
**GREAT NECK LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 19, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.**

A special meeting of the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees was held on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, at the Main Library, 159 Bayview Avenue, Great Neck, NY 11023 [Agenda attached]

The following Trustees were present constituting a quorum:

Liman Mimi Hu – President
Josephine Mairzadeh – Vice President
Scott Sontag – Secretary
Kathleen Gold – Treasurer
Donald Panetta – Trustee
Barry Smith – Trustee

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

CALL TO ORDER

President Hu called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PUBLISHED AGENDA

- S. Khodadian – 1. Is there still a Nominating Committee? What does the Nominating Committee do? Does the current litigation affect the Nominating Committee process? President Hu said there is a Nominating Committee and acknowledged that there is ongoing litigation that prevents her from commenting further.
2. When will the steps at the main entrance of the Main Library be repaired? President Hu stated that this matter is also tied to ongoing litigation.
3. Will future board meetings be live-streamed? President Hu responded that this is being looked into but involves policy changes. She added that meetings were held via Zoom during the height of the COVID pandemic as permitted by the state.

MINUTES

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

MOVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the June 21, 2022, Board meeting as presented.

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PAYROLL CHANGES

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the Payroll Changes report of June 17 through July 14, 2022, as presented.

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

Long Range Planning Committee

President Hu reported that the committee met earlier this month where they finalized the library's long-range plan. She noted that it is a living document that may be improved upon but feels the library is headed in a very promising direction. President Hu applauded Director Denise Corcoran for all her work on the plan which is long overdue. Director Corcoran thanked all the staff involved in the creation of the long-range plan, as well as, Cindy Simeti for putting together a beautiful presentation.

Director Corcoran shared that she attended the ALA conference in Washington, D.C. where she had the opportunity to meet with vendors and attend many seminars.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Proposed Policy Changes – 3rd Read & Vote

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees has reviewed the attached document and hereby approves the changes listed in items 1a –k to be made to the Policy Manual.

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Proposed Policy Changes – 2nd Read

- a. MOVE: Section 500-95 Anti-Nepotism to Section 300-60
- b. MOVE: Section 500-96 Sexual Harassment to Section 300-70
- c. MOVE: Section 600-20 Censorship to Section 100-20
- d. MOVE: Section 600-30 Freedom to Read to Section 100-60
- e. MOVE: Section 600-40 Library Bill of Rights to Section 100-70
- f. MOVE: Section 600-50 Freedom to View to Section 100-80
- g. MOVE: Section 400-80 Continuing Education to Section 300-80
- h. MOVE: Section 400-90 Conference/Meeting Reimbursement to Section 300-90
- i. REVISE and MOVE: Section 500-85 Conflict of Interest to Section 100-90
- j. REVISE and MOVE: Section 500-90 Whistleblower to Section 300-95

President Hu stated that Sections 500-85 and 500-90 were reviewed and revised by library counsel.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Accept Amended NYS Annual Report

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the amended New York State 2021 Annual Report for the Great Neck Library as presented.

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Approve Long-Range Plan

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the updated Long-Range Plan as presented.

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Accept Updated Holiday Closings & Sunday Hours

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the updated September 2022 to August 2023 Schedule of Holiday Closings and Sunday Hours as presented.

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Proposed Policy Changes – 1st Read

- a. ADD: Section 400-80 M/WBE Policy
- b. ADD: Section 700-90 Library of Things Policy
- c. REVISE and MOVE: Section 1200 Gifts and Donations to Section 600-20 Donations and Naming Recognition
- d. MOVE: Section 900-40 Streaming to Section 700-95
- e. MOVE: Section 600-10 (f. Local History Collection Policy) to Section 900-40
- f. REVISE: Section 1500-20 Nominating Committee Procedures

President Hu noted that these proposed policies are on for a first read. Included is the addition of the Library of Things, advocated by Trustee Sontag, and; a minority and women business enterprises policy. Director Corcoran said that the M/WBE policy is important to have in order for the library to obtain certain grants. President Hu stated that the donation policy is also being revised and moved. A revision to the Nominating Committee Procedures policy is being presented in which specific protocols are listed for the process. She added that the revisions have been vetted by library counsels. Trustee Panetta interprets the changes being made to Section 1500-20 as doing away with the Nominating Committee.

