

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
February 10, 2015
Headquarters Branch

Present: Commission Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Grace Abramov, Peter Doyle, James Gray, Nancy Grbelja, and Frank Wells. Also present Freeholder Lillian Burry, Acting Director Judi Tolchin.

Absent: Commissioner Don Burden

Guests: None

The meeting convened at 1:09 p.m.

Renee Swartz opened the meeting of February 10, 2015 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 webpage the date, time, and place of the meeting."

Minutes:

The Commissioners met with library department heads for end of year updates. Presenters included: Judi Tolchin, Heidi Amici, Pat Findra, Kim Avagliano, Donna Mansfield, Stephenie Acosta, Marilyn DeJesus, and Rick Brancadora. Renee commended the department heads for their hard work. Rick Brancadora presented "Four Score and Twelve", a documentary about the history of the Monmouth County Library. Rick thanked Renee for the opportunity to serve the library and Commission and Renee thanked Rick for his hard work on the documentary.

Note: This portion of the meeting was not included in the meeting audio.

A motion to accept the January 12th meeting minutes was made by Peter Doyle and seconded by Grace Abramov, unanimously approved. Nancy Grbelja abstained because she was not present at the January 12th meeting.

Renee said that Library Commission was delighted with the reports from the library department heads and that it is valid to have the reports after the 1st of the year. She thanked Judi for her hard work and leadership and said the Library Commission was very pleased with the job she did in 2014.

Renee Swartz Report:

Chairperson Swartz said that when handing in the budget, the Commission should make a statement about the fact that they are very cognizant of the shortage of funds and that if the library is to continue it needs financial help. Freeholder Burry suggested devising an approach to bring more money into the library, and said that the Commission needs to

show that they will try to do their part, but they need a partner. Commissioner Abramov brought up the idea of having sponsors for library programs. Chairperson Swartz said to make a wish list of technology because the Ivy report showed that the Library was not up to date with technology. Commissioner Grbelja suggested writing to different companies and asking them to donate computers to library. Commissioner Wells said that the Ivy Report complained about the cost of performances and suggested that the library raise \$110,000 through sponsors for concerts. Commissioner Doyle noted that the Parks system has a full time fundraiser. Freeholder Burry suggested that Meridian could sponsor a health program at the library. Freeholder Burry noted that the types of partnerships the Commission is looking to develop will not solve the budget issue, but would show the Freeholders that they are making an attempt.

Acting Director Tolchin said they do not have closed session minutes because Don Burden took the minutes, but he isn't present at this meeting.

Lillian Burry Report:

Freeholder Burry reported that the subcommittee search for the library director position; the position has been advertised in trade magazines and as of the day of the meeting, they haven't gotten any responses yet. Renee spoke about how Commissioner Burden set up for the Master Gardeners to plant bulbs for Spring at the Eastern Branch, and noted that it was a lovely occasion which was very well attended. Lillian Burry said that the Commission is invited to the 50th anniversary of Allentown Library on March 8th. Freeholder Burry will bring a proclamation from the Freeholders, and Renee suggested giving Allentown a copy of the library history documentary.

Peter Doyle asked who could coordinate letters to set up meetings with sponsors and follow up. Renee suggested hiring a professional fundraiser and Commissioner Grbelja suggested asking the women from Marlboro library who were previously guests at a Commission meeting. Judi noted a change to the schedule: next meeting will be at Marlboro on March 10th. Renee said there needs to be someone who will make one-on-one appointments, visit with sponsors, write a fundraising letter and follow through. Freeholder Burry said the Library Commission should do it since they know the library the best. Chairperson Swartz asked the Commissioners to compile a list of people they know who they will approach, and said she will help Judi form a fundraising letter and the Commission can review it.

Renee then turned the meeting over to Frank and departed at 1:45 pm.

Financial Report:

Acting Director Tolchin presented the financial report which concerned the budget, reserve budget, and check writing.

Acting Director Tolchin said that she had reduced the book budget and audiobook budget for 2015 to keep spending flat. She noted that there was a small increase to programs and electronic equipment over the initial 2015 proposal. Frank noted that the Commission will deal with the budget at the next meeting.

A motion to accept the financial report was made by James Gray and seconded by Nancy Grbelja, unanimously approved.

Howell Memorandum:

Commissioner Abramov told the Commission about a contract from 1973 between the Library Commission and Howell Township which stated \$5,000 to be paid annually by Howell for the cost of books. Acting Director Tolchin said that she found agreements with other towns as well and that she was not aware of towns paying this fee. It is not reflected in revenue. Commissioner Wells suggested sending the contract to the legal department to see if it is still valid.

Freeholder Burry departed the meeting at 2:12 pm.

Peter Doyle signed voucher for West Long Branch.

Acting Director Report:

Judi noted that Oceanport is deciding between moving to a new location or remaining in the community center and requested more hours on Saturdays. For the staffing report, Judi said that the library continues to fill open positions.

Publicity and Programming Report:

Judi reported that the "I Love My Monmouth County Library" campaign will continue until February 14th then the Library will share the responses on Facebook and draw a winner who will get a small prize. Judi said this will be followed by the "Do You Know?" campaign, which is a 10 month campaign that tells people about library services. Regarding programs, Judi reported that the Bob Burger and Friends concert had 600 people in attendance, the Spirit of Life Ensemble concert had 375, and the Library expects a big crowd for the upcoming Zydeco concert.

Facility Report- Judi reported that the Headquarters Branch needs an upgrade and should focus on making the main reading room more accessible, comfortable and inviting. Judi also said that the Library should investigate starting a Business Resource Center for people who run their businesses at the library and adding supplies [for sale] for them such as envelopes.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by James Gray and seconded by Peter Doyle, unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

The next meeting will be on March 10th at Marlboro Branch.

Submitted by Rachel Casey.