

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on December 13, 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, December 13, 2021. 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
- X Beverly Weber, Member At Large
- X 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

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting(s)

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on November 8, 2021, was made by Emily DeScenza and seconded by Beverly Weber. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson announced Cathy Ferris will be resigning her position as of December 31, 2021. Cathy has given her time and energy to the Board for more than thirty years. President Benson read her letter of resignation.

Cathy's term expires in 2023. As President, Jim Benson has the authority to appoint someone to complete her term. He appointed Dina Healey, currently serving as Mayor's Representative, to the position.

Upon President Benson's suggestion, Mayor Madden appointed Dave Oliver to the position of Mayor's Representative. Mr. Oliver attended tonight's meeting as a guest.

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 mentioned that the PSEG bill has not yet been received. She expects the bill will not exceed \$3,000.00. A check for \$4,520.00 was written to TK1 Solutions for our yearly maintenance contract and for work done on the outdoor routers. A check for \$451.00 was written to Swank Movie Licensing for our yearly contract allowing us to show movies. A check was written to Barbara Iannetti for \$660.00, which represents 1/4 of her yearly health insurance payment.

No unusual expenses were noted.

A motion for a resolution to pay the bills, including PSEG, not to exceed \$3,000.00, was made by Susen Edwards 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 2021 Monthly Budget Report was provided to Board Members. Negative balances appear in Adult Acquisitions, Contingency, Internet/Technology and Library Supplies. At present, we have a surplus of \$83,807.04, much of which is remaining in Salaries due to our Children's Librarian's maternity leave.

Circulation Report

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

All numbers are on track for the month. Circulation is up in all categories. RB Digital and Libby/Overdrive (magazine subscriptions) numbers are up.

Meeting room usage continues to be down due to Covid and flooding of the Community Room. Meeting Room A and the Community Room are open for Borough and Library group meetings but closed to outside groups.

Director's Report

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

1. The broken window in the back of the Library should be repaired in the next few days. Vertical glass panels matching Room A's windows will be installed.
2. Director George announced that the Borough Business Administrator and insurance adjustor are handling the funds needed to repair the Community Room. In the meantime, another box of foam flooring will be ordered and installed. A cleanup of the room will be done over the holiday.
3. A part-time temporary Children's Librarian has been hired and has fit in seamlessly. She and Director George have decided no special children's events will be scheduled until they can be held outdoors.
4. Two part-time circulation staff have been hired. They, too, have fit in seamlessly with the staff and patrons. Both have excellent technology skills. The Library is now fully staffed. Everyone is working well together, and morale is high.
5. A problem occurred with a patron who insisted on having her mail forwarded to the Library. Director George spoke to a postal investigator who said we are allowed to note "return to sender" on any mail received. So far, so good.
6. An incident occurred where a boy wrote graffiti on Library walls. The police brought the boy home to his parents. His father came to the Library the following day, apologized for his son, and offered to pay for the damages. All has been cleaned and returned to normal. The boy has not returned to the Library since the incident.
7. President Benson read a letter of resignation, effective December 31, 2021, from Maureen Donohue, Children's Librarian, who has moved out of state. Director George will advertise the position in-house in early January. If no suitable candidate comes forward, the position will then be publicly advertised.
8. Director George would like to offer a staff development training on January 21, 2022. Prepare, Inc. has a program on communication and boundary setting that can be held in-person or on

Zoom. The cost is \$1,500.00 for sixteen-twenty participants. She would like to follow it with a one-hour stress reduction Zoom workshop. All Board members were in favor.

9. Meeting rooms will continue to be closed to outside groups at least through early 2022. The Community Room and Room A will remain open for Borough committees and Library groups.
10. Director George mentioned a patron came in, masked, but told the staff he had Covid symptoms. She asked the Board if, in the future, we can ask symptomatic patrons to leave. The Board felt it is not worth the risk to allow them to use the facility. Board Attorney, Ed Johnson, agreed.
11. The Nightmare Before Christmas drive-thru program was a huge success with 325 attendees. No other special events will be scheduled at this time. The Library will continue to follow the school's lead on masking procedures.
12. The Adult department is flourishing. Walk-up/pick-up continues to be popular.
13. Social media platforms continue to be active with daily postings. Adult Zoom programs are also popular, with many 30-50-year-olds participating.

Committee Reports

Beverly Weber indicated she will send something to an employee who has been out on extended sick leave.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President Susen Edwards reported a Zoom program on decluttering for the holidays was presented by Jamie Novak on December 5 and was well-received.

The Friends plan to host at least two Zoom programs for Spring, 2022. She hopes to book Richard Veit, son of Mary Ann Veit, for a program on shipwrecks. Once the Community Room is repaired or once the weather becomes warm, the Friends will host a chair yoga program.

Unfinished Business

Nothing has been done on the personnel policy update.

President Benson gave Board members a revised schedule for 2022 holidays and Board meetings. The Board agreed to schedule the February 2022 meeting on Tuesday, February 15.

A 2022 Proposed Budget was given to members. Increases in Adult Acquisitions, Contingency, Internet/Technology, Library Supplies, Maintenance Supplies, Public Programs, Salaries, and Water

were noted, as well as a decrease in Membership/Dues/Training. Overall, the budget has increased by \$38,500.00.

State Aid and funds from the Borough will increase in 2022, but we still face a shortage of \$13,059.00.

Barbara Ferris made a motion to adopt the 2022 Budget. Melissa Fedosh seconded the motion. All were in favor.

New Business

President Benson presented the slate of nominations for 2022 Officers: James Benson, President; Emily DeScenza, Vice-President; Susen Edwards, Secretary; Melissa Fedosh, Treasurer. He then opened the floor for nominations for each position. No additional nominations were received. Officers will be voted on and installed at the January 2022 meeting.

Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. 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, January 10, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
December 15, 2021

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