

**GREAT NECK LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M.**

A regular meeting of the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees was held on Tuesday, February 23, 2021, via Zoom [Agenda attached]

The following Trustees were present constituting a quorum:

Weihua Yan – President
Liman Mimi Hu – Vice President
Barry Smith – Secretary
Chelsea Sassouni – Treasurer
Scott Sontag – Assistant Treasurer
Kathleen Gold – Assistant Treasurer
Josephine Mairzadeh – Trustee

Also Present: George Trepp – Interim Director
 Steven Kashkin – Business Manager
 Charles Segal – Jaspan Schlesinger

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Yan at 6:02 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PUBLISHED AGENDA

None

MINUTES

Regular Board Minutes

Upon motion by Trustee Smith, seconded by Trustee Mairzadeh, it was,

MOVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the Minutes of the January 19, 2021 Board meeting as presented.

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)
 Absent from Vote – 1 (Hu)

MOTION CARRIED

Special Board Minutes

Upon motion by Trustee Smith, seconded by Trustee Mairzadeh, it was,

MOVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the Minutes of the February 9, 2021 Special Board meeting as presented.

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)
Absent from Vote – 1 (Hu)

MOTION CARRIED

TREASURER’S REPORT

Upon motion by Trustee Sassouni, seconded by Trustee Smith, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the following financial reports which have been reviewed by the Audit Committee:

- a. February 23, 2021, Treasurer’s Report;
- b. Warrant dated February 2, 2021 through February 7, 2021 which has been reviewed by the Treasurer, the sums set against their respective names, amounting in the aggregate to \$220,963.78.
- c. Payroll Warrants for pay dates January 14th and January 28, 2021 which have been reviewed by the Treasurer, (in the amounts of \$172,299.52 and \$131,680.49, respectively,) for a total of \$303,980.01.

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PAYROLL CHANGES

Upon motion by Trustee Sassouni, seconded by Trustee Mairzadeh, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the Payroll Change report of January 1 through January 30, 2021 as presented, which has been reviewed by the Audit Committee.

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

Building Committee

Trustee Smith deferred to Interim Director George Trepp for an update on the capital improvement projects. Mr. Trepp reported that he and architect, Elisabeth Martin, have been conducting reference checks on general contractors that may be working on the Station Branch renovations. They will also be checking the references of the sub-contractors. Mr. Trepp stated that he is working on a timeline for the project which will be presented to the board for review. Trustee Smith said that there will be a special

board meeting, with Ms. Martin present, to discuss the branch renovations in more detail. He noted that they are a little behind on the project timeline because of the recent snowstorm and coronavirus pandemic.

Policy & Bylaws Committee

President Yan announced that the Policy committee meeting was cancelled due to the snowstorm.

Interim Director's Report

Interim Director George Trepp reported that the library's Coronavirus Task Force continues to meet biweekly with its next meeting scheduled for Thursday. Their next topic of discussion is the expansion of service to evening hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Mr. Trepp announced that Sunday hours commenced February 14th to low attendance but anticipates they will pick up as word gets out. He shared that, in response to staff concerns on how to handle patrons not wearing masks appropriately, an email was sent out with guidelines on how to address these situations. The trustees recommended signage be displayed on the proper way to wear masks. Mr. Trepp said that, in consultation with the library's auditor, attorney, business manager and HR specialist, he has written a new continuing education policy to replace the existing one. This policy will be presented to the Policy Committee at its next meeting. Ms. DiCamillo asked when the board mandated the policy committee to update its continuing education policy. President Yan responded that the request to update it was brought forward by Mr. Trepp after being approached by a staff member inquiring about such support. It was agreed that the policy revision be discussed at the board meeting then moved to the Policy Committee. Mr. Trepp continued that he created a procedure regarding the use of library interns that was approved by both unions. It will be sent to the attorney to be added to the contracts. Ms. DiCamillo said that there are federal regulations that need to be looked into concerning the use of non-paid interns and asked if the interns are covered by insurance. Mr. Trepp confirmed that they are covered. He assured that federal regulations will be reviewed before moving forward with anything. Mr. Trepp announced that they are currently evaluating the bids received for the Station Branch renovations. The numbers produce a total cost of \$641k for the project, which includes general contracting, furniture and moving. Mr. Trepp said they are in the process of checking references and financials before making a recommendation to award. Trustee Hu applauded the Children's Department and its librarians following a very successful author book talk that was recently held. Trustee Sontag echoed her sentiments and also extended gratitude to Adam Hinz and Chris Van Wickler of the STEM lab staff and Donna Litke, Programming Coordinator.

