

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on November 18, 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, November 18, 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 Courier News, 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
- Barbara Ferris, Member At Large
- X Beverly Weber, Member At Large
- X Dina Fomataro, 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 14, 2024, was made by Dave Oliver and seconded by Beverly Weber. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson announced the existing officers would like to continue in their positions for 2025. He will call for nominations from the floor at our December meeting. The terms of two Board of Trustee members, Emily DeScenza and Beverly Weber, will expire in 2025. Both have indicated

they wish to continue. President Benson contacted the Mayor about renewing both terms and the Mayor agreed.

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 \$270.00 was paid to Central Jersey Security Cameras for an update on security settings. They are also looking at how to adapt the security system to our new doors.

No Amazon bill was included on the statement. We are still running on open credit with the company.

There were no other unusual expenses.

Melissa Fedosh moved to accept Resolution 2024-16 authorizing payment of all bills. Susen Edwards 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 Internet/Technology is \$18,131.86 in the red due to the new computers, printers, software, and contracts. Magazines and Newspapers is \$1,959.22 in the red. This category will be cut next year due to increasing costs and decreasing interest and supply of print media. Maintenance Contracts is \$717.29 in the red due to a large number of repairs.

Under Capital Funds, we overestimated the costs to upgrade to tempered glass windows. A large surplus remains. We have an outstanding bill for HVAC repairs, which will decrease our remaining balance.

Everything else is on target for the year.

Circulation Report

Director George gave the circulation report for November. Our numbers are on par for the month. See the Circulation Reports for details. A few issues still need to be ironed out but she finally has numbers for ILLs In and Out, which gives us numbers for Total Circulation.

Hoopla and Overdrive numbers are strong.

Two Children's Halloween programs were held in October, which brought children's attendance for the month to 506. Adult/Friends attendance is also high.

Director's Report

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

1. Apollo Glass has reinforced the middle seams of tempered glass windows in the main section of the Library.
2. Central Jersey Security fixed the IP and security issues with our security system.
3. The new doors are working well after an electrical surge caused a problem.
4. Both the new and old HVAC systems are in good working order. Repairs have been paid for from Capital funds.
5. Legacy Lawn signs are displayed, and we hope to keep them on the property until December 11.
6. New computers are still being configured. Director George is looking into switching from Microsoft Office to Open Office. She is waiting for feedback from TK1.
7. A new catalog Chromebook will be installed on Wednesday.
8. The Library received many compliments at a recent Town Hall meeting.
9. Kaila Ward, Children's Librarian, reported that Halloween programs were successful with over 150 attendees. Teen volunteers are doing an amazing job. She is currently planning programs for winter and spring.
10. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian, reported that movies will be shown in the Community Room the second Thursday of each month. Joshua Szulczewski conducted a Trivia program. He has planned another program on Sunday, December 8.
11. Theresa Bond continues to keep active with social media and community programs. "Read 25 Books in 2025" will offer a choice of a mug or tote for a prize. Zoom programs continue to be popular. In the display case she will feature information from 2003 when the Children's Room addition was built and first opened.

Committee Reports

The Finance Committee has been working on the 2025 budget.

Beverly Weber from the Sunshine Committee read a thank you letter from an employee who received a care basket after the loss of a family member.

There were no other committee reports.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, reported that the Friends had one of their all-time best jazz concerts on November 17. More than 50 people attended the two-hour program. The final jazz concert is scheduled for December 15 and features Charu Suri, a pianist who combines Eastern and Western jazz traditions.

Unfinished Business

No progress has been made on the roof repairs. HVAC repairs have been completed. Director George announced that the annual audit has been completed and everything is in good shape. At present she only has the electronic version which she will email to Board members.

New Business

Director George presented the proposed 2025 Budget, Salaries, and Holiday/Board Meeting Schedule to Board members.

Adult Acquisitions, Electric/Gas, Water, Library and Maintenance Supplies, and Membership/Dues/Training, and Salaries will increase due to rising costs. Hospitalization is proposed to decrease by \$17,000 due to Director George not taking health benefits.

Director George hopes to add a full-time librarian at some time in the future to manage the Circulation desk and the Reference desk.

Salaries will increase by 3% in 2025 as agreed to in the CBA.

Despite the increase in expenses, the Proposed Budget shows a surplus of \$25,272.00.

The Board reviewed Library holidays and Board meeting schedule. Dina Fomataro moved to approve the holiday and meeting schedule for 2025. Melissa Fedosh 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 8:10 p.m. on a motion made by Dina Fomataro and seconded by Melissa Fedosh. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, December 9, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
November 19, 2024

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