

**Minutes Maplewood Memorial Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
June 17, 2020**

Via Zoom, the June 17, 2020 meeting of the Board of Trustees of Maplewood Memorial Library was called to order by President McCaffrey at 7:31 p.m. She read: "Pursuant to Section 3, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975...adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the public by posting and maintaining the annual notice of regular meetings on the Main Library Bulletin Board, and the office of the Municipal Clerk mailing the annual notice of this meeting to the *Star Ledger* and the *News Record*."

1. Roll Call

Present were: S. Cuttle, Mr. DeLuca, Ms. Ezell, Mr. Huemer, Ms. Latimer, Mr. Marchman, Dr. McCaffrey, Ms. Purdon and Ms. Winston. Also present: Ms. Lester, Director, and Robyn Whalen and Robert Nealon of the Library staff.

2. Minutes

Ms. Purdon moved the minutes of the May 20, 2020 meeting, Mr. Huemer seconded and the motion carried.

Ayes: DeLuca, Ezell, Huemer, Latimer, Marchman, McCaffrey, Purdon, Winston

Nays: None

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. Report of the Library Director

Ms. Lester's May Report was placed on file. She added that the staff is coming in on a staggered schedule and is getting ready for the curbside pick-up to start on June 18. [S. Cuttle arrived.] She commended the staff on figuring out how to come into the buildings and work with each other safely using new procedures. The Library is seeing savings by not bringing in Pages since March 13. This will help with the budget shortfall in the Township. Ms. Lester pointed out that several Pages are graduating from high school. They are Poe Rosenberg, Emile Alfonse, Alice Condry-Powder, Madeleine Hollenbeck, and Evan Fagan. The Library is very proud of them and sorry they cannot send them off in a more personal fashion. Four of the five teens that organized the student march in the beginning of June are regular library patrons. It is nice to see them fill these leadership positions and speak out against injustice. We are proud of all the teenagers in our community and stand behind them. The Library has to get the word out that we have materials and resources available and want to get them into the hands of our community safely. There are more than 100 items on reserve right now. Ms. Latimer offered to get the word out to the elementary schools to reach the students who don't usually come into the Library.

5. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Huemer moved to adopt the May Treasurers Report, Mr. DeLuca seconded and the motion carried.

Ayes: Cuttle, DeLuca, Ezell, Huemer, Latimer, Marchman, McCaffrey, Purdon, Winston

Nays: None

6. Presentation of Claims

The claims to June 17, 2020 totaled \$40,230.57. Mr. DeLuca pointed out that the COVID-19 expenses have been indicated on the claims. These expenses will be submitted to try to get

reimbursement from CARES federal money through the end of the year. Mr. Huemer moved that the claims be paid. Ms. Purdon seconded and the motion carried.

Ayes: Cuttle, DeLuca, Ezell, Huemer, Latimer, Marchman, McCaffrey, Purdon, Winston

Nays: None

#### 7. For Information

##### A. Summer Reading Program

This year's Summer Reading Program will be great and very different. All of the programs will be virtual. The sign-up is online and the procedures are the same for children, teens, and adults. The theme is *Imagine Your Story*. It will run from June 29 through August 14. The children's and teen librarians have been working with the school librarians on the reading list. Ms. Latimer stated that there is a shortcut link on the school district's home page for all four reading lists. All the schools have posted the lists on their websites. The titles on the lists are linked to the book. Teen Librarian, Emily Witkowski, posted a video explaining the summer reading program and how to take part in it. The Library has made sure all the titles are available in print, ebook, and eaudio formats. Many titles on anti-racism are on backorder, but Ms. Lester received an email from a local resident who has offered to buy any additional copies needed from the [Racial Justice Bookshelf](#) which curates black owned bookstores. Our librarians have also gathered lists for Pride Month.

#### 8. For Discussion

##### A. Forum on Race and Democracy

Dr. McCaffrey, Mr. Marchman, and Ms. Lester have reached out to community partners including the Coalition on Race, SOMa Justice, and the SOMa Action racial action group. One of the ideas is to activate voices in our community, especially black voices, and talk about the work people are already doing along issues of racial justice. In Orange, the University of Orange describes itself as a free people university. It serves as an adult school. They have an interesting series of events in the next two weeks on racial justice. On Monday, the Library co-sponsored a book group they are running about a new book that's co-authored by Mindy Thompson Fullilove, MD called *From Enforcers to Guardians* which is a public health approach to policing. Tonight, there is another event covering 400 years of inequality that the Library is co-sponsoring. Monday, June 22, there will be an event on collective recovery which will discuss how we can all cope with the difficulties of the pandemic and the racial injustice that we are experiencing at this moment. The role as Trustees is to guide the Library policy, but the Library staff is in charge of programming. The Trustees will support them in this effort.

