

Middlesex Public Library  
1300 Mountain Avenue  
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on October 18, 2021

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 18, 2021. James Benson, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:04 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 Beverly Weber, Member At Large
- Cathy Ferris, Member At Large
- X Barbara Ferris, Representative of the Superintendent of Schools
- X Dina Healey, Representative of the Mayor
- X Christine George, Library Director
- X Edward Johnson, Board Attorney

Executive Session

A motion was made by Susen Edwards and seconded by Barbara Ferris for the Board to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters with Steve Glickman, labor attorney. All were in favor.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting(s)

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on September 13, 2021, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Emily DeScenza. All were in favor.

A motion to approve the minutes of the Executive Session held on September 13, 2021, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Dina Healey. 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.

Director George noted the larger number of bills was due to the October meeting occurring later in the month than usual. A check for \$820.05 was paid to Middlesex Borough for the completion of May's Memorial Garden. The account is now at \$0.00. A check for \$425.00 was paid to Ace-Walco Termite and Pest Control to address a problem with "cicada killer" bees. There were no other unusual expenses.

A motion for a resolution to pay the bills was made by Melissa Fedosh and seconded by Emily DeScenza. 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 2021 Monthly Budget Report was provided to Board Members. Director George noted funds were “borrowed” from Memberships/Training to pay for additional Maintenance Supplies. Covid has added to our expenses in this category, and prices have increased significantly. Dina Healey mentioned “borrowing” creates an unrealistic picture of our expenses. She suggested running negative balances in categories which have been depleted, noting the bottom line will remain the same. The Board was in agreement and the Report will be amended.

#### Circulation Report

Director George gave the circulation report for October. See the Circulation Report for details.

After a robust summer, circulation dipped for September. Schools have reopened and families are busy reorganizing after the summer. Internet usage has risen steadily over the last three months. Fines were forgiven due to Hurricane Ida.

Meeting room usage is down due to Covid and flooding of the Community Room. Meeting Room A is open for Borough and Library group meetings but closed to outside groups. Programs will continue to be held on Zoom at least through the end of 2021.

### Director's Report

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

1. Contractors are scheduled this week to survey the Community Room. Snap in flooring has been suggested instead of carpeting. Wallboard will be replaced below wainscoting. Colors matching the rest of the Library have been suggested.
2. Capital budgeted money will be available to replace all tables in the Community Room.
3. Because much of our storage area and Meeting Rooms B and C, are being used to store items from the Community Room, all weeding of books has been put on hold.
4. Two additional computers will open up in the adult section of the Library. Social distancing can still be maintained.
5. Masking protocol will remain in place.
6. Director George suggested fines resume beginning November 1, 2021. All Board members were in favor.
7. Director George informed the Board that she has found the perfect candidate to fill a part-time circulation assistant position. The Board agreed to hire the candidate.
8. Director George has been covering many of the duties of the children's librarian who is out on maternity leave. She requested hiring a temporary part-time children's librarian and has found a candidate. The Board approved the hire.
9. Attendance for children's programs is down for the month as children have returned to school.
10. More adults are joining Zoom programs.
11. Social media platforms continue to be active with daily postings.

### Committee Reports

President Benson asked Dina Healey and Barbara Ferris to serve on the Finance Committee. Dina agreed. Barbara needs to look at her schedule.

### Friends of the Library Report

Friends President Susen Edwards reported the Friends had a tent at the Food Truck Festival in Mountainview Park on October 9. The tent was fully staffed with volunteers who were grateful for the opportunity to once again take part in a community event. They sold adult books (three for \$1.00) and gave out free children's books. A total of \$124.00 was taken in.

Two Zoom programs are scheduled for the fall. A program on the Beatles will be held on November 7, at 3:00 p.m., and a program on decluttering for the holidays with Jamie Novak will be held on December 5, at 3:00 p.m.

### Unfinished Business

Replacing and hiring personnel was discussed in the Director's Report. Nothing yet has been done on the personnel policy update.

### New Business

A discussion on the 2022 budget was put on hold. We are still waiting for financial information from the State and the Borough.

### Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m. on a motion made by Dina Healey and seconded by Barbara Ferris. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, November 8, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards  
Secretary

October 19, 2021

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