A regular meeting of the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees with an executive session was held on Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at the Main Library, 159 Bayview Avenue, Great Neck, NY 11023 [Agenda attached]

The following Trustees were present constituting a quorum:

- Rory Lancman – President
- Scott Sontag – Vice President
- Kathleen Gold – Secretary
- Mimi Hu – Treasurer
- Donald Panetta – Assistant Treasurer
- Barry Smith – Trustee

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

Also Absent:
- Josephine Mairzadeh – Assistant Treasurer

CALL TO ORDER

President Lancman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Trustees Sontag, Hu, Panetta, and Smith were in attendance along with Library Director Denise Corcoran and Business Manager Steven Kashkin.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Hu, Panetta, Smith)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Trustee Gold joined the executive session at 6:09 p.m.

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

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

VOTE: Yes – 6 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Panetta, Smith)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

No action was taken in the executive session.

The board reconvened at 7:00 p.m.
PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PUBLISHED AGENDA

M. DiCamillo – Statements made on Main renovations that occurred during her time on the board.

I. Amir – Trustee communications via social media and emails sent to library administration.

STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board President Rory Lancman announced that he would be reading a statement on behalf of the board regarding an incident that occurred at the September 19th board meeting. Trustee Panetta asked to speak prior to the reading of the statement. Trustee Panetta stated that they could harass him as much as they want but he still believes the Parkville closure was handled incorrectly. The residents of the South are still a part of this community and deserve to be treated better. As a group, they have spent too much time bickering rather than moving forward. Trustee Panetta shared that he is a cancer survivor and that cancer has once again been detected in his body for a second time. After much thought, he has decided that he has more important things in his life deserving of his attention. Therefore, effective immediately he is resigning his seat on the board of trustees of the Great Neck Library.

Trustee Panetta left the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

President Lancman read the following: The Great Neck Library policy manual includes a number of provisions to protect library staff, trustees, and patrons from inappropriate conduct. As stated in policy manual Section 100-40 the Great Neck Library is committed to providing a safe and secure environment that promotes respect, dignity, and equality for all members of the library community. For the purposes of this policy, the term harassment shall refer to any written, verbal, or electronic communication or physical act which intimidates, threatens, or harms another. Harassment is detrimental for the library environment. It interferes with the mission of the library and disrupts its operations. Such behavior affects, not only the patrons or the employees who are the target but also those individuals who participate in and witness such acts. To this end, all forms of harassment are strictly prohibited in library facilities, on library grounds, and in all library-sponsored activities, programs, and events. Policy Manual Section 300-50 further specifies that threatening behavior, and/or verbal abuse will not be tolerated.

Trustee Donald Panetta’s conduct at the board’s September 19, 2023, meeting where he publicly berated the director, arguably violated these policies. Any communication with a trustee, employee, patron, or member of the public, whether in public or in private must be made in a civil and professional tone. Moreover, any critique of an employee’s performance should be confined to an executive session as contemplated by Section 105 of the NYS Open Meetings Law which authorizes an executive session to discuss, among other things, matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person. What happened at the September 19, 2023, meeting cannot happen again. I know I speak on behalf of the board when I express our confidence in the Director’s performance in leading our library including the extraordinary efforts that she has made to ensure that patrons of the Parkville Branch have a fully renovated library, temporary privileges at the nearby Hillside Library, including the ability to have their Great Neck Library holds maintained there and programming at a location convenient in the community. She and her entire team are doing a wonderful job serving our community and we are grateful.
MINUTES

Board Minutes

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

MOVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the September 19, 2023, board meeting as presented.

VOTE: Yes – 4 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu)
No – 1 (Smith)

MOTION CARRIED

TREASURER/BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the following financial reports:

  a. October 17, 2023, Treasurer’s Report;
  
  b. Warrant dated October 5, 2023, through October 8, 2023, which has been reviewed by the Treasurer, the sums set against their respective names, amounting in the aggregate to $442,161.12.
  
  c. Payroll Warrants for pay dates September 7, and September 21, 2023, which have been reviewed by the Treasurer, (in the amounts of $155,321.17 and $148,687.32, respectively,) for a total of $304,008.49.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Smith)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Business Manager Steven Kashkin summarized his report.

