

## MINUTES

### GARFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Wednesday,

May 29, 2024

The regular meeting of Wednesday, May 29, 2024 was called to order at 7:05 PM by President Raymond Rivas.

1. President Raymond Rivas asked for the Roll Call:

Present:

President, Raymond Rivas

Vice President, Thomas Derr

Secretary, Michael Kupec, Jr.

Treasurer, Suny Mellawa

Alternate for Acting Superintendent Nick Perapto, Marie Marx (via phone)

Alternate for Mayor Richard Rigoglioso, Christopher Braitsch (via phone)

Director, Mary Jo Jennings

Absent:

Acting Superintendent of Schools, Nick Perrapato

Mayor, Richard Rigoglioso

Trustee, Berti Shenderasi

2. President, Raymond Rivas read the following statement:

- Pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, Laws of 1976, adequate written notice of this meeting, together with the agenda of this meeting is to be:
- permanently posted on the Board's officially designated public bulletin board, located in the Garfield Public Library lobby, 500 Midland Avenue, in the City of Garfield delivered to the Passaic Herald News, and the Community News, newspapers circulating in the City of Garfield,
- filed with the City Clerk of the City of Garfield; and mailed to all persons, if any, who have requested said notice, pursuant
- Section 14 of Chapter 231, Laws of 1976.

### 3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Motion made by Suny Mellawa to accept the minutes and seconded by Thomas Derr. Motion passed.

### 4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Suny Mellawa questioned the amount of medical benefits. She believed the dollar amount should have been lower since. Mary Jo Jennings noted that it relates to retro adjustments that have yet to be processed by City Hall.

### 5. COMMUNICATIONS

a.) Mary Jo Jennings is beginning to receive resumes for the open positions.

b.) Information received from our attorney offered some guidance with regarding to increasing the size of our Board of Trustees from 7 to 9 members. It seems we need approval from Mayor and Council. (Ray Rivas will follow-up with Mayor.)

c.) Owing to issues with the processing of payroll, charges for insurance (JIF), snow removal and landscaping it was suggested that the library have a formal agreement with City Hall. Ray Rivas will speak with Erin Delaney, City Manager. Suny Mellawa is interested in seeing/reviewing the JIF bill.

### 6. COMMUNITY ROOM REQUESTS

No new requests.

### 7. DIRECTORS REPORT

Michael Kupec Jr. noted that the requested Monthly Circulation Trend Report was not prepared (as requested at the previous meeting)...but rather only the month of January 2024.

Michael noted that the requested Used Sick Days Report was not prepared (as requested months earlier).

Michael mentioned. it is great that Mary Jo attends various workshops/meetings...and that her list would be even MORE meaningful if she reported what the meeting take-aways were, was the meeting off-site or Zoom, and the duration of the meeting/workshop.

Michael recognized the list of events of the recent past and future presented by Mary Jo... and asked Mary Jo, (going forward), to identify "who-took-the-lead" for each event so their efforts can be acknowledged.

On the "Top 20 List", Michael asked why "waiting for childrens' bench" appears on this list. (Seems to be tantamount to "waiting for the mail to arrive".) Why is it here?

Michael requested that completed items remain on the list so that a history of past “priority items” are available for review. Going forward, the Top 20 List is to include a column for “Action Required”, “Obstacles” and “ETA/Deadline”. If she fails to meet deadline...she is to include a full explanation. Additionally, the report should be prepared in a way that any third party picking it up will understand what the priority item is about.

When asked about the status of “architect to do” (related to Capital Planning) on the Top 20 List (and Mary Jo was reminded that she was provided 5 firm contacts (email addresses) by Michael and professionally drafted specifications by Berti), her response was that she did not send them because she didn’t appreciate being micromanaged. The Board was speechless!

Michael continued to ask about other items: hiring status, seed catalog, staff evaluations, preparing for audit, finish painting lockers.

Michael reminded Mary Jo, that the one page Monthly Circulation Trend Report is expected to also include Hoopla activity.

The conversation then transitioned to Suny Mellawa and Thomas Derr speaking to responsibilities on the Top 20 List and asking what can be delegated to the library staff. The topic of hiring an assistant (secretary) for the Director was also broached.

Ray Rivas mentioned that through this Top 20 List, as well as other requests, the board is expressing their interest in the library and trying to fulfill their obligations and responsibilities to the taxpayers.

## 8. MARKETING

Discussion took place regarding board members attending various city events (Cigar & Bourbon Night ... or Tricky Tray) to better “market” the library and its services. Suny volunteered to check with our attorney to learn if the library could cover any of the expense. Also to see if any Sunshine Law would be violated if most of the board attended an event. (Perhaps only 3 can attend? Perhaps we can buy an ad that includes a couple of tickets?) Mary Jo reminded the board that receipts are required for any reimbursement. If we decide to move in this direction, a formal resolution would be needed. Discussion will be continued at next meeting. Suny and Michael noted that they would not be in favor of such a resolution/expenditure.

(SIDE NOTE: At this time, President Ray Rivas, excused himself as he had a “hard stop” (as he reported earlier) and need to leave the meeting. The meeting continued under 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Thomas Derr.

## 9. FOUNDATION REPORT

a.) They recently met. Their plan is to ask the Friends organization for \$545.45 \* to go toward a special purchase.

b.) \*Mary Jo reported arrangements are being made to purchase an item to donate to the library. (This gift is a secret for now.)

c.) Mary Jo mentioned that the Foundation is planning to fold. Suny noted the importance of the Foundation to remain active.

d.) Suny asked Mary Jo to provide a full report as to what the Foundation has been doing. How much is in their treasury? Where did the money come from? What is the current status? If “folding,” how can it be resurrected? How can we salvage it? Suny, Thomas and Michael voiced an interest in attending the next Foundation meeting. Let’s talk more about rebuilding the Foundation. Thomas said he met an entrepreneur at the Cigar & Bourbon event that may be a good candidate to join the Foundation board.

## 10. HIRING PROCESS

Mary Jo reported that she and Christopher Shupenko would interview candidates. They then would present the Board their recommendations.

## 11. BYLAWS

Currently on hold, pending exploring the idea of increasing the Board from 7 to 9 members. Needs to be discussed with Mayor and Council. (Marie mentioned that it may be difficult to find candidates that are a good fit. Thomas noted that he is happy with our current board size.)

## 12. FRIENDS REPORT

In the interest of saving time, Michael Kupec Jr. provided hardcopies of the May 2024 meeting minutes.

Adjournment:

13. Motion made by Suny Mellawa and seconded by Michael Kupec, Jr. to adjourn.  
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Meeting of the Garfield Free Public Library Board of Trustees was adjourned at 9:10 PM. Resolution was unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Kupec, Jr.

Trustee / Secretary