

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on January 8, 2024

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 8, 2024. 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
- X Melissa Fedosh, Treasurer
- X Susen Edwards, Secretary
- 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

Nominations and Elections

President Benson called for nominations from the floor for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. With no nominations received, President Benson asked the Board to accept the current slate of officers for 2024. All were in favor. The officers for 2024 are: James Benson, President; Emily DeScenza, Vice President; Susen Edwards, Secretary; Melissa Fedosh, Treasurer.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting(s)

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on December 11, 2023, was made by Dave Oliver and seconded by Emily DeScenza. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson announced that he and Beverly Weber will be celebrating forty years on the Library Board of Trustees in 2024.

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 \$9,900.00 check to Jersey Shore Awning will be paid by the Borough using HUD money. The payment to PSE&G should read \$2,422.65, not \$5,752.77 as printed on the report. Jersey Shore Painting Plus should read Jersey Painting Plus.

4imprint, Inc. was paid \$1,136.21 for mugs for our promotion, "Read 24 Books in 2024." WT Cox was paid \$2,641.56 for newspaper subscriptions for 2024.

No other unusual expenses were noted.

Susen Edwards moved to accept Resolution 2024-01 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 January was provided to Board Members. Director George noted the Contingency Fund has only spent \$480, not \$10,380, as the Borough is paying Jersey Shore Awning. The correct balance in this account is \$19,520. Magazines and Newspapers is in the negative (\$1,721.56) as WT Cox was paid for newspapers for the entire year.

An End of Year Report for 2023 showed a surplus of \$56,692.24.

Circulation Report

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

Overall circulation numbers have decreased for December but are still up from 2022. The Library was closed for 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. LMxAC has changed the way they report Overdrive Magazines. Director George asked the Board to disregard the inaccurate number of 116.

Fines were up for the month as one patron paid a \$50 fine.

Attendance at Adult/Friends programs is strong, due in part to the Borough using the Community Room. Attendance at Children's programs received a boost from the Taylor Swift Eras party.

Director's Report

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

1. Automated Controls have identified a problem with the new HVAC system.
2. DPW has begun working on items noted in the recent fire inspection.
3. The staff room has been painted and new flooring has been installed. New furniture will arrive on January 11. Many thanks to John Greenwald who donated his time to install the floor.
4. New awnings were installed on January 3.
5. College students home for the holidays have cleaned out Meeting Room C, and have begun work on Room B.
6. WT Cox has taken over our newspaper service beginning February 2. They do not provide the *Courier News* or *Star Ledger*.
7. The patron who stole the override key to the copy machine from behind the circulation desk was mailed a letter banning him from the Library. We have received confirmation that the letter has been received.
8. We have been having problems receiving and sending mail. The problem may be due to the mail processing machines at the post office.
9. CRASE—Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events—four sessions to be held this week and next, are mandatory for Borough and Library employees.

10. In the six months since we have had a notary public, we have earned \$115.

11. Staff morale continues to be high.

12. Kaila Ward, Children's Librarian and Mary Toole, Adult Reference Librarian, both reported their departments continue to be busy and popular.

13. Theresa Bond continues to keep active with social media and community programs.

Committee Reports

Susen Edwards reported the Personnel Committee conducted a performance review for Director George. Prior to tonight's meeting the Committee met with her to discuss the report. Director George continues to do fantastic work in her position. We are fortunate to have her as our Director.

President Benson mentioned the performance review form we are currently using needs to be revised.

Beverly Weber has sent cheer baskets to two employees who have been injured. A tree was planted in Barbara Iannetti's memory. Beverly also requested Board members contribute to the Sunshine Fund at our next meeting, noting contributions are voluntary.

There were no other committee reports.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, reported the Friends will have their first program, a flute concert, on Sunday, January 21. Their second program, A W.A.S.P. Takes Wings will be held on Wednesday, February 7, and is in memory of Ann Bruggner, who served in WWII. Susen also mentioned she donated two cases of used handbags to the Senior Center. The Friends have more than a dozen cases of handbags which they would like to donate. Melissa Fedosh and Dina Healey gave suggestions for charities that might accept donations.

Unfinished Business

Now that the outside awnings have been installed, we can begin looking for a company to install outdoor lighting.

New Business

Board Members were provided with a list of 2023 Goals. Many have been accomplished, notably the installation of outdoor security cameras, a new security system, and the completion of a personnel

manual. The Library has also revitalized and grown a strong volunteer program with teens and MHS Key Club. No flooding has occurred since the new outdoor drainage system was installed. President Benson mentioned he met with Union reps regarding a new contract and proposed salaries and holidays.

President Benson read Resolution 2024-02, establishing a reserve fund for Library facility improvements. Dave Oliver moved we add \$50,000 to the account. Beverly Weber seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MIDDLESEX PUBLIC LIBRARY
RESOLUTION 2024-02
ESTABLISHING A RESERVE FUND FOR LIBRARY FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

WHEREAS, the Middlesex Public Library Board of Trustees (“Board”) has undertaken an analysis of the capital improvement needs of the Middlesex Public Library (Library”); and

WHEREAS, the Board has identified several capital improvement expenses that are necessary for the overall improvement and enhancement of the library facility; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that these improvements will contribute to the provision of efficient and effective library services to the public, and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined it is necessary to restrict certain capital funds to provide for future Capital Projects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Middlesex Public Library Board of Trustees that the amount of \$50,000.00 be and is hereby restricted for the completion of the Capital Projects.

Approved: January 8, 2024

Public Discussion

One member from the public attended the meeting, but there was no Public Discussion.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 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, February 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
January 9, 2024

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