

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on October 19, 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, October 19, 2020. James Benson, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 (attended via Zoom)
- X Cathy Ferris, Member At Large (attended via Zoom)
- X Beverly Weber, Member At Large
- 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 September 14, 2020 was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Emily DeScenza. 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.

Optimum still appears on the list of bills. Verizon has completed its installation but strongly suggested we keep Optimum during the ten day period transitioning from one service to another.

A check for \$638.78 was paid to Personnel Concepts for all necessary laminated Department of Labor posters. A check for \$3,811.93 was written to LMxAC for our quarterly dues. A check for \$4,501.54 was written to Baker & Taylor to cover recent acquisitions. There were no other large or unusual expenses.

A motion for a resolution to pay the bills was made by Melissa Fedosh and seconded by Susen Edwards. 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 wants to review where certain expenses are allocated. The bottom line will remain the same, but she believes this will give us a clearer picture of expenditures.

It was noted that all three Capital Ordinance accounts should read \$0.00.

Circulation Report

Director George provided a Circulation Report for October. Hoopla usage has leveled off, but Over Drive and RB Digital continue to be strong. Overall circulation numbers are up due to Walkup/Pick-up.

The actual number of New Users is not available. \$118.94 was collected in outstanding pre-COVID fines. No new fines are accruing at this time.

Director's Report

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

1. The new and old HVAC systems are working fine.

2. Now that FIOS has been installed and running smoothly, we can cancel our Optimum service.
3. Our Walkup/Pickup service continues to thrive. Friday hours have been added. In addition, the first PopUp Library and story time was a big success. Three carts of books were available for patrons to browse. Story time was held on the lawn. Another PopUp event is scheduled for November.
4. The DVD retirement project is nearly complete. More than 1,600 DVDs have been put into storage. These DVDs will still be available to check out, but will not remain on the Library floor.
5. ILL delivery and pickup service resumed today.
6. Director George discussed the possibility of reopening the Library interior with Board Members. She noted that cleaning will not be able to be done on a daily basis at least through Thanksgiving. Two computers could be moved to the Community Room, but would need to be closely monitored. Browsing would also need to be tightly monitored. We don't have enough staff to handle the increased workload. Staff also has concerns about reopening. The Board unanimously agreed that the Library should remain closed. We will discuss reopening at the November Board meeting.
7. A relabeling and reshelving project is underway in the Children's Room. Virtual programming continues to be popular.
8. The Adult Room is also getting reorganized.
9. Theresa Bond submitted a Marketing/Community Outreach Report in which she discussed the work she is doing through social media platforms. She is promoting Walkup/Pickup, our PopUp Library, and other events. All has been well-received.

Committee Reports

Beverly Weber reported that the Sunshine Committee received a thank you letter from Board Member, Susen Edwards, who received a cheer basket in September. A Library employee will be going for surgery later this week. A card and basket will be sent.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, reported that she has not scheduled any programs for 2021 with the exception of two rescheduled programs from the Fall. Susen is sharing virtual programs hosted by Hunterdon County Library North on Facebook. The response from our community (made up primarily of seniors, many without computer skills), as well as Hunterdon County's, has been minimal.

Unfinished Business

As mentioned in the Director's Report, the interior of the Library will remain closed. We will consider reopening at our November meeting.

New Business

President Benson presented the Board with a preliminary Proposed Budget for 2021. Individual line items were reviewed and discussed. We anticipate receiving \$570,459.00 from the Borough which is a notable increase from 2020. We will still be left with a significant budget shortage.

President Benson and Director George also presented a Capital Projects Projections form that looks at possible capital improvements from 2020 through 2025.

Contract negotiations have not yet begun. Until they do, discussion regarding our Discipline Policy has been put on hold.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Public Discussion

There was no public discussion.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm on a motion made by Dina Healey and seconded by Susen Edwards. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, November 9, 2020, at 7:00 pm in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
October 21, 2020

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