

Middlesex Public Library
1300 Mountain Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting on February 9, 2026

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Middlesex Library Board of Trustees was held in the Community Room of the Library on Monday, February 9, 2026. 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 January 12, 2026 was made by Dave Oliver and seconded by Susen Edwards. All were in favor.

Reports of Officers

Treasurer Melissa Fedosh reported that the Library is one account short to participate in Unity Bank's U-Care, a program that can provide us with a small amount of extra income.

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.

Scalzo Maintenance was paid \$799.00 for a deep cleaning of the Library. Demco was paid \$945.73. Included in this bill were book covers and security strips.

A yearly subscription of \$136.99 to School Library Journal will help us determine quality books to order. Baker & Taylor had provided this service in the past.

Director George noted that a check was written to Approved Fire Protection totaling \$2,475.34. This amount covered four inspections: sprinklers, alarm, back flow, and extinguishers. She also mentioned that we are continuing to order books as well as other supplies from Amazon.

JIF has sent a check for \$39,344.03 to cover repairs done by All Risk and Allstate. Rather than issue a check to the Borough it has been deposited in our account, meaning we will pay All Risk and Allstate directly. Our total amount spent is \$41,182.36, which is \$1,838.83 higher than the JIF reimbursement. This information needs to be included in the February Payment of Bills.

Additionally, Director George explained Modern Marketing has quoted \$2,323.34 for Summer Reading giveaways. The Library would like to book a six-week program, "Magic of Make Believe" for \$1,350.00 for the summer. Both these amounts need to be approved by two Board Officers. All three officers in attendance: Emily DeScenza, Melissa Fedosh, and Susen Edwards approved.

There were no unusual expenses for the month.

Melissa Fedosh moved to accept Resolution 2026-2 authorizing payment of all bills. Dina Fornataro 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 Board also received a Monthly Budget Report for February 2026. Everything is on target for the year.

Circulation Report

Director George gave the circulation report for January 2026. Overall circulation numbers are high for the month compared to past years, especially considering the weather and snow closures. See the Circulation Report for details.

Only three children's programs were held in January. Attendance was strong for Community programs. Adult/Friends programs were on par with 2025.

Director's Report

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

1. The water fountain has been removed from the Library.
2. New lighting has been installed in the Children's room. The next step is to get a quote for matching lights in the Library.
3. Scalzo has completed a deep cleaning. Director George will meet with them next week for a quote on a monthly cleaning. She has purchased a mopping Roomba for the Community Room.
4. DPW did a bulk pickup to help declutter the Library. The next step is to declutter the smaller meeting rooms and the Community Room kitchen.
5. We will continue to order books from Amazon.
6. The HDMI cable from the wall in the Community Room is broken. We need to wait until the Borough renews their contract with TK1 before the work can be done. In the meantime, we have a portable projector without sound.
7. Kaila Ward-Merritt, Children's Librarian reported the space has been upgraded with a vibrant new rug and child-sized beanbag chairs. She has nearly finalized the summer presenter lineup.
8. Mary Toole, Reference Librarian, reported that the movies for adults shown two Thursdays each month is slowly gaining popularity. Patrons have begun requesting paper tax forms.
9. Theresa Bond reported that she has been working with Katrina on a Blind Date with a Book program. The reading challenge for 2026 is "Read 13 Books and Get a Chip Clip" or "Read 25 Books and Get a Mug or Tote Bag." The book display for the month is a display of Black authors. She continues to share events and news on social media.

Committee Reports

Beverly Weber asked if anyone was in need of a cheer basket. None were needed at this time.

There were no other Committee Reports.

Friends of the Library Report

Friends President Susen Edwards reported that the Friends have been approved for a \$4,000 grant for programming in 2026. The money will go toward a series of “Oldies” concerts.

On Sunday, February 15, author Kevin Woyce will present a program on the history of Valentine’s Day.

Unfinished Business

The Children’s lighting and bulk pickup were discussed in the Director’s Report. Director George plans to meet with our custodian to discuss weekly and monthly cleaning scheduling as well as organizing regular deep cleaning.

New Business

Joe DeScenza, the new Borough Council liaison reported that the Council has approved \$35,000 for outdoor sprinklers for the Library grounds and suggested allocating more money for water in our budget. He assured the Board that next year the Borough will provide the Library with holiday lights and decorations.

The Council is working on renewing the contract with TK1 Solutions. Mr. DeScenza promised to do what he can to support the Library.

Public Discussion

There was no Public Discussion.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 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, March 9, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susen Edwards
Secretary
February 11, 2026

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