

Ramsey Free Public Library

Meeting of the Board of Trustees April 11, 2022

The April meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mrs. Martin with the reading of the public meeting law. Also present were Mr. Bogaenko, Mayor Dillon, Mrs. FitzPatrick, Mrs. Knauss, Mrs. McCaskey, Mrs. Ohnegian, Mrs. Rennie, and Mrs. Thorp, Trustees, and Director Latham. Mrs. Palchisaca and Councilman Gutwetter were absent. The minutes of the March 14, 2022 meeting were accepted as received on motion by Mrs. Rennie, seconded by Mr. Bogaenko, and passed. Mrs. Dey reminded the Board of Trustees that they need to file their financial disclosure statements by April 30th.

Correspondence: None

Library Board Members Comments: Mrs. Rennie complimented Director Latham for giving credit to other members of the staff when he shares information about the many library activities and event. He observed that the success at the Ramsey Library is certainly a team effort.

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Bogaenko had forwarded the financial reports which were reviewed. Three months into the year, there is not much to glean from a review of the 2022 budget since things are generally a little skewed in the beginning of the year. Upon motion by Mrs. McCaskey, seconded by Mrs. FitzPatrick, approval to pay the March bills was unanimously passed. The treasurer's report was received and filed for audit.

Director's Report: As suggested by Mr. Bogaenko at the March meeting, Director Latham included a summary of the status of the library's main systems and physical plant items. He reported that the necessary filter for the generator has not yet arrived. Supply issues have delayed receipt of the part. Once it is received, it will be installed by the library's plumber and then the generator company will return to verify full working order of the generator. In the meantime, the generator has been turned off since it was continually going into a state of alarm. Hopefully, that repair can be done by the end of the month.

The origin of the leak in the community room has yet to be identified. Before the room is painted, further investigation and repair will be done.

Regarding the ground lighting in front at the main entrance, it may need to be partially rebuilt since it has not been looked at in some time and there may be some damage that requires repairs. A decision will be made once a repair estimate has been received.

The annual carpet cleaning will be completed on Friday, April 15th, since the building will be closed. There is a proposal to replace all of the carpeting in the building.

Director Latham worked with Anthony Reganato to select a new simple security system for the library which includes alarms for the doors, a keypad entrance for staff and visitors, and motion sensors. Installation has begun and the system should be operational sometime in April. The malfunctioning security camera in the Quiet Study Room has been replaced. Mr. Reganato is also looking into updates for the A/V equipment in the community room should the library board choose to pursue.

There are several small projects within the library that 24/7 Maintenance is handling.

The community survey was finalized, and distribution began during the last week of March. Over 150 responses have already been received. Director Latham and Mr. Hofmann are reaching out to community organizations to encourage their members to help spread the word about the survey. It is anticipated that the survey will be active for at least one to two months. Director Latham is also finalizing the details of the community representative interview process, working with board members and the library staff to set up

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interviews, utilize a standard interview script, and generate an introductory message to each interview candidate. He is also working on an analysis of the library organization including staffing, resource allocation, budgets, physical space along with community demographics and trends in the library field.

Director Latham is working with DPW to secure a list of possible painting companies which can provide quotes for painting the community room. Prior to painting the room, the intermittent leak that occurs in the one corner of the community room must be addressed.

Over the past year, Director Latham has completed a full review of the adult non-fiction collection, including the biographies. Several thousand items that have not been borrowed in several years have been weeded from the collection. The entire collection was then shifted, freeing up much needed extra space for the growing comics and Manga collections.

The Friends of the Ramsey Library will be running their spring used book and jewelry sale between Thursday, April 28th and Sunday, May 1st. Mr. Hofmann is working with them to improve promotion of the sale through various diverse outlets.

The plans for the Summer Reading programs are almost complete, including a visit from a real penguin from Jenkinson's Aquarium, possibly at the Community Center. There are some changes in the structure from previous years to encourage more participation. Mr. Hofmann will provide an advertising push for participation leading up to the summer. At the next FORL meeting, Director Latham will present the full list of programs and rough cost estimate since they normally provide nearly the entire funding for all of the summer events and summer reading program.

