

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on March 13, 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, March 13, 2023. 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 (attended via Zoom)
- 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
- Dina Healey, Member At Large
- X Dave Oliver, Representative of the Mayor
- X Christine George, Library Director

Before beginning the meeting, President Benson asked for a moment of silence to remember part-time employee, Kristy Garcia, who passed away on March 10.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting(s)

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on February 13, 2023, was made by Dave Oliver and seconded by Susen Edwards. All were in favor.

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous Executive Session held on February 13, 2023, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Emily DeScenza. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson led a discussion of what the Board should do to mark the passing of Kristy Garcia. Kristy's sister has organized a GoFundMe page to help pay for the funeral. Rather than make a donation to GoFundMe, which takes 2.9% of each donation, Director George suggested we collect our donations and give a money order and sympathy card directly to the family. Beverly Weber suggested we use \$50 from the Sunshine Fund to add to the Board members' donations. All were in agreement.

There were no other 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 that two checks (\$350.00 and \$203.84) were issued to Approved Fire Protection Co. One check covered the cost of the inspection of the sprinkler system. The second was for the inspection of the fire extinguishers.

A check to Demco in the amount of \$879.98 was issued to replace two book carts.

Two checks, each in the amount of \$350.00, were issued to Fire Control Electrical Systems. One covered the annual inspection of the fire alarm system. The other covered a service call.

A check to TK1 Solutions in the amount of \$12,420.00 covered our annual service contract with the tech support company.

Foster Town Plumbing & Heating was paid \$390.00 to unclog a sewer line back up in the Community Room.

The check written to LMxAC in the amount of \$3,510.00, was to replace a check issued last month that got destroyed in the mail. Because this was a reissued check, the adjusted total of expenses for the month came to \$27,577.50.

Amazon Capital Services was paid \$881.43 for new lightbulbs in the Children's Room.

No other unusual expenses were noted.

President Benson asked for approval of Resolution 2023-04 to pay the bills. 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.”

The Monthly Budget Report for March was provided to Board Members. Director George noted the Library is not purchasing as many DVDs as in the past. Demand is down. She is considering using more of the funds in Digital Media for eBooks. Everything is on track for the year.

Circulation Report

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

Total Circulation for the month is up significantly from 2022. New users are also up from 2022.

Internet usage has seen a large increase from 2022.

Meeting room numbers are up. The Borough is using the Community Room for meetings. Adult/Friends programs for the month hosted an estimated total of 124 attendees. Twenty-two Children’s programs were held in February with an estimated total of 242 participants.

Director’s Report

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

1. A work-order is in for PSE&G to install parking lot lights on the Community Room side of the building at no expense to the Library.
2. Elite and DPW discussed updating the outdoor “awning” lighting. Elite’s quote is much too expensive. DPW is looking for an alternate solution.
3. HVAC contractors have been in for preliminary paperwork. The equipment is still on order.
4. Tax forms are finally available for patrons.
5. East Brunswick Library is temporarily closed for repairs.
6. PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) boards have been installed. The response from the community has been very positive.
7. The Library owns a total of 55,987 books. Adult and children’s circulation have both increased significantly from 2022.

8. The Mayor and Council have been very supportive after the loss of Kristy Garcia. Director George has arranged for a grief counselor to be available for staff during this difficult time.
9. Children's Librarian, Kaila Ward has been hosting several "out of the box" programs for kids. She has also started a teen cafe which meets in the Maker Space.
10. Reference Librarian, Mary Toole continues to remind patrons that we do not offer tax advice. She directs them to the AARP representative at the Senior Center.
11. Theresa Bond reported she is receiving a lot of positive feedback on our 2023 reading incentive program. She continues to run several Zoom programs and keep the community up to date on social media.

Committee Reports

Beverly Weber asked the Board if anyone was in need of a cheer basket. None are needed currently.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President Susen Edwards reported that the Friends hosted two programs in February and one in early March. On March 26, they will be hosting their first musical program since programming resumed in Fall 2022.

Unfinished Business

President Benson and Director George have worked on Section 21 of the Personnel Policy revision. They hope to complete the document by the end of May.

New Business

Director George reported the Makerspace Policy has not yet been amended.

President Benson will send a letter to the Library staff expressing condolences from the Board on the passing of Kristy Garcia.

Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. on a motion made by Melissa Fedosh and seconded by Barbara Ferris. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, April 10, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
March 15, 2023

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