

South Plainfield Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes April 8, 2025

Topic	Discussion	Outcome/To Do
Call to Order	The meeting was called to order by President Cheryl Nagel-Smiley at 6:00 pm. President Nagel-Smiley announced that the meeting was held in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act and as such, proper notice of the meeting was published in the official newspapers, The Observer, The Courier-News and The Home News Tribune.	
Roll Call	Trustees Present: Cheryl Nagel-Smiley, President; Melissa Katsingris, Vice President/Secretary; Annemarie Stoeckel, Treasurer; Ray Rusnak, Mayor's Rep; Bill Seesselberg, School Rep; Robert A. Bengivenga; Carol Christatos; Janine Kupcho; Stephanie Wolak;	
National Library Worker's Day and National Library Week	Cheryl mentioned that today is National Library Worker's Day and this week is National Library Week. The Friends are providing lunch for the staff on Friday and Cheryl bought a box of candy for staff.	
Approval of Minutes	Cheryl called for a motion. Annemarie motioned to accept the minutes from the previous meeting. Melissa seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously with Bob abstaining from the vote.
New Business - Approval of Executive Session Minutes	Cheryl called for a motion. Janine motioned to approve the Executive Session minutes. Annemarie seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously with Bob abstaining from the vote.
Payment of Vouchers	Cheryl reviewed the vouchers (checks #16161 - #16205 totaling \$81,043.02) and called for a motion. Cheryl mentioned that check 16206 will be discussed during Buildings and Grounds. Melissa motioned to accept the voucher payments. Janine seconded the motion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Expense Report Review	Cheryl called for a motion. Annemarie motioned to accept the report. Ray seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Cash Receipts Report Review	Cheryl called for a motion. Janine motioned to accept the report. Annemarie seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Statistical Report Review	Cheryl called for a motion. Carol motioned to accept the report. Stephanie seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Director's Report	Linda reviewed her report. Cheryl called for a motion. Stephanie motioned to accept the report. Annemarie seconded the motion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Finance and Budget/ Treasurer's Report	Annemarie presented the bank statement. Bill asked if the Library and Library Friends are tax exempt. Annemarie answered yes.	The bank statement was accepted.

South Plainfield Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes April 8, 2025

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Buildings and Grounds Report	<p>1) Cheryl explained that the Library Board had two questions after receiving the DPW bill for the plumbing emergency fix. 1) Why was there a bill for workers working during their normal hours; 2) Why rent was charged for machines that the town owns.</p> <p>These questions were to be discussed in the March Borough Council Meetings, but no decision or information came from the executive sessions. On March 25th, Linda received a letter from Mr. Rizzo, Borough Attorney, instructing the library to pay the bill and that there would be no further discussion. The Library's attorney advised paying the bill and sending a response.</p> <p>After reviewing the proposed response, Bill asked if the town's and library's funds are separate. Cheryl replied yes.</p> <p>Ray stated that he presented the library's case to some council members but got no response.</p> <p>Bob reviewed the steps he took and what happened during the emergency plumbing situation. Cheryl explained how our plumber handled the same situation two years ago. Also there was no consultation between Mr. Patti and Linda about the work that was being done. Mr. Miller had spoken to Linda and had said that our plumber may have to handle the job and the next day Mr. Patti took over with no consultation with Linda.</p> <p>2) Ray explained that 24 hour HVAC service was needed and recommended signing a contract with Edison Heating & Cooling.</p> <p>3) Bob suggested cutting down the tree that will interfere with power lines and plumbing pipes.</p>	Cheryl stated that these Building and Grounds items would be voted on during New Business.
Policy Report	Janine stated that there are no updates at this time.	
Personnel Committee Report	Cheryl stated that there are no updates at this time.	
Technology Committee Report	Annemarie stated that the website is almost ready to roll and that Linda is finalizing the content to be moved over.	
Capital Projects Committee	Ray stated LDS did their spring clean up.	
Community Relations Committee	Stephanie stated that there are no updates at this time.	
Mayor's Alternate Report	Ray stated that there are no updates at this time.	
Schools Report	Bill stated that there are no updates at this time.	

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Board President's Report	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cheryl gave some reminders: A) Financial disclosures are due on line by April 30; B) Linda and Ray are the official spokespeople for the Library; C) As voted on and approved at the February and March Board meetings only licensed professionals will be engaged moving forward and Linda will make those decisions. 2) Cheryl enjoyed the Lotus workshop. She said it was fantastic and very informative showing the culture of South Korea. 3) Cheryl gave thanks to Stephanie Bonanno, Carol and Maggie Temple from the Friends as well as Kitty and Jessica from the Library for volunteering at the Bunny Hop last Saturday. 4) Cheryl mentioned upcoming Library workshops. 5) Cheryl shared that Danielle will have some Academy Award movies this month. 6) Letters from the State Librarian, NJ Attorney General, and Congress Persons were sent to inform Board members about possible funding cuts and the impact either positively or negatively on library programs. It is a waiting game. 	
Old Business	There was no Old Business to discuss.	
Public Comments	<p>Cheryl called for a motion. Bob motioned to open Public Comment. Stephanie seconded the motion.</p> <p>Lisa reviewed the highlights from the last Friends Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for the Mother's Day Mother/Daughter Tea were finalized. • Jewelry Sale Fundraiser was discussed. Friends are seeking advice from those who do similar events. • Friends will advertise for the Edison Museum in West Orange (as tickets are reasonably priced). The Friends voted to get the Intrepid museum pass. • Friends discussed details for a Babysitting course. Research is being done for available days. • Applications were sent to private schools for the scholarship program. <p>Ken said that someone at the Historical Society asked if Federal funding cuts might affect them.</p> <p>Cheryl asked about the case to display artifacts from the archeological dig. Ken replied that he would ask about the case.</p>	Motion carried unanimously.
New Business: Approval of Payment to DPW (Check #16206)	Cheryl called for a motion. Janine motioned to pay the bill. Bob seconded the motion.	Motion carried with a majority and Carol opposing.