The board will have their hands down their throat in every single way and their independence and confidentiality is being taken away. Trustee Panetta is upset over the whole thing. Trustee Smith opines that this goes against why the nominating committee was formed. Trustee Panetta said that he was on the nominating committee and requiring six names per position is impossible. He continued that who is interviewed and why they are not chosen is confidential and these changes are doing away with all that. President Hu asked Trustee Panetta to please lower his voice. Trustee Smith that this document has one part of the community not trusting the other part of the community and the nominating committee was formed to remove the arbitrary actions of the board. President Hu stated that she likes the passion and debate of different ideas but she does not like the yelling or hand gestures being done. Trustee Panetta said that as he told her a long time ago, he is Italian and talks with his hands. Trustee Hu reiterated that these changes were vetted by the library counsels and are consistent with our current policy and bylaws. She added that the board of trustees has the ultimate authority in deciding library affairs and has control over all the committees. Last year, the board reached out to the community for a candidate to fill a trustee vacancy. Within seven days of the solicitation, over 14 applications from qualified candidates were received. If the nominating committee is unable to get enough candidates to apply to the board, then maybe we need to rethink the process. In 2015 under the leadership of Marietta DiCamillo, the board was already revisiting the nominating committee procedures and considering the independent petition process. Regarding Trustee Panetta's comment on the confidentiality of the interviews conducted by the Nominating Committee, President Hu stated that the board has unfettered access to all the information regarding the library in order to make informed decisions. Trustee Hu said that this is the law and according to NYS law, the board of trustees has the authority to fill trustee vacancies. Therefore, these policy revisions are consistent with NYS law. Trustee Sontag wonders what the problem is with the board being provided information on why a candidate is rejected by the nominating committee when they are being approached by members of the community who have undergone that nominating process and felt as if they were being interrogated. Trustee Smith said that the job of the nominating committee is to vet candidates to serve on the board. President Hu said the revisions to this policy are to ensure that we have an open transparent process that will allow people to have a welcoming experience. Trustee Smith asked what happens if the board does not agree with a nominating committee selection. President Hu responded that if all seven members of the board, all with different backgrounds, unanimously and vehemently disagree that a nominating committee selection is not suitable to join the board, the trustees' opinion should be accepted. She acknowledged that there was a candidate selected by the nominating committee who caused serious backlash from the community. If the board does nothing when this occurs, the community will question why the board is allowing such a candidate to join the board. The trustees should absolutely have a say when the library's reputation is at risk. Trustee Sontag asked Trustees Panetta and Smith to explain how they would like the nominating process to work. Trustee Panetta said that at the moment he does not have any suggestions. Trustee Smith responded that nominating committee members should be asked their opinion. President Hu said that in 2019, Rebecca Miller, former board president, sent the library bylaws and policy manual to Rebekah Smith Aldridge, co-author of the NYS Trustee manual, for review. One of the first things she pointed out was the nominating process. Legally the nominating committee cannot stay independent and the board must assert control. President Hu repeated that she appreciates discussion of opposing opinions but asks everyone to be respectful as it is not helpful to scream at one another. Trustee Gold feels there is strong opposition to the requirement of six candidates per open position and recommends lowering the number to four. Director Corcoran reminded everyone that this policy is being presented on a first read and is only one of many policies being reviewed in the manual. She added that most libraries no longer have nominating committees so there are no examples to follow. President Hu welcomes comments on the revisions prior to the second read.

5. Personnel

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve personnel items, 1a-e, and 2a; on the attached Personnel Report.

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Trustee Sontag left the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

6. Discussion – Open late (11:00 am) Wednesday, August 3rd

Director Corcoran informed the board that the library will be opening one hour late (11:00 a.m.) on Wednesday, August 3rd due to staff training.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

OPEN TIME

- S. Khodadian – 1. Are 100 signatures required on the independent petition form? President Hu confirmed that 100 signatures are mandated by the bylaws
2. How many hours are dedicated to service on the board? President Hu responded that the hour varies.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

September 20, 2022 – Board Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm on a motion by Trustee Gold and seconded by Trustee Panetta.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Sontag
Secretary, Board of Trustees