

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
May 14, 2019
Eastern Branch Library

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Brian Boms, Nancy Grbelja, Mary Ann Musich, Christina Requa, and Frank Wells, also present Director Judi Tolchin and Assistant Director Heidi Amici

Absent: Commissioner Grace Abramov and Freeholder Lillian Burry

Guests: Muriel Smith, Publicity Consultant

The meeting convened at 11:16 am.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of Tuesday, May 14, 2019 with the following statement:

“The Library Commission has complied with the regular requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act by giving written notice to the Press and County Clerk’s Office and by posting on the Library web page the date, time, and place of the meeting.”

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

Chairperson Renee Swartz gave a few minutes for review of the meeting minutes from April 9, 2019. Opportunity was given for additions, corrections, and suggestions.

A Motion to approve the open public meeting minutes of April 9, 2019 was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Brian Boms. Nancy Grbelja abstained. Motion Approved.

A Motion to approve the closed executive session minutes of April 9, 2019 was made by Christina Requa and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. Nancy Grbelja abstained. Motion Approved.

State and National Report

Chairperson Renee Swartz stated, prior to the scheduled June Monmouth County Library Commission Meeting, she will be attending a national meeting for the Center for the Book.

The Center for the Book in each state, along with the Library of Congress, held a Letters about Literature program where students in grades four through twelve submitted letters stating the effects that literature has had on them. From the submissions received in New Jersey, winners were chosen in three separate age categories. The participants and winners will be honored at an event held on May 15, 2019. The first and second place winners will be invited to attend the

national meeting in Washington, D.C. with the winners from every state. From the state level winners, a national winner and runner up will be chosen.

Headquarters Renovation Update

Project Status

Director Judi Tolchin provided an update on the Headquarters renovation project. Bid proposals have been received from Settembrino Architectural Design and Spiezle Architectural Group. These bids have been evaluated by the Monmouth County Department of Engineering along with a selection team that rated, scored, and awarded a contract. Settembrino Architectural Design received a score of 1325 and Spiezle Architectural Group received a score of 1150. The contract has been awarded to Settembrino Architectural Design at a cost not to exceed \$52,505.56. This amount will be posted to the Capital Account. A kick off meeting will be held on the architectural elements; focusing on ceiling, lighting, demolition, and reconstruction. When the design elements come forward, the Monmouth County Library Commission will provide input at that time. Settembrino Architectural Design will also be presenting on the restroom renovation at the meeting. The restroom renovation is a separate project awarded under a separate contract.

The New Jersey Public Library Construction Fund Act sent a grant survey for libraries to complete. Judi has completed and submitted the survey for the Headquarters Library, stating a renovation project amount of \$3,000,000 to complete. A copy of the survey has been sent to all of the branches for completion and submission for information pertaining to each individual branch. Heidi Amici will coordinate notifying the member libraries of the survey, if they would like to submit a response.

A Two Rivers Times article written about the Headquarters renovation was cited. The article stated the renovation was underway and noted the technology updates being made. Judi extended a thank you to the newspaper for the wonderful article.

Judi, along with the New Jersey Library Association, went on advocacy visits to discuss library funding, restoration of state aid, and the impact of the minimum wage increase on libraries and their budgets. Additional advocacy visits have been scheduled in the coming month.

Financial Report

April Financials - Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, Grant Budgets

Director Judi Tolchin submitted the April 2019 Financial Report to the Commission, including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets wherein the 2019 detail budget account charged year to date is \$2,973,879.99 posted to the approved budget of \$16,985,000; this total includes encumbered amounts. As of April 30th, the salary and wage line items have been 31% expended. The reserve budget includes \$1,143,896.70 unexpended in remaining 2018 funds; remaining will go into the fund balance. The remaining capital account for the renovation in the amount of \$1,497,000 has an available amount of \$1,485,770.84 as of April 30, 2019. These funds are reserved for the completion of the adult library and the lobby. The Capital Account for the Eastern Branch ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) ramp was included in the summary for informative purposes only, as the project

is not managed by the library. A pre-meeting has been held to discuss the project. The Grant Fund Accounts reflect amounts used for the Career Connections Grant.

A Motion to approve the April 2019 Financial Report including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Christina Requa. Unanimously approved.

Voucher Approval

The Murray Paving and Concrete invoice in the amount of \$10,984.95 is still pending. Judi has reached out to Stewart Fife of Library Interiors about the updates and information needed by the County prior to the processing of the invoice. This will be brought forward at the next Monmouth County Library Commission Meeting.

The Nickerson delivery and invoice have been received. The invoice is in the amount of \$33,276.60. The items received in delivery are primarily the circulation and reference desks. These items are in pieces and will require assembly. Stewart Fife of Library Interiors has assured the library and the Commission that if any materials are missing or damaged, he would obtain replacements and build the items.

A Motion to accept and approve the voucher for payment in the amount of \$33,276.60 to Nickerson was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Brian Boms. Unanimously approved.

Director's Report

Director Judi Tolchin stated during the Food for Fines program approximately \$4,400 in fines was forgiven. She is waiting to hear from Fulfill of Monmouth and Ocean Counties on exactly how much food was donated. In April, \$19,300 was deposited in fines and photocopies.

The New Jersey Department of Labor, in conjunction with the New Jersey State Library, has discontinued the Career Connections Grant as of June 30, 2019. On behalf of the Commission, Judi expressed a desire to send a summary letter outlining the library's successes to the New Jersey Department of Labor.