PAYROLL CHANGES

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees accept the Payroll Changes report of September 15, 2023, through October 12, 2023, as presented, which has been reviewed by the Treasurer.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Smith)

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

Director’s Report

Director Denise Corcoran summarized her written report which is attached below:

ADMINISTRATION

- The PSEGLI rebate application for Parkville has been completed.
- Election preparations continue. Postcards noting polling locations have been mailed.
- The 2023 request for proxy form is now available online and at all branches. October 20th is the last day for the library to receive proxy request forms. Requested proxy forms have been mailed to those eligible to vote.
This week candidates will be sent an information sheet regarding the election. Please note that there will be no electioneering allowed in the parking lot at Main since it creates hazardous conditions. Proxy ballots will be tallied the day after the election on Tuesday, October 31st.

We have been contacted by several libraries who would like to visit to see and review our new printing system.

Staff are in the process of completing “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” training.

Staff are continuing training for our new Collection HQ collection maintenance and management system. We are the first to begin using the system in Nassau County, but other libraries have planned to add the system. The system is used in some of the largest libraries throughout the world.

Each Wednesday, I have a round-robin virtual meeting with department heads, branch heads, and administrators.

Each week I meet individually with department heads and branch heads.

We continue to review policies and procedures.

I reviewed and approved several staff performance evaluations.

I reviewed and approved vacation, leave, FMLA requests.

I had several meetings with various staff to resolve HR questions, queries, and issues.

We continue to post, interview, and make recommendations for hiring for open funded positions.

The Great Neck Library continues to accept donations of new and gently used books in good condition at all locations.

I reviewed invoices to be processed to BoT approval.

COMMUNITY & OUTREACH

We continue to work with SEPTA to plan programs for the upcoming school year. Staff have created social stories to view and read so that children are prepared for visits to the library.

We continue to collaborate with the Lions Club as a location where our patrons can browse, borrow books, and pick-up their Great Neck Library holds. The total of requested holds delivered to the Hillside Public Library are as follows: July – 177, August – 210, Sept – 159, October 1 thru 17 – 114.

Holds can be requested by calling the Great Neck Library, placed online at www.greatnecklibrary.org or through the Great Neck Library app.

Patrons can still choose to pick up holds at Main, Station, or Lakeville.

The return bin is still open and available as a book return for patrons.

We are coordinating with the Town of North Hempstead and have reserved space at the Clinton G. Martin Community Center for library programs. These programs will be listed in our newsletter and on the calendar of events on our website. Our regular Parkville book club will meet there for their monthly discussion.

Parkville Library of Things items and Pick-up/Return Museum passes can be picked up at our Station Branch.

Postcards were sent to Parkville patrons noting the closure information and collaboration with Hillside Public Library.

A banner was placed at Parkville with closure information and was updated as more information became available.

Lakeville and Station

We have been having issues with the HVAC system at Station with lack of airflow and leaking. The landlord has been notified and is working on the issue.

We received a tax bill from the new landlord at Station and are working to resolve.

Although the neighboring business next to Lakeville has been addressing their problems with noise transfer, more work needs to be done.

Trusted Hu stated that many patrons have reached out to her about all the good things that are being done at the library, specifically the increased school visits and bilingual programming. She applauds Director Corcoran for making all these changes and added that the community really appreciates what she is doing here. From her observation, Director Corcoran has changed the culture of the library. The staff are so welcoming and we are on the right track to continue doing great things.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion – Board Meeting Start Time
President Lancman shared that a patron had reached out asking if the board meetings could be pushed to a later start time. Trustee Gold noted that the discussion at the last meeting was to make the public start time at 7:00 p.m. and, if an executive session is needed, then the board can meet at 6:00 p.m.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Presentation – Legacy Collection**

Christy Orquera, Head of Reference and Local History Librarian explained the legacy collection. Ms. Orquera noted that when Director Corcoran served her first tenure as library director, she reinitiated the legacy collection. The legacy collection now includes approximately 700 local authors and she is making a concerted effort to locate authors who may have published books in languages other than English. Ms. Orquera said that the collection is very popular and well-received.

