

April 27, 2022

A Work Session of the Borough Council of the Borough of Avalon was held on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room, 3100 Dune Drive, Avalon, New Jersey.

Attendance: Public ----- 5

Reporters ----- 0

The meeting was called to order by Council President Juzaitis.

<u>Roll call:</u>	Council President Juzaitis	Present
	Councilwoman Coskey	Present
	Councilman McCorristin	Present
	Councilman McDermott	Present
	Councilman Wierman	Present

Also present:

Scott Wahl, Business Administrator
James Waldron, Assistant Business Administrator
Nicole Curio, Esquire, Borough Solicitor, Gruccio, Pepper, De Santo & Ruth P.A.
William McCormick, Director of Public Works/Utilities
Jeffrey R. Christopher, Chief of Police
Thomas R. Thornton, P.E., Borough Engineer, Mott MacDonald
Paul Short, Code Enforcement Officer
Erin Brown, Library Director, Avalon Free Public Library

Council President Juzaitis read the Open Public Meetings Act Announcement.

Notice of this Regular Meeting was included the annual Schedule of Meetings dated June 23, 2021. It was given to the news media and posted on the Official Bulletin Board as required by law.

Presentation of the State of the Avalon Free Public Library

Erin Brown gave the following presentation:

LOOKING BACK ON 2021

MEMBERS

618 new patrons joined the Library in 2021 for a total of 4,995 active patrons.

Patrons joined us online and in person:

- 70,333 visits to our Website
- 7,844 visits to AFPLHC YouTube

Over 500,000 reached via Library & HC social media and 48,825 visits to the Library and 1,423 visits to the History Center.


BORROWING & EVENTS

Circulated 157,146 items.

- eBooks were the most popular format in 2021.
- 53% of overall loans were digital, a shift from 2020's 60%

Resumed in person programming late summer and hosted hundreds of patrons remotely and in person.

- Hosted 261 adult events & 101 children's events. 1308 attended in person and 7,557 participated virtually.



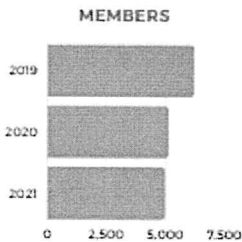
HISTORY CENTER

Opened two new museum exhibits!

- 623 HC objects acquired and cataloged, with 529 digitized
- 2,037 visits to the virtual museum - Google Arts & Culture

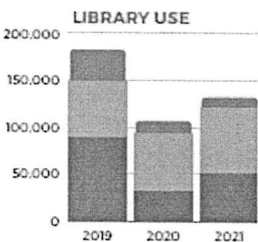
PROVIDED 11,875 WI-FI SESSIONS AND 31,715 PRINT JOBS FOR PATRONS.

AVALON LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS

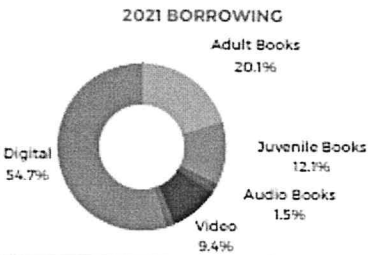
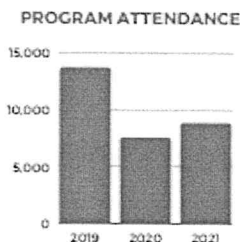


A year-end report in 2021 provided the following details:

- 4,995 active members
- 2,864 nonresident homeowner patrons
- 638 resident homeowner patrons



The table above measures: library visits, website visits, and WiFi use by year.



1,323 2020 Planning Survey Respondents	94% Percent of respondents who use the Library	74% Percent of respondents who own a home in Avalon but do not live there year-round	14% Percent of respondents who reside in Avalon year-round	60% Percent of respondents who use the Library's digital services
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2021 FINDINGS



- Digital Circulation has become as important as Print Circulation.
- Physical AV Circulation (DVDs, audiobook CDs, music CDs) is declining and unlikely to recover. Decline is offset by digital circulation growth.
- Children's Circulation up vs. 2020, 2019, and 2018, in part due to renovation and reorganization of the children's room and collections.
- Library visits up vs. 2020 but need further increase in 2022 & 2023 to return to pre-pandemic levels.
 - 2021 Patron visits increased 57% over 2020 but were down 43% over 2019.
- Fewer patrons are borrowing more items. Overall circulation on par with 2019 and 2018 levels. Particularly significant when compared to onsite visitation levels.
- Patron base relatively maintained but changed use and fewer onsite visits resulted in a decline during COVID-19.
 - Growth (especially among new homeowners) is a focus for 2022 & 2023.
 - The proportion of patrons by type (resident vs. non-resident homeowner vs. county) is approximately the same as the past five years.
- Wi-Fi and Public Printing are the most valued business services. (Scanning, fax, and copying remain popular, too.)