Text of George Trepp's, Interim Director, written report dated February 2021 is below:

While the first half of this time period was devoted to daily operations, Corona Virus planning and the Station Branch renovation, the second part of this period was enveloped by the Landscape Project. However, since virus planning remains uppermost in the public's eye because of its impact on hours and services, this report starts with that topic.

1. COVID-19 Planning:

- As you read this, the Library has been open two (2) Sundays starting February 14. The initial Sunday was muted and uneventful, as the public is not fully aware, despite publicity, of the new service day. The Task Force continues to meet biweekly and has decided the next service expansion will be night openings; Tuesdays and Thursdays, on or about March 30/April 6, contingent upon positivity, hospitalization and vaccination rates. As this is written, the two former rates are declining but the vaccine rate is only 13% and Long Island still has the highest rates in the State with vaccines remaining in short supply and the variants becoming more omnipresent; thereby, informing this gradual expansion. Absenting another surge and continued declines in rates, the next step is to return to the pre-covid schedule with services; browsing and study, still being discussed. The one day the Board may want to address is Friday night hours, as this would be an opportune time to reexamine that night having been closed for over a year. Further, Nassau County public library closings of varying durations continue to be reported. Finally, the Interim Director attended seminars on Workplace Safety during the Pandemic, Covid and Workplace Law and a Newsday session on Covid and Employment, which interestingly covered the topic of vaccine mandate by employers.

- In response to staff reports of inappropriate mask usage by the public and uncertainty on how to handle these situations, administration has issued mask guidelines, as follows:

Mask Guidelines:

- * All patrons, over the age of 2, entering the branches of the Great Neck Library are required to wear a mask .
 - * Masks should cover both the nose and mouth.
 - * Patrons who are not wearing a mask must be advised to wear a mask. (initial warning)
 - * Patrons who must be warned a second time to wear the mask are also advised that failure to wear a mask, requiring a third warning, shall result in a "request" to leave the building.
 - * If a patron still has not donned the mask; (third instance), they should be asked to remove themselves from the premises.
 - * If they fail to comply and still do not don the mask, inform the patron that the Nassau County police will be summoned. Then call the police.
 - * Users who habitually, your call regarding habitually, do not wear the mask shall be advised that if they persist in not wearing the mask shall be barred from use of the library the next day.
 - * Prior to barring for habitual violations, administration is to be informed and the following information provided: Name of the offender; Address; Email and telephone number.
- Signage has been posted in all buildings and the staff has reacted positively to the guidelines.

II. Capital Projects:

- The middle part of January was devoted to the Branch renovations highlighted by contractor walkthroughs. Bids for moving and storage, furniture and general contracting were received on Tuesday, February 16 and the three (3) general contracting, three (3) furniture and two (2) move bids are currently being analyzed by the architect; however, the raw, unanalyzed numbers are as follows:

General Contracting:

AFL General Construction Inc. --- \$460,843 inclusive of two addendums; estimated construction time 12-14 weeks
Jobco Incorporate --- \$483,000 inclusive of one addendum; estimated construction time 14 weeks
W.J. Northridge --- \$506,574 inclusive of one addendum; estimated construction time 10 weeks

Furniture and Equipment:

Empire Office --- \$186,018.20
Inside Source --- \$179,357.
WBG --- \$179,986.00

Moving and Storage:

National Library Relocations --- \$50,425 + \$2,850 for Storage and \$1,900 for Handling for a **Total of \$55,175** (no pricing to discard furniture or reinstall technology).
WBG --- \$46,675 + \$2,675 to discard excess furniture and \$4,750 to reinstall technology for a **Total of \$54,100**. In either case, WBG is low bidder even if one or both of the options are selected (tech reinstall may be in another bid).
Clancy Cullen--- No bid

To be conservative, it is suggested that another month be added to the general contractor time frame. Reference checks are still needed and will be done by Library administration. To expedite the process, it is recommended that the awards be made at a Special Board meeting, to be determined, rather than waiting another month for the Audit Committee and then the March Board Meeting.

