

Board of Trustees  
Beth Binde, Pres  
Mireya Alfonso  
Deborah Celey  
Carmen Diaz  
Nilda Gutierrez  
Josephine Marchetta  
Russell Marchetta  
Karen Monus  
Benito Ortiz  
Cecilia Claflen, Emeritus

# New Brunswick Free Public Library

60 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick NJ 08901

732-745-5271 Fax 732-846-0226

## Minutes, Board of Trustees

October 22, 2014 5:00 p.m.

Approved November 19, 2014

1. Announcement of Compliance with Open Public Meeting. Notice of the meeting was sent electronically to the Home News Tribune and was posted in the library, on the library website, and at City Hall.
2. Call to Order.
3. Roll Call. Present: Alfonso, Binde, Celey, Claflen, Diaz, Gutierrez, J. Marchetta, R. Marchetta, Monus, Ortiz; Excused: Claflen; Staff: Belvin, Crittenden, Oshman. Public: Ann Gordon, Vice-President, Friends of the New Brunswick Free Public Library.
4. Approval of Agenda. Ortiz (Celey), unanimous.
5. Approval of Minutes of the September 24 Meeting. Ortiz (Monus).
6. Approval of Bills. Ortiz (Celey).
7. Director's Evaluation. Binde and J. Marchetta notified the Board that the process had been completed. One of the suggestions of the committee, staff presentations, was being implemented at this meeting.
8. Committee Reports.
  - 8.1. Nominating Committee. Binde informed the Board that she had appointed Ortiz as the Nominating Committee.
  - 8.2. Policy Committee.
    - 8.2.1. Collection Development Policy. R. Marchetta (Ortiz), unanimous.
    - 8.2.2. Jewish Family & Vocational Service of Middlesex County charges students a one-time \$25.00 administrative fee for opening a file on each student and tracking their progress. No fees for instruction, books, or other class materials are charged to any student. If a student is unable to pay the fee, it is waived. Belvin and Pandey will meet with Debby Altar from Jewish Family Services after the Jewish holidays in early November.
  - 8.3. Finance Committee.
    - 8.3.1. Budget: Belvin referred to the distributed budget and pointed out that the projected deficit is primarily due to the rates of return on the endowment being lower than they had been in the past.
  - 8.4. Friends' Liaison: The Wednesday October Brown bag program featured a classical string quartet from Rutgers University's Mason Gross School. The Friends also presented a book signing with Mae Silver, the author of *Stars on the Diamond: Early Women's Softball in Jersey* on October 21. Celey spoke about encouraging membership in the Friends of the Library. She also encouraged Board members to donate to the Friends for copies of Silver's *Stars on the Diamond* and the Book Lover's Calendars that the Friends would soon be selling.
9. Staff Presentation. Jackie Oshman spoke about the Interlibrary Loan and Hold process. This work involves virtually every facet of the library's operation. The Board was appreciative of her excellent presentation and her excellent work.

