

Ramsey Free Public Library

Meeting of the Board of Trustees June 12, 2023

The June 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, Mrs. FitzPatrick, Mrs. Knauss, Mrs. McCaskey, Mrs. Thorp, Trustees, Councilman Gutwetter, and Director Latham. Mayor Dillon, Mrs. Ohnegian, Mrs. Palchisaca, and Mrs. Rennie were absent. The minutes of the May 8, 2023 meeting were accepted as received on motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. McCaskey, and passed.

Correspondence: None

Library Board Members Comments: None

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Bogaenko forwarded the financial reports for May. Total assets are \$1,538,823.11. Nothing has been received from the Kass estate sale. Approximately \$18,000 has been paid for capital improvements. Upon motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by McCaskey, approval to pay the May bills was unanimously passed. The treasurer's report was received and filed for audit.

Director's Report: LibraryCon was held for the first time since 2019, with 215 in attendance. This is a ComicCon style event that highlights comics and other pop culture elements. Director Latham enumerated all of the activities and attractions. Because of a funeral in Virginia, he was not in attendance, but the staff ran the event and Ms. Carroll stepped in to take over as the master of ceremonies for the costume contest.

May's Family Trivia Night was the most successful trivia night to date, featuring Disney and Pixar movie trivia. There were fifty people in attendance. Director Latham will continue to mix trivia nights for just adults with trivia nights for families into the schedule. He noted that the family trivia nights take place slightly earlier, will be shorter in length, and will have less complicated questions.

There were several library visits from the LEAP school in May, with sixty-eight total children visiting.

Grab 'N Go continues to be very popular. Each month one hundred take-home crafts are created and distributed.

Ms. Newton's latest macrame class had 115 people either attending in person or viewing on YouTube.

The nature photography walk at Suraci Pond was the second program held in collaboration with the Environmental Commission. It is expected that the library and that Commission will work on future projects together, utilizing SOAR, the organization that provided the classes.

Ms. Burnette restarted the Ramsey Cookbook Club, which was a very popular event. The club selects a cookbook each month and participants prepare one of the recipes from the cookbook and bring it to the program to share.

The Summer Reading Kickoff event will take place on Wednesday, June 28th from 2 to 4 p.m. on the library grounds. The Friends of the Ramsey Library donated \$12,000 to cover the costs of the program. Three concerts are scheduled, one at Finch Park and two on the library patio area. The concert dates are Thursday, June 22nd, Thursday, July 31st, and Thursday, August 17th.

Other summer programs include an author talk by Ann Napolitano on Tuesday, July 25th, a What's it Worth? appraisal session, a 2000s Trivia Night, a Bad Movie Night for teens, a Zoom Storytime, a Meet a Mini Therapy Horse opportunity, a virtual fashion show featuring fashions from the mid-1800s, and kick-off and end-of-summer reading parties.

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Ms. McAlear has once again put together prize baskets for the summer reading program. Each basket has a different theme, and many of the items in each basket are donated or offered on discount by local businesses. This year the baskets will be for both children and adults.

Four staff members, Ms. Burnette, Ms. Carroll, Ms. Suarez, and Director Latham, were able to attend the New Jersey Library Association Annual Conference, a three-day event with dozens of panels, presentations, and workshops on all kinds of subjects. Director Latham co-presented with his wife on the topic of Big Events for Small Libraries. He also represented both the NJLA Member Services Committee and the BCCLS Member Services Committee with table displays. He also had been scheduled to moderate a panel on First Amendment Audits in Libraries but was unable to since he needed to leave the conference earlier than expected.

On Friday, May 26th, the railing and steps leading to the emergency exit out of the library's community room was struck by a vehicle, attributed to driver error. The car only hit the railing and steps and not the door or actual building. Both the police and Ms. Burnette made a report. Director Latham is now working with the town insurance/Joint Insurance Fund on submitting a claim for the damages. Three quotes for repairs are needed. Once they are received, the library will proceed with the lowest quote and work with the insurance company to be reimbursed for the repairs.

