

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on June 8, 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, June 8, 2020. James Benson, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 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
- X Melissa Fedosh, Treasurer
- X Susen Edwards, Secretary (attended via telephone)
- Mary Lou Johnson, Member At Large
- X Cathy Ferris, Member At Large
- X 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 May 11, 2020 was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Barbara Ferris. 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 was written to Verizon for \$968.87. This is a one-time charge for the new phone system. A check was written to Synchrony Bank/Amazon for \$734.04. A large part of this amount went to purchase plexiglass shields, gloves, and masks. These costs will be submitted to the Borough and will be reimbursed by FEMA. Director George purchased gift cards for Facebook giveaways and was reimbursed with a check for \$100.75.

A motion for a resolution to pay the bills was made by Cathy Ferris and seconded by Melissa Fedosh. 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 Library is beginning to order new books again. Some of the funds in the Internet/Technology category will be spent at the end of July.

Circulation Report

Director George did not provide a Circulation Report as the Library has been closed.

Director's Report

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

1. The new book drop and DVD drop are installed and have been operational since June 1. Several Rubbermaid industrial carts have been purchased to use for the book and DVD drops so that no staff member has to touch the contents. Materials are quarantined for 72 hours before returning to the shelves.
2. Verizon completed the FIOS installment earlier today. TK1 needs to come in and finalize the work.
3. The phone project is still on hold. Director George expects that it will be operational by July 4th weekend.

4. A doorbell has been installed on the door by the side parking lot for deliveries.
5. DPW will install plexiglass shields next week.
6. Facebook and Instagram continue to be used for monthly giveaways. We have many new readers!
7. On June 1, Maureen Donohue returned as Youth Services Librarian. She is creating a virtual summer reading program and is redoing the children's website.
8. NJLA, ALA, and many local libraries have made public statements supporting an anti-racist society. Director George posted her public statement on the Library's website today.
9. ILL delivery will not return at least until September. LMxAC will forgive fines until July 15.
10. Jenna, a video production intern, is helping to create PSA videos. She designed an instructional video for patrons on how to use our Walkup/Pickup service once we reopen.
11. No word has come from the state as to a reopening date. We will continue digital services only until a reopening order has been issued.
12. Director George's reopening plan is overly cautious to keep staff members safe. Some staff will continue to work from home.
13. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian is offering online reading challenges. She has had a high level of participation. Her adult summer reading programs will be virtual as well.

Committee Reports

The Sunshine Committee reported that a basket was given to Mary Lou Johnson after a recent fall.

Friends of the Library Report

Amani, a local jazz group, is providing the Friends with weekly recordings that are posted on Facebook and the Friends website. A video will be posted each Wednesday until life returns to normal.

Susen Edwards thanked former Board Member, Dan Gilroy, for completing the Friends' 2019 tax return.

Unfinished Business

The Board agreed to suspend fines through July 31, 2020.

DPW began a cleanup of our landscaping last week. Maylein's memorial garden is still on hold, but a few individuals have indicated they would like to volunteer to help DPW with the project.

The Community Room entrance drainage problem is still on hold, but there was no problem during the last heavy rain storm.

New Business

Director George submitted a draft of the Middlesex Public Library Coronavirus Reopening Plan to Board members prior to this meeting. The plan is thorough and covers health and safety measures, employee procedures, "curbside" pickup for patrons, and other necessary information. The Governor has not yet given permission for Libraries to reopen, so the plan will remain in limbo.

President Benson proposed that the Board give Director George permission to implement the plan once the Governor gives his "okay". Beverly Weber moved that the Board accept President Benson's proposal. Emily DeScenza seconded the motion. All were in favor.

President Benson addressed the anti-racist statement posted by Director George on the Library website. He felt it was inappropriate for a public tax-funded institution to post a political statement. He felt it was not a neutral statement as it did not address other aspects of current events including actions taken against police officers. Director George said that the piece was from her personally. Discussion followed and suggestions were made on ways to amend the statement. Director George said if the piece were to be amended, then it should come from the Director and the Board. As no other feedback was volunteered by Board members, the statement remains as is and only from Director George.

Executive Session

There was no executive session.

Public Discussion

There was no public discussion.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 pm on a motion made by Cathy Ferris and seconded by Dina Healey. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, July 27, 2020, at 7:00 pm in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
June 10, 2020

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