

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on November 10, 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, November 10, 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
- 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
- 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 13, 2025, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Dave Oliver. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

President Benson thanked Emily DeScenza, Board Vice-President for running the October meeting. He also thanked the Board for their cards and well-wishes during a recent health situation.

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 Library is ordering books from Amazon as Baker & Taylor has gone out of business. \$4,977.93 was spent on adult acquisitions and \$1,585.74 on juvenile acquisitions. These amounts reflect back orders. Amazon will be used at least until the end of the year. Included in the Amazon payment was \$1,063.27 for internet and software. This amount includes a new printer and other tech supplies.

A \$10,838.30 check was written to Baker & Taylor. The amount is for back billing.

While we are using Amazon for our book orders, plastic book covers are being ordered from Demco.

There were no unusual expenses for the month.

Dave Oliver moved to accept Resolution 2025-15 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 November 2025. Everything is on track for the year. A second page listing a detailed account of Capital Funds was provided to Board members. Director George indicated this will become a regular feature of the Monthly Budget Report.

Circulation Report

Director George gave the circulation report for November. Numbers are down slightly for October, which follows a national trend. Despite half of the Juvenile collection still boxed up due to construction, the numbers are still very positive. Hoopla and Overdrive numbers both rose this month. Once again, Total Circulation for the month is up significantly from the prior two years. See the Circulation Report for details.

Attendance at Adult/Friends and Children’s programs is strong.

Director’s Report

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

1. Flooring is all that is left to be repaired after the July 14 flood. The contractors are expected on November 12.
2. New, more waterproof baseboard will be installed next week. The Boro will cover the cost
3. The insurance claim for the flood repairs is in process.
4. The staff is returning books to the shelves. Once the books are back and carpet repaired, the Juvenile section will reopen.
5. A new hot water heater has been installed in the Community Room at our cost.
6. Someone has been dumping their recyclables into our bins. They have been warned and will be fined if it happens again.
7. STELLA is working on a group discount for Brodart and Ingram who will eventually replace Baker & Taylor.
8. A police report has been filed for an altercation at the Reference computer area.
9. Legacy Lawn signs are going out today.
10. Kaila Ward-Merritt, Children's Librarian reported programming has been thriving with a mix of regular and special events. Patrons enjoy dropping in vs. pre-registration. The staff is unboxing Juvenile fiction books.
11. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian, reported that Moms Helping Moms has set up a box to collect school supplies, clothing, and canned goods. Movies are now being shown two Thursdays each month in the Community room.
12. Theresa Bond reported that Chip/Bag clips will be the reading incentive "prize" for 2026. Workshops and Zoom programs continue to be popular with patrons. Middlesex artist, Ted Ferfecki, has a display of local points of interest. Theresa continues to share library information through social media.

Committee Reports

There were no Committee Reports.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President Susen Edwards noted that three Friends programs are being offered in November, one of which is funded through a 2024 Middlesex County Grant. Vic Lennard, a visiting musician from England, has offered his talent for free on November 30.

The program on Margaret Bourke White, originally scheduled for October 15, was canceled due to illness. It has been rescheduled for Wednesday, January 28.

Susen will have Winter/Spring newsletters for Board members at the January 2026 meeting.

Unfinished Business

Elite Electric has received the contract for outdoor lighting. They have sent pictures of what will be installed.

New Business

Board members were provided with a 2026 Proposed Budget for informal discussion. Director George will email Board members a detailed explanation of each line item.

Public Discussion

A mom and regular visitor to our Library spoke to the Board about a book she found in the Children's section. She was concerned about the age limits on the book and felt it was inappropriately placed. Director George thanked her for coming forward and advised her to follow the procedures for material reconsideration in our Collection Development Policy.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. on a motion made by Dina Fornataro and seconded by Barbara Ferris. All were in favor.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, December 8, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
November 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.