
**GREAT NECK LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M.**

A regular meeting of the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees with an executive session was held on Wednesday, November 15, 2021, via Zoom [Agenda attached]

The following Trustees were present constituting a quorum:

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

Also Present: Denise Corcoran – Director
Steven Kashkin – Business Manager

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Yan at 6:05 p.m.

PRESENTATION & ACCEPTANCE OF JUNE 2021 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS BY JILL SANDERS OF CULLEN AND DANOWSKI, LLP

Jill Sanders from Cullen & Danowski, LLP presented the annual audit report. She stated that her role as the external auditor is to give an opinion on the financial statements by determining if they fairly present in accordance with the general accounting principles of the United States of America. Ms. Sanders went over the document. She said that the books were in order and that strong internal controls are in place. Ms. Sanders noted that library was issued an “unmodified opinion”, meaning that the statements fairly present, not only the balances as of June 30 2021, but the financial transactions that encompass the period from July 1 2020 up through that balance sheet day. She encouraged all to review the detailed report which is attached.

Trustee Hu asked for clarification regarding the reduction in revenue and if it is due to not being able to collect late fees/fines. Business Manager, Steven Kashkin, noted that is only a portion of it. He said, as detailed in the line items; fines, lost book revenue, copier revenue, interest income, and pilot revenue were all much less. The reason why is that COVID hit in 2021.

On behalf of the entire board, President Yan thanked Ms. Sanders, Steven Kashkin and his team for the good work on this.

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the audited Financial Statements and the Auditor’s Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Mairzadeh)
Absent from Vote – 1 (Sontag)

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PUBLISHED AGENDA

K. Schader – Regarding Parkville Renovation: 1. Will the branch need to close, if so, when and for how long? Having branches closed really effects the community. 2. Will moving the children’s room to the rear of the branch present staffing challenges? 3. What of the renovation is essential in terms of repairs and upkeep versus a cosmetic change? 4. Will the number of books available for browsing increase?

President Yan stated that since the renovations are extensive, the branch will need to completely close for approximately four to six months or longer. He acknowledged the community’s concern regarding the relocation of the children’s room and said this will need to be discussed more.

M. Wohlgemuth – Regarding Parkville Renovation: 1. Believes there is little browsing in the branch. 2. The renovation plan has been vetted by the previous board. 3. Doesn’t see relocation of children’s room as a problem and feels the space is better used for that than as a meeting room.

Trustee Smith said that previous boards agreed to move the children’s room to the back based on the fact that it is a bigger and better lit space. He added that per the architect the number of books and seating will increase after the renovation.

MINUTES

Regular Board with Executive Session Meeting Minutes

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

MOVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the November 3, 2021 board meeting with executive session as presented.

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

TREASURER/BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT

Upon motion by Trustee Gold, seconded by Trustee Mairzadeh, 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. November 15, 2021, Treasurer’s Report;

- b. Warrant dated November 1, 2021 through November 7, 2021 which has been reviewed by the Treasurer, the sums set against their respective names, amounting in the aggregate to \$762,025.83.
- c. Payroll Warrants for pay dates October 7 and October 21, 2021, which have been reviewed by the Treasurer, (in the amounts of \$149,469.29 and \$140,329.27, respectively,) for a total of \$289,798.56.

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PAYROLL CHANGES

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the Payroll Changes report of October 1 through November 4, 2021 as presented, which has been reviewed by the Audit Committee.

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

Absent from Vote – 1 (Sontag)

MOTION CARRIED

REPORTS

Policy and Bylaws Committee

Trustee Hu reported that the committee met on November 9th after a long hiatus. Past topics, including late fee amnesty and library card age groups, were brought back for discussion. She noted that the committee will continue to work under the framework provided by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich. Trustee Hu shared that the possibility of a “library of things” and the loaning out of iPads and hotspots are being considered. She added that trustee training and emails were also on the agenda. Trustee Hu said that this training is now mandated by the NYS but that the library is a step ahead since they already did it last year. She reported that a patron was in attendance at the meeting to discuss the library’s existing mask mandate. Trustee Hu said that although the committee is not presenting any items for board approval tonight, they did task Director Corcoran with reviewing the policy manual to recommend outdated sections that should be removed.

Director’s Report

Director Denise Corcoran welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for their interest and involvement. She reported that Staff Development Day was held on November 11th where required training was completed and staff wellness activities were held. Director Corcoran shared that administration has been focused on staffing due to the library’s critically low levels. Several positions have been posted, interviews have been conducted and, on tonight’s agenda there are numerous resolutions for the approval of new hires. She announced that the NLS member support for 2022 and 2023 is attached for board approval. Director Corcoran shared that NLS uses a four-factor calculation to determine each library’s share with equal weight to population, cardholders, materials expenditures, and net circulation. Based on the formulas attached, Great Neck Library’s contribution will be reduced by \$9,494. spread over the course of two years. She stated that the NLS direct assessment reimbursement has been changed. Great Neck is routinely a negative use library, which means that our patrons, go and borrow from other libraries, more than other patrons come here. She said this is due to several factors

but since the formula will now be recalculated in a different way, it will actually result in a savings for us. Director Corcoran reported that the board approved the purchase and installation of a new HVAC unit for Lakeville. The vendor came in to the branch but the unit that was sourced would not fit correctly without major modifications and because of supply chain issues, our vendor is having difficulty getting the equipment that is right for us. She added that they are looking at another unit right now and will share updated information as it becomes available. Director Corcoran reported that the library received recognition from PSE&G as a Green Business Leader for participating in Long Island's Commercial Efficiency Program. She announced that new shelving has been installed at Main and the children's room has more shelving so books will be moved from storage and onto those shelves as quickly as possible. Director Corcoran added that shelves will be also installed in the Adult Reference and Media areas.