South Plainfield Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes April 8, 2025

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New Business: Approval for Response to the Borough Council	Cheryl called for a motion. Stephanie motioned to send the response. Annemarie seconded the motion.	Motion carried with a majority and Carol and Bob opposing.
New Business: Approval for Edison Heating & Cooling Contract	Cheryl called for a motion. Bill motioned to approve engaging Edison Heating & Cooling for HVAC maintenance. Ray seconded the motion.	Motion carried unanimously.
New Business: Approval of Resolution for REV 250 Grant	Cheryl called for a motion. Melissa motioned to approve the resolution for the REV 250 Grant. Bob seconded the motion.	Motion carried unanimously.
New Business: Approval for Tree Removal	Cheryl called for a motion. Stephanie motioned to cut down the tree that will interfere with power lines and plumbing pipes with the understanding LDS will do the cutting. Bob seconded the motion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Public Comments	Cheryl called for a motion. Stephanie motioned to close Public Comment. Bob seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Trustees Remarks	<p>Cheryl mentioned that Bob's birthday is April 19th and Janine's birthday is April 22nd and wished them a happy birthday.</p> <p>Bob mentioned the town's upcoming Centennial anniversary. Bob will be going on an Honor Flight to Washington DC (which is an honor given to veterans). He also warned that it will be cold tomorrow.</p> <p>Melissa stated that she is saddened about how things turned out with the council and how things are run by them. She recommends a book called "Let Them Theory". Melissa said the focus needs to be what the Library Board does for the community. She also wished everyone a happy Easter.</p> <p>Janine stated that she loves how the Library is run and how it works with the schools. She stated it would be nice to plant a tree since we are cutting one down. Janine is going to the Catskills for her birthday. She also wished everyone a happy Easter.</p> <p>Stephanie stated that Public Celebrations donated candy to the Library and Library Friends tables at the Bunny Hop.</p> <p>Carol stated the candy went fast at the Bunny Hop and she really enjoyed working it. Carol stated that she wanted to explain her No vote and that she was disturbed by the letter from Mr. Rizzo. She does not like that the discussion is over but is glad it has been settled. Carol stated that she enjoyed the Stress Management program.</p>	

South Plainfield Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes April 8, 2025

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Trustees Remarks, continued	<p>Bill agreed that it is good that the issue with the council is put to bed. Bill stated that he is looking forward to holiday events and wished everyone a nice holiday and spring.</p> <p>Ray said he agrees with Bill and that the borough attorney's letter left him speechless. He said he feels it was not handled correctly but will move on from here. Ray said he checked with other towns' council people and they don't pay their DPWs for such work. Ray said he was glad a civil conversation could be had. Ray shared that he saw a news story about Buddy Benches. A child will sit on a Buddy Bench when he/she feels alone and someone will join them. Ray thinks it would be good to put a Buddy Bench sign on one bench at Willow Park.</p> <p>Annemarie stated that she is sad that the relationship with the council will be awkward but is glad that we've taken the high ground and it is behind us. Annemarie stated that her grandson was excited to go to the Library and had a blast. She also gave kudos to Stephanie Bonanno, Carol and Maggie Temple for their work raising money and signing up new Friends at the Bunny Hop.</p> <p>Cheryl said she is sad that the Borough likes to highlight the great job of the Library when it benefits them but couldn't handle this situation in a more friendly manner. She feels like the stepchild. Cheryl stated that she is glad the Board works well together. There will be sunny days ahead both figuratively as well as literally. She wished everyone a happy Easter and Passover.</p> <p>Cheryl mentioned what is on this month's Diversity Events Calendar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Month-long Observances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate Diversity Month: Recognizes diversity throughout the world • Arab American Heritage Month: Recognizes the contributions of Arab-Americans in American history • Autism Awareness & Acceptance Month: Raises awareness to promote acceptance and celebrate those with autism • National Deaf History Month: Raises awareness to promote acceptance and celebrate those with hearing loss • National Volunteer Month: Recognizes volunteers and encourages volunteerism worldwide • Earth Month: Honors the planet by celebrating progress in environmental protection and reflecting on how to address the climate crisis 	

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Trustees Remarks, continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• April 2: World Autism Awareness Day - Promotes understanding and acceptance of people with autism• April 7: World Health Day - Raises awareness for global health• April 9: Day of Valor - A national observance in the Philippines that commemorates the fall of Bataan to Japanese troops• April 13-20: Passover - Celebrates the liberation of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery• April 14: Vaisakhi - Sikh New Year celebrating the spring harvest• April 18: Good Friday - A Christian holy day observing the crucifixion of Jesus and his death at Calvary• April 19: Holy Saturday - A public holiday in the Philippines that commemorates the death of Jesus Christ and the day he lay in the tomb• April 20: Easter - Celebrates the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ• April 22: Earth Day - Encourages global environmental protection and sustainability	
Adjournment	Cheryl called for a motion. Stephanie motioned to adjourn. Annemarie seconded the motion.	Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Submitted by Lisa Mahon, Secretary to the Board