An update on the Eastern Branch sculpture was provided. The artist has received the deposit and can now purchase the stone materials. Once the stone has been received, an approximate weight and dimensions of the sculpture will be submitted. The Monmouth County Library Commission will need to select the desired location for the sculpture. A suggestion was made to set a target date of completion for the sculpture in November in conjunction with Veteran's Day. Judi researched the availability of a military band for performance in November and they will not be in the area again until approximately 2020. A suggestion was made to look into the availability of the New Jersey National Guard band or the 78th Divisional band from Fort Dix. The Commission suggested coordinating with the artist to establish a formal target completion date so preparations for a sculpture unveiling program can begin. Judi will reach out to him after the meeting. The committee assembled to select the sculpture location will try to meet next month with Building and Grounds to discuss possible sites, make a selection, and define the work necessary.

A thank you was extended to the Commissioners for submitting their financial disclosure statements.

Automatic doors have been installed at Headquarters making both main entrance doors fully accessible. A thank you was extended to Robert Compton, Division of Buildings and Grounds Superintendent and the Buildings and Grounds team.

Judi met with a sales representative regarding defibrillators. Information pertaining to employee training requirements is needed from the County. The potential costs will be for the initial purchase of the devices as well as annual required maintenance and training costs. Judi will touch base again with Freeholder Lillian Burry regarding the information she has received so far and the potential for setting up a presentation. As a public building, the Commission suggests considering the devices and the general security of the building. A concern was raised that library staff members are highly mobile from branch to branch and it would create some difficulty ensuring a trained staff member was on site at all times at each location. The discussion will be tabled until next month.

The New Jersey State Library Leadership Academy met at the Headquarters and Holmdel branches. It was a lovely event and they were very thankful to the library.

At the end of May the IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) will be awarding the Monmouth County Library with a plaque for supporting them and providing meeting space.

Assistant Director's Update

Assistant Director Heidi Amici stated the LEAP (Library Equal Access Program) equipment has been delivered to the Headquarters Library. The equipment provided includes iPads, laptops, monitors, and a computer for assisted learning. This program is in conjunction with the New Jersey State Library and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The Monmouth County Library Headquarters location is one of eleven libraries in the state of New Jersey to participate in this program. This program will offer assistance and learning in the use of these different devices. Currently, the program is new at Monmouth County Library and will grow to a full program launch in the near future. The Commission would like to extend an invitation to Congressman Chris Smith to attend the full program launch.

The library is looking to purchase new computers for all of the branches and members. Currently, Heidi is gathering pricing and software licensing information while Judi is researching funding. They anticipate obtaining approximately three hundred computers at an estimated cost of \$300,000. Purchasing for all locations simultaneously aids in maintaining consistency between all of the branches and members. A meeting is scheduled to be held next week with a sales representative and Heidi will report back to the Commission at the next scheduled meeting.

Heidi is working with the Department of Public Works to purchase a new van. She stated they have been supportive and helpful during this process.

Joan Moss from the Programming Department provided Heidi with a copy of a welcome packet that is distributed to new homeowners in certain areas of the county. Included within the folder is a small flyer about the library. A suggestion was made to consider adding to the flyer that is provided to offer more information to new members of the community.

An update was provided on the Verizon bill reduction process. Heidi is still working with County Purchasing. The County Information Technology Department has been supportive during this process. The current Verizon contract has been extended for six months while Heidi continues to work through the process.

A thank you was extended to Tara Lovrich, Manalapan Township Administrator, for her work in obtaining free cable at Headquarters. This will allow staff to better assist patrons when they encounter issues when attempting to connect to the library from home by allowing the staff to mimic what the patron is seeing. Heidi has a goal of obtaining this service for the Eastern branch as well.

Publicity Report

On May 22nd, a Spring Lake Heights senior group will be making a monetary donation to the Monmouth County Library for the purchase of large print books and other items that they specify. The amount being donated is unknown at this time.

The Friends of the Library group at the Atlantic Highlands branch have purchased new furniture for the library. Both the library and members of the community are excited for this update. Muriel stated she is amazed by how many children utilize the Atlantic Highlands branch and desires to interview some of the children, with parent permission, about why they enjoy coming to the library.

Muriel stated a letter written to the editor has been submitted to newspapers for print. The letter was about Alex Trebek, host of the television game show Jeopardy!, stating he obtains a lot of his information from the children's library.

Renee Swartz extended a thank you and commended Muriel Smith on a job well done on publicizing the library.

A suggestion was made to present to the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders on the population increase in Monmouth County and its effects on the library.

A suggestion was made to consider a local school band for the sculpture unveiling event to bring the community together.

In the past, the Monmouth County Library Commission liked to see three large literary events held annually. They would like to see a resurgence of this by having kick-off events to multiple days of programming relating to a specific topic. By extending events across multiple days, more members of the public will be able to attend. It was suggested to talk about this more at the next meeting held in June.

Closed Executive Session

A Motion to adjourn to closed executive session to discuss the Library's Collective Bargaining Agreement, other personnel issues and contracts as permitted by the Open Public Meetings Act was made by Brian Boms and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

The Commission adjourned to Closed Executive Session at 12:28 pm. Chairperson Renee Swartz departed the meeting at this time.

A Motion to resume regular session was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Christina Requa. Unanimously approved.

The Commission resumed the regular session at 12:55 pm.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 at the Headquarters Library at 11:00 am.

Scheduling of Closed Executive Session at Next Meeting

A Motion to schedule a Closed Executive Session at the next meeting on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Christina Requa. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

The meeting concluded at 12:56 pm.

Submitted by Kimberly Conover