- Prior thereto, the Branch Head and the Interim Director spent two half days measuring and photographing all furnishings and equipment for insurance purposes and to facilitate disposal and then the Salvation Army, Goodwill Industries, Habitat for Humanity, the School District, Member Libraries and the staff were informed of the availability of surplus furnishings. Trustee Hu also contacted some agencies one of which made a pickup. Unfortunately, 1 800 Got Junk may still be needed. Because the architect issued addendums in response to contractor inquiries, the landlord delayed a response to dumpster location, the snow storm and the Presidents' Day holiday, the timeline is now about two weeks later than anticipated.
- Toward the end of January, the landscape project took center stage culminating in its approval at the February 9 Special Board meeting. Bayview Landscape Architecture and Rockwell Developers were apprised of the vote and are proceeding with permitting and RFP development. They also have been requested to provide a project timeline, focus on the front section, provide information on the children's garden interactive elements, ascertain if the Nassau County Museum of Art has pieces to lend and prepare a complete written description of the project.

III. Daily Operations:

As you can imagine, there have been numerous situations requiring attention, as follows:

- Following the meeting with the Charles Segal, construction attorney, the list of outstanding items was verified with the Facilities Manager and forwarded back for disposition.
- The Interim Director formulated a new Continuing Education Policy replacing the extant Policy 400-80 Continuing Education Support for the Board's review. The new policy was developed in response to a staff request for such support and in consultation with the Library's auditor, attorney business manager and human resources specialist.
- In response to a request for a Library Internship and skepticism by the two Staff Associations, the Interim Director developed guidelines for such internships, which has met with approval from both unions and will be submitted to the attorney for inclusion in the contracts.

- At the suggestion of Trustee Hu and following discussion with the Head of Children's Services we will contact Deidre Goode's daughter regarding an annual program in her name when the mourning period has elapsed.
- The evacuation route maps have been completed and will be hung as soon as frames are obtained. We are close to securing a seven (7) hour orientation, albeit expensive, from the lighting control company.
- Following a patron suggestion, the Library has acquired the on-line edition of the Wall Street Journal, which is on the website's Home Section Go Digital 24. /7 area.
- The Interim Director reviewed and amended the job posting for Levels staff.
- Following abusive, harassing calls demanding special and extraordinary treatment to the Station Branch Manager, the Head of Circulation, the Head of Children's Services and a librarian from a patron, the Interim Director emailed a response, which warned of such behavior. The patron has written to the president of the Board.
- Following the November Diversity training workshop, administration felt that a deeper dive was needed; consequently, an Equity Audit is considered, which would include Interviews with the Board, Surveys of the staff and community, confidential focus groups, reviews of policies vs practices, flyers, programming and material purchases, a final comprehensive report including recommendations and potential next steps. Because much of this can be done virtually, it would take about a month but it would be costly, as it is quite intensive. This proposal will be passed through the Personnel Committee at its next meeting for consideration.

OLD BUSINESS

(a) Proposed Policy Changes

- a. Revise 900-10 Programs - 3rd Read & Vote

Upon motion by Trustee Sassouni, seconded by Trustee Hu and after discussion, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees revise Section 900-10 (Programs) from the Board Policy Manual as updated. [copy attached]

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Interim Director George Trepp suggested the entire first paragraph of the policy be removed. He said the updated policy, if approved, will read as follows: "Authors, artists, musicians, or performers who appear at the Library may be allowed to sell their creative works within the guidelines established by the Library Director."

Public Comment: J. Pizer wants to make sure that all changes are vetted at public meetings.

- b. Revise 900-20 Admission to Programs - 3rd Read & Vote

Upon motion by Trustee Sassouni, seconded by Trustee Gold and after discussion, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees revise Section 900-20 (Admission to Programs) from the Board Policy Manual. [copy attached]

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Board Comment: Trustee Sassouni wanted to ensure that Parkville Branch patrons are not excluded from priority of admissions to programs. After discussion it was determined that certain sections of New Hyde Park are part of the Great Neck School district.