2. **Discussion – Landscaping Fund**

Business Manager Steven Kashkin announced that currently, the balance in the landscaping fund is $1,786,481.96. There are encumbrances of around $119,100 for two vendors, Rockwell Group, the Project Manager, who had a contract for about $125,000 but was only paid a deposit, and Northcoast Civil Engineers (formerly Bladykas and Panetta) who had a contract of $19,500 of which $12,900 was paid. Bayview Landscape Architecture was paid roughly $120,050 for his two contracts. Mr. Kashkin concluded by stating that almost $100,000 in interest income has been added over the life of the fund.

3. **Ratify Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for Successor CBA**

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees hereby resolves that the Memorandum of Agreement made on October 17, 2023, by and between the Great Neck Library and the Great Neck Department Heads Union is hereby ratified and approved in all respects, and authorize the Director to execute any necessary documents in accordance herewith.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Smith)

*MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY*

Director Corcoran explained that this memorandum of agreement brings the Department's Head Contract in line with that of the Staff Association’s Contract.

4. **Snow Removal Contract**

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees authorize the renewal of the snow removal contract for the season November 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024, with EPG Construction Corp at a base price of $9,998.00, plus $220.00 per sanding of accumulations under two (2) inches, and snowplow charges for accumulation over eight (8) inches, to be charged to the Snow Removal budget line of the Operating Budget.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Smith)

*MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY*
5. Approve Copier Lease for the Main Library-Administration Area

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees authorize the Business Manager to enter into an agreement with Konica Minolta for a 60-month lease of one (1) new Konica Minolta Bizhub C7501 at a monthly lease cost of $628.90 which includes the lease payment and all supplies and maintenance. This copier will replace the machine which is located at the Main building in the Administration area. The lease costs are to be charged to the Office Equipment Rent and Repair line in the General Fund.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Smith)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Approve Construction Change Order #13 for Parkville Branch Renovation to Install Jump Ducts

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees approve the Construction Change Order to furnish and install jump ducts at the Parkville Branch in the amount of $4,936.80 from Jobco Incorporated; such funds to be taken from the Branch and Special Services Fund.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Smith)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Personnel

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

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

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Panetta)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. Discussion – Electioneering and Line Control at Main

Director Corcoran that on election day no electioneering will be permitted in the parking lot at Main because it creates a hazardous situation. She added that proxy ballots will not be counted on the night of the election. They will be locked up in a secure area, of which only the library attorney has the key, and counted the following day.

CORRESPONDENCE

J. Lam-Leong letter
D. Capruso email
OPEN TIME

R. Gilliar – Time allotted for public participation at board meetings.

M. DiCamillo – Backup for Item #7 on agenda, Department Head Contract, Trustees considered non-paid employees of the library.

S. Rivka Khodadadian – Possibility of extending Sunday hours, live streaming of board meetings, Nominating Committee, the handling of requests for book removals

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

October 30, 2023 – Annual Meeting/Election
November 21, 2023 – Board Meeting (Main Library)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

RESOLVED, that the Great Neck Library Board of Trustees enter into Executive Session to discuss litigation matters.

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Gold, Sontag, Hu, Smith)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

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

VOTE: Yes – 5 (Lancman, Sontag, Gold, Hu, Smith)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

No action was taken in the executive session.

The board reconvened at 8:21 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Lancman and seconded by Trustee Hu.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gold
Secretary, Board of Trustees