

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
December 10, 2019
Headquarters Library

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Grace Abramov, Brian Boms, Barbara McMorrow, and Mary Ann Musich; also present Freeholder Lillian Burry, Director Judi Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici

Absent: Commissioners Nancy Grbelja and Frank Wells

Guests: Meghan Bennett, Special Counsel; Christopher Marion, Deputy County Administrator; Muriel Smith, Publicity Consultant; Pat Findra, Children's Coordinator; Kim Avagliano, Eastern Branch Manager; Robyn Miller, Headquarters Branch Manager; Rachael Scalise, Branch Services Librarian; Laura Migliore, Public Relations Coordinator; Veronica Stevens, Young Adult Programming Coordinator; Karen Nealis, Holmdel Branch Manager; Stephanie Laurino, Colts Neck Branch Manager; Joan Moss, Public Relations; Beth Stamp, Friends of the Monmouth County Library President

The meeting convened at 11:18 am.

Director Judi Tolchin opened the meeting of Tuesday, December 10, 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.

Director Judi Tolchin greeted everyone in attendance and introduced Chairperson Renee Swartz.

Chairperson Renee Swartz thanked Judi and stated how proud she is of the outstanding efforts put forth by library staff. 2019 saw great strides in the development of the library as the heartbeat of the community. Renee thanked Freeholder Lillian Burry for her strong support of the library. Renee recognized the members of the Monmouth County Library Commission for their service and dedication to the library. Renee thanked Director Judi Tolchin for her outstanding leadership and involvement in the state-wide library community. Renee acknowledged Assistant Director Heidi Amici for her hard work and efforts in keeping the library's technology innovative and moving forward. A thank you was extended to all of the library's department heads for their innovation and creativity, keeping the library moving and keeping the patrons coming back day after day. Thank you to the Friends of the Monmouth County Library and their efforts in advancing programs. Thank you to the Master Gardeners. Thank you to all that support us and make us proud of the services we provide at the library. Renee extended a thank you to Muriel Smith for being a public face of the library.

Judi stated she is truly fortunate to have such a great team. She extended a thank you to the Commissioners for their dedication and is grateful for the wonderful department heads present here today. They bring all their efforts forward to make this library great. A thank you was extended to Kim Conover for her work on the Commission meeting minutes each month. A thank you was extended to Branch Manager's Karen Nealis and Stephanie Laurino. Judi thanked Beth Stamp and the Friends of the Library for all that they do. A thank you was extended to Freeholder Lillian Burry for her constant support and Judi is truly grateful for all that she does. A final thank you was extended to Muriel Smith.

Department Head Reports

Presentations were made by: Heidi Amici, Assistant Director; Pat Findra, Children's Coordinator; Kim Avagliano, Eastern Branch Manager; Robyn Miller, Headquarters Branch Manager; Rachael Scalise, Branch Services Librarian; Laura Migliore, Public Relations Coordinator; and Veronica Stevens, Young Adult Programming Coordinator.

Heidi Amici, Assistant Director, acknowledged the hard work and dedication of the entire staff. She began by stating that the biggest failure she saw this year was the new van purchase is still in process. She will continue to work with County fleet services to finalize this purchase. One of the biggest projects for 2019 was launching a new library webpage. The new webpage has increased accessibility, visibility, usability, and created quicker access to information. The e-Books and e-Audiobooks remain popular among patrons. Heidi touched on the cost differences between physical books and e-books, as the cost of maintaining e-books is much higher. Over 100,000 holds were placed on items throughout the year. Three of the most popular databases this year were Ancestry, Valueline, and Lynda.com. The Monmouth County Library partnered with the New Jersey State Library to bring the Library Equal Access Program (LEAP) to the Headquarters library; this program offered assistance and learning with various devices to those residents 55 and older with visual impairments. New microfilm machines were purchased this year that offered more extensive scanning options. The wireless usage at both the Headquarters library and the Eastern branch increases monthly. The Ethernet Virtual Private Line (EVPL) service at the Headquarters library will be installed soon. The way people are using the library is changing; access to power outlets is crucial. Heidi is looking forward to changes that will come with the continuing Headquarters renovation.

