

Middlesex Public Library  
1300 Mountain Avenue  
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on June 10, 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, June 10, 2024. 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
- 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
- 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 May 13, 2024, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Susen Edwards. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson brought Board members up to date on the situation concerning Director George and Councilman Jeremiah Carnes. Mayor Jack Mikolajczyk, along with the Borough attorney and Borough labor attorney, has sent a communication to Mr. Carnes stating that Mr. Carnes shall have

no contact with any Borough department heads, specifically Chrissy George, Library Director; Leonard Vidal, head of DPW; and Caroline Benson, CFO. The three department heads are working with an outside attorney to further investigate the matter.

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 the check written to Everything Branded USA Inc. in the amount of \$905 has been canceled. The check was to cover the cost of sunglasses given out at Community Day, but the order had not been processed. Sunglasses were purchased at a lower cost through Amazon. A \$380 check written to Foster Town Plumbing and Heating was to cover the cost of repairing the backed-up sewers two months ago.

Three checks have not been cut but have been included on the statement, including a check to Blinds To Go for \$791.42 (window treatments for the History Room), a check to Chrissy George for \$336.12 (miscellaneous reimbursable expenses), and a check to Clare Levourne for \$74.10 (public program).

Dina Healey moved to accept Resolution 2024-09 authorizing payment of all bills including the three additional checks mentioned above. 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 June was provided to Board Members. Staff computers have been purchased but no bill has been received, accounting for \$3,000 currently remaining in Capital Funds. As the Report was submitted prior to the end of the month, three categories—Digital Media, Memberships/Training, and Public Programs—need updating. Director George will send an updated Report to members.

### Circulation Report

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

The Circulation Report shows a drop in Adult and Juvenile circulation. Director George believes the drop is because no new items have been purchased since May 14. This is due to the updating of the

computer system through LMxAC. All digital media numbers are strong and well ahead of the prior month, giving us a total circulation for May at 6,037, which is a significant increase from 2023.

The drop in Current Total Users is incorrect, most likely due to the changes to our computer system. Director George suspects the fines for the month are inaccurate as well.

No Children's programs were held during May, but Library Sponsored Adult Program attendance is at 204, more than double the attendance in May. Much of the attendance is attributed to Staff Appreciation Day.

### Director's Report

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

1. The door build has been awarded to Automatics Unlimited.
2. New bike racks have been ordered.
3. The History Room is nearing completion.
4. Staff Appreciation Day for the Borough took place on May 15 and was a great success.
5. We are holding off on hiring a temporary summer Library assistant.
6. The system update from SIRSI to Polaris is progressing. Patrons are understanding, and employees are "going with the flow." Systems are down from June 3 through June 13. Thursday, June 13, the new system will go live.
7. Community Day was a huge success. We gave out 300 pairs of sunglasses and 75 bags. The History Room garnered a lot of excitement. Page Vincent Pileggi won the rib-eating contest for the Library!
8. LMxAC is changing its name to STELLA—Sharing and Technology Enhancing Local Library Access.
9. The Board discussed the possibility of moving utility payments from monthly checks to ACH debit payments directly from our bank account, with blanket Purchase Orders being approved to cover several months in advance. President Benson asked the Board to approve purchase orders for PSEG and NJ American Water. All were in favor. We hope to make the change for the second half of 2024. Additionally, the Board is considering moving certain recurring bills, which are only payable with credit cards (such as Microsoft Office) to ACH debit payments/blanket purchase or-

ders. Presently, Director George uses her credit card for these bills and is then reimbursed. With expenses increasing, it would make it less of a burden to her.

10. Kaila Ward, Children's Librarian, sent a video about the Library to elementary classes. She has received a number of positive responses from children who watched the videos. Registration for summer programs has begun. Rather than register for all summer programs, she is doing individual program registration three weeks prior to events. This move will decrease the number of people who register and do not show up for programs. Fifty teens have volunteered to help during the summer.

11. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian, reported that the Summer Reading Program will run from July 8 - August 16. Gift card prizes for book reviews will be given out every two weeks. Afternoon movies will be shown on July 8 and August 5.

12. Theresa Bond continues to keep active with social media and community programs. The Shade Tree Commission has a display informing residents of changes to tree removal. Two Zoom programs are scheduled: Paint and Sip (July 8) and Zentangles (August 5).

### Committee Reports

Beverly Weber from the Sunshine Committee asked if any Board members knew of someone needing a care basket. Fortunately, no one replied.

There were no other committee reports.

### Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards reported that the Friends had a tent at Community Day on June 8. Due to the location, their tent was not as well attended as the prior year, but volunteers gave out many flyers for Fall events. Free children's books were given out and some adult books were sold. The Friends took in \$85.

Three new volunteers helped at the event.

Susen thanked Councilman Conahan who connected the Friends with Positive Solutions who created a beautiful flyer for the Friends' Fall jazz series.

### Unfinished Business

The outdoor lighting is still on hold. The update on the Automatic Doors/HUD Grant was discussed during the Director's Report.

### New Business

The payment of utility bills was discussed during the Director's Report.

Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

Executive Session

Dina Healey moved the Board enter Executive Session. Susen Edwards seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m. on a motion made by Dina Healey and seconded by Barbara Ferris. All were in favor.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards  
Secretary  
June 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.**