

Middlesex Public Library  
1300 Mountain Avenue  
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on July 27, 2020

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Middlesex Library Board of Trustees was held in the Community Room of the Library on Monday, July 27, 2020. James Benson, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Announcement of Compliance with Open Public Meeting Law

The President read the announcement of the meeting in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Law. (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) stating that notice of the meeting has been published in the Home News and the Star Ledger and has been posted on the Library public bulletin board.

Roll Call of Members

X – Represents member present at meeting

- X James Benson, President
- X Emily DeScenza, Vice-President (attended via Zoom)  
Melissa Fedosh, Treasurer
- X Susen Edwards, Secretary (attended via Zoom)
- X Mary Lou Johnson, Member At Large (attended via Zoom)
- X Cathy Ferris, Member At Large  
Beverly Weber, Member At Large
- X Barbara Ferris, Representative of the Superintendent of Schools
- X Dina Healey, Representative of the Mayor
- X Christine George, Library Director

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting(s)

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on June 8, 2020 was made by Mary Lou Johnson and seconded by Susen Edwards. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

There were no reports of officers.

## Financial Report/Payment of Bills

Bills that arose since the last board meeting and current payments for this month and last were reviewed and approved.

A check for \$200 was written to Andrea Donohue for translating materials into Spanish. A check was written to Maureen Donohue for \$834.61 which covers all prizes and other supplies for the summer reading programs. Chrissy George was reimbursed \$283.07 for PPE.

A motion for a resolution to pay the bills was made by Barbara Ferris and seconded by Cathy Ferris. All were in favor. The following resolution was passed:

“WHEREAS THE ATTACHED BILLS AND CLAIMS AGAINST THE Free Public Library of the Borough of Middlesex have been examined and audited by the Treasurer of the Library, NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Free Public Library of the Borough of Middlesex and the Trustees thereof that the attached bills and claims are hereby approved for payment.”

A year-to-date Budget Report was provided to Board members. Director George noted that the Digital Media category may run low on funds. Maintenance Supplies may also run low on funds due to the purchase of additional cleaning supplies and PPE.

Mary Lou Johnson asked about the money in May's Garden Fund. May's Memorial Garden has been put on hold. DPW has not had time to devote to the garden due to COVID-19 and the challenge of a hot summer. Director George reported that an Eagle Scout may be interested in working on the garden. This will require more research and planning.

## Circulation Report

Director George provided an abbreviated Circulation Report for July. Pick-up service began in late June and the circulation numbers have been excellent. Hoopla and Overdrive have also been doing well. DVDs had a slow start but the numbers are starting to pick up. Magazine use is understandably low. She believed there may be 15 or 16 new user applications online.

## Director's Report

Director George presented the monthly report for July on the operation of the Library. See Director's Report for details.

1. The new HVAC system stopped working at the end of June, forcing the Library to close. The manufacturer sent a repairman the next day. He made a few adjustments and the system is now working well.

2. Verizon has completed the wiring for FIOS. A few more things need to be completed before we can run FIOS to our server.
3. The phones are in the process of being switched to the new system. It is a minimum ten business day procedure. Service will not be interrupted during the process.
4. Plexiglass has been installed at all service points in the Library to protect staff.
5. LMxAC is working to get all outstanding material to “home” libraries. A good portion of our material has come back to us.
6. Walkup/Pickup service is working well and has been well-received. Printing and copying services have been added, as well as paperwork from the Borough.
7. An individual pried open the fire door on June 30, entered the building, and asked Reference for help with WiFi. Staff on duty did not contact the police. For a while after that, he was seen around the Library, but has not been seen near our building. Director George urged staff members to notify the police or press the panic button if they feel unsafe for any reason.
8. The Governor has allowed libraries to open at 25% capacity. A few of the larger libraries in the county have opened. Director George is not comfortable opening to the public yet. We don't have the capability to keep up with safeguarding our patrons and staff, most of whom are in the high risk category. Our patron base is transient. Other Borough buildings are open by appointment only.
9. Director George outlined a reopening proposal for August. She wants to ease staff back into regular work hours, but has concerns about high risk employees. There can be no computer usage. Walkup/Pickup services can be made available from 10 am - 8 pm, beginning August 3. Other details are available in the Director's Report. She suggests that we reassess reopening the building at the end of August.
10. Teresa is creating screen shots of new releases which she will put on social media, creating “simulated browsing.”
11. According to new research from Batelle, COVID-19 can persist on some materials (glossy pages) for up to 96 hours. If these materials have touched other material in the book drop carts, our quarantining needs to be extended from 72 hours to 96 hours.
12. Director George suggested we keep due dates on material but not accrue fines until the end of September. A patron can return material on time but because it sits in quarantine, it cannot be checked back in on time. All Board members were in favor.

13. The Adult Summer Reading programs are well underway with the theme, "Imagine Your Story." An outdoor Summer Chair Yoga class is in progress and has received positive feedback.
14. The Children's Summer Reading program has 75 kids and 10 teens registered. All registration was completed online. Six virtual programs are held each week with one special virtual event per week. Teens are reacting positively to our interactive website.
15. Nearly all projects for the Children's Room have been completed. Thanks to Children's Librarian, Maureen Donohue and all staff members for their hard work.

#### Committee Reports

Director George reported that a staff member spent a few days in the hospital. This information will be forwarded to Beverly Weber for the Sunshine Committee

#### Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, asked the Board for feedback on whether or not to schedule Fall Friends of the Library programs. Susen has many concerns about the safety of patrons and speakers. She felt it might send a false message of safety to our community if programs were to run as scheduled. All Board members agreed it was in the best interest of everyone to cancel all Fall programs.

#### Unfinished Business

There have been no problems with the Community Room entrance. Director George suspects there may be more problems in the future since the doors are getting increased usage with the Walkup/Pickup service.

Mary Lou Johnson reported that she has been running virtual ESL classes with about 20 students. The response has been excellent.

#### New Business

The Board agreed to wait until the September 14 meeting to discuss plans for reopening.

President Benson said the current Union Contract expires December 31, 2020. He thought it might be advisable to use Borough Labor Attorney Steve Glickman for contract review this year. Mary Lou Johnson suggested President Benson speak to Library Board Attorney Edward Johnson before approaching Mr. Glickman.

#### Executive Session

There was no executive session.

### Public Discussion

There was no public discussion.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm on a motion made by Dina Healey and seconded by Cathy Ferris. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, September 14, 2020, at 7:00 pm in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards  
Secretary  
July 28, 2020

**NOTE: These minutes will be available to the public for inspection and/or copying once they are approved at a subsequent Board meeting.**