

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on November 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, November 13, 2023. 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's public bulletin board.

Roll Call of Members

X – Represents member present at meeting

- X James Benson, President
- 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
- Erin Gomez, Representative of the Superintendent of Schools
- X Dave Oliver, 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 October 9, 2023, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Dave Oliver. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson reported that the Legacy Lawn ceremony held on Saturday, November 11, 2023, was a moving and joyous community event. More than 150 people attended the event. He thanked Director George and the Library staff, the speakers, and everyone who made the day possible.

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 two reimbursement checks: Holly Muller (\$113.55) and Maureen Ferretti (\$512) had been approved at the October Board meeting.

A check in the amount of \$613.53, paid to NJ American Water, was for expenses accumulating since July 2023. The company had not been sending bills for that account.

Fosbre Town Plumbing was paid \$190 for repairs to a Community Room toilet. Fosbre was also paid \$1,265 for a new hot water heater.

Kermizian Carpets was paid \$1,000 for replacement carpet in the children's room.

Apex Media was paid \$2,311.70 for the Legacy Lawn signs.

No other unusual expenses were noted.

Susen Edwards moved to accept Resolution 2023-13 authorizing payment of all claims. Melissa Fedosh seconded the motion. 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 November was provided to Board Members. Director George noted several supply categories are in negative territory. She adjusted these line items for 2024 to reflect inflationary price increases. She also noted that our annual audit may increase to \$3,000 in 2024. Expenses for Legacy Lawn were taken from the Public Programs account.

Circulation Report

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

Adult circulation numbers have increased for October, while juvenile circulation has decreased as students return to school. Total circulation is up significantly from 2021 and 2022. Overdrive and Overdrive Magazine numbers continue to rise. Director George noted that she is still adding money into Hoopla, as patron interest continues to increase.

Meeting room attendance has more than tripled since September. Children's program and Adult/Friends attendance has also increased significantly.

Director's Report

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

1. No more flooding has occurred since the new HVAC system has been installed. A problem exists with the sensor in the Community Room. Installers are due at the Library tomorrow to examine the sensor.
2. The HVAC system is installed and running in the children's area, but a defect was spotted upon delivery. New parts are on order but won't be received until January.
3. JRC is replacing exhaust fans on the old HVAC system at a cost of \$2,259.50.
4. The Legacy Lawn project has 116 participants. Over 150 attended the event on November 11. It was a special and moving day for our town.
5. Barbara Iannetti has passed away. She worked at the Library from 1964 - 2014. Services will not be held until April 2024.
6. Director George outlined plans and costs to redo the staff room. Melissa Fedosh moved to accept the cost of new furniture (approximately \$2,185.99). Barbara Ferris seconded the motion. All were in favor.
7. Kaila Ward, Children's Librarian, reported Fall programs have been well-received. Over 300 patrons dropped in for our Halloween program. Drop-in programs continue to be popular.
8. Mary Toole, Adult Reference Librarian, reported the Library's Rolling Reads program for home-bound patrons has added a few new customers.
9. Theresa Bond reported that patrons enjoy the displays in our display case. This month, local artist Ted Ferfecki's paintings are displayed. Social media continues to be active.

Committee Reports

Beverly Weber will send a sympathy card to Barbara Iannetti's family.

There were no other committee reports.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, reported the Friends have scheduled a Latin pop/jazz concert for Sunday, November 19. Two holiday programs are scheduled in December.

Susen mentioned patrons sign up for events and don't show. It appears some have signed up for every program on the schedule and never show up. Others attend without signing up. She asked the Board their opinion on continuing the sign-up procedure. It was noted that drop-in children's programs have been well-received, and perhaps the Friends sign-up procedure is limiting attendance. The Board agreed to dispense with signing up.

Unfinished Business

The HVAC update was given in the Director's Report.

New Business

President Benson mentioned two appointments will expire at the end of 2023: Dave Oliver (Mayor's Rep) and Jim Benson. Both Board members want to continue on the Board. President Benson will speak to Mayor Elect Jack Mikolajczyk regarding the appointments.

Board members were given the 2024 Holiday and Meeting Schedule. Director George noted the second Monday in November 2024 is Veteran's Day. She suggested moving the meeting to Monday, November 18. Melissa Fedosh moved to adopt the schedule. Dina Healey seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Public Discussion

There was no public discussion.

Executive Session

Dina Healey moved to exit the regular meeting and move into Executive Session. Susen Edwards second the motion. All were in favor.

Once back in regular session, President Benson read Resolution 2023-14, which adjusts salaries for several staff members. Melissa Fedosh moved to adopt Resolution 2023-14. Dave Oliver seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m. on a motion made by Dina Healey and seconded by Melissa Fedosh. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, December 11, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
November 14
, 2023

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