

FREE LIBRARY OF NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP

Board of Directors Meeting

October 13, 2022

Members Present: Eleanora Rosso, Wayne Lahr, Charlene DiSarlo, Janet Braker, Michael May, Chip Heim, (guest, Jessica Friendell), and Charles Beem

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

- I. Call to Order – The Board President called the meeting to order while welcoming the members in attendance.
- II. Approval of the September 08, 2022, Meeting Minutes
Motion: To approve the September 08, 2022, Meeting Minutes
Discussion: Nothing further.
Action: Unanimous Approval.
- III. Library Director’s Report
Programming – Saturday, November 12, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. Alisa DuPuy presents Harvest traditions and Thanksgiving.
Wednesday, November 09, 2022, 7:00 p.m. Trivia Night: Local History – Northampton history and celebrate our 300th Anniversary.
Tuesday Morning Matinee (10:00 a.m.) – October 18, 2022 – “The Outfit” and November 01, 2022, “The Lost City”
Artist of the Month – Derek Jecz, Photography featured in the display case, and near the Reference Desk.
Finances – The Library Director has met with Finance Director to review the finances as considered for 2023. An update on the progress will occur at the next meeting.
Organizational Management – Operating hours for Wednesday, November 23, 2022, will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sunday operating hours, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. from September 11, 2022, to Summer 2023. Staffing requirements and scheduling are under review.
The recently approved Library Board By-laws have been submitted to the Northampton Township Administration for review and a decision regarding approval.
The rewriting of a Collection Policy, Meeting Room Policy, and Study Room Policy is continuing while such policies will be shared and discussed by the Board.
Collection – The ordering and receipt of new materials, (Baker & Taylor), was slightly disrupted due to a ransomware attack upon the supplier.
Outreach – Northampton Day preparation required a significant effort, while the Library Director assisted the Historical Commission to display the nine story boards of Northampton Township. Tents, and tables were supplied by the library.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee offered the Library Community Survey to attendees. The promotion of the survey included 400 bookmarks with a QR code leading to the survey. Signage at the event promoted the survey as including the QR code. Library Board members, Eleanora Rosso, Michael May, and Charlene DiSarlo helped in staffing the library table during the event.

Facility – The big wall atrium Patriot Display for the flags, adjustments in the structural design preparation has been finalized in preparation for the Veterans day celebration

Northampton Township’s 300th Anniversary – Saturday, September 24, 2022, featured the Hey Diddle Diddle Nursery Rhyme Breakfast. 53 attendees participated with a breakfast, crafts, and children’s activities. Michelle Kiker was acknowledged for her fine work in finalizing the arrangement for the activities of the day. The Library Director handled most of the catering responsibilities, while Susan and Sarah R. both contributed support of the event.

The Library Conference Room featured a display of maps, pictures, and nine historical panels created for the 300th Anniversary, as offered by the Northampton Township Historical Commission. Afternoon programming included a presentation by Annie Halliday, (Mercer Museum), “A Brief History of Northampton Township”. An encore presentation is scheduled for Saturday, March 11, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. The Gala, originally scheduled for Friday, October 14, 2022 has been cancelled by the Township.

The Library Director noted that the marking of Fire lanes around the library is needed. During Northampton Days, visitors used all available space to park, including in areas adjacent to the library that would be needed in the event of an emergency. The Library Director is addressing this issue with the Township as it is a priority correction needed for staff and public safety.

Technology – A few remaining items to be sold are listed on Facebook Marketplace.

Facility – The Northampton Township Board of Supervisors and the Northampton Veterans Advisory Committee have decided to move the Patriot Flag Program display to the library building as a permanent location. A Veterans Day Ceremony is scheduled inside the library on Saturday, November 11, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. to dedicate the newly designed location and presentation of the former Northampton Township Patriots Program.

Election ballot drop-off boxes will be available to Bucks County residents starting October 24, 2022.

Fundraising – The 2022 Annual Appeal has received \$9,300 to date.