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2023



MISSION

Inform, inspire, and enrich the Avalon community near and far.

VISION

A library card in every Avalon household.



VALUES & CULTURE

- Accessibility
- Accountability
- Innovation
- Service
- Teamwork
- Transparency



GOALS & STRATEGIES

ENGAGE – CONNECT WITH THE ENTIRE AVALON COMMUNITY, NEAR AND FAR.

A library isn't a library without its patrons. Staff and Trustees are committed to serving the whole community, whether a patron is across the street or across the country. Refining current practices and finding new ways to connect serve this effort.

ENHANCE – DEVELOP SPACES AND RESOURCES THAT PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL ONSITE AND DIGITAL EXPERIENCES.

As the Avalon Community evolves, so must its resources. Enhancements to facilities and services will support efforts to prepare the Library and History Center as they move into the future.

ENVISION – USE FORESIGHT TO CREATE PLANS THAT ARE RESPONSIVE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS.

The Library strives to be responsive by both providing what its users are asking for, and by anticipating resources and services they will find useful. Various approaches are taken to structure organizational planning, including committees, information gathering, and reporting tools. Making planning a priority serves patrons and staff.



MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- 1 EVEN RATIO OF PROPERTY OWNERS TO SATISFIED PATRONS
- 2 BORROWING, PROGRAM ATTENDANCE, USE, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INCREASED/MAINTAINED
- 3 POSITIVE FEEDBACK AND COMMUNITY SATISFACTION VIA PERIODIC SURVEYING
- 4 STAFF RETENTION AND POSITIVE MORALE
- 5 SUCCESSFUL FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS



COMING UP...

EVENTS FOR ADULTS, TEENS, AND KIDS THIS SUMMER!

Including:

- Summer Author Series at Surfside Park
- Bay Atlantic Symphony concert - August 13
- Broadway Revue concert - July 16
- Sponsorship of two Surfside Park Borough Concerts
- Lectures, classes, and art & tech workshops
- Event partnerships with community organizations
- Teen SAT Prep series

PLUS! The return of the Kids' Summer Guide, featuring FREE Library, History Center and Recreation kids' events EVERY WEEKDAY in the summer. Includes story times, family programs, crafts, characters, special events, and more!



Keep in touch by signing up for our eNewsletter:
www.avalonfreelibrary.org

Council President Juzaitis thanked Erin for her very detailed presentation and commended her for all she and her staff do for the Borough of Avalon through the Avalon Free Public Library.

Councilman McCorristin spoke as the Borough Council representative on the Avalon Free Library Board of Trustees and expressed his happiness in seeing the new and innovative programs offered through the library and the history center, which have had tremendous positive impacts on the community. He emphasized his thanks and appreciation to all staff members of the library and history center for their hard work and dedication to the betterment of the community.

Discussion regarding Resolution appointing Special Law Enforcement Officers

Chief Christopher reported the Avalon Police Department has completed the necessary employment procedures for an additional Class I and Class II Special Officers. It is being requested that Council consider a Resolution appointing these Special Officers today in advance of the start of the Police Academy.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be considered at today's Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding Resolution authorizing a Change Order to Contract No. 20-01, Fourth of July Weekend Fireworks Shows for the Calendar Years 2020-2022

Scott Wahl explained this Change Order is for the 2022 Fourth of July fireworks display, reflecting an increase of \$2,500.00 for a fuel surcharge. This Change Order is now necessary due to recent inflation increases impacting this contract, and the barge that will be carrying the fireworks. No additional costs will be incurred for labor or materials.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be considered at today's Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding Resolution accepting and adopting the Atlantic County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund's Safety Incentive Program.

Scott Wahl reported participation in this program within the Joint Insurance Fund (JIF) is voluntary, with participating communities being required to opt into the program on an annual basis. Through this program, the JIF rewards communities for being proactive and going above and beyond what is expected of member communities through regular safety meetings, toolbox talks, and other efforts to promote safe working environments. Communities that participate in this program and are found to be model communities then become eligible for many benefits back to the Borough, which include funding which can be spent to further safety initiatives.

Council President Juzaitis expressed her full support of participating in this program.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be considered at today's Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding Resolution approving updated flood insurance promotion activity with the Atlantic-Cape Multi-Jurisdictional Program for Public Information

Scott Wahl asked Council to consider a resolution to continue with this program as part of the New Jersey Coastal Coalition, of which Avalon was a founding member. This was a volunteer effort for communities in Atlantic and Cape May counties to gather and share information, strategies, and ideas for flood mitigation. Participation in this program awards points through the Community Rating System (CRS) Program, as well. Through this program, Avalon recently hosted a flood insurance meeting with interested property owners to provide education on flood protection and mitigation. Many valuable and innovative ideas have come from these meetings, much to the benefit of the Borough of Avalon and other participating communities. By participating in this cost-free program, it guarantees information sharing between communities, and maximizes the amount of points captured by the Borough through the CRS Program.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the May 11, 2022 Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding amendment to Borough Code pertaining to required certifications of Municipal Court Administrator and Deputy Court Administrator