10. Director's Report.

- 10.1. Bike Rack: members of George Street Co-op have been discussing with Belvin the possibility of placing a bike rack and concrete pad near the Henry Guest House. It would serve Co-op and library patrons with the advantage of being opposite the front window of the Co-op which would make it more observable. Belvin noted that bikes had been stolen around the outside of the library even in spaces where there was foot traffic. Each square tube post and ring might be approximately \$130 each. Monus and J. Marchetta mentioned issues of liability. Belvin will be discussing the possible placement with the Office of Historic Preservation since the Henry Guest House is on the Historic Register.
- 10.2. Books on Cassette: As with a number of other media over the years (33 $\frac{1}{3}$  phonograph records, 16mm films, and videotapes), demand has decreased to the point where maintaining the collection is not sensible. Linda Crittenden has decided to phase it out and concentrate on Books on CD. She noted that already some audio books are only available as mp3s.
- 10.3. Children's Contests: In October, there was a Spooky Reading Challenge for children pre-school to grade six who were to read a spooky book and draw or write a short review. The second contest was "Guess the Weight of the Pumpkin!" Better World Harvest (Elijah's Promise's new store) has donated a pumpkin and children will have to guess the weight. The closest guess will win the pumpkin.
- 10.4. Clock: Elvin Ortega has had the atrium clock repaired and has put it back in its case.
- 10.5. Driveway: Ortega has arranged for junipers to be placed on the grass slope between the back driveway and the cemetery.
- 10.6. Electrical Cord Safety: Belvin reported that a frayed electric pencil sharpener cord caused a short circuit. He has sent an email to all staff reminding them to check cords, be careful of extension cords, and other basic electrical safety items.
- 10.7. Esperanza Neighborhood: Belvin has been invited to join the Esperanza Neighborhood Stakeholders Advisory Committee.
- 10.8. Fire Extinguishers: The annual inspection of the fire extinguishers has been arranged. Elvin Ortega contacted Fire Official Dominic Quagliata for recommendations as to whether the library has enough extinguishers and whether they are properly placed. Belvin said he would be contacting the Fire Department to arrange for fire drills.
- 10.9. Guest Portraits: Belvin brought the portraits to the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia on September 26. The paper conservator, Samantha Sheesley, examined them and will have reports on both the framing and matting prepared. Belvin said the condition report is finished and they are waiting for the framing / mounting report.
- 10.10. Henry Guest House Roof: The City Department of Engineering will let the roof contract.
- 10.11. Henry Guest House Shutters: The project is awaiting a revision of the numbering of the specifications by the architect.
- 10.12. Literacy: The library currently has three English Conversation Cafés (Wednesday daytime, Wednesday evenings, and Friday daytime); three ESL Conversation Groups (Tuesday and Thursday evenings and, in conjunction with Literacy New Jersey, Saturday morning); and two ESL citizenship classes in conjunction with Jewish Family Services of Middlesex County on Monday and Wednesday evenings.

The English Conversation Cafés are a cooperative venture of the library and the Conversation Tree: Community-Based Language Partnerships, an initiative of Rutgers Graduate School of Education and The Collaborative Center for Community-Based Research and Service that started in the Spring of 2012 to support the library's existing English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and provide new opportunities for adult learners to practice English

conversation in an informal setting. This has expanded to the present three English Conversation Cafés which are informal conversation groups for adult learners of all levels of English. Participants engage in one-on-one or small-group conversations with Conversation Facilitators and other participants discussing a variety of topics. Conversation Facilitators are prepared through academic courses and professional development offered by the Rutgers Graduate School of Education. In 2014, 25 Rutgers students have joined with 22 volunteers and 142 adult learners of English to engage in a mutual learning environment.

Dr. Mary Curran, Associate Dean of Local-Global Partnerships, Graduate School of Education has requested the library's cooperation and support for a study of participants in the Conversation Cafés. They are only seeking participation from adults who have participated in our Conversation Cafés and library personnel who have assisted in the program's implementation. They hope to document the growth of The Conversation Tree: Community-Based Language Partnership Program.

