

**Hamilton Township Free Public Library Board of Trustees Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, April 25, 2022 5:00 p.m. in Room 2 of the Library.** This public meeting is taking place in accordance with the NJ Open Public Meetings Act. All meetings of this group will be audio recorded.

**Members Present:** Mr. Santamaria, Mr. Atkin, Ms. DeAngelo, Mr. Gedeika, Ms. Rogers, Ms. Tonti, and Library Director, Mr. Chianese

**Members Absent:** none

### **MONTHLY AGENDA ITEMS**

**Review and Consideration of the minutes of the March 28, 2022 regular meeting of the Board:** Approval of the March 28, 2022 minutes were moved by Ms. DeAngelo and seconded by Ms. Tonti.

**Voting Yea:** Mr. Santamaria, Mr. Atkin, Ms. DeAngelo, Mr. Gedeika, Ms. Rogers, Ms. Tonti

**Voting Nay:** none

**Motion passes**

**Consideration of the Treasurer's Report:** Approval of the April 2022 Treasurer's Report was moved by Ms. Rogers, seconded by Ms. Tonti.

**Voting Yea:** Mr. Santamaria, Mr. Atkin, Ms. DeAngelo, Mr. Gedeika, Ms. Rogers, Ms. Tonti

**Voting Nay:** none

**Motion passes**

**Consideration of the Library Bill List:** Approval of the April 2022 Bill List was moved by Ms. Tonti, and seconded by Ms. Rogers.

**Voting Yea:** Mr. Santamaria, Mr. Atkin, Ms. DeAngelo, Mr. Gedeika, Ms. Rogers, Ms. Tonti

**Voting Nay:** none

**Motion passes**

### **Director's Report:**

Mr. Chianese reported on recent and upcoming library activities and events, including:

- Planned 5/12/22 COVID vaccine clinic (4pm-6pm), in association with the Hamilton Township Department of Health.
- New IT support provider is transitioning.
- Eagle Scout shoe collection box project in the lobby.
- Upcoming retirements.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Santamaria reported that the committee to review the library policies has met twice, reviewing the policies and the input/suggestions from the Director and staff.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Santamaria noted that a new Board member, Mr. Anthony "Skip" Cimino, has been appointed by the Mayor. Mr. Cimino's swearing in will take place at the Township offices before next month's meeting.

The Mayor will also be designating a new liaison to the Board.

**Resolution 22-006, Addition of a new Assistant to the Township**

**Historian position.** The creation of a new part-time position at the Library was discussed by Mr. Santamaria. The motion was moved by Ms. Tonti, and seconded by Ms. Rogers.

**Voting Yea:** Mr. Santamaria, Mr. Atkin, Ms. DeAngelo, Mr. Gedeika, Ms. Rogers, Ms. Tonti

**Voting Nay:** none

**Motion passes**

**OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Santamaria brought up the topic of the library fines schedule, which is being considered by the library policies committee for discussion. The committee is split on keeping the current fine/fee structure, raising the fines, or eliminating late fees altogether. The Board discussed the issue at length, and the input will be considered by the committee in revising the policies. Ms. Rogers offered a packet of information regarding the elimination of fines in libraries, gathered from the ALA and other library and news sources, for interested Board members to review.

**Resolution 22-007, Appointment of 2 Full-Time Library Assistants (replacement).**

The appointment of two library assistant was moved by Ms. Rogers and seconded by Ms. Tonti.

**Voting Yea:** Mr. Santamaria, Mr. Atkin, Ms. DeAngelo, Mr. Gedeika, Ms. Rogers, Ms. Tonti

**Voting Nay:** none

**Motion passes**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carol Hawkes

31 Brockton Road

Ms. Hawkes suggested the addition of name plates for the Board members at meetings, so the public can more easily identify the Board members. Ms. Hawkes voiced support for eliminating library late fines for reasons including, "no child should suffer for the action of adults [who return books late]," and that fines create "barriers to education" when access to books is limited.

Darrell Vigh  
15 Benson Lane

Noting that she was speaking as a member of the public (and not on behalf of the Friends of the Library), Ms. Vigh offered to pay the fines of the student who shared with Ms. Rogers that they do not use the Public Library due to fines. She suggested an "amnesty week" to waive fines and collect overdue materials. Ms. Vigh also volunteered to help the Township Historian and the anticipated new Assistant to the Township Historian.

Mr. Gedeika complemented Ms. Vigh and the Friends of the Library on their most recent book sale.

Ms. Hawkes noted that the Friends of the Library is an "absolutely phenomenal group."

Mr. Santamaria expressed appreciation to the Friends on behalf of himself and the entire Board.

#### **OLD BUSINESS (CONTINUED)**

The Board continues to revisit the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on library operations each month, reviewing local data, and the most recent guidance from the CDC and local authorities. All Board members weighed in on a lengthy discussion, including a review of case and hospitalization data shared by Mr. Santamaria and Mr. Atkin.

Mr. Atkin moved to reinstate a mask mandate for Library patrons and staff. The motion did not receive a second, and was tabled.

The Board will continue, as decided and resolved at the February 2022 meeting, to follow CDC Community Levels Guidelines, which continue to show Mercer County, NJ at a "Low" Community Level.

#### **ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING**

Hearing no more business, Ms. Tonti moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 pm. The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Monday, May 23, 2022, at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Renee Rogers  
Secretary