

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on November 9, 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, November 9, 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
- X 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 October 19, 2020 was made by Beverly Weber 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 \$361.56 check was written to Director George for reimbursement for the Read and Treat Halloween program. A \$324.86 check was written to Mo Donohue for insurance reimbursement. There were no other unusual expenses.

A motion for a resolution to pay the bills was made by Emily DeScenza and seconded by Barbara 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. A new format with an added “Description” column is being used. The column gives the Board detailed information about what items are included in each account.

All three Capital Ordinance accounts have been removed.

Circulation Report

Director George provided a revised, simplified Circulation Report for November. The report eliminates unnecessary line items and gives the Board an easier-to-read report citing the most important information.

The number of new users for the month, although fewer than 2019, is strong considering new users can only sign up online. Circulation continues to be strong as patrons continue to use our Walkup/Pickup service. All digital numbers are on target for the month.

Director George noted that ILL resumed on October 19.

Attendance at children’s programs is high due to popup libraries and the Read and Treat Halloween program.

President Benson suggested adding a quarterly report which will track employee sick and vacation days.

Director’s Report

Director George presented the monthly report for November on the operation of the Library. See the Director's Report for details. A few of the highlights are listed below:

1. Our custodian is expected to be out until December. In his absence, cleaning is being done three times a week.
2. New DVD racks, bookshelf end caps, and automatic hand sanitizer dispensers are being installed this month.
3. More than 100 children attended our Read and Treat Halloween program.
4. Five virtual children's programs are being held each week and have been well-received. Miss Jolie has been invited back to host a virtual dance party.
5. The Reference Department is looking into virtual programming for adults. New materials are being catalogued. Patrons can view new books and DVDs on our website.
6. Theresa Bond continues to do an excellent job with social media and community outreach. In November, we launched a Leaves of Gratitude campaign to encourage the community to think about things they are grateful for during these challenging times.

Committee Reports

President Benson recommended the Personnel Committee meet before the end of the year to complete the annual performance evaluation of the Library Director. Emily DeScenza, Susen Edwards, and Beverly Weber have volunteered to serve on the committee.

Beverly Weber reported that the Sunshine Committee gave a cheer basket to an employee who was out for surgery. She received a thank you card which she read to the Board.

Susen Edwards suggested that Board members donate to the Sunshine Fund next month.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, reported that she is sharing virtual programs hosted by Hunterdon County Library North on Facebook. No new programs have been scheduled.

Unfinished Business

Director George recommended that the interior of the Library remain closed. The COVID situation is getting worse with the colder weather. In addition, she and the staff have concerns about the holidays and indoor family gatherings potentially spreading the virus. The Board agreed to keep the Library closed until the end of 2020.

President Benson presented a revised 2021 Proposed Budget. Additional funds have been added on a number of line items due to increased costs. The 1/3 mil minimum has been increased to \$570,459.00 for 2021, but we still estimate a budget shortage of \$78,633.00.

Beverly Weber moved that the Board accept the 2021 Proposed Budget. Mary Lou Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

New Business

President Benson presented the Board with the 2021 Library Holidays and Board Meeting Dates.

There is no update on contract negotiations at this time.

President Benson discussed two employees who have not returned to work since the Pandemic began. Neither have duties that can be done from home. Both have medical excuses but the time has come to notify them that they cannot continue to receive a salary without working. The Board will send a letter to both employees advising them they are being placed on unpaid leave.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Public Discussion

There was no public discussion.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 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, December 14, 2020, at 7:00 pm in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
November 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.