Leadership and Professional Development – The Library Director has completed nearly 25 hours of Continuing Education credits. The Pennsylvania Library Association’s Annual Conference, (October 16-19), as held in Harrisburg, PA, will be attended by the Library Director. Library staff training as completed by two members: “Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Mandated and Permissive Reporting in Pennsylvania”.

Please see the Library Directors Report for any additional details.

- IV. 2023 Budget – Final adjustments are being prepared, while a narrative is being prepared to accompany the budget. Tax assessments are increasing, thus potentially impacting the library funding. State aid to the library may also increase revenue. A question was asked regarding the funding of libraries in Bucks County. A portion of the library funding comes from Bucks County. There eighteen libraries in Bucks County while some are not state funded.
It is believed that money from the Capital Fund will be used to reupholster some chairs in the library, while expenditures from the Capital Fund must be approved by the Library Board of Directors. The funds in the Capital Fund are not replenished.
- V. Friends of the Library Report – The ‘Book Page’ subscription, (expensive), will be renewed by the Friends. The Adult Friends Programs meeting time will be changed from 2:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. A new monitor is being funded by the Friends. A door counter will be funded by the Friends. This will allow for a more accurate patron count, while it may have been undercounted due to the in accuracy of the present equipment. Florence Egan will be the liaison representing the Friends at the Library Board of Directors meetings.
- VI. Northampton Township Supervisor’s Liaison Report – The Library Director was congratulated for his work on the Northampton Township 300th Anniversary Celebration. A meeting to discuss the progress of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee with the Northampton Township Supervisors was discussed. The actual meeting is scheduled for October 26, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. in the Northampton Township Administration Building. Anyone on the Library Board can attend. Several positive comments were voiced concerning the leadership and progress achieved to date.
- VII. Strategic Plan Steering Committee Report – A survey of the public was successfully launched with 866 survey responses received to date. The deadline for the public to complete the survey is October 17, 2022. The cross section of the respondents was noted as encouraging sign in a preliminary review of the survey. The group interviews have begun, as the ‘Wagoneer’s’ group was acknowledged as having been interviewed. Information gathering is a core function being fulfilled in conducting the group interviews. Another five groups have been selected to be interviewed. Recordings are taking place. Children groups will be surveyed. The possibility of showing the CBS Sunday Morning clip on the library of the future was discussed. The interviews were acknowledged as being successful in fulfilling their function thus far. The interpretation of the data may reveal marketing opportunities describing the existing library services. It was noted that innovative suggestions may originate from the library staff or the Board of Trustees. No surprises thus far as discovered from the surveys or interviews, besides, “great programming and compliments to the staff.” The Northampton Township Supervisors have been contacted in preparation for the October 26, 2022 meeting. The Staff survey has been distributed to all staff members and the results will be used as part of the

analysis in preparation for the November 19, 2022 Retreat. Cathi is collecting the staff survey data. The Bucks County Planning Commission has offered a significant amount of information in assisting the Steering Committee to gain a more thorough understanding of demographic and other data available in describing Northampton Township. The Library Retreat will take place on November 19, 2022 from 9-1. The Friends of the Library, as well as representation from Parks and Recreation, and the Senior Center will be invited to attend the Library Retreat. The tentative program will include the Library Director addressing the current state of the Free Library of Northampton Township. A discussion will be led by Cathi to help formulate Priorities or Goals to be achieved that may be included in the final draft of the strategic plan. Each priority identified and included in the strategic plan will have a measurable goal. The purpose of the process is to create a comprehensive actionable plan that will serve to inspire constructive action involving all areas of the library. The Steering Committee will meet on November 03, 2022 to continue its work. All participants in the process have been thanked. The writing of the strategic plan will follow the analysis of the data collected. The Strategic Planning process was described for the guest attending the meeting. A three-year strategic plan is considered reasonable, given this being the first strategic plan.