Mr. Marchman stated that the Trustees should look for long term recommendations. Everybody wants to get on the radar screen that they support Black Lives Matter or that they are sensitive to racial injustice. When you try to do some program, people get upset that you're in their lane. They want to be up front. When the cameras go away and the pandemic is behind us, these issues are still going to be with us. We need to do things in the short term, but more so in the long term because the issues that we are dealing with are not going to be resolved. It took 400 years to get where we are. We're not going to resolve them in a year. There are a number of organizations that are doing things the Library could co-sponsor. It's an opportunity to expand our network to these different groups. Let them take the lead. If there are some programs where there is a niche more educational perspective, I think we can do that. It's off putting and upsetting to see how people are literally breaking their necks to try to say, "I'm with you." While they are trying to comfort me, I want to say, "Where were you going back to the church incident, going back to South Carolina, when somebody killed nine people, when there's been all these police shootings. The organizations we have already reached out to are considering doing something on Allyship which is critically important, particularly in this community. My concern is people educating themselves about the issue and devoting themselves to long term change.

Ms. Lester added that she thinks about the kids that come into the Library and what we can do for our regular Library patrons who we already know. They already trust us and we need to find new ways to support them. The Ideas Festival was cancelled very abruptly. Two Ideas Festival events are going to be rescheduled for this summer. The first is Ibi Zoboi who is an award-winning children's and teen author and lives in Maplewood. The second is the *Toni Morrison Book Club* which was written by four professors from The College of New Jersey. Mr. Huemer added that we could demonstrate what was articulated in our statement at next year's Ideas Festival. Ms. Winston stated that if there is an opening on the staff, that it has to be a priority to have more black representation. It would be a logical and long-term action to take.

S. Cuttle stated that there should be a discussion about how we are utilizing security firms in interaction in buildings with young people in general. Ms. Lester stated that the security has been a great asset and almost a parental presence. Our recent security guard is well liked by the teens. We miss him.

Mr. DeLuca stated that on Friday, June 19, the Township is hosting a Zoom community meeting, From Awareness to Action. There may be suggestions that come out of that meeting that the Library could follow up on.

#### B. Library as Convener

One of the important roles that the Library can continue is to serve as a place that brings people together, disseminate information, and also provide a forum for different residents to use. To those ends, the Library's higher level of Zoom allows up to 500 participants. We can offer our Zoom to members of the community to do a forum if they wanted to have more people participate. Since a Library staff person would have to log in and be the tech person at these meetings, the Library will need to co-sponsor an event when another organization is using our Zoom account. It would be available to Maplewood groups hosting a local non-profit meeting, consistent with our meeting room policy and the library mission.

#### 9. New Business

There was a discussion about getting the word out to the community about the resources and media available especially on anti-racism. Traditional means have been used including our website, sending newsletters, the Village Green, Tap Into, and social media. It is hard to reach people without internet access. The newsletter, *Two Towns for All Ages*, is mailed out to all seniors. The Library may want to invest in a town wide mailing. Ms. Lester and S. Cuttle will mention the Library's resources at meetings they attend. Ms. Ezell will reach out to Elizabeth Zenobe who has Facebook page.

Robert Nealon applied for and was awarded a \$2,000 Google grant called Libraries Needs with Digital Skills. The grant provides webinars on Google Tools on job seeking and resume building. There is a possibility of an additional \$3,000 Spotlight grant. This is our second Google grant.

#### 10. Public Comment/Open Discussion

Ms. Lester thanked Dr. McCaffrey for writing the Board's statement. The Library has been receiving a lot of comments about it.

#### 11. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. DeLuca moved to adjourn at 8:30 p.m., Ms. Winston seconded and the motion carried.

Ayes: Cuttle, DeLuca, Ezell, Huemer, Latimer, Marchman, McCaffrey, Purdon, Winston

Nays: None

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Purdon  
Secretary