

**February 24, 2024**  
**Joint Free Public Library**  
**Of Morristown and Morris Township**  
**Board of Trustees**

The annual **retreat** meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Joint Free Public Library of Morristown and Morris Township was called to order at 9:10 AM.

Representing Morristown were: Patricia Ard, Secretary; and Lisa Price

Representing Morris Township were: Don Kiel, Vice President; Geoff Brooks, Treasurer; and George Quillan.

Also present were: Deanna Quinones, alternate for Mayor Doherty; Beth Quirk-Hendry, alternate for Mayor Guariglia; Deb Gottsleben, alternate for Superintendent Mucci; Chad Leinaweaver, Director; and Mary Lynn Becza, Assistant Director

Pursuant to a resolution of the Board and to RS 10:4-10, "Open Public Meetings Act," the vice president announced that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided by posting notices of the meeting in the Library, by handing the Clerks of Morristown and Morris Township notices of the meeting, and by mailing to the Morris County Daily Record and the Star Ledger copies of the notices of the meetings all more than forty-eight hours prior to the meeting.

The great majority of the meeting was concerned with a presentation by library architect Bob Russell on the different spaces in the library, their current usage and/or design, and possibilities for change and improvement. The exterior design and stone of the tower entrance facing South St. were also discussed at length.

Mr. Russell, who designed the 2006 library extension, noted that library design has changed since that addition.

Turning the Marian Gerhart room in the 1917 wing into a study room, an idea discussed at previous meetings, was analyzed. Mr. Russell noted that: Lighting in the space would need to be increased; more electrical outlets are needed; and some infrastructure changes for heating and cooling might be needed. The current space has no return duct, so heat buildup might be a problem. The room would fit a maximum of 8 people, and would cost approximately \$60,000 to \$80,000 to construct.

Mr. Russell and the board then discussed turning the current Technology room on the first floor, across from nonfiction, into two independent spaces by installing a divider. The divider could be opened when using the entire space was desired. Mr. Russell noted that the HVAC unit in the ceiling would have to be reconfigured. He estimated the work would take about 30 days.

Mr. Russell then discussed concerns about the South St. tower entrance of the library. The small space before the library doors is confusing. It has a concrete floor and poor lighting. One solution is to move the glass entrance doors up to face South St. and enclose this space with glass and iron, installing a stone or outdoor carpeted floor.

The façade of this tower is faced with limestone which, Mr. Russell noted, is a soft stone that wicks up moisture. Salt has leached into the stone and caused discoloration. The bottom panels could be removed, the underlying steel inspected, and the bottom stones eventually replaced with something less porous.

The circulation room of the 1930 addition was discussed at length, both its aesthetic appeal and possible renovations. Mr. Russell suggested improving the frame over the front door and the circulation desk. It was noted that an electronic board could be placed over the circulation desk. There are two problems with the room's bookcases: The cases to the right and left heading into the 1917 wing are not sufficiently deep. And the room's shelving is of different heights; it would look better if all were a standardized height.

The need for wayfinding signs throughout the library, as well as outside the back entrance, was discussed. The interior hallway leading to and from the parking lot entrance could be made a more vibrant space. Painting it a different color was one suggestion for this space. Taking down the security gates would make it less visually crowded.

Some open spaces in the 2006 wing were then viewed via images. Mr. Russell noted the need for more square tables on the second floor. Installing a third study space at the end of the fiction section was reviewed.

The possible movement of one or more of four second floor collections to make room for a newly placed YA section was discussed. The four collections are: mysteries; science fiction/fantasy; graphic novels, and fiction. One or more of

these four collections could move to the area outside the first floor technology room.

Options for the Kirby Gallery were reviewed. It is currently used for a variety of functions, making it a multipurpose room.

The Board approved the following motions:

1.The renovation of the Gerhart room, as discussed above, will move forward. Mr. Russell's firm will provide preliminary sketches and cost estimates.

2.The separation of the technology room into two spaces will proceed. Mr. Russell's firm will provide preliminary sketches and cost estimates.

The board requested that Mr. Russell and Mr. Leinaweaver do further research, sketches, and cost analysis in the following three areas, and report back as their research progresses:

1.Moving the YA collection over to the Mystery/Sci Fi/Fiction area. The director will discuss this possibility with the relevant staff.

2. The South St. entrance project (see above).

3. The back door entrance. This project would involve expanding the sidewalk from the parking area to the back door, and would include lowering and partially moving the courtyard gate. Lighting and welcoming signage would also be desired.

Mr. Russell added that the 2006 roof is almost twenty years old. He will examine the feasibility of solar panels on some part of the library roof as a sustainability action.

Finally, there was a brief discussion of library financing.

Meeting adjourned at 12:24pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Ard, Secretary