- VIII. Overview of Circulation Desk Responsibilities by Lori Mangieri – Lori was introduced to discuss the work of the library circulation staff. In Lori’s words, “The circulation staff views themselves as the ambassadors of the library, and more broadly, of the township itself. Where the director is charged with the business of running the library and the Reference staff focuses on research, information and collection development, the Circulation staff gives the library a ‘face’. We greet people as they enter and wish them a nice day or evening as they depart. We check out their books and issue their library cards, we chat with them about the weather and the last book we’ve read. We offer stickers to children and bring their attention to our fish tank when a parent is having a difficult time wrangling them in while trying to solve a problem or acquire information from our staff. These small gestures often offer enough time to conduct their business in a more pleasant and successful way. We are first in line for questions of all kinds and take pride in working hard as a team to offer help to everyone who enter while making them always feel welcome. We go out of our way to be inviting and to present the library, and township by extension, as a friendly, caring, supportive part of the community we serve.”
- “When not able to offer a solution to a problem or the answer to a question, we refer our visitors to the Reference desk for assistance, working together- with the reference staff to establish a well-rounded body of service, helpfulness and information for our community. This is the primary goal of every member of the entire library staff, and we work well together to accomplish this.”
- “Although customer service is the central component of Circulation responsibilities, each individual member contributes to the library’s success in many additional respects and is always looking for new ways to enhance the atmosphere of

community we pride ourselves on to make this a place people look forward to returning to over and over again.”

“In addition to everyday responsibilities and tasks that are the basis of every circulation desk: processing holds and the daily deliveries, checking materials in and out, issuing new and replacement cards, taking fines and payments of lost or damaged books, shelving, answering phones and more, we create, manage, promote, and host several programs. These include Tuesday Morning Matinees for Adults, and annual Adult Winter Reading Challenge, a Monthly Senior book club, a Staff Picks section with lists and reviews. Library Card Sign-up month each September, a Bi-monthly library newsletter, our Library Volunteer Personnel and Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon each April. We process new materials and discard old, mend and replace damaged materials, manage financial transactions and keep our ‘new’ fiction, non-fiction and video sections organized and current. We search through all donations for materials we can add, use as replacements or sell through Thriftbooks, E-bay and Amazon.”

Lori continued with a sampling of the feedback received from the library guests, and regular patrons. “The little extras are what make our library stand out from the rest and make people look forward to coming back and staying longer each time they visit. People can get books and information from any library, but they don’t often encounter much more, such as a warm, friendly atmosphere; pluses like stickers, mosaics, bookmarks and even a fish tank; smiles and a feeling of community. We do this quite well and pride ourselves on it! We have many customers who choose our library over the one that is closer to their home. A man who recently moved from Philadelphia came in early this week and told us his wife had come in last week with his autistic son and was blown away by all that we offer and the welcome she received. She told him he “had to come see it for himself” as she had never seen a library like ours before! She raved about it and so did he. This is not only true for visitors. It is also true for staff and volunteers, which is why each member of the Circulation staff has been here for many years.”

“Regarding our volunteers, we even have one volunteer who lives in Doylestown, but travels all the way to our library for her books and her weekly volunteer hours because of the difference in warmth of the staff and atmosphere of the library in general in comparison to the perspective she has of her home library.”

A Board member asked the question of How has your job changed since the adoption of self-check-out? The Circulation Staff works to help patrons in the adjustment to the technology. The pandemic has changed patron habits. Many patrons like the personal contact with the Circulation Staff.

- IX. Public Comment: Written comments or any questions from the public may be emailed to publiccomment@nhtwp.org prior to the meeting.

Jessica, our guest offered her background while moving into the area from the Middle West region of the country. The teenage involvement in the library was also discussed.

X. For the Good of the Order/Miscellaneous – Michael discussed an email he received concerning diversity training as a potential children’s activity. Drag Story Hour is the name of the group producing the video. The age group targeted offers an inspirational event towards inclusion. The Mental Health First Aid training was briefly discussed, whereas this training could be helpful to the library staff. Michael offered to be the contact person with the individual offering the training.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was officially adjourned at 8:21 pm, by a unanimous voice vote.

The next Free Library of Northampton Township Board of Directors meeting is scheduled to held Thursday, November 10, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Charles W. Beem

Free Library of Northampton Township Board of Directors Recording Secretary