

## **Ramsey Free Public Library**

### *Meeting of the Board of Trustees April 13, 2020*

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the April meeting was held via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:39 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, Mr. Phelan, and Mrs. Rennie, Trustees, Councilman Gutwetter, and Director Latham. Mrs. Thompson was absent. The minutes of the March 9, 2020 meeting were accepted as received on motion by Mayor Dillon, seconded by Mr. Phelan, and passed.

**Correspondence:** None

**Library Board Members Comments:** Mr. Phelan noted that Director Latham and the staff are doing an excellent job under the current circumstances; he commented upon their professionalism.

**Treasurer's Report:** Rather than cobble together available information, Mr. Bogaenko will provide a combination March/April financial report for the May meeting. Upon motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mr. Phelan, approval to pay the March bills was unanimously passed. Upon motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mr. Phelan, approval to pay the April bills was unanimously passed.

**Director's Report:** In response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the library has been closed to the public since Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. An in-person staff meeting was held on Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> to develop plans for projects, staff workflow, and the handling of general operations within the library building. However, the next day, the Governor of New Jersey issued an order stating that all non-essential workers were to remain at home. Additionally, the BCCLS Executive Committee, which will be "meeting" on Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, halted all deliveries and final items were delivered to libraries by Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. All inter-library loans were frozen until libraries reopen. The due dates on all checked-out items were automatically extended. Special digital library cards which can be obtained online were created for patrons without a library card. The in-person verification requirement was waived. The card would provide access not just to the BCCLS Libby and RB Digital Magazine services but also to all of the content Ramsey purchases individually for its patrons, including Hoopla, RB Digital (streaming TV, movies, Great Courses, etc.), and Overdrive Advantage's additional titles purchased by Ramsey via Libby for its patrons. Assistant Director Elwell has taken home the necessary supplies needed to create and track these cards. Additionally, over two hundred cards have been created for Smith School students and teachers. The media specialist at Smith provided a list of students who did not have library cards.

Efforts have centered around increasing the library's virtual services. New items are being added each week. More content has been added to the Libby collections via Overdrive Advantage. Libby provides the majority of the eBook and eAudiobook

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collections. The current purchases include multiple copies of popular items, items soon to be published, and a wider assortment of popular content than might usually be purchased. The monthly borrowing limit for a Hoopla account has been raised from five to twenty per month.

The library's use and scope of social media has greatly increased including the creation of a YouTube Channel for the library as well as a Zoom account. The new YouTube Channel has been used to post original content for patrons, including two to three storytimes per week, arts and crafts for teens and adults, digital collection recommendation videos from staff, adult yoga for adults, and art classes for children. More content is being planned for the future, both original content created by staff as well as bringing in some outside vendors to provide classes and workshops. The Zoom account has enabled the library to host interactive events and classes as well as to hold staff meetings and Library Board meetings, creating virtual events and content, and creating resources including online activities and those which can be done from home.

Posts are made several times each day to the library's Facebook and Instagram accounts. These posts have highlighted the new content the library is creating and provided staff pick recommendations for the digital collections, instruction on how to use the digital collections, and suggestions and citations for activities that can be done online and at home.

Director Latham has provided training for staff in the new technologies, including the use of the YouTube Channel and Zoom accounts. He has assigned new duties to staff including the creation of original video content, lists of online activities for patrons at home, and other original content. Special assignments have also been given to certain staff, including bookkeeping and payment duties, the digital card creation project, and recruitment of outside vendors for programs.

Additionally, he plans to outline specific tasks for all staff going forward and to track the progress. This will also include staff taking a series of webinars and online meetings and other online training to improve skills and to bring back that training to the library. Some of the resulting duties will be ones that are completely new to staff and the library and will take some time to develop, train, and implement. A staff meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, utilizing Zoom.

Director Latham has been redesigning the library's website and creating new pages and content including the coronavirus closing statement, virtual events and resources, and coronavirus assistance resources.

He noted that it is difficult to ascertain the impact of COVID-19 on the library's budget. At this point, the staff is being paid based upon their normal schedules, including health

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care benefits for those who have coverage. The Library Board's executive sub-committee will consider the issue of staff overtime/banked hours when it meets on Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Dillon suggested contacting Borough Attorney Scandariato and Borough Administrator Vozech for guidance. Overdrive Advantage is the service which allows the library to purchase additional eBooks and eAudiobooks for Libby/Overdrive that targets Ramsey patrons. This is the area where the most money will be spent. Approximately \$3,300 has been spent since the library's closure. For 2020, \$5,000 was budgeted for Overdrive Advantage and \$4,700 has been spent since January 1<sup>st</sup>. The library has \$7,500 in donated funds from previous years which can be used for digital content as well as further donations that have been received in 2020 that can also be utilized. There are also funds that can be reallocated from print collections that are not being ordered at this time and funds from the recent mini-golf event so there should be sufficient funds to dedicate to digital item purchasing. Since the library building is closed, there are areas of potential savings to be considered including the nightly cleaning services (approximately \$1,350 per month), utilities, programming, supplies, and maintenance.

At this time, there is no timetable for safely reopening the library. That process and any resulting policies and procedures will be based upon the guidance of the state, county, and local governments. BCCLS is currently looking at ways that items being returned might be cleaned and sanitized in order to help prevent the virus spread. The library's usual cleaning company has already provided a deep clean of the building, but the DPW may provide an additional cleaning before opening. Utilization of a specialized cleaning service as recommended by Mayor Dillon may provide a sanitizing cleaning before reopening.

**Consent Resolution:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:** None

At 8:20 p.m., the meeting was closed on motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Knauss, and passed.

