

## **Ramsey Free Public Library**

### *Meeting of the Board of Trustees June 8, 2020*

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the June meeting was held via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Mrs. Martin with the reading of the public meeting law. Also present were Mr. Bogaenko, Mrs. FitzPatrick, Mrs. Knauss, Mrs. McCaskey, Mrs. Ohnegian, Mr. Phelan, Mrs. Rennie, and Mrs. Thompson, Trustees, and Director Latham. Mayor Dillon and Councilman Gutwetter were absent. The minutes of the May 11, 2020 meeting were accepted as received on motion by Mrs. Rennie, seconded by Mr. Phelan, and passed.

**Correspondence:** Correspondence has been received from the union.

**Library Board Members Comments:** Mrs. Rennie complimented Director Latham and his staff on the great job they are doing during a very difficult time.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Bogaenko provided the May financial reports which he reviewed. Checks are being processed as usual. At this point, the budget is tracking, and nothing is markedly off-base; adjustments will continue to be made to the budget. Despite the library being closed, utilities are still being used. The re-opening expenses are being compiled. Upon motion by Mr. Phelan, seconded by Mr. Bogaenko, approval to pay the May bills was unanimously passed. The treasurer's report was received and filed for audit.

**Director's Report:** May was a very successful month, with 387 people attending the virtual events which were offered. In comparison, there were 287 such attendees in April which bodes well for the summer. The staff has done an excellent job creating eighty-seven videos which had 2,400 views. Director Latham provided the digital circulation, including eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, Hoopla, and RB Digital, which totaled 3,260 items in February, 5,066 items in March and 7,643 items in April. The statistics for May will not be complete until BCCLS releases its May report.

The Governor announced in May that libraries would be part of Phase 2 re-openings across the state. However, libraries are currently waiting for clarification from the Governor's Office and New Jersey State Library regarding the details and stages for the re-opening. As he waits for further direction from the Governor, Director Latham has been developing numerous procedures for re-opening. No patrons will be in the building for a while. For those procedures, he has combined recommendations and research provided by BCCLS, the New Jersey State Library, the TOPCATS library group, the CDC, the New Jersey Health Department, and more. He explained that TOPCATS is a working group of library professionals around the state who are developing re-opening procedure recommendations. Director Latham will be attending the upcoming Friday meeting of TOPCATS and representatives from the Governor's Office. Beginning on Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, he would like to start to bring the staff in and train the team leaders. Recommendations by BCCLS which were officially adopted at the early June meeting of

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the BCCLS Executive Committee include a phased-in re-opening plan. Inter-library loan would only begin when a majority of libraries indicate that they are ready to receive items and quarantine items being placed into delivery.

Regarding item quarantine, the recommendation is to quarantine items for seventy-two hours which is based upon the length of time that coronavirus can live on various surfaces. When the library is closed, the bookdrop will be open.

Regarding curbside pick-up, the library vestibule areas at both the front and back doors will be utilized to enable totally contactless curbside pick-up. The staff will not go to patrons' cars. Pick-up will be available Monday through Friday, between 2 and 6 p.m. Staff members may help with directing traffic. Director Latham will speak with the police to discuss how best to handle the possible angry patron. Additionally, there will be lots of signage.

Regarding the social distancing staff schedule, which was developed by Director Latham, Assistant Director Elwell, and Ms. Casella, the new schedule creates small teams of staff members which will not overlap with each other. Work hours inside the building have been limited. While in the building, staff will be working on necessary tasks such as quarantining items, providing curbside pick-up, linking/processing new items, managing inter-library loan participation, bookkeeping jobs and limited virtual programming, craft kit creation, and other special projects.

Regarding staff safety and sanitizing procedures, steps were developed to create as safe a work environment as possible. Masks are required; gloves are optional. There will be a deep clean each night of the areas which are used.

All of the plans have been carefully developed and have been presented to the staff through the weekly meetings. Still in question are such things as temperature checking and tracking. Upon motion by Mrs. Rennie, seconded by Mrs. Ohnegian, the presented plans/procedures were unanimously approved. The information can now be shared with the union.

To date, the library has spent \$6,336.31 to purchase such coronavirus-related items as gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes and spray, wall-mounted hand sanitizer dispensers, paper bags for curbside pick-up services, storage bins for quarantining items, and acrylic guards/dividers for the Circulation Desk. These items were certainly not anticipated during the development of the 2020 budget. Therefore, Director Latham recommended that all coronavirus-related expenses be classified as capital/emergency and that the funds to pay for the items be drawn from the library's capital reserve funds. Currently, the library has more than \$700,000 reserved for capital/emergency. There is a registry of approved vendors which Director Latham has consulted. Public assistance

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grants might be utilized to cover the cost of some of the items. Mr. Phelan will be participating in some Zoom offerings which should provide valuable information. Director Latham has attended eight or nine pertinent webinars.

Director Latham, Assistant Director Elwell, Ms. Burnette, and Ms. Suarez have been working on a modified summer reading program with plans for a virtual, contactless experience; it is nearly as full as what would have normally been developed for this year. All events and classes will be done virtually. There will be “Take and Make” craft projects with instructions provided via Zoom. The reading program and prize system will all be recorded and tracked virtually, with prizes being either virtual or as pick-up items following a quarantine period. Some additional programs, mainly adult programs created by Director Latham, are still being added to the list of programs. Promotional materials are being developed as well as an online portal for everything pertaining to Summer Reading. The library is also working with the schools to provide students and teachers with support, resources, and access to the library’s collections. At their Monday, June 1st meeting, the Friends of the Ramsey Library voted to donate \$9,000 to fully fund the Summer Reading program.

**Consent Resolution:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Unfinished Business:** Anthony Reganato has visited the library several times to fix the alarm system with no success. The problem seems to be tied into the phone system.

The subscription to the museum pass program will be allowed to lapse for the time being.

**New Business:** Director Latham will include a message of inclusion and diversity in his upcoming weekly update. Additionally, he will include a resource list with items which may help open up the conversation about the issue.

At 8:24 p.m., the meeting was closed on motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Rennie, and passed.