The BCCLS Member Services committee that Director Latham co-chairs has begun a new monthly, virtual discussion series. Each session will focus on a different topic related to libraries, featuring one or two presenters, with an opportunity for questions. Director Latham and a librarian from the Johnson Public Library in Hackensack presented a session about How to Run Trivia Nights in libraries. In June, Vanessa Mooradian, Ramsey's ESL program coordinator, will present a session about how to create and manage ESL programs with a librarian from the Wood-Ridge Public Library.

Director Latham's BCCLS committee also arranged an after-hours mixer event for anyone working in a BCCLS library; the event was held at the River Edge Public Library, and included games and activities, refreshments, and a special 1990s trivia session. Director Latham and his wife hosted the event with approximately sixty people in attendance.

Work is underway to create a structure for providing an appointment-based system to provide one-on-one technology assistance for patrons. It is expected that this new service will start during the summer.

On Thursday, June 8th, Director Latham heard from the architect and the contractor notifying him that the HVAC units have been ordered and are scheduled to arrive on November 1st. This is a little later than the original timeframe of October into early November. The project manager for the HVAC project will return in mid-June to go over what this means for the schedule of this project, now either November to mid-December or spring of 2024.

Director Latham provided an update to the laptop lending program. Ms. Cesena, the Sunday Librarian, is helping to prepare and design the project. It will take from \$5,000 to \$7,500 to complete this project, including the purchase of seven new laptops, one or two Macbooks, as well as security software for all laptops and management software. These laptops would restore the laptop lending program the library had available before the pandemic. Director Latham would like to get this project going as soon as possible, utilizing capital funds.

Director Latham is working with Ms. Carroll to research and implement the upgrade of the A/V in the community room. All parts of the aging system, including the audio equipment, the projector, and the connections, are old and difficult to work with. In addition to ascertaining what equipment is needed, possible vendors will also be determined. that can be utilized for the project as needed. A proposal and price estimate will be developed and brought to the library board, hopefully sometime this fall.

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BCCLS is offering a new service where they will provide managed WiFi services at an additional cost to member libraries. Director Latham was able to get the Ramsey library into the initial round of libraries who wanted to switch over to the new BCCLS managed WiFi service. He is not certain of the cost, but there will be some initial outlay, perhaps a few thousand dollars from capital funds, required for new equipment. He will report the costs and progress to the library board as soon as he has information.

Mrs. FitzPatrick was asked to help pick out a replacement fountain.

It was suggested that the library package some little jobs and hire someone to complete them, taking some jobs away from DPW.

Director Latham presented some minor changes to the Collection Development Policy and the Request for Reconsideration of Materials form. The changes fall into three categories: 1) creating a defined process for how books get reviewed by the Director and then by the library board so everything is transparent along with setting time frames for that process, 2) clarifying that reconsideration requests can only be made by individual Ramsey residents, not outside individuals or organizations, and 3) creating a 'cooldown period' for book reconsideration requests. The cooldown period which was initially proposed was thirty-six months. Following discussion, it was decided to shorten that to twenty-four months. The library's attorney has reviewed and approved the changes. Upon motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. FitzPatrick, the current Collection Development Policy was unanimously amended as presented to include a cooldown period of twenty-four months.

Several months ago, the staff proposed a two-holiday swap, removing Columbus Day from the list of holidays, replacing it with the day after Thanksgiving. Director Latham explained several reasons why the swap was suggested. The swap was discussed by the executive committee and reviewed by Borough Administrator Vozeh. At this point, no objections have been made. But there is not yet any specific language that can be used as an addendum to the union contract that the board could approve. However, the board indicated that they are in favor of the Columbus Day/day after Thanksgiving swap.

Consent Resolution: None

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: None

At 8:07 p.m., the meeting was closed on motion by Mrs. McCaskey, seconded by Mrs. FitzPatrick, and passed.