

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on June 9, 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, June 9, 2025. James Benson, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 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
- X 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
- X 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 May 12, 2025, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Barbara Ferris. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

There were no 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.

The Contingency Fund was debited \$2,094.03 for an Amazon Capital Services purchase of two laptops and other supplies for the History Room.

TK1 Solutions was paid \$3,320.00 to update Library hot spots. Kaila Ward-Merritt attended the American Library Association conference in Philadelphia and was reimbursed \$465.00.

Director George noted that we receive three Verizon bills each month (phone, fire alarm, and internet) but because they are not billed concurrently, anywhere from two to four bills will appear on our monthly statement. Two identical bills appeared in May, which Director George noted were bills from March and April.

Katrina Perry, our newest librarian, has asked to attend an ALA webinar on book repair. The fee is \$79 and does not appear on the June statement. The Board approved the additional expense.

There were no unusual expenses for the month.

Melissa Fedosh moved to accept Resolution 2025-09 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.”

Director George provided Board members with the Monthly Budget Report for June 2025. She mentioned that due to increasing water costs, the Water Service budget will be increased in 2026. More than \$20,000 of the budgeted \$25,000 has already been spent for Maintenance Contracts. Director George noted that the bulk of those expenses are paid early in the year.

Circulation Report

Director George gave the circulation report for June. 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. Director George plans to put more money into our Hoopla account in July, which is the beginning of the fiscal year for Hoopla.

Meeting room attendance jumped to 416, in part due to attendance at the May Volunteer Fair. Children's and Adult/Friends program attendance dropped for the month. The Friends have finished their spring programming and fewer children's programs were held.

Director's Report

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

1. A bulk trash pickup was done last week. A significant amount of decluttering has been done throughout the building. Next on the agenda is a clean out of the small meeting rooms.
2. Katrina Perry is now working as a full-time Reference Librarian and doing a fantastic job.
3. All but two staff members attended the May 15 staff meeting. Brainstorming resulted in new ideas on how to refine procedures.
4. Several applications have been received for the three Pages positions.
5. The History Room will have its grand opening on June 16, at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room. Work is nearly done on the project.
6. Earbuds are now being provided to patrons who do not have their own. This will eliminate disruption from videos watched on our public computers.
7. Kaila Ward-Merritt, Children's Librarian reported that preparation is being done for our Summer Reading program. The theme is "Color Our World." The children's room has received much-needed TLC. Clifford, our therapy dog, will be on hiatus through the summer as his mom recovers from a medical procedure. In his place will be Falkor, another trained therapy dog.
8. Kaila also noted that the Library is working with the Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Preschool coordinator to become more integrated with the school system. A new preschool program, "Books and Blankets," is planned.
9. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian, reported that she is also preparing for the adult summer reading program, "Color My World." She plans to focus on various areas of art and creativity.

Committee Reports

Beverly Weber asked if anyone is in need of a care basket. Director George mentioned a staff member will be undergoing surgery in the next week.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President, Susen Edwards, announced the Friends will have a table at the Cultural & Arts Committee Craft Supply Swap in the Community Room on June 28, from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm. The Friends will begin programming again in September. She also noted a first: a belly dancer has been booked for January 2025.

Unfinished Business

There was a question as to whether the outdoor lights are owned by PSEG or the Borough. We have learned they are owned by the Borough. President Benson can now meet with Binsky and Snyder regarding an update to the lights.

New Business

Beverly Weber reminded Board members that President Benson will be honored as a Pillar of the Community at the Borough Council meeting on July 15. President Benson congratulated Beverly who was honored as a Pillar at the Council meeting on June 3.

Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m. on a motion made by Dina Fornataro and seconded by Melissa Fedosh. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, July 14, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
June 11, 2025

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