

**Belmar Public Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 8, 2024  
Minutes**

Present: Danielle Arnold, Bruce Blattner, Mayor Jerry Buccafusco, Kathleen Casserly, Pat Hutchinson, Johanna Roper-Robinson, Sharon Russell-Fowler (by Zoom), Michael Schappert

Absent: Jimmy Alvarez, Darleen Havens, Maria Rondinaro

Also present: David Hallman and Luis Pulido

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Mr. Hallman read the notice of the meeting. Attendees pledged allegiance to the flag. Mr. Hallman invited us to elect officers in order to carry out tonight's meeting.

Ms. Russell-Fowler nominated Ms. Hutchinson to resume her role as secretary. Ms. Roper-Robinson seconded. A vote ensued. Ms. Hutchinson was elected unanimously and then took nominations for the remaining officers President.

Bruce Blattner nominated Sharon Russell-Fowler for President. Ms. Roper-Robinson seconded. Ms. Russell-Fowler was unanimously re-elected President

Ms. Roper-Robinson nominated Michael Schappert for Vice-President. Ms. Arnold seconded. Mr. Schappert was unanimously elected Vice-President.

Ms. Hutchinson nominated Darlene Havens for Treasurer. Mr. Blattner seconded. Ms. Havens was unanimously re-elected Treasurer.

Mr. Buccafusco made a motion that we approve the minutes of the December 19 meeting. Ms. Roper-Robinson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Director's Report

- Mr. Hall announced that the windows will be delivered by the end of January.
- Mr. Hallman asked if the board wanted to change the library's payment agreement with the Recreation Department. Suggestion: Pay for Barry Trogu's time rather than paying separate instructors. After some discussion, the board felt that we should leave the agreement as is.
- The strategic plan, now underway, will likely address four aspects of library service: communication, resources, programs and facilities.

Survey information will be gathered four ways: digital responses, written responses submitted to the front desk, and oral responses elicited at meetings. Feedback submitted in Spanish will also be accommodated.

The board discussed methods of reaching people who cannot access the questions digitally. Mr. Hallman suggested we might walk around the town and deliver surveys in person. Mr. Schappert suggested having questionnaires available on the library's St. Patrick's Day float. Mailing is expensive, and Ms. Hutchinson asked Mayor Buccafusco if we could piggy-back on any mailings already planned. He was unaware of any planned mailings. Ms. Russell-Fowler felt that opportunities to speak to people directly work better. She suggested having a table at town events. Mr. Blattner suggested contacting Chip Cavanaugh, who solicits donations for the Belmar Fire Department.

### Treasurer's Report

There will be no treasurer's report because Lorraine is ill and away from work.

### President's Report

- Ms. Russell-Fowler spoke to the Gallagher family, and they will write up and submit their tribute for the dedication of the lilac tree.
- Professional development workshops for trustees for 2024 are posted on the NJ Library Board's web site.
- The library's programs have not been on the digital sign in the marina for some time.
- Mr. Hallman will have the proposed calendar of events ready for the next meeting. Some of the featured events will include:
  1. Four living-history speakers
  2. Book fair, Thursday, April 13, 10 am-2 pm
  3. Author talk/launch—Zach Levy
  4. Art classes/tech classes
  5. Summer concert series
  6. Kids' rock band
  7. St. Patrick's Day parade
  8. Chinese New Year, Feb. 10, 2024
- We will try to reinstitute Story Time for children up to 3rd grade.
- It was also suggested to bring back the opera series, but rental is dependent on the budget.
- As a result of the collection effort at the library, donations were delivered to

the animal shelters at the Associated Humane Society of Tinton Falls and ASPCA of Eatontown by Ms. Cavaluzzi and Ms. Russell-Fowler.

Comments from the public:

- Find a Mexican or Hispanic band to enrich programs.
- Pokemon and other games-based activities were discussed. It was noted that the school received a grant for after-school programs, and those would draw on the same population of teachers to present.

Mr. Blattner proposed adjournment at 7:20 pm. Ms. Roper-Robinson seconded. The board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting, after which we again toured the basement to review the now-painted walls and progress of other tasks.

Submitted by Pat Hutchinson, 1/31/24