

Middlesex Public Library  
1300 Mountain Avenue  
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on May 12, 2025

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Middlesex Library Board of Trustees was held in the Community Room of the Library on Monday, May 12, 2025. 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
- 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 Fornataro, 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 April 14, 2025, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Barbara Ferris. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson announced that Councilman Michael Conahan will no longer be working with the Recreation Committee, which will allow him more opportunity to attend our meetings.

He also announced the opening of the History Room on June 16 and asked for clarification from Director George, Councilman Conahan, and the Board as to whether the History Room is considered a Library project. All agreed it is.

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 was reimbursed \$186.13 for a website fee which must be paid by credit card.

A new laptop was purchased for Kaila Ward-Merritt in the amount of \$704.49. A check for \$1,809.59 was paid to Penworthy for adult acquisitions. The bill was for 2024 purchases. Demco was paid \$326.06 for security strips.

Director George announced that all utilities are now on automatic pay. This includes New Jersey American Water, Public Service, and Verizon. She also noted that two current Verizon bills are duplicated at \$269.80. This may be an error and is currently pending.

There were no unusual expenses for the month.

Susen Edwards moved to accept Resolution 2025-08 authorizing payment of all bills. Dave Oliver 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.”

Director George provided Board members with the Monthly Budget Report for May 2025. All accounts are in good shape.

#### Circulation Report

Director George gave the circulation report for May. Once again, Total Circulation for the month is up significantly from the prior two years. See the Circulation Report for details.

ILLs In and Out are nearly even. Internet usage is strong. Fines showed an uptick as several patrons paid for lost books.

Children’s and Adult/Friends program attendance is strong and significantly higher than 2024.

#### Director’s Report

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

1. We are holding off on replacing blinds and shades for now.
1. A bulk trash pickup is scheduled for Friday. The Makerspace has been cleaned out as well as other areas of the Library.
2. The Library is conducting a safety audit. Webinars will be available for staff in a variety of areas. Employees are reminded to document everything.
3. The Volunteer Fair on May 3 was a huge success.
4. Katrina has received her degree and began working as a full time Reference Librarian today.
5. The Library will close early on Thursday, May 15 for a staff meeting.
6. The History Room will have its grand opening on June 16, at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room.
7. Kaila Ward-Merritt, Children's Librarian reported that many fun and educational programs were held during April. At the Volunteer Fair twenty-three teens signed up to volunteer at the Library. Preparations have begun for summer reading and other programs.
8. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian, reported that she is preparing for the adult summer reading program. Movies will be shown in the Community Room every other Thursday during the summer. She also noted that many patrons have asked for assistance in obtaining Real IDs.
9. Theresa Bond continues to host in-person and Zoom programs, and shares events, new books, and other Library information on social media. Thirty-two people have registered for a Brush Lettering program on May 19.

### Committee Reports

There were no Committee Reports

### Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, reported that Vic Lennard, a visiting Brit, has once again offered a free guitar program for the Friends in the Fall. Historical re-enactor, Carol Simon Levin, has created a program on Margaret Bourke White and has offered to perform for free in the Fall.

The Friends did not spend the entire \$4,000 in grant money from the County in 2024. The County has offered to fund two musical events in the Fall to spend down the funds. Susen will be meeting with the County later in the week.

### Unfinished Business

Director George reported she will get pricing for outdoor/children's room lighting later this week.

### New Business

Director George reported that our two teen pages will be leaving for college soon. She would like to hire three pages to replace them and asked the Board if that would be possible and also to bring the new pages in for training before the current pages leave. Each page works six hours per week at minimum wage. The Board agreed to her proposal.

### Public Discussion

Councilman Mike Conahan thanked Director George and the Library for all the work done for the Volunteer Fair. At the Mayor and Council meeting on May 27, Beverly Weber will be honored as a Pillar of the Community. Jim Benson will be honored as a Pillar on July 15.

### Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m. on a motion made by Dina Fornataro and seconded by Dave Oliver. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, June 9, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards  
Secretary  
May 13, 2025

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