Pat Findra, Children's Coordinator, oversees children's services at all of the branches and member libraries. This year has seen many challenges and changes in both programming and staffing deficits. The flexibility and creativity of staff made everything possible to ensure success in continuing to provide programs and services to the community. Two new staff members are anticipated in the Children's department in January 2020. Durnethia Rich took over the role of Children's Administrative Assistant and has been a tremendous asset to the department. Programs and attendance for 2019 exceeded that of last year. Programming ages were restructured to make it easier for families to attend. The Children's department was able to maintain programming at all 26 branches and member libraries. Programs included crafts, puppet shows, magic shows, yoga experiences, author visits, lego building, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) projects, reading to therapy dogs, movement and dance activities, cupcake and cookie

decorating, movies, and so much more. Maker's Day 2019 was a creative learning success with 1,400 patrons in attendance. Beanstack was used again for Summer Reading and the theme this year was a Universe of Stories. The app and website made it easier for patrons to sign up and log books. 3,014 children signed up to participate in summer reading, earning prizes and a special sweet treat coupon. A thank you was extended to all staff for their flexibility and generosity. Pat is hopeful for next year and looking forward to new faces and talents joining the department.

Kim Avagliano, Eastern Branch Manager, stated the library is a place where members of the community can gather to read, learn, discover, and explore. The Eastern branch partners with a great number of community groups by providing regular meeting space, displaying information and materials, and promoting community events. The library continues to offer programs, such as films, literature and poetry series, book discussions, author visits, and job and career assistance. The library runs a First Friday for seniors program aimed at providing free and unbiased information to the community on issues that impact their daily lives. Each April, a volunteer recruitment fair is held at the Eastern branch where organizations from around the County can meet with those that are interested in getting involved. The Friends of the Monmouth County Library have been instrumental in supporting library programming. The Friends support musical performances, art and history lectures, restorative yoga series, bridge lessons, craft workshops, and more. Our patrons love to create and through a survey conducted at the library they expressed an interest in having more hands-on arts and crafts programs. The library plans to increase their offerings in the coming year. The children's reading room continues to be a busy and popular place, offering story times and special programming. The Eastern branch ended this year with a salute to veterans, featuring patriotic music, the local boy scouts, and a key note speaker. The Eastern branch was a large staff training location and saw many new staff before they moved on to their assignments at other branches. The library was featured in the news this year thanks to the efforts of Muriel Smith and the library's new microfilm readers were featured in the PBS Legacy List series.

Robyn Miller, Headquarters Branch Manager, thanked Director Judi Tolchin and Assistant Director Heidi Amici for all of their support and their open door policy during her first year at the Headquarters library. The reference department saw the retirement of Judith Wolt. The Library Equal Access Program (LEAP) was a success offering services to those that were age 55 and over with visual impairments. The State Library provided devices such as iPads and computers, along with a trainer to work directly with the patrons. Robyn has tried to look around the library and see it with fresh eyes. Monthly book discussions are held at the Headquarters library and it has been a success getting foreign language books clubs up and running in Russian, Italian, Hebrew, and Arabic. The history book club continues to thrive at the Headquarters library and a new "Murder They Wrote" book club started this year. The English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship classes continue to be popular. A new librarian has taken over the Teen Advisory Board (TAB) group and implemented Tech Tuesdays where volunteers from the TAB group offer one-on-one technology assistance to patrons. Robyn encourages her staff to provide feedback from the patron's point of view. The library has worked to make book displays more engaging for patrons and moved the travel books to make them more accessible. The Headquarters staff has been welcoming and Robyn is looking forward to next year.

Rachael Scalise, Branch Services Librarian, stated as she is coming to the close of her first year in this role there have been many learning experiences. She extended a thank you to the Branch Manager's and staff for their support. 2019 saw a total of ninety-seven personnel actions, this includes new hires, retirements, resignations, promotions, and location changes. A goal for 2020 is to hire more staff to meet the changing needs of the library system while looking inward for staff training and development opportunities. The branches are creative and hardworking and Rachael encourages everyone to visit all of our locations. Some of the highlights this year are:

- Allentown reported that adult programming was met with great success. They never miss an opportunity to participate in community events and as part of the Fall Festival the library designed an eighteen-hole mini golf course inside the library.
- Atlantic Highlands continues to partner with organizations to provide services that directly impact their patrons. A partnership with the Bayshore Family Success Center has resulted in a successful grandparents support group. Additionally, the library continues to offer English conversation classes and will be re-launching their adult basic computer series.
- Colts Neck welcomed the annual mini horse program which hosted over one-hundred patrons. The staff organized a field trip for the local primary school to visit the library. Partnering with the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Kitchen, the library and the Friends of the Library hosted an Empty Bowls pottery event to raise awareness to fight hunger.
- Hazlet continues to offer programming favorites, such as chess and movies. A stand out in new programming was the library sponsored art exhibition called "Voices from Keansburg the Souls of Four Artists".
- Holmdel celebrates its second year at its new location in the Bell Works complex. The library continues to focus on community outreach and partnerships, such as the on-going eye glass collection, supply drive, student art displays, and local scout troops. The community continues to seek out exciting technology programs, such as the teen program Girls Who Code.
- Howell was excited to be selected by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities as the Monmouth County Location for "What is Your Water Story", a state-wide program exploring water use. The branch is proud of their recent recognition by the Asbury Park Press Reader's Choice One of the Best Libraries in Monmouth County award.
- Marlboro began the year with a new Branch Manager, new second adult librarian, and a new circulation staff member. They continued to provide service and programming that patrons have come to expect.
- Ocean Township was busy offering something for everyone in 2019. A prom dress giveaway, a holiday themed family program, monthly concerts, author talks, programs on de-cluttering and personal safety, and many more kept patrons coming to the library.
- Oceanport reported the branch saw a busy summer season with an increase in daily use. Research has begun for the Oceanport Centennial in 2020 and the library, with the assistance of the Historical Association, is looking at how to get involved in this celebration.
- Wall Township was invited by the Township Public Schools to participate in the annual community fair. This outreach event saw a wonderful opportunity to register new patrons while promoting library services. During a storm, the library became the main source of power for the community thanks to the backup generator that has been installed by the Township.

- West Long Branch continued to foster existing partnerships in 2019. They worked with the local environmental commission for a successful Borough-wide treks challenge which kept plastic out of landfills and helped to create new public benches.

It has been an interesting year and looking forward to next year.

Laura Migliore, Public Relations Coordinator, thanked the Monmouth County Library Commission, Director Judi Tolchin, and all those who supported programming. Requests had been made for two major programs to be held in 2019. These programs were a series of events commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day and a Book Club Festival coinciding with National Reading Group Month. Over one-thousand programs, concerts, and meetings were attended by more than 44,600 patrons. Community attendance increased over 2018 as a new monthly Friday afternoon series was instituted to make library entertainment accessible to those who cannot join us on the weekends. History and art programs increased, health and wellbeing programs were held, technology classes were successful, and gaming continued to be popular. Laura would like to recognize The Friends of the Monmouth County Library for their support of many of the Headquarters library and Eastern branch programming. For 2020, Laura has a goal of increasing health and wellbeing programs, continuing World War II programming, planning a celebration of Women's History Month, and to produce the 2019 Annual Report earlier.

Veronica Stevens, Young Adult Programming Coordinator, stated 2019 was a great year for teens. A variety of fun and educational programs were held at the Headquarters, Holmdel, and Hazlet libraries. Some programs included a calculus series, virtual reality, AED and CPR training, college preparation seminars, and a GEMS (Girls Empowered in the Medical Sciences) workshop. With the Summer Reading theme of a Universe of Stories, programs such as a NASA jumpsuit display and a portable planetarium experience were offered. A bath bomb making workshop was held along with aromatherapy and yoga. For the second year, the Halloween costume swap was a success with seventy-eight families participating. The Holmdel library had an incredible success partnering with ISIMS for their Girls Who Code series covering HTML, CSS, Python, and Finch Robots with 161 teens participating. This year's tri-board theme was "What Book Changed Your Life?" and met a nice response. The teen steering committee continued to meet on a monthly basis. It has been a pleasure working with teens for the last fifteen years.

Beth Stamp, Friends of the Library President, stated over the past three years \$7,000 has been provided in scholarship funds and over \$30,000 for programs. For the year 2020 the Friends has the challenge and goal of engaging younger families in the community. She stated it has been a pleasure to see and implement programs at the libraries.

Chairperson Renee Swartz stated this has been a fabulous year due to everyone's efforts and creativity. She and the Commission look forward to next year.

Minutes

Chairperson Renee Swartz gave a few minutes for review of the meeting minutes from November 12, 2019. Opportunity was given for additions, corrections, and suggestions.

A Motion to approve the open public meeting minutes of November 12, 2019 was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Brian Boms. Mary Ann Musich abstained. Approved.

A Motion to approve the closed executive session minutes of November 12, 2019 was made by Brian Boms and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Mary Ann Musich abstained. Approved.

State and National Report

Chairperson Renee Swartz stated the topic of e-books was discussed at the previous meeting and she is concerned about the possible affects the restrictions on e-book purchasing will have on the library. The difficulty of e-book purchasing has been a prominent topic of conversation in the library field recently. Chairperson Swartz suggests informing the patrons on this topic and circulating a petition. Meghan Bennett, Special Counsel, stated a verbal resolution by title that the Monmouth County Library Commission resolves to effectuate a petition against the MacMillan e-Book Embargo; subject to attorney review. It was suggested that the petition be made available electronically on the library's website.

A Motion to approve the resolution to effectuate a petition against the MacMillan e-Book Embargo, subject to attorney review was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Unanimously approved.

Library Liaison Report

Freeholder Lillian Burry asked for a status update on the Eastern Branch sculpture.

Eastern Branch Sculpture Update & Sculpture Estimate – Harry H. Gordon Studios, LLC
Deputy County Administrator Christopher Marion stated the sculpture assembly needs and issues were discussed at the previous meeting. Harry H. Gordon Studios, LLC conducted an on-site meeting with Monmouth County Engineering, Library staff, Monmouth County Purchasing, and Franco Minnervini. After the meeting, a cost estimate of \$10,600 was provided for the on-site assembly. The sculpture assembly is anticipated to occur in Spring 2020. Monmouth County Engineering has completed the installation of the sculpture base. A question was asked as to when the sculpture presentation will be held. It was stated that the presentation could occur approximately in March or April 2020. Mr. Marion stated more defined dates could be made available once the proposal has been approved.

A Motion to approve the sculpture installation estimate received from Harry H. Gordon Studios, LLC in the amount of \$10,600 was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. Unanimously approved.

Freeholder Lillian Burry asked about the flooring voucher and the engineering services voucher.

Voucher Approval

Deputy County Administrator Christopher Marion stated the estimate for the flooring is \$111,131.20. This is for flooring that has already been installed from an approved purchase order. The total contract award was \$623,502.36 and billing is being completed in parts. The first

invoice was paid in the amount of \$491,563.16 and the second invoice is the stated \$111,131.20. The remaining balance will be \$20,808.00. A meeting was held with Direct Flooring, Monmouth County Engineering, Director Tolchin, Assistant Director Amici, and Mr. Marion to confirm all components. An additional voucher may be received from Direct Flooring for work recommended by Settembrino Architects.

A voucher in the amount of \$4,206.34 for Murray Paving and Concrete Electrical Engineering Services was submitted for approval. This work was conducted under the ECSNJ contract and is the final ten percent costs that were withheld until all the components of the project were satisfactorily met. A question was posed as to why a paving and concrete company was contracted for electrical work. It was stated that Murray Paving and Concrete was the general contractor who will in turn pay the sub-contractor for electrical services.

A Motion to accept and approve the voucher in the amount of \$111,131.20 for a partial payment to Direct Flooring was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Unanimously approved.

A Motion to accept and approve the voucher in the amount of \$4,206.34 for Murray Paving and Concrete Electrical Engineering Services was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Brian Boms. Unanimously approved.

Freeholder Burry suggested having a bronze plaque made to recognize the Raffetto estate and the bequest used for the Eastern Branch sculpture.

On December 18th, the library will be the subject of the taping of Monmouth in Focus.

Building and Renovation Updates

Deputy County Administrator Christopher Marion stated a meeting will be held on December 12th with Settembrino Architects. Monmouth County Engineering is approximately fifty percent through reviewing the progress of plans put forward by the architect; this includes simultaneous review of the restroom accessories by Buildings and Grounds. This also includes checking the Library Administration data and electric comments were properly incorporated into the progress documents. Review and comments will be completed by December 12th and presented to the architect at the schedule meeting. The finishes being made to the renovation project are at product specification levels and finishes for the restroom project are at color selection levels. The architect will provide Library Administration with a new master spreadsheet of finishes for the products. Engineering is currently working on the front-end of the bid documents and are approximately twenty percent complete. The architect has been asked to provide construction cost estimates to ensure they are within budget.