Trustee Hu wondered if NLS usage calculation takes the library's collection into account. She asked how visits to the physical library are counted. Director Corcoran said that over the past three years Great Neck has been a negative use library which means that we had to pay additional money because our patrons were using other places more. NLS's formula for that is now being changed by calculating using the ILS (catalog system). Since our library is one of three libraries that has a standalone ILS system we will actually benefit from the change.

Trustee Hu applauded the library for its recognition from PSE&G. She mentioned that she has received comments from patrons questioning why the library lights are on during the night at Main when it is closed. Trustee Hu recalls a conversation at a previous meeting regarding our maintenance staff having control over that. President Yan stated that this had been discussed with the interim director who was supposed to look into having the facilities manager trained on the operation of the light switch controls. He asked Director Corcoran to please follow up.

Trustee Smith requested an overview of the number of vacant positions in the library system and the status of the Assistant Director position. Director Corcoran referred to the attached payroll changes report which lists the current open funded positions. She said there currently are over two dozen open positions which cannot be posted all at once. Director Corcoran noted that there are various reasons why positions are open, such as retirement or relocation. She stated that job postings are up each week and that interviews are ongoing. Director Corcoran said that on call staff is filling the gaps but that is not enough. Interview committees have been formed to search for the most qualified candidates so that we can have the best workforce possible. She added that the Assistant Director position has not been posted because with all the other openings it is critical to first get staff in to continue daily library operations. Director Corcoran hopes to keep getting staff in and then post for the Assistant Director position.

Text of Denise Corcoran's, Director, written report is below:

ADMINISTRATION

- We had our GNL Staff Development Day on November 11th. Required training for technology and the NYS Hero Act occurred as well as staff wellness seminars.
- I have met with various Department and Branch Heads to discuss library operations, programming and upcoming initiatives.
- I am currently evaluating and prioritizing staffing needs, reviewing applications, and interviewing candidates for open funded positions.
- I continue to meet with the Presidents of the Department Head and Staff Association to ensure open lines of communication and a good working collaboration.
- I have had several phone conversations with our patrons to resolve issues and hear suggestions for better service.
- NLS Member Library Support - Attached is the 2022 and 2023 NLS Member Library Support information. NLS uses a four-factor calculation to determine each library's share with equal weight to population, cardholders, materials expenditures, and net circulation. Based on the formulas attached, Great Neck Library's contribution will be reduced by \$9,494. spread over the course of two years. I recommend approving.

- NLS Direct Access Reimbursement- NLS will be stopping direct access reimbursement and instead incorporate direct access into the formula for calculating annual ILS consortia fees. Great Neck Library is routinely a negative-use library and therefore stands to benefit since the ILS fee calculation does not impact us.

COMMUNITY & OUTREACH

- Meeting with Northwell Health regarding partnership opportunities
- Meeting with Innovative regarding products

MAIN LIBRARY

- The installation of additional shelving at Main began on November 11, 2021 in the Children's room. Shelving will also be installed in the Media room and Adult areas.
- The donated tree from Jerrald Weinstein in memory of his wife has been planted.

BRANCHES

- We received a note of recognition as a PSEG Long Island Green Business Leader for participating in the PSEG Long Island's Commercial Efficiency Program at Station.
- The Parkville renovation project has been submitted to the Department of Library Development (DLD) for review for Construction Aid funding. According to NLS, after DLD reviews and approves NLS' recommendations, the projects are forwarded to the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) for review and final approval. We may not receive notification concerning the award until June 2022. NLS capped funding for projects of our size at \$232,336.
- The Lakeville Branch is temporarily closed due to issues with the HVAC. We are experiencing problems in securing equipment due to supply chain issues.

LEGISLATION

- OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard
<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA4161.pdf>
- **Open Meetings (S.1150-A/A.1228-A)**
Documents need to be made available "at least twenty-four hours" prior to the meeting.
- **Public Officers Law A1108—A**
Minutes taken at a meeting of a public body be posted on the agency's website within two weeks from an open meeting and one week from an executive session.

OLD BUSINESS

(a) Untable the motion to authorize Stalco Construction to complete Parkville renovation

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees take from the table the motion relating to the authorization of Stalco Construction for the completion of the Parkville Renovation at a cost of \$630,000 to be charged to the Branch and Special Services Fund.

