

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
December 11, 2018
Headquarters Branch Library

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Don Burden, Frank Wells, Peter Doyle, Grace Abramov, Nancy Grbelja, and Mary Ann Musich; Also Present: Director Judi Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici.

Absent: Freeholder Lillian Burry

Guests: Muriel Smith, Publicity Consultant; Staff members: Laura Migliore, Sue Domas, Veronica Stevens, Pat Findra, Donna Mansfield, Kim Avagliano, Rick Brancadora, Beth Henderson, Stephanie Laurino, Marilyn DeJesus, Glenn Goble, and Stewart Fife

The meeting convened at 11:24 am.

Judi Tolchin opened the meeting by greeting everyone in attendance and thanking the Commissioners and County Administration for all they do. She welcomed and introduced a new Commissioner, Mary Ann Musich. Judi thanked Freeholder Deputy Director Lillian Burry for her strong support and for always being an indispensable asset. Judi then introduced Chairperson Renee Swartz.

Renee thanked Judi for all of her hard work, stating the library has a great team and is delighted with all the work they do. She stated it has been a great year and cited both the Eastern Branch 50th Anniversary and the Headquarters Branch renovation as highlights.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of Tuesday, December 11, 2018 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.

Renee extended a thank you to Muriel Smith for being a public face of the library. She then turned the microphone back over to Judi.

Judi stated that every good manager has a great team behind them and extended recognition to all the managers. She also extended a thank you to Assistant Library Director, Heidi Amici, for all her hard work and tremendous support.

Department Head Reports and New Staff Introductions

Presentations were made by: Heidi Amici, Assistant Library Director; Marilyn DeJesus, Branch Services Librarian; Donna Mansfield, Headquarters Branch Manager and Programming Coordinator; Rick Brancadora, Media Technician; Kim Avagliano, Eastern Branch Manager; Pat Findra, Children's Coordinator; and Veronica Stevens, Young Adult Programming Coordinator.

Heidi Amici, Assistant Library Director, spoke on the technological updates that will be occurring during the Headquarters Renovation; electricity and data ports will be both moved and have new ones added. She also stated the new Young Adult room will feature a TV and wireless headphones. Heidi stated new servers have been installed and mobile printing has been added to almost every branch, allowing patrons to send a print from anywhere and pick it up at the library. She stated the new library mobile app has been updated to feature the ability to add multiple card profiles on the same device and allow patrons to register for programs. Heidi noted that Maker's Day 2018 brought to the forefront some technological deficiencies to be improved upon. Kanopy was added as a streaming service for the library this year and its success will be measured next year. The e-book collection and e-audiobook collections are being expanded and a Chinese ebook collection has been added. After some time, circulation statistics will be reviewed to see the collections popularity and use. Laptop lending is about to begin. The intention of the laptops is to promote more technology-based programming. The webpage redesign is slated for the beginning of next year.

Marilyn DeJesus, Branch Services Librarian, presented a staffing report. Marilyn reported that many changes have occurred throughout the year and it is still the goal of the department to recruit and hire new innovative staff. As of January 1, 2019, Rachael Scalise will be stepping into the role of Branch Services Librarian. Marilyn cited: Allentown Branch for obtaining funds to restore the branch foyer, Atlantic Highlands has established an English conversation class for adults, Colts Neck continues their recipe of the month display, Hazlet received a window bench donated by a local Eagle Scout and holds lots of fun contests, Holmdel celebrated moving into their new location and received an award from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Howell continues to partner with local schools to get students registered for library cards, Marlboro continues to work with the regional high school district to provide job sampling to special needs teens, Ocean Township continued its participation in the Township's National Night Out, Wall Township was interviewed by a local newspaper, and West Long Branch has been working with a media specialist to encourage students to register for library cards. All of this is made possible by the hard work of the library systems wonderful staff.

Donna Mansfield, Headquarters Branch Manager and Programming Coordinator, presented on the success of the programs held **throughout** 2018. During the year, 54,000 people attended 1,450 programs and meetings. Concerts and history presentations remain among some of the most popular programs. The library was one of 100 libraries to receive a grant from The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History; a prestigious honor. The library was nominated by Congressman Chris Smith for an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) award. This year saw the start of a big renovation and a large review of books was completed. Additionally, the career connections grant will continue to provide job preparation services to patrons. Lastly, the library was recognized in the Asbury Park Press as one of the Best Reader's Choice Libraries.

Rick Brancadora, Media Technician, presented a video montage of 2018. Joan Moss was recognized for her involvement with the library connecting on social media. He stated video styles are changing and they are working to continue to connect in these different ways.