Financial Report

November Financials - Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, and Capital Budgets
Director Judi Tolchin submitted the November 2019 Financial Report to the Commission, including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budget wherein the 2019 detail budget account charged year to date is \$14,794,364.73 posted to the approved budget of \$16,985,000; this total includes encumbered amounts and the budget is 87%

expended as of November 30, 2019. \$2,190,635.27 remains unencumbered with fourth quarter fringe benefits still to be billed from Monmouth County. December wages and salaries will be an estimated cost of \$500,000.00 and will be posted in December along with pending library materials. It is anticipated that the budget for 2019 will be almost entirely spent after it is transferred to the reserve budget. The 2019 reserve budget for 2018 shows \$1,016,519.23 unexpended and unencumbered in remaining funds; any remaining amount will be transferred to the fund balance in January 2020. Revenues are on target with the budget projections. The remaining capital account for the renovation is \$60,486.02 unencumbered from the first capital appropriation of \$977,000 and \$1,485,770.84 remains unencumbered from the second capital appropriation of \$1,497,000 for a total remaining of \$1,546,256.86 as of November 30, 2019. This amount is higher than the previous month's report as some of the encumbered funds were released with the closing of one Murray Paving and Concrete purchase order. These funds are reserved for the completion of the adult library and the lobby, including lobby furniture. 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.

It was asked if the personnel vacancies have been accounted for in the budget. Judi stated she has accounted for all vacancies and configured them on a prorated basis.

A Motion to approve the November 2019 Financial Report including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, and Capital Budgets was made by Brian Boms and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Unanimously approved.

Director's Report

Director Judi Tolchin stated it was recommended by County Counsel that the Commission record the closed executive session, going forward, as the open public meeting portion is recorded. If it is not preferred to record the closed executive session it may behoove the Commission to not record the open public meeting either.

\$70,161.36 is remaining on the purchase order with Library Interiors. As this is part of the operating budget, the item was opened in 2018 and a transaction was done through accounts payable to be able to finalize this purchase order once the furniture is installed.

A number of closures have been experienced at the Monmouth County Library West Long Branch location due to HVAC issues. Repairs have been completed and the Township is looking into the potential of further repairs. The closures did disrupt library services.

Judi will work with Meghan Bennett, Special Counsel on establishing a policy for the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) devices. Once a draft is complete, they will bring the policy before the Commission for approval.

The Annual Report for 2018 has been provided to the Commission and the 2019 Annual Report is under way.

The holiday cookie trays are being delivered to all branch and member libraries.

There is currently no further update on the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act.

Online Trustee training is provided from the New Jersey State Library and is recommended for those that may be interested. There is a seven hour training requirement for Commissioners to maintain the library's state aid.

The 2020 Monmouth County Library Commission meeting schedule has been approved. If there are no conflicts, the schedule will be sent to the newspapers to be printed in their legal notices section. The Commission is still able to make changes to the schedule with at least forty-eight hours advance notice.

Assistant Director's Update

Assistant Director Heidi Amici stated they are going to begin the transfer to the Ethernet Virtual Private Line (EVPL) service at the Headquarters library at the end of the week. This change will significantly reduce the cost of providing internet services at the library. She will continue working with Information Services to increase the bandwidth for the Wi-Fi service. This same transfer of service will occur at the Eastern Branch in January 2020.

Publicity Consultant Report

Publicity Consultant Muriel Smith stated she will use the presentations and summaries provided by the department head reports to write articles.

Commissioner Comments

It has been noticed that the new carpet at the Monmouth County Library Headquarters has some stains. It was stated that this has been addressed with Buildings and Grounds. They are working on better ways to maintain the carpet.

Chairperson Renee Swartz suggested sending a letter of thanks to the Friends of the Monmouth County Library for their program support and scholarship offering.

Freeholder Lillian Burry suggested sending a letter of thanks to the Master Gardeners. Additionally, Chairperson Renee Swartz suggested sending a card to the various township's Mayors featuring the gnome display at the Eastern Branch library.

Closed Executive Session

A closed executive session was not held.

Public Comments

A Motion to open the meeting to public comment was made by Brian Boms and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. Unanimously Approved.

Let it be known for the record that no members of the public were present for comment.

A Motion to close the meeting to public comment was made by Brian Boms and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Unanimously Approved.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at the Monmouth County Library Eastern Branch at 11:00 am.

Adjournment

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. Unanimously approved.

The meeting concluded at 1:54 pm.

Submitted by Kimberly Conover