

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on January 9, 2023

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Middlesex Library Board of Trustees was held in the Community Room of the Library on Monday, January 9, 2023. James Benson, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:06 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- Barbara Ferris, Member At Large
- X Beverly Weber, Member At Large
- X Dina Healey, Member At Large
- X Dave Oliver, Representative of the Mayor
- X Christine George, Library Director

Nominations and Elections

President Benson reminded the Board that nominations were held at the December 2022 meeting. The 2023 slate is made up of current officers. He asked for nominations from the floor. As there were none, President Benson asked the Secretary to cast one vote for the existing officers.

As Board Attorney, Edward Johnson was not present, President Benson swore in Barbara Ferris as a new Board member.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting(s)

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on December 12, 2022, was made by Dave Oliver and seconded by Beverly Weber. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson announced that he has appointed committee members for 2023. Very few changes have been made from the prior year.

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 that the December payments to Barbara Ferris, Chrissy George, and two payments to MedicZero were approved at the December meeting but did not appear on the December payment roster.

A check for \$129.51 was paid to Clare Levourne for planting supplies. Clare and employee Holly Muller are volunteering their time and talent to improve the landscaping around the Library.

No other unusual expenses were noted.

A motion to pay the bills was made by Dina Healey 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.”

An end of year (2022) Monthly Budget Report was provided to Board Members. The Library Supplies, Maintenance Contracts, Magazines and Newspapers, Social Security, and Adult Acquisitions accounts are in negative territory. We closed the year with a surplus of \$79,167.14, due in great part to personnel changes. The Library can retain up to twenty percent of the budgeted amount for the year (\$693,500.00). We are well below that threshold.

Director George also provided Board members with a Monthly Budget Report for January 2023. Very few payments have been made to date.

Circulation Report

Director George gave the circulation report for January 2023. See the Circulation Report for details.

Total Circulation rose in December. Hoopla numbers are down but Overdrive and Overdrive Magazines are up significantly. Computer usage continues to be strong.

Meeting room numbers are not as large as before Covid, but we are seeing a gradual increase in usage and attendance.

Director's Report

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

1. The handicapped entrances have been repaired.
2. Vestibule lighting is still an issue.
3. We are working on bringing old computers to the Recycle Center.
4. We are waiting for DPW to install Aunt Flow dispensers in restrooms.
5. Director George listed her 2023 Director's Goals including more outreach in library associations and in the Borough. She wants to delegate more to staff and to encourage more staff development. She also wants to focus on accessibility in the Library.
6. Children's Librarian Kaila Ward reported the Tiny Art Show was a huge success. She plans to run the program again this summer. She is doing a lot of community and professional outreach.
7. Reference Librarian Mary Toole reported patrons are doing a lot of printing. The staff is getting creative with privacy roadblocks. "Read 23 Books in 2023 and Get a Library Tote" has generated a lot of interest.
8. Theresa Bond reported on outreach, Zoom and in-person programming, and monthly displays.
9. Finally, Director George acknowledged the amazing, friendly, helpful staff who have created a positive warm environment. "It's a joy to come to work," she said.

Committee Reports

Beverly Weber asked if anyone knew of someone needing a cheer basket from the Sunshine Committee. Director George reported one employee had Covid over the holidays. Another employee is recovering from broken ribs and will return to work once she receives permission from her physician.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President Susen Edwards reported that she and Chrissy George hosted a program on January 7, 2023, entitled "Readings." Susen read from her recently published novel and Chrissy provided mini-tarot card readings. Susen sold copies of her novel and donated a portion of the sales (\$35) to the Friends.

Friends Treasurer Beverly Weber provided Board members with copies of the Friends Winter/Spring 2023 newsletter. Six programs will be held between February and April.

Unfinished Business

There was no Unfinished Business.

New Business

President Benson asked the Personnel Committee to complete the Director's Annual Review before the February meeting.

Director George provided Board members with a list of 2023 Library Goals/Projects. See the list for details. She reported progress has been made on the Personnel Policy and hopes to have a preliminary document in March. Staffing issues, security, building maintenance, implementing a Master Procedures Manual, and other policies and procedures are noted.

Director George also provided Board members with the latest correspondence from the NJ State Library Association.

Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 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, February 13, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
January 10, 2023

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