made by James Gray and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 2:08pm.

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

Submitted by Laura Cunningham