

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
October 16, 2018
Headquarters Branch Library

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz, Commissioners Don Burden, Frank Wells, Peter Doyle, and Nancy Grbelja, Freeholder Lillian Burry, Director Judi Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici.

Absent: Commissioners Grace Abramov and James Gray

Guests: Muriel Smith, Publicity Consultant; Glenn Goble, Library Interiors; Frank Gomes, Direct Flooring; Ann Morris, Sea Girt Councilwoman and Library Liaison

The meeting convened at 11:09 am.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of Tuesday, October 16, 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.

Minutes

Renee Swartz gave a few minutes for review of the meeting minutes of September 14, 2018. Opportunity was given for additions, corrections, and suggestions.

A Motion to approve the open public meeting minutes of September 14, 2018, was made by Peter Doyle and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously Approved.

A Motion to approve the closed executive session minutes of September 14, 2018, was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Peter Doyle. Unanimously Approved.

State & National Report

Chairperson Renee Swartz stated a reminder that the month of October has been the 50th anniversary celebration of the Monmouth County Library Eastern Branch. She complimented the events that have already occurred and reiterated that programs highlighting this milestone will continue until the end of the month.

Library Liaison Report

Freeholder Lillian Burry received a phone call from the Administrator of Freehold Borough where they expressed a desire to be a part of the Monmouth County Library system. Currently, the Freehold Borough Library is part of the Carnegie Library system and Lillian questioned how changing systems would affect the Freehold Borough Library. Judi Tolchin stated she was unsure, at this time, what exactly the rules of the Carnegie system would need to be considered and asked if their intention was to become a branch of the Monmouth County Library or a member library. Lillian stated the answer to that question is unclear, at this time. Freehold Borough has concerns regarding budgeting and the ability to maintain their library, which is important to their community. Lillian stated the Freehold Borough Library could become an even

more prominent part of the community if they become involved with the Monmouth County Library. Don Burden asked, when the Carnegie libraries were established, were individual libraries provided endowments? Renee Swartz and Judi explained this type of library was established through the philanthropic efforts of Andrew Carnegie throughout the country. Don asked, if the library was established through an endowment, if or when they leave the Carnegie system, is the annual endowment transferred or lost? Judi stated that the money, if there is an endowment, would not be transferred to the Monmouth County Library and she would need to research further. Lillian asked if the Commission is thinking about branch status or member status, in regards to the Freehold Borough Library. Judi stated a branch status could be more costly as it would require providing staff. Lillian stated, as Freehold Borough is the location of the county seat, this would provide goodwill and support. She asked if a separate budget line could be made and Judi stated that would have to be brought before the Freeholders. Renee and Lillian concurred this would be a positive decision that cannot be seen as just dollar amounts. Judi noted the close proximity of the Borough library to other county libraries. Renee stated that was not an issue as there are current branches and member branches that lay in close proximity to each other. Don stated that the Borough library's important location and community diversity cannot be overlooked. He then inquired about the status of their collection and digital equipment. Heidi Amici stated some time would be needed to figure that out, as well as assess the buildings physical accessibility. Judi noted if anything relating to the physical building accessibility needed to be updated, that would involve the township as it is a township building. Lillian noted the high potential for pedestrian patron traffic at this location that some current library locations do not offer. Renee suggested tabling this discussion until the next scheduled meeting and the Commissioners agreed, stating this is a great idea that requires further inquiry.

Lillian announced Commissioner James Gray will be resigning from his position due to moving outside of Monmouth County. A new Commissioner will need to be appointed to fill the vacancy. Lillian and Renee stated that diverse county representation is necessary and sited the Manalapan and Wall areas of the county as needing more extensive representation.

Eastern Branch 50th Anniversary / Eastern Branch Sculpture Sculpture

The prototype made of the intended sculpture is currently in the possession of the artist. The Commission would like to obtain the prototype for display at the 50th Anniversary final event celebration on October 28, 2018 at Eastern Branch. The Commission would also like to continue to display the piece in Eastern Branch until the completion of the formal sculpture. Judi stated the artist informed her there will be a slight change in cost from the original estimated \$45,000. Now that material and transportation cost have been determined, the price will be \$48,500. The intended completion and delivery date of the final sculpture is June 19, 2019. Judi stated she would work to finalize the purchasing requirements and contractual agreement.

A Motion to accept the sculpture pricing proposal of \$48,500 was made by Don Burden and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

The base for the sculpture and the support for the base are not provided by the artist, but he will make recommendations of where the library may obtain these items for purchase. Lillian stated a final location for placement of the sculpture needs to be decided upon. As an outdoor piece,

Lillian suggested a location near the library sign. Don suggested including landscaping in the area where the sculpture will be placed. Renee suggested consulting with the Master Gardeners for their recommendation. Heidi stated that if the sign needs to be moved in relation to the placement of the sculpture, electrical would also be needed.

50th Anniversary

Renee discussed the 50th Anniversary kick-off event and stated it was a wonderful success.

A final anniversary event will be on October 28, 2018 from 1pm – 4pm. Renee stated there will be only a small portion that will be a formal program. The Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts will be presenting the colors, the Star Spangled banner will be sung, Judi will be the Master of Ceremonies, Renee will greet those in attendance, Lillian will give a speech, and then a ribbon cutting for the room with cupcakes will follow. A concert will also be held starting around 2pm. Renee asked if Chris Smith will be in attendance and the answer is not known, at this time. If he is not able to attend, a representative from his office will be in attendance. Heidi stated a couple of drawings are scheduled. Renee said one of them will be for a Kindle device. Heidi stated Ben Franklin will also be there to read one of the town proclamations. Renee stated Don had contacted local mayors for the submission of flags. During the concert, Ben Franklin will be providing entertainment in the children's room from 1pm – 3pm. Renee asked if there were any suggestions for additions to the program. Frank Wells asked if a history of the library would be included. Judi stated that would be incorporated in displays around the library. Don asked if the digital photo reel would be played. Judi stated it would be playing in the lobby areas of the Headquarters and Eastern branches. Renee asked if copies could be made for all of the branches. Judi stated that additional copies were possible. Don asked if it would be okay to have a fire truck on site from 1pm – 2pm for the kids. It was stated that would be great.

Headquarters Renovation Update

Glenn Goble from Library Interiors distributed to the Commissioners a timeline, the awarded contractors estimate, a proposed construction phasing, and an amendment to the architectural services contract. Glenn stated a fabric decision would need to be made regarding the backs of the reading room chairs. Renee stated she was informed the previously selected yellow fabric is no longer available. The Commission expressed concern that the suggested fabric swatches do not coordinate. Glenn stated the original fabrics for the backs of the chairs were black and silver. Renee asked if there is just one or are there multiple vendors from which to source furniture and fabric. Glenn stated there have been different fabrics chosen for different pieces of furