

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on March 11, 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, March 11, 2024. James Benson, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:04 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 (attended via phone)
- 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
- 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 February 12, 2024, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Dave Oliver. All were in favor.

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous Executive Session held on February 12, 2024, was made by Susen Edwards and seconded by Dina Healey. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson introduced Council liaison to the Library, Michael Conahan, who was in attendance.

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 \$2,947.08 check to Central Jersey Security Camera was payment for additional security cameras (now totaling sixteen) and should be billed to our contingency account. The second check to Central Jersey Security Camera is for our yearly monitoring fee. The \$2,366.15 payment to Baker & Taylor is broken down as follows: \$1,184.33 for Juvenile Acquisitions and \$1,181.82 for Adult Acquisitions. The \$5,379.80 check to PSE&G is for two months. No other unusual expenses were noted. Total expenses for the month are \$15,781.60.

Dave Oliver moved to accept Resolution 2024-05 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 March was provided to Board Members. Director George reminded Board members that Magazines and Newspapers is negative (\$1,721.56) as WT Cox was paid for newspapers for the entire year. The monthly cost for hospitalization has increased from \$3,542.86 to \$4,403.12. Everything else is on target for the year.

Circulation Report

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

The Circulation Report shows a large increase in February in both adult and juvenile circulation. ILLs In and Out are strong. Hoopla numbers have gone up. LMxAC has a new way of calculating Overdrive numbers and as such, cannot be compared to months prior to January 2024. Total circulation for the month has increased over 400 from 2023.

Meeting room attendance at Adult/Friends and Community programs is strong. Twenty-two children's programs were held in February with an overall attendance of 215.

Director's Report

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

1. Problems with the HVAC system occurred after fire alarm testing and have been repaired.
2. Central Jersey Security Cameras has installed five additional cameras which will cover current blind spots.
3. TriStarr Electric has quoted \$643.71 for new outside lights and replacement of the timer clock. We are waiting for clarification on costs for children's lighting and landscape lighting.
4. Once again, plumbing issues have occurred in the Community Room and Children's Room. The plumber recommends removing all seat cover and sanitary product dispensers.
5. We are waiting for a quote to repair the outside automatic main entrance.
6. Problems have been occurring with delivery of the *New York Times*. Many weeks we only receive delivery on four days.
7. We are limiting patron printing to a maximum of 50 pages per person per day.
8. The DVD project will be completed within a week or two. Labels have been changed allowing us to send DVDs through ILL.
9. A meeting is scheduled for March 22 for the History Room project. Scanning documents is underway and should be completed by mid-April.
10. Staff Appreciation Day is scheduled for May 15. Two tiny horses are coming as well as the Scream Truck.
11. Kaila Ward, Children's Librarian announced that Tinker Tuesday drop-in programs are popular. A Bad Art Party was hosted for teens/tweens and was well received. She also held an Oreo Taste Test party. A NASA Space Ambassador will come soon to educate children in grades 3-5 about the upcoming eclipse.
12. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian, reported that the Library is becoming a catch-all for services not offered elsewhere. She and other staff members have learned to set firm boundaries to protect the privacy of the Library, staff, and patrons.
13. Theresa Bond continues to keep active with social media and community programs. Her new promotion, "Read Twenty-four Books in 2024 and Receive a Middlesex Public Library Mug," has begun. She hosted a book display for Black History Month in February, as well as an exhibit of historic photos of Middlesex Borough.

Committee Reports

President Benson reported that the Board member who had been hospitalized is now home. Beverly Weber will deliver a care basket from the Sunshine Committee.

There were no other committee reports.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards reported that the Friends will host a guitar concert on Sunday, March 24. Susen will host a memoir writing workshop on Wednesday, April 10.

An incident occurred at the Friends program on Sunday, March 3. A guest at the program became disruptive, interrupted the speaker, and appeared to disturb and frighten the other guests. After using inappropriate language, Friends volunteer, Bob Edwards, asked the man to watch his language. The man swore at Bob. Susen tried calming him to no avail. The police were called but stayed outside. The man calmed down until the end of the program when he once again became disruptive. The police were summoned back. Remaining guests and volunteers were asked to wait in the building until the police arrived. Susen has written an incident report, and we are waiting for the police report.

The Friends must obtain liability insurance to take advantage of a \$4,000 grant from the Arts Institute of Middlesex County. Susen has been in touch with the Borough and JIF to see if they can be added to the Borough's liability insurance policy. Councilman Michael Conahan spoke in support of the Friends and indicated the matter would be taken up by the governing body at the Council meeting on March 12.

Unfinished Business

Dave Oliver and Director George have discussed a five-year plan for the Library including future technology, building, and grounds needs. Their priority is to add more capital funding to upgrade technology as necessary, improve lighting in the children's area, and look at possibly purchasing automatic entrance doors and upgrading to locks that can be scanned. Their goal is to monitor what will become obsolete and what might need replacing.

Director George reviewed amendments to the Policy Document including, confidentiality, video surveillance, technology, and Library sponsored programs. We need to wait for advice from TK1 on the technology policy before approval. Beverly Weber moved to accept the confidentiality, video surveillance, and Library sponsored programs policy amendments. Susen Edwards seconded the motion. All were in favor.

New Business

There was no new business.

Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

Executive Session

Dave Oliver moved to exit the regular meeting and move into Executive Session. Dina Healey seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 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, April 8, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
March 12, 2024

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