Director Latham has also been working on the 2022 slate of Summer Concerts at Finch Park, in coordination with the borough. Ms. Suarez is also going to be running a concert for children in the park as part of the Summer Reading program. There will be a jazz quartet concert on the side of the library building in May. There is a possibility for one more concert for September at the library that will tie in with Hispanic Heritage Month. He would also like to bring in someone local to help run the sound and get the bands set up for the concerts.

The FORL provided a donation of \$2,825 to restart the Museum Pass program. Director Latham and Assistant Director Elwell are completing all of the necessary work to get the program up and running for the summer. Passes for the Intrepid, Guggenheim, Storm King, Newark Museum, Brooklyn Botanical Gardens, Morris Museum, Aviation Hall of Fame, Yogi Berra Museum, and the Frick Museum will be available.

New Take-Home Storytime Kits are now available for library patrons. The kits were created by Ms. McAlear, with assistance from Ms. Suarez. Each kit comes with a book and all the materials and instructions for a craft, which are both centered on a particular theme. Kits can be borrowed at any time from the Children's Room, with several different kits available in several different themes.

Ms. Suarez started a new program in conjunction with the School Media Specialists, a special Writing Contest for fourth and fifth graders with special prizes for the top three winners. Forty-five students submitted short stories which were read by over twenty volunteers from the library staff and FORL. The activity will be repeated next year with the possibility of another contest for a different age group.

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NJ Makers Day, a statewide event when libraries offer STEAM events and activities, was in-person this year. Appropriate Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math activities were scheduled for teens and younger children on Friday, March 25th, including a Science Friday project for children and making their own ArtBots for teens. A bigger event for all ages was scheduled for Saturday, March 26th. The day was split up into three different sessions of about thirty people each. In the community room there were four different projects that attendees could create, including paper robots and weebles. There was also a section where attendees could free explore with some of the Library of Things/STEM tools, including Sphero Robotics, Code-a-Pillar, Magformers, Makey Makeys, and Snap Circuits. Seventy-six people attended the three Saturday sessions and over one hundred take-home STEM crafts were distributed. For the last session, Mr. Hofmann had connected with middle school and high school students, three of whom attended and brought the projects they had created, demonstrated robots and other projects, and shared poster displays of their projects. Director Latham noted that there are grants available for STEAM activities and supplies.

Mr. Hofmann visited Smith School in March to represent the library and provide hands-on activities for a STEM event.

Director Latham give a presentation about library services at a monthly meeting of the Leisure Club at the Community Center. Approximately fifty people were in attendance. He brought examples from the Library of Things along with copies of new brochures, bookmarks, and buttons. As a result of the excellent presentation, he was also invited to speak at the April meeting of the Valley Hospital Auxiliary.

The Krayon Kiosk in the Children's Room is now up and running, thanks to updates and maintenance provided by Mr. Hofmann and Ms. Suarez.

A few months ago, Director Latham joined a grant program that the East Brunswick Public Library and New Jersey State Library had been awarded through the American Rescue Plan. Free of charge, Ramsey received three specially curated iPads that contain resources for health research, telehealth visits, and multilingual health information. They became available as of Thursday, April 7th.

The month of April is Autism Awareness Month, and the library is featuring the artwork of Ramsey resident Michael Popolo. There also is a book display focusing on a variety of materials related to Autism Awareness.

Mr. Hofmann is working on the submission for the *Ramsey Journal*.

In March, there were LEAP school visits for 70 kids and four different classes, allowing them explore the library space and enjoy fun activities.

During the month of March, over one hundred Kindness Boxes were given out for every three items borrowed from Ramsey library materials. Each kit contained a hot chocolate packet, candies, and treats.

Director Latham shared a few minor updates to the library's Notary Policy, mostly points of clarification for when the service is available and what kinds of materials can be notarized. Upon motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mayor Dillon, the updated Notary Policy was unanimously approved as presented.

The Borough & Library UPSEU Collective Bargaining Agreement Proposal had been discussed at the February meeting. Since nothing had changed since the last discussion, it was not necessary to go into Executive Session. Upon motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. McCaskey, the Borough & Library UPSEU

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Collective Bargaining Agreement, January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2025, was unanimously approved as presented.

Consent Resolution: None

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: None

At 8:08 p.m., the meeting was closed on motion by Mrs. Knauss, seconded by Mrs. Thorp, and passed.