Kim Avagliano, Eastern Branch Manager, presented and cited the 50th Anniversary celebration held this year. All year long, the branch works to partner with the community through programming, such as: music concerts, cultural and historical presentations, art and cultural displays, book discussions, and author visits. The career connections grant continues to provide patrons with job seeking techniques and networking. For the third year in a row, the branch held a successful volunteer recruitment fair. “First Fridays for Seniors” program continues to be popular by providing information, entertainment, and socialization for area seniors. Kim cited the wonderful staff involvement throughout the year, with programs such as “May the 4th be with You, Star Wars Day”. On October 28, 2018, Eastern Branch celebrated its 50th Anniversary and the Children’s Library was dedicated to Library Commission Chairperson Renee Swartz.

Pat Findra, Children’s Coordinator, presented on the activities of the Children’s department throughout the year. Attendance has increased for school age and pre-school age programs, as well as programs for kids and their parents. Marker’s Day 2018 saw an attendance of 1,200 patrons with the participation of the entire Children’s Department staff and teen volunteers. The summer reading program saw 3,381 children register and read 34,000 books across ten weeks. Pat extended a thank you to Laura Migliore for the wonderful job she does.

Veronica Stevens, Young Adult Programming Coordinator, presented the departmental accomplishments throughout the year. The top three changes were shifting social media focus from Facebook to Instagram to increase followers, and then establishing a teen volunteer program to teach interviewing skills and workplace presentation, and finally establishing a “steering” committee of ten teens for the goal of obtaining peer orientated ideas to attract other teens. The “Girls Who Code” program was wildly successful and will be held again in 2019. The Anime Club continues to be a highly attended and popular program.

Judi stated the library’s management team does so much. She is thankful to all the department heads, grateful to the Library Commission, and thankful for all of the library’s supportive friends.

Renee added the Commission is proud of the staff and all the things they bring to the public. They see and can hear the passion, creativity, and stamina. The staff translates the library’s mission through this great team. Renee wished the best of luck to those retiring; they will be missed. She extended a thank you to everyone and is looking forward to another good year.

Minutes

Renee Swartz gave a few minutes for review of the meeting minutes of October 16, 2018. Opportunity was given for additions, corrections, and suggestions.

A Motion to approve the open public meeting minutes of October 16, 2018, was made by Peter Doyle and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Grace Abramov abstained. Approved.

A Motion to approve the closed executive session minutes of October 16, 2018, was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle. Grace Abramov abstained. Approved.

Headquarters Renovation Update

Judi stated a meeting had occurred with County Administration to work on bringing the project forward and some changes have been made in the strategy to best utilize resources. County Administration, Engineering, Legal, Purchasing, and Library Representatives were present and it was determined that the next step would use the existing budget for a “top-to-bottom” approach to complete the adult side of the library and the lobby. The intention is to complete what has already been started and then move forward with the remaining phases. With the remaining capital of approximately \$1.6 million, it is recommended to complete the adult reading room and the lobby using the “top-to-bottom” approach, which would include: the ceiling grid (excluding newer tiles installed in the 1999 revision), lighting, electrical and power for furnishings, technology upgrades/ data infrastructure and painting in both areas. The plans will include option for public bid. The Commission will then be requested to award a contract to the architect with the revised proposal and specifications to include the change of scope. If the Commission would like to expedite the process, the Commission Renovation Committee could provide the approval for the architectural contract to be in time for the next Freeholders meeting. County Engineering will be involved in the process and advise according. After completion, the remainder of the project, including: Childrens Reading Room, Meeting Rooms, the Administration Office and staff areas will be addressed. Options for completion may include obtaining additional capital from the County and/ or applying for a New Jersey State grant when the Construction Bond Fund Act becomes available. Heidi added that the cost and plan mentioned did not include the bathrooms. Judi stated the bathrooms are a separate project fully managed by the County.

Stewart Fife stated the all shelving and books have been placed in their new permanent locations and the majority of the flooring has been completed. Judi, Glen Goble of Library Interiors, and Frank Gomes of Direct Flooring met prior to the Commission Meeting and will meet again in January to schedule staff office area flooring installation. The flooring by the circulation desk will not be completed until the current desk is removed and the new desk is ready for installation. Renee asked what the projected timeline is for this. Stewart stated the timeframe is open-ended at this time, but generally estimates that work could commence in approximately April or May 2019. The Commission would like a more formal timeline, not an approximation. Stewart stated he does not have any control over the timeline, as that would default to the architect awarded the contract, and is only providing a rough estimate that work could commence in April or May of 2019 and take approximately seven months to complete. Renee asked what potential disruptions could occur that would affect the timeline. Stewart stated a delay in the public bidding process could alter the timeline, but he did not foresee that occurring and he reiterated that he does not have any control over the timeline. Renee stated the originally perceived timeline has already been exceeded. Nancy stated, initially, the project focused on updating carpeting and furniture. However, to complete the project correctly, additions had to be made for improvements beyond the original scope. These extended improvements required expertise and going out to bid for competitive pricing, which in turn extended the timeframe of the overall project. A suggestion was made that closing the library could expedite the project. Closing during a project has not occurred before, but Renee posed the question of closing for approximately one week. Stewart

replied that something closer to a six month closure would be needed to complete the project. It was expressed that it is more desirable to remain open and provide services to the patrons, but that this question may be revisited at a later date.