VOTE: Yes – 3 (Smith, Gold, Mairzadeh)

No – 3 (Yan, Hu, Sontag)

MOTION DEFEATED

Board Comments: Trustee Gold stated that a major concern of the community is for Lakeville and Parkville to be closed at the same time because it greatly affects the people who live geographically closer to them.

Trustee Smith said that this vote does not signify that construction will start immediately and that the start date will be up to the director and construction company. Elisabeth Martin, Architect - MDA, stated that usually there is one to two months of mobilization if work starts immediately. She opined that the library can make the start date of the renovation contingent upon Lakeville being reopened.

President Yan noted that although the motion was defeated it may be brought back for a vote at a future meeting.

Trustee Smith added that this project has been in existence for about four to five years and the plans have been vetted by multiple boards. He clarified that this vote is just to put the contractor in place, who in turn will work with the library and architect to set a start date for the renovation and that there will be no tax increase resulting from this renovation.

President Yan expressed his, and all the trustees support for Parkville's renovation but noted other urgent matters that need to be addressed by Director Corcoran. He would like a strong, complete team in place to better support the director and move this renovation project forward.

Trustee Mairzadeh echoes President Yan's viewpoint and added that she wants Director Corcoran to be in a place where there is structure in her environment where she is in control to make decisions. She absolutely supports Parkville's renovation but feels that the timing is not right.

Trustee Hu said that all library locations are equally important but feels the process is corrupted. She has concerns over the pressure put on the trustees, including the sanctity of their executive sessions. Trustee Hu encouraged all to keep this tabled to be revisited at a future date as this contract can be signed at any time. She validated Ms. Schader's points from earlier and thinks its better to continue to receive and respond to the community's questions on the project. Tabling this also allows Director Corcoran more time to devote to the priorities of library which are staffing and the restoration of services with the COVID-19 reopening.

Trustee Smith said that he has confidence in the library staff and reiterated that all this vote does is give the director and architect permission to move forward.

Public Comment: M. DiCamillo – Looks forward to board voting to move this along. Station and Lakeville have been renovated but Parkville has still not happened. She hopes this will be expedited and if it doesn't move forward at this meeting expects it to be approved at the next.

NEW BUSINESS

(b) Appointment of Part Time Children's Librarian

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Serimatie Lakhnath to the position of Part Time Children's Librarian with a six-month probationary period, effective November 22, 2021, at an hourly rate of \$28.03. [Job Description/Posting attached]

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

(c) Appointment of Part Time Children's Librarian

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Christina Lorper to the position of Part Time Children's Librarian with a six-month probationary period, effective November 29, 2021, at an hourly rate of \$25.90. [Job Description/Posting attached]

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

(d) Appointment of Part Time Reference Librarian

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Ian Bloomfield to the position of Part Time Reference Librarian with a six-month probationary period, effective November 22, 2021, at an hourly rate of \$26.41. [Job Description/Posting attached]

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

(e) Appointment of Part Time Reference Librarian

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Aaron Berkowitz to the position of Part Time Reference Librarian with a six-month probationary period, effective November 22, 2021, at an hourly rate of \$25.90. [Job Description/Posting attached]

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

(f) Appointment of Part Time Circulation Clerk

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Lizandra Fuentes to the position of Part Time Clerk with a six-month probationary period, effective November 29, 2021, at an hourly rate of \$15.07. [Job Description/Posting attached]

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Mairzadeh)
Absent from Vote – 1 (Sontag)
MOTION CARRIED

(g) Renew D & O and Flood Insurance

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees renew its Directors & Officers & Employment Practices Liability, and Flood policies for the period November 28, 2021 through November 27, 2022 with Philadelphia Insurance Company and American Bankers Insurance Company, for a total of \$12,295.00 to be charged to the Property/Liability Insurance line of the Operating Budget.

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

(h) NLS Member Support Fee – 2022 and 2023

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the NLS Member Support fee for the year 2022, in the amount of \$51,715.00, and for the year 2023, in the amount of \$46,969.00, to come from the NLS Budget Line in the Operating Budget.

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORRESPONDENCE

A. Solomon letter

PSE&G letter

OPEN TIME

M. Fuller – When will board put forward names to fill trustee vacancy?

Trustee Hu wonders if Lakeville's closure is being clearly communicated to the patrons. Director Corcoran said she will make sure more signage is put up and added that there is information on the library website and telephone system. She urged patrons who are having difficulty obtaining their material reach out to the library so that may be directed to another location.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

December 21, 2021 - Board Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees enter into Executive Session for a discussion on personnel matters.

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

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

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

No action was taken in executive session.

The board reconvened at 8:23 p.m.

ADDITIONAL RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library authorize the library counsel to issue a legal opinion on the January 20, 2021 meeting where the board president, vice president, interim director and library counsel met, specifically as to the issue as to whether or not the meeting has violated the open meetings law.

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Yan, Hu, Smith, Gold, Sontag, Mairzadeh)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm on a motion by Trustee Hu and seconded by Trustee Sontag.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Barry Smith
Secretary, Board of Trustees