James Waldron indicated this Ordinance amendment addresses the appointment of the Municipal Court Administrator and Deputy. Presently, as the code is written, the Court Administrator and Deputy Court Administrator are required to be certified, as consistent with the rules of the Supreme Court. The statute provides that after May 25, 2011, should there be a vacancy in the office, a municipality is empowered under certain conditions to appoint an uncertified individual into the Court Administrator

James Waldron (continued) position on an interim basis with certain conditions which allow for the individual to complete the courses and become certified, for a time frame up to a maximum of five years, subject to the approval from the sitting vicinage judge. Recently, the Borough's Deputy Court Administrator resigned from the position to take employment elsewhere. No certified individuals applied to fill said vacancy. The vicinage participated in the interviews and, with the selection committee, has agreed on a non-certified candidate. That individual has been offered the position and has accepted the offer. Assuming Council is agreeable to the course of action recommended today, that individual will be appointed for an interim position, subject to Council's advice and consent. Because of the Shared Services Agreement for a shared Municipal Court with the Borough of Stone Harbor, the appointment will require similar appointing Resolutions by the Mayor and Council of that governing body. Subject to Council's approval of the Ordinance amendment, it is sought for the individual to be hired in a Municipal Court Clerk position on an interim basis until such time as the Ordinance becomes effective and the advice and consent Resolution naming the individual as Deputy Court Administrator, subject to the requirement that the individual become certified. To be clear, New Jersey State Statute does not require a Deputy Court Administrator be certified. It has been a long-standing practice of the Borough of Avalon to require any Deputies serving under an individual required by Statute to be certified, that the Deputy be certified as well to ensure a full-functioning office in any unforeseen circumstances or absences. While this amendment allows for the appointment of a non-certified individual to the position of Deputy Court Administrator, the spirit of the Borough's long-standing practice is being upheld by including the requirement that the individual obtain their certification within an appropriate time frame.

Councilman McDermott asked for clarification that the judge has approved this appointment.

James Waldron explained the judge and the vicinage have reviewed the Ordinance before Council and have approved the form of the document.

Councilman McCorristin inquired as to the requirements of the certification process for this position.

James Waldron responded the certification process typically takes approximately 18 months. Courses are held only in the spring and fall of each year. The individual to be presented to Council has a degree in Criminal Justice and has a desire to work in a related field. The background check and drug screening processes are underway. There are hopes to expedite these processes to have this individual begin their employment as soon as possible.

Councilwoman Coskey questioned the five-year period permitted before the individual is certified.

James Waldron noted the five-year period would apply only in the most extenuating circumstances. The statute envisions that the certification process will take a shorter time frame than five years. The time period is outlined in detail within the statute.

After further discussion, Council agreed to proceed with an Ordinance to be considered on first reading at today's Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding proposals received for Purchase of Scrap Water Meters

Scott Wahl reported as Council is aware, all water meters throughout the Borough are being replaced through the Water Meter Replacement Program. The old water meters are not of use to the Borough; however, it was determined that the water meters could generate some revenue through their value in scrap metal.

Tom Thornton added the Borough is currently in possession of 6.5 tons of brass by way of these water meters, which can generate some value. The supplier of the new water meters had offered to purchase these old meters from the Borough. Chief Financial Officer James Craft indicated proposals would need to be received for the purchase of these old water meters. Three proposals were then received, with the best price coming from the supplier, Rio Supply in the amount of \$22,371.57. It was recommended to sell these meters to Rio Supply.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be considered at today's Regular Meeting.

Public Comments:

Martha Wright, 632 7th Street, referenced the presentation made by Erin Brown and commended the Avalon Free Public Library for being a tremendous asset to the community. She announced her knowledge of an available grant through Atlantic City Electric to jumpstart sustainability projects. She implored Council to consider authorizing submission of a grant application through this program, and suggested the funds be used for environmentally-friendly lighting at the Sport Fishing Center.

Council to check over the agenda for the Regular Meeting.

Council proceeded to check over the agenda for the Regular Meeting.

Motion made by Councilwoman Coskey, seconded by Councilman McDermott to adjourn the Work Session.

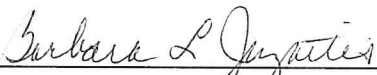
ROLL CALL VOTE:

Councilwoman Coskey	Aye
Councilman McCorristin	Aye
Councilman McDermott	Aye
Councilman Wierman	Aye
Council President Juzaitis	Aye

Work Session adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


C. Danielle Nollett, Borough Clerk


Barbara L. Juzaitis, Council President