

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes

December 13, 2016

Headquarters

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Grace Abramov, Don Burden, James Gray, Nancy Grbelja, Director Judi Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici.

Absent: Frank Wells and Freeholder Lillian Burry, Liaison

Guests: Jane Reynolds, Sue Domas, Beth Henderson, Rachael Scalice, Stephanie Laurino, Karen Nealis, Muriel Smith, Joan Moss

The meeting convened at 10:29 AM

Chairperson Renee Swartz welcomed all in attendance. Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of December 13, 2016 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.”

The Commissioners met with library department heads for end of year reports. In attendance: Pat Findra, Marilyn DeJesus, Donna Mansfield, Rick Brancadora, Kim Avagliano, and Heidi Amici.

Opening Statement by Chairperson Renee Swartz:

Mrs. Swartz welcomed everyone and thanked those in attendance, and those absent, for continuing to be the heart of the Monmouth County Library. She thanked the Commission for taking time out of their schedules to volunteer. Mrs. Swartz also thanked the Friends of the Library. The library is so indebted to the Friends and Mrs. Swartz, along with the rest of the Commission, look forward to a great relationship in the future. She also thanked library staff for all that they do to make the library so successful.

Department Head Reports:

Judi Tolchin noted that the *Library in the Palm of Your Hand* Campaign, which is designed to attract more patrons to use the library, has been an ongoing effort and a great success. The Headquarters parking lot has been renovated to be more Handicap-accessible with a new electronic sliding door. The expanded electronic resources have been in very high demand. Headquarters held a Special program to honor the Olympians from Monmouth County. This was a very well attended program in 2016.

Pat Findra-Coordinator of Children's Services

- Pat presented pictures from the Children's programs at various branch and member libraries.
- Tween programming has expanded in 2016.
- There was a 19% rise in school age children, 17% in toddlers, and 21% in babies attending programs.
- STEM learning has become very popular, especially with the newly purchased littleBits kit.
- Monmouth County Library's second celebration of Maker's Day was a success with over 1,000 people in attendance.
- "On Your Mark, Get Set, Read" was the summer reading club theme of 2016, which showcased sports and teamwork. Every branch and member planned programs based on this theme, with one library hosting Library 'Lympics.
- 6 AWE early literacy stations have been added to various branches. Children use these touch screen computers in the library. There have also been 34 Launchpad tablets added to the branches.
- In 2016, Phyllis Judman celebrated 45 years with the Monmouth County Library, Dawna McClendon celebrated 30 years with the Monmouth County Library and Marissa Chimento completed her master's degree in December and was promoted to full time.

Marilyn DeJesus- Branch Services

- Allentown Library dedicated the children's section to former Branch Manager, Nancy Stein.
- Jane Reynolds partnered with the Atlantic Highlands YMCA to create very successful monthly programs.
- Ocean Township Library has held a very successful job expo for patrons.
- Colts Neck's Cookbook collection continues to be in high demand. An article was written in the Two River Times regarding this collection.
- Hazlet has created a variety of fun and inclusive events for patrons.
- Wall Branch Manager Sue Domas and Children's librarian Heather Hansen attended Family Literacy Night held by the Wall School District.
- Creation of Monmouth County Library Wiki was led by Samantha Bremenkamp. This wiki has pertinent information regarding forms and information that is easily accessible for library staff.
- In 2016, 10 staff members retired/left, 8 new hires, 7 part time employees promoted to full time, and 20 vacancies.

Donna Mansfield- Public Relations Coordinator, Branch Manager of Headquarters

- In 2016, over 50,000 people attended adult programs.
- There were 10 jazz, 9 orchestra, 2 Art, and 20 Shakespeare programs.
- The most attended program in 2016 was the Olympian program to honor Monmouth County Olympians.
- 9,125 pounds of food were collected for "Food for Fines."
- In 2017, there will be several programs in honor of Hamilton and the Federalist Papers.
- July and August were the busiest months for Headquarters circulation.
- A wall was erected between Adult reference and the rest of the library for staff safety.
- Headquarters and Eastern Branch received \$50,000 Career Connections Grants. Rosemary was hired as a Career liaison. She noticed that recent graduates attend these meetings the most and is currently working to develop programs for teens and young adults.
- Asbury Park Press readers voted the Headquarters Branch the *Best of the Best Library*.

Rick Brancadora-Videographer:

- There were 7 promotional video segments dedicated to the *Library in the Palm of your Hand* campaign.
- Local cable stations in Wall, Hazlet, Matawan, and Manalapan have been integral in promoting the library.
- In 2016, 28 long and short form videos were created to promote the Monmouth County Library system.

Kim Avagliano-Branch Manager of the Eastern Branch Library:

- Kim presented pictures of Eastern Branch Library throughout 2016.
- Master Gardeners of Monmouth County were acknowledged for making Eastern Branch look so beautiful.
- 500,000 materials were circulated at Eastern Branch this year.
- There are an estimated 600-700 patrons visiting Eastern Branch each day, 3 meetings a day with around 50 programs a month.
- Self-service wireless printing is a new addition this year. Patrons can print from their tablets, cellphones, and other electronic devices.
- Monica Johnson was hired as the career liaison for Eastern Branch for the Career Connections grant.

Heidi Amici- Assistant Director:

- A technology booth was held at the Olympic program. This was an idea from the Commissioners. It was very successful with most of the questions regarding when the next program would be.
- Ebooks have had a 9% increase from last year.
- Headquarters and Eastern Branch had a wireless upgrade which allows the library to count how many users access the Wi-Fi.
- Mobile printing is a brand new addition to the library system. Patrons are now able to print from their own electronic devices.
- The library is now leasing copies of popular best sellers. These extra copies save room on library shelves.
- Monmouth Beach Library has been rebuilt and reopened with a shortened schedule.

