



Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
May 2, 2016
Hall of Records, Freeholder Serena DiMaso's Conference Room

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz; Commissioners Grace Abramov, Don Burden, James Gray, Nancy Grbelja, and Frank Wells; Freeholder Lillian Burry, Liaison; Director Judith Tolchin

Absent: Commissioner Peter Doyle

Guests: Muriel Smith, Consultant.

The meeting convened at 10:10 AM.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of May 2, 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.”

Everyone in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes:

Chairperson Renee Swartz brought to the Commission's attention the minutes from the open public meeting on April 12, 2016.

A motion to accept the April 12, 2016 open public meeting minutes was made by Don Buden, and it was seconded by Frank Wells; unanimously approved. Commissioner James Gray abstained; he was not in attendance at the last meeting.

Chairperson Swartz brought to the Commission's attention the minutes from the closed executive session meeting on April 12, 2016.

A motion to accept the closed executive minutes from the April 12, 2016 meeting was made by Grace Abramov, and it was seconded by Frank Wells; unanimously approved. Commissioner James Gray abstained; he was not in attendance at the last meeting.

Chairperson Swartz noted the Commission had been asked to make a presentation to the Board of Freeholders. Last Thursday it was decided the Commission will present to the Freeholder’s the proposed expenditures.

Chairperson Swartz noted the need to schedule a closed executive session at the June 7, 2016 Commission Meeting at Eastern Branch.

A motion to schedule a closed executive session at the next Commission Meeting was made by Don Burden, seconded by Frank Wells, and unanimously approved.

Chairperson Swartz's Report

Chairperson Swartz congratulated Commissioner Burden, as the Shrewsbury Historical Society of New Jersey won third prize for their book *The Story of Shrewsbury Revisited*. The Commission echoed their congratulations, and Mrs. Swartz noted he leads the charge very well.

Chairperson Swartz addressed the Commission if there were any connections to Bruce Springsteen. Mr. Springsteen is releasing a book *Born to Run*, and it would be a grand idea to have him involved in a program at the Library. The Commission discussed possibilities.

Chairperson Swartz touched on the Annual Report. Judi noted the letters were being finalized, and the final products will have a glossy cover.

Programs

Mrs. Swartz discussed programming at the libraries. She noted the success of the *Ye Olde Monmouth County Authors Book Faire*. Don Burden added that local authors have trouble selling their books, as there are few local bookstores in New Jersey. Mrs. Swartz proposed that in the fall there be another author event. Regarding the Antiques Roadshow themed program, Mrs. Swartz said she would investigate the Belmar Jewelry Company to perform appraisals at the program. Chairperson Swartz expressed this program is not a dead idea. Freeholder Burry spoke of the similar fundraising program they recently had, and they discussed whether an event such as the Antiques Roadshow one would be appropriate for the needs of the Library. Mrs. Swartz expressed there needs to be some kind of program that introduces the public to the Library.

Commissioner Burden discussed the possibility of having the Monmouth Medical Center have health screenings for the public; however, Ms. Tolchin noted it was still uncertain if our venue would be appropriate and said that Monmouth Medical would contact us if they were interested in pursuing the idea. Commissioner Burden discussed the possibility of having Rosemary Peters at the Library. The Commission agreed that whatever the major program will be, it should be held at the Headquarters Library due to how many people the lower gallery accommodates.

Freeholder Lillian Burry's Report

Freeholder Burry stated that her secretary is now the President of the Friends of the Colts Neck Library. They were hosting *Women in the Civil War* program, and Lillian Burry questioned why this was not more publicized. Muriel Smith, Publicity Consultant, responded that the flier was the first she saw of this program. The Commission discussed the difficulties of publicizing the Library's programs. Judi noted that on our Eventkeeper part of our webpage, all of the programs are listed. Mrs. Swartz expressed that program information should be on the charge-out desks.

New Jersey Center for the Book

Chairperson Swartz informed the Commission that Director Tolchin went to Washington D.C. on her behalf to participate in an "Idea Exchange" at the Library of Congress. A member from each state comes to present their ideas each year. Chairperson Swartz commended Director Tolchin on her great job; she brings not only a national perspective but also a state perspective by going to these events.

Director Judith Tolchin's Financial Report

Ms. Tolchin introduced the financial data into the open session. In summary, the April financial report reflects the following expenditures:

- \$452,237.74 was spent in salary and wages, with a year-to-date total of \$1,861,602.58.
- Other expenses: \$486,653.05 was expended in April with an additional \$62,110.83 encumbered. This results in a total of \$992,777.50 charged year-to-date, which is reflected in the financial report.
- The combined year-to-date spending totals \$2,854,380.08 applied to the temporary budget including encumbered expenses.
- As of 4/30/16 \$1,058,113.68 remains in the Reserve Budget for 2015 expenses. Additionally, there are \$22,232.81 that are encumbered.

Freeholder Burry noted that Craig Marshall noticed \$1,030,689.11 unexpended in 2015. She questioned why this was the case, and Judi stated \$503,000 was because of unspent salary and wages. This was due to staff leaving the Library, and the time consuming process of replacing them. The majority of the amount is for salary as well as the corresponding fringe benefits, resulting in \$750,000 of the unexpended 2015 funds. Also, additional 2015 expenses are anticipated over the next 7 months.

Freeholder Burry questioned why the vacancies have not been filled, and Judi confirmed we work every day to fill the vacancies within the Library. Don Burden added that it is important the right people are found, and Judi stated that as these are civil service positions it is imperative to hire people with the library's best interest in mind. Ms. Tolchin said she is working with the Center of the Book, which she has the pleasure of serving on, about connections for hiring new people recently graduating from Library School; Mrs. Swartz expressed this is a big breakthrough so we can have a conduit in hiring new people.

Don Burden inquired about how many open positions there are. Judi stated there are ten to twelve vacancies, mostly part time positions. It is hard to project how many more retirements and resignations there will be through the end of the year. James Gray questioned which positions these are; Judi answered that we are focusing on two Technology Librarians and a Public Relations/Programming Librarian at present.

Motion was made to approve the financial report by Frank Wells, seconded by James Gray, and unanimously approved.

The Commission conferred with Freeholder Burry about the best way to discuss the Library budget with the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Motion was made to go into executive session by Grace Abramov to discuss personnel, negotiations, and draft documents; it was seconded by Frank Wells and unanimously approved.

Closed executive session began at 11:38 AM

Closed executive session ended at 12:19 PM

Motion was made to go back into an open, public session by Frank Wells and seconded by Don Burden; unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Grace Abramov to change the Library Budget to reduce the salary and wage line by \$100,000.00, \$50,000.00 for full-time salary and wages and \$50,000.00 for part-time salaries and

wages, corresponding fringe benefits would be deducted, and allocate the \$416,409.00 to Headquarters for renovations. The motion was seconded by Don Burden, and unanimously approved.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Grace Abramov and seconded by Don Burden; unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on June 7, 2016 at the Eastern Branch Library at 11:00 AM.

Submitted by Christina Roma