- c. Remove 900-30 Children's Programs - 3rd Read & Vote

Upon motion by Trustee Smith, seconded by Trustee Sassouni and after discussion, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees remove Section 900-30 (Children's Programs) from the Board Policy Manual. [copy attached]

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Public Comment: J. Pizer asked for clarification on what is being removed. Interim Director responded that the information is included in the resolution.

d. Remove 900-40 Jointly Sponsored Programs - 3rd Read & Vote

Upon motion by Trustee Gold, seconded by Trustee Mairzadeh and after discussion, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees remove Section 900-40 (Jointly Sponsored Programs) from the Board Policy Manual. [copy attached]

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Yan, Hu, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

No – 2 (Smith, Sassouni)

MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment: M. DiCamillo asked for clarification on what is being removed. Trustee Gold read the following: "The Library may jointly sponsor a program with another community, educational, or cultural organization. When a program is jointly sponsored, all publicity regarding the program must be approved by the Department Head in charge of Programming. Costs for such programs may be shared or borne by the Library. All such programs must be approved by the Library Director." Ms. DiCamillo wondered if this means that the library can no longer jointly sponsor a program with anyone. President Yan explained that removing items from policy does not mean they will no longer be done. The policies being removed are procedural and do not need to be included in the policy manual. Trustee Hu elaborated that the deleted policies are standard practice and the job of the professionals. Trustees Sassouni and Smith opined that the policy should remain in the manual as it is important to explain this process. Trustee Sontag concurred with Trustees Yan and Hu as this responsibility falls to the Director and need not be in the policy manual.

e. Remove 900-50 Other – 3rd Read & Vote

Upon motion by Trustee Mairzadeh, seconded by Trustee Hu, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees remove Section 900-50 (Other) from the Board Policy Manual. [copy attached]

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

f. Remove 900-80 Cable Television – 3rd Read & Vote

Upon motion by Trustee Mairzadeh, seconded by Trustee Hu, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees remove Section 900-80 (Cable Television) from the Board Policy Manual. [copy attached]

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

NEW BUSINESS

(a) Schedule Special Board of Trustees Meeting for Branch Award of RFPs

Proposed date March 8, 2021

President Yan announced that a special meeting of the board will be held on Monday, March 8th to review the RFPs received for the Station Branch project and award it. The architect, Elisabeth Martin, will be in attendance to provide details.

(b) Letter to Governor Cuomo requesting priority for the COVID-19 Vaccine for Library Workers

Upon motion by Trustee Sassouni, seconded by Trustee Mairzadeh and after discussion, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the signing and sending of a letter to Governor Cuomo requesting priority for Library Workers for the Covid-19 Vaccine. [copy attached]

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

Absent from Vote – 1 (Hu)

MOTION CARRIED

Board Comment: Trustee Hu expressed surprise that librarians are not getting vaccinated. After reaching out to the local elected officials she discovered that the ultimate authority over this lies with Governor Cuomo. Ms. Hu said that since the community is pushing to fully open the library it is crucial to have librarians receive the same priority as teachers for the COVID-19 vaccine. Trustee Sassouni agreed and thanked Trustee Hu for the gesture.

Public Comment: J. Pizer feels this is a great idea but added that the problem is a shortage of the vaccine in Nassau County.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

OPEN TIME

J. Pizer – When policies are removed something should be added in its place. No one is using the policies to get in the way of the Director's responsibilities rather the policies are in the manual to help the general population understand the goings on of the library.

M. DiCamillo – Feels that she has been denied her ability to speak and was not allowed to share her opinion on the programming policies being removed from the manual. Ms. DiCamillo said not everybody belongs to the Park District so there may be programs held that the public will never know about. Since there will no longer be a policy on this matter there will be people that will be disenfranchised from

attending the program. Ms. DiCamillo asked that the board consider that when programs are being conducted jointly with the Park District.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

March 10, 2021 - 1st Budget Workshop
March 22, 2021 - 2nd Budget Workshop
March 23, 2021- Board Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Trustee Sassouni, seconded by Trustee Gold and after discussion, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees enter into Executive Session for a discussion on matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Interim Director Trepp added that matters related to litigation will also be discussed in the session.

Upon motion by Trustee Hu, seconded by Trustee Smith, it was,

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees exit Executive Session.

VOTE: Yes – 7 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Sassouni, Sontag, Gold, Mairzadeh)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

No action was taken in executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm on a motion by Trustee Hu and seconded by Trustee Mairzadeh.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Barry Smith
Secretary, Board of Trustees