- 10.13. LMxAC: The Libraries of Middlesex Automation Consortium has added one new member, South Amboy. They are in discussion with two other libraries. LMxAC dues will be increasing next year by 2.5%.
- 10.14. MakerSpaces: Hsien-Min Chen has applied for a Constellation Power grant for the MakerSpace Project. Although the Piscataway library is using liability waivers for the participants in their MakerSpace project, Belvin investigated and found that in New Jersey parents cannot waive their children's right to sue. In addition, the Piscataway library's project includes a 3-D printer that involves molten plastic.
- 10.15. Mango: In response to a comment from a patron who is teaching English in New Brunswick and to Belvin's experience with this product at the American Library Association's Midwinter Conference, the library has subscribed to Mango Languages, a popular language-learning database. The database contains 62 languages with interactive lessons and is able to track individual's learning progress. Besides in-house use, users can have remote access via their home computers or mobile devices with their library card numbers. The librarians are planning to hold a "Mango Day" to promote the database sometime in December.
- 10.16. Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission: The library has been awarded a \$1,200 grant to hold the opening for our African American History Month program at Crossroads Theater on Sunday Feb. 8, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. There will be a reception and exhibition at the library following this. Two organizations that we work with, the New Brunswick Historical Society and the Friends of the New Brunswick Free Public Library, have also received grants. The Friends received a grant of \$2,500 that they must match with \$625 to continue the digitization of the New Brunswick newspapers. The New Brunswick Historical Society received a \$1,562 grant (\$391 match) for a display of the Rubel items. The Historical Society had been cooperating with the library on the newspaper digitization but issues of the acceptance of Rubel donation dictated that the original intent of having the Friends involved with the Rubel project had to be modified.
- 10.17. Middlesex County College Advisory Committee for the New Brunswick Center: Belvin noted that enrollment at the New Brunswick Center was up for this year. A continuing challenge is assisting young people and their families in the completion of financial aid forms which many find confusing.
- 10.18. Nametags: New staff nametags are being ordered.
- 10.19. Painting: Elvin Ortega and Marco Arias painted the lower outside of the library addition. Ortega also arranged to have the stucco on the lower wall by the ground floor door replaced. Since it was cracked and falling off.

- 10.20. Parking Lot: At the library's request, Public Works has cleaned the drain that had collected a substantial level of waste. However, on their initiative they solved the drainage problem in the library's parking lot by raising an area of the asphalt paving, cutting gaps into the curbing and replacing the concrete spillway with a spillway of large stones.
- 10.21. Prison Art: *Marking Time* was an international symposium on the cultural aspects of mass incarceration, especially art produced by prisoners. The conference's lead organizers are Rutgers University, the Institute for Research on Women, and the American Studies Department. Works were exhibited at the library, the Zimmerli Art Museum, Alfa Art Gallery, the Heldrich, and the Rutgers Art Library. Many of the panels used the library's Carl T. Valenti Community Room.
- 10.22. Raritan River Festival: Belvin in his role as President of the New Brunswick Historical Society conducted some of the historical boat tours during the Raritan River Festival.
- 10.23. Raritan Valley Federation of Libraries: The Federation is now a 501(c)3 organization.
- 10.24. Roof: Belvin, Ortega, and Belvin's son John examined the stack roof in September. There were no visibly damaged areas on the stack roof and the scuppers. Ortega did find damage to the exterior wall of the elevator housing probably due to leaks in the flat roof on the top of the elevator shaft. Belvin will arrange for repairs.
- 10.25. Snow: Arrangements have been made for a contractor to do the snow removal.
- 10.26. Summer: Belvin said that Meredith Masin-Blount, the Director of the School Based Youth Services Program, expressed her thanks to Tamara Richman for the help the library gave their summer soccer program.
- 10.27. Tables: Prevent Child Abuse NJ has donated eight computer tables and half-circle tables that they did not need. They were in storage in East Brunswick and Belvin with the assistance of his son John transported them to the library.
- 10.28. Teen Book Club: Belvin reported the praise of Dr. Deborah Alexander, the Principal of the Health Sciences High School, for our Young Adult Librarian, Rosy Henderson, and the book club she conducts at the school.
- 10.29. YAAR Meeting: The October YAAR meeting was a tour of the Unity Square Community Center.
11. Other Matters.
  - 11.1. The Thirty-fifth Annual LMx Awards Reception will be held on Monday December 1 at 5:30 at the Pines Manor in Edison.
  - 11.2. NJLA Annual Conference will be April 20 to April 22, 2015 at the Ocean Place Resort in Long Branch.
12. Public Comment. Dr. Gordon explained that the Friends were hoping to send a representative to all of the Board's meetings so they could stay more informed about library developments. She said that there had been substantial turnover in the Friends Executive Board and that they were hoping to build upon the existing foundations and attract new members.
13. Adjournment. Gutierrez (Celey), unanimous.

**Next Meeting November 19**