

Middlesex Public Library  
1300 Mountain Avenue  
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on December 11, 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, December 11, 2023. James Benson, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:01 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
- X Emily DeScenza, Vice President
- 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 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 November 13, 2023, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Dave Oliver. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson reported that he will be sending an email to Board members asking for nominations for officers for 2024. Dave Oliver's and Jim Benson's terms will expire at the end of 2023.

Both have requested to continue as trustees. He also announced that the audit has been completed and no problems were found.

### 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 checks to LL Flooring (\$541.59) and Bob's Discount Furniture (\$2,155.99) were for the staff room update and were approved at the November Board meeting.

Scalzo Maintenance was paid \$858.33 for a deep cleaning to the Community Room area and staff room.

Apex Media was paid \$104.25 for additional Legacy Lawn signs.

Several checks were written to LMxAC. The check for \$1,179.00 was for Hoopla and the check for \$3,661.75 was for Overdrive.

No other unusual expenses were noted.

Dave Oliver moved to accept Resolution 2023-15 authorizing payment of all claims. Emily DeScenza 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 December was provided to Board Members. Director George mentioned most categories list final numbers for the year. Salaries, Utilities, and possibly Hospitalization may have additional expenditures. The Restricted Funds Account is depleted. The money was used for new flooring and furniture for the staff room.

### Circulation Report

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

Overall circulation numbers have decreased for November but are still up from 2022. The Library was closed for three holidays during the month, which has an impact on circulation. ILLs In and Out are steady.

Hoopla and Overdrive numbers continue to be strong. More patrons are reading magazines on Overdrive Magazines. Computer usage is up for the month and up significantly from prior years.

Attendance at Adult/Friends programs is strong, due in great part to the Legacy Lawn ceremony.

### Director's Report

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

1. A problem still exists with the thermostat or sensor in the new Community Room HVAC system.
2. Three issues were found during our recent fire inspection: batteries were needed in two exit signs and missing ceiling tiles will need to be replaced. DPW is handling the problems.
3. Painting of the staff room will take place on December 18. Delivery for the flooring and furniture is expected the following day.
4. The Legacy Lawn signs will stay up through Monday, December 18.
5. A group of YouTubers conducted a "First Amendment Audit" and posted the video of our Library along with other libraries on YouTube. We are monitoring our social media pages for comments on the video.
6. Problems exist with our current newspaper service. We cannot pay with a check or get a human on the phone.
7. College students will be returning to the Library to help with a number of projects.
8. Some discussion has taken place with the OEM regarding using the Community Room as an emergency shelter. Director George has no further information at this time.
9. A patron stole the override key to the copy machine from behind the circulation desk. He was caught on camera. Police went to his home to retrieve the key. The Library chose not to press charges, but has banned him from the premises until further notice.
10. Kaila Ward, Children's Librarian and Mary Toole, Adult Reference Librarian, both reported their departments continue to be busy and popular.
11. Theresa Bond reported that patrons enjoy the displays in our display case. She continues to keep busy with social media and community programs.

### Committee Reports

A discussion took place regarding whether the Board should plant a tree in Barbara Iannetti's memory. Information is located on the funeral home's website.

There were no other committee reports.

### Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, reported the Friends have their final 2023 program, a holiday concert, scheduled for December 20. On Thursday, December 14, the Friends volunteers will have a business meeting at 1:30, followed by a holiday party at 2:00. She invited Board members and Library staff.

Susen gave Board members copies of the Winter/Spring 2024 Friends Newsletters. Seven programs are scheduled for the season.

### Unfinished Business

Outside awnings should be installed the week of December 18.

### New Business

Director George gave Board members a copy of the 2024 Proposed Budget, which has been reviewed by the Finance Committee. Salaries had initially been increased to \$410,000, but she felt the amount should be increased to \$417,000. Dina Healey moved to approve the 2024 Budget. Dave Oliver seconded the motion. All were in favor.

### Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

### Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m. on a motion made by Dina Healey and seconded by Dave Oliver. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, January 8, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards  
Secretary  
December 12, 2023

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