- In 2017, there will be a new Library website, mobile App, and a automated calling system that will contact patrons when their holds become available.

The meeting recessed at 11:40 AM

The meeting reconvened at 12:00 PM

Minutes:

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Grace Abramov, Don Burden, Peter Doyle James Gray, Nancy Grbelja, Freeholder Lillian Burry, Liason, Director Judi Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici.

Absent: Frank Wells

Guests: Muriel Smith, and Barbara Stanhope

A motion to accept the minutes from the November 15th meeting was made by Renee Swartz and seconded by Peter Doyle; approved without changes.

A motion to accept the closed executive minutes from the November 15th meeting was made by Peter Doyle and seconded by James Gray; approved without changes.

Chairperson's Report

Mrs. Swartz noted that the Department Heads had such lovely reports. She enjoyed learning more about the team effort of library staff. She is also very pleased 2016 will end on a high note. Lillian Burry added how wonderful it is that Director Judi Tolchin attends every Freeholder meeting and thinks this presence is much appreciated.

Mrs. Swartz added how much of an asset Lillian Burry is and how her efforts this year, as well as previous years, has made a large difference in the library. James Gray mentioned the renovations of the Headquarters parking lot are beautiful. Mrs. Swartz stated how thankful the Commission is that Lillian Burry helped in facilitating the renovation and what a wonderful partnership it was to make this a reality. She also thanked Building and Grounds for the renovation of the front of Headquarters, especially the sliding doors and removal of steps.

Commissioner Don Burden also added how beautiful the Master Gardeners of Monmouth County have made Eastern Branch. Mrs. Swartz noted that this pleasant surrounding helps entice patrons into wanting to visit the library. Nancy Grbelja noted that the work the library does with programming and events makes her extremely proud and supportive of library staff. Mrs. Swartz praised the team effort of library staff and the high level of productivity as a result. Mrs. Swartz also thanked the Library Commission for giving up their time and being a large part of making the library so great. Lillian Burry also added Assistant Director Heidi Amici as being a large help in making the library so successful. Mrs. Swartz recognized Assistant Director Heidi Amici for her knowledge and expertise. The technology in the library has vastly improved under Heidi's care.

Mrs. Swartz thanked Muriel Smith for continuing to write articles regarding the library for more publicity. Muriel has continued to give good coverage of the library this year. Muriel Smith thanked Commissioner Don Burden for providing the contact for The Journal newspaper in Rumson.

Freeholder's Report

Freeholder Burry is in County budget discussions and has noted that there may be some cuts next year. The alternative would be to raise taxes which would not be ideal. Mrs. Burry also mentioned that reorganization will be held at Biotech High School and commissioners are invited to attend.

Meeting Dates

Mrs. Swartz asked if there were any issues regarding the 2017 meeting dates.

Peter Doyle mentioned corrections to the draft in May and November. Judi stated that she will revise those dates in question.

Peter Doyle motioned to accept the 2017 meeting dates with corrections and James Gray seconded the motion; unanimously approved.

Financial Report

In summary, the November financial report reflects the following expenditures:

- \$481,015.62 was spent in salary with a year-to-date total of \$5,151,491.59.
- Other expenses- \$3,703,254.97 expended in November with an additional \$126,662.26 encumbered. This results in a total of \$8,314,752.58 charged year- to-date including encumbered expenses.
- Combined year to date total expenditures are \$13,466,103.25 applied to the adopted budget including encumbered expenses.
- As of the end of November there are \$12,509.41 in charges that are encumbered for 2015 and \$1,012,060.94 remains in the reserve budget for the 2015 expenses.
- Included in the financial report is the Career Connections grant information with funds allocated to staff and related grant expenses. The grant amount covers actual expenses up to \$50,000 at each location including Headquarters and Eastern Branch.
- Also included into the financial report is the use of a \$1,000 grant fund set up as a result of the Multicultural Award received from the NJ State Library and the Manalapan Englishtown Senior Citizen Club donation grant of \$500 used for the upcoming Tim McLoone Holiday Concert.

A motion was made by Peter Doyle to accept the financial report, and James Gray seconded the motion; unanimously approved.

Directors Report

Judi stated that she is looking into unassigned expenses regarding the library's indirect charges. Craig Marshall has been notified and will be investigating these charges. Both Ocean Township Library and West Long Branch Library have had heating issues that have resulted in temporarily closings. The heating systems are in the process of being repaired and the libraries will be reopened when repairs are complete. The member cookie trays were sent to all the member libraries as a holiday gift from the commissioners. Judi also mentioned that the Manalapan-Englishtown Senior Center have given the library a \$500 donation that will be placed into a grant fund.

Assistant Director Report

Heidi stated that the library branches will have self-service printers for patron use. Patrons can now print from their own electronic devices in the library. Heidi also mentioned that in 2017, there will be a new Library website, mobile App, and an automated caller that will contact patrons when their holds become available.

Public Comments

Barbara Stanhope, President of the Library's Union, spoke about giving Library employees a 3% raise. She advocated for the employees who feel overworked due to the lack of staff members. Director Judi Tolchin stated that there are open positions that will be filled in 2017. This was already funded in the library's budget. Judi also stated that she is very appreciative of all library staff. She has held staff training and teambuilding workshops in order to boost employee morale.

Motion was made to go into executive session by Peter Doyle seconded by James Gray and unanimously approved.

Closed executive session began at 1:20 p.m.

Closed executive session ended at 1:40 p.m.

Renee Swartz wished everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Peter Doyle; unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

The next meeting will be on January 10 at the Eastern Branch in Shrewsbury at 11:00 AM.

Submitted by Marissa Chimento