Stewart requested permission to deliver furniture. Peter Doyle asked for confirmation, that to deliver the furniture, it would need to be stored on-site. Stewart stated yes, the furniture would need to be stored on-site or additional research would need to be completed on the cost of storing off-site. Nancy requested confirmation that the furniture would not be assembled, just delivered. Stewart stated yes, the furniture would just be delivered and not assembled. Judi stated an area of the building will be partitioned off to create a storage space and that space will be made inaccessible to patrons, temporarily. Stewart stated that within the partitioned off storage area the furniture can be stacked and pre-sorted by phase to aid in the installation process later. Coordination will need to take place between Stewart and the awarded General Contractor for furniture and glass wall installation. Peter asked who will be the point of contact going forward. Judi and Stewart stated that the County will be the point of contact and a representative of the awarded contractor may be an additional point of contact.

A Motion to accept the furniture order and store on-site at the Monmouth County Library Headquarters Branch in a partitioned area until the time of installation was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Grace Abramov. Unanimously approved.

Judi stated Direct Flooring has requested partial payment of \$491,563.16 of the \$623,502.36 for the installation of carpeting that has been completed and the movement of shelves and books. Sign in sheets were requested to certify payroll, but Judi has not received complete sheets.

A Motion to approve a partial payment of \$491, 563.16 to Direct Flooring for the installation of carpet that has been completed, the movement of shelves, and the movement of books was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

Meeting Room Policy

Meeting rooms will be available to non-profit and not-for-profit organizations for a minimal fee of five dollars and parameters have been set for publicity. Publicity cannot use the Monmouth County Library logo and all publicity must be approved by the library prior to distribution, on any platform. This new policy will allow for modifications to the policy, if the need arises.

A Motion to pass the Meeting Room Policy was made by Peter Doyle and seconded by Don Burden. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report – October and November 2018 Financials

Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Grant Budgets, Capital Accounts

Judi submitted the October and November 2018 Financial Report to the Commission including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Grant Budgets, and Capital Accounts wherein the 2018 Detail Budget Account charged year to date is \$13,871,742.58. The total charged year to date, including encumbered amounts, is \$3,596,820.82 remains unexpended. December salaries, fourth quarter fringe benefits, and December spending remain to be spent.

The remaining Reserve Budget, unexpended, is \$2,257,932.31. The remaining amount will be returned to the fund balance at the end of the year. The Capital Account for the renovation charged year to date is \$887,121.75 of the \$977,000 allocated, most of which are encumbered. \$1,497,000 remains in the second Capital Account. A total of \$1,586,878.25 remains unexpended, which will be used for the completion of the adult reading room and the lobby. The funds approved for the partial payment to Direct Flooring are encumbered and allocated in the totals listed above.

Peter asked when payment will need to be made to Stewart Fife. Judi stated that will not occur until the furnishings arrive and it will be a partial payment, which has been encumbered. Furniture cannot be delivered until the space has been allocated and partition walls have been obtained.

A Motion to accept and approve the October and November 2018 Financial Report including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Grant Budgets, and Capital Accounts was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Don Burden. Unanimously approved.

Preliminary Draft Budget

Judi submitted to the Commission a Preliminary Draft Budget for 2019 of \$16,985,000. Craig Marshall has recommended a 1.5% increase to the tax levy for 2019, after reviewing the preliminary budgets. Budget highlights include: wages and salaries are to remain static at \$6,320,000; allocations have been made based on current staffing and number of vacancies; the book budget has been restored to \$3,000,000; fringe benefits are estimated to remain level; and indirect costs are estimated to remain level. The Preliminary Draft Budget reflects a ten year sustainable plan.

The Preliminary Draft Budget has not been requested to be passed at this time. Discussion will continue at the next Commission meeting.

Director's Report

Event Acknowledgements

Judi extended a thank you to Commissioner Don Burden for his attendance at the Trustee Institute, meeting the State Aid requirement for trustee training. A thank you was extended to Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Frank Wells, Don Burden, and Peter Doyle, and Freeholder Lillian Burry for attending the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Eastern Branch. Appreciation was expressed to Congressman Smith and all the Mayors of council that attended the event. Judi acknowledged the wonderful articles written about the anniversary celebration. A thank you was extended to Commissioner Peter Doyle and Freeholder Lillian Burry for attending the Holmdel Branch plaque dedication. A thank you was extended to Sculptor Franco Minervini for the fruit platter sent as a thank you to the Commission.

Reciprocal Borrowing – Ocean County Library

Both Monmouth and Ocean County's Library Commissions will need to vote on the reciprocal borrowing agreement. This agreement has stood for many years and assists patrons residing in border towns. The terms are similar to the current borrowing agreement, excluding streaming

services not contractually allowed. There is a net-lender agreement that the majority borrowing county provides additional payment to the other, with a maximum.

A motion to authorize the reciprocal borrowing agreement was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Don Burden. Unanimously approved.

Freehold Borough Library

Freehold Borough Library has approached the Monmouth County Freeholders and expressed interest in joining the Monmouth County Library system. A meeting has been scheduled for December 14, 2018 with Freehold Borough Administration and a Board member to discuss the possibility of Freehold Borough joining the system. Judi asked if the Commission would like to assign a Commissioner to also attend the scheduled meeting. The tax levy received from Freehold Borough is estimated to be small, approximately \$198,000, based on population and tax base. The preliminary cost estimates favor them becoming a member library over a branch. A suggestion was made to approach the Board of Freeholders for additional funding to off-set the deficit that would be incurred, if Freehold Borough becomes a county branch. A concern was raised that the Freehold Borough Library building is not accessible, therefore not ADA compliant. Nancy stated, as a historic building, a waiver and modifications could be made regarding the accessibility. Don asked about the status of the collection. Heidi stated a preliminary walk-through was completed and concerns lay, not just with accessibility, but also the delivery of items and possible additional facility concerns.

The Commission agreed to table further discussion until the next meeting.

Sea Girt Referendum – Letter of Withdrawal

The Sea Girt Library will be withdrawing from the Monmouth County System. They have submitted a letter of withdrawal and stated their notice period with an effective date of withdrawal on January 1, 2021. At that time, all services from the county will cease. Judi will be sending a letter of acknowledgement to the Sea Girt Library. The financial impact to the Monmouth County System is estimated at approximately \$440,000, which will need to be apportioned to the remaining communities.

The Commission agreed that the Sea Girt Library will keep the books and equipment already purchased. Any borrowed materials will be received back. Any items slated for return that are not received will be billed.

Assistant Director's Report

Heidi requested approval to dispose of shelving. Shelving has been offered to all branches, but many did not have the space or ability to pick up additional shelving. Disposal can be done at a scrap yard for the receipt of five dollars for every one hundred pounds, if delivered directly. If not delivered directly and a dumpster is provided for removal, four dollars for every one hundred pounds would be received. Disposal will need to occur before Stewart Fife can deliver the new furniture.

A Motion to approve permission to recycle and dispose of shelving, as needed, was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Heidi informed the Commission that the lines and Wi-Fi have been installed for the new projector. A thank you was extended to Monmouth County Buildings and Ground, ITS, and the Commission.

Closed Executive Session

A motion to adjourn to executive session was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

The Commission adjourned to Executive Session at 2:33 pm.

A Motion to resume regular session was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Don Burden. Unanimously approved.

The Commission resumed the regular session at 2:41 pm.

Library Table of Organization

A motion to change a Part-time Senior Library Assistant to a Part-time Assistant Personnel Technician at 25 hours per week was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously approved.

Commissioner Comments

Don asked about the status of staffing levels. Judi stated the library is struggling to cover, but managing at this time. Current vacancies need to be filled and recruitment is actively occurring.

Renee asked Nancy about submitting a request for a capital expenditure. The answer is unclear at this time.

Nancy stated follow-up will need to occur regarding the canopy project and recommended it be included in the January agenda.

Renee expressed a thank you for a wonderful 2018 and looks forward to a successful 2019.

Public Comments

A member of the public asked what the change in the meeting room policy was. Judi stated that previously there was not a formal policy, just a procedure. Passing the Meeting Room Policy would provide consistency across the thirteen branches and would not affect member libraries.

Next Meeting and 2019 Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at the Eastern Branch Library at 11:00 am.

A Motion to approve the Commission meeting schedule dates for 2019 was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Grace Abramov. Unanimously approved.

Scheduling of Closed Executive Session at Next Meeting

A Motion to schedule a closed executive session at the meeting on January 8, 2019, was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Peter Doyle and seconded by Nancy Grabelja. Unanimously approved.

The meeting concluded at 2:44 pm.

Submitted by Kimberly Conover