

Middlesex Public Library  
1300 Mountain Avenue  
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on October 13, 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, October 13, 2025. Emily DeScenza, Board Vice-President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Announcement of Compliance with Open Public Meeting Law

The Vice-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

- 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 September 8, 2025, was made by Beverly Weber and seconded by Dave Oliver. 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.

Director George noted that \$26 was paid to Discount Magazine Subscription Service for *Consumer Reports*, the one magazine patrons continue to ask for. Suplee, Clooney & Company have completed our 2024 audit and have been paid \$3,000.

Two checks were written to Stella: \$3,000 and \$3,685.28. These checks cover our quarterly payment to Stella and our quarterly assessment for digital media.

Director George also noted two bills that were approved at our September meeting: Katrina Perry was reimbursed \$122.33 for office supplies, and Kaila Ward-Merritt was reimbursed \$159.21 for office and programming supplies.

Baker & Taylor has gone out of business. At this time, Adult Acquisitions are being purchased through Amazon. We also now need to directly order *Kirkus Review*, *Publisher's Weekly Review*, and *Library Journal*. These publications had been sent free through Baker & Taylor. Cengage Learning continues to supply our large print books.

There were no unusual expenses for the month.

Melissa Fedosh moved to accept Resolution 2025-13 authorizing payment of all bills. Barbara Ferris 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 October 2025. Everything is on track for the year. Most of the funds for Internet/Technology have been spent, but she anticipates no major expenses for the rest of the year. Due to rising costs, more money will be allocated to Maintenance Contracts in 2026.

## Circulation Report

Director George gave the circulation report for October. Numbers are down slightly for September, which follows a national trend. Children are back to school and much of the children's area has been closed due to flooding. Hoopla and Overdrive numbers are strong. Once again, Total Circulation for the month is up significantly from the prior two years. See the Circulation Report for details.

Considering that the Community Room has been closed for repairs, attendance for adult and community-led programs was strong. No children's programs were held in September.

### Director's Report

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

1. The hot water heater broke on September 12 and flooded the Community Room. DPW immediately came to the rescue, cleaned and deodorized the area in three hours. Other than the backing on some Children's Room bookcases stored in the Community Room, there was no significant damage.
2. Walls and bookshelves in the Children's Room have been repaired and replaced.
3. Most of the work in the Community Room has been completed. The room is usable but restricted for "free grazing" children's programs until work is fully complete.
4. The three new pages have been a tremendous help during the construction process.
5. Baker & Taylor has closed after nearly 200 years in business. Ingram and Brodart will hopefully take over. Director George hopes to connect with them in 2026. In the meantime, books are being ordered from Amazon. Library staff is putting plastic covers on the books as Amazon doesn't provide this service.
6. Kaila Ward-Merritt, Children's Librarian reported that despite construction issues, the Children's Room has stayed active. Fall programming is off to a strong start. She has special "spooky" October programs scheduled.
7. Kaila also mentioned the 3D printer is being used daily and generating interest from both children and adults.
8. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian, reported that movies will be shown in the Community Room on Thursday afternoons. Water and light refreshments will be served. She also has several adult Zoom programs scheduled.
9. Theresa Bond has sent out the Fall Newsletter. She has created a display of books by Hispanic authors for National Hispanic Heritage Month. Next week the display will feature thrillers and horror books for Halloween. She continues to share library information through social media.

### Committee Reports

Director George alerted the Finance Committee that she will soon be working on the 2026 budget.

### Friends of the Library Report

The Friends have returned to the Community Room for programming. Friends President Susen Edwards thanked the Library staff for their support during construction. Their next program will be a historical re-enactor as Margaret Bourke White, one of Middlesex's most famous residents, on Wednesday, October 15.

The Friends have a busy schedule this season. Two presenters have offered their programs for free. Two additional programs are being funded through remaining funds from a 2024 Middlesex County Grant.

### Unfinished Business

There was no Unfinished Business.

### New Business

Vice-President DeScenza presented Resolution 2025-14 Authorizing the Purchase and Installation of Improved Lighting Equipment for the Interior of the Library. The Board has received three quotes and will accept the quote from Elite Electrical Installations for \$11,955.00.

Dave Oliver moved to approve Resolution 2025-14. Melissa Fedosh seconded the motion. All were in favor.

### Public Discussion

Councilman DeScenza sat in for Councilman Conahan. He announced the Council is working on the 2026 Borough budget.

### Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

### Adjournment

Prior to adjournment, Board Member Dave Oliver announced he will be resigning as he is moving to Bridgewater. He has been asked to stay on the Board until the end of the year.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 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, November 10, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards  
Secretary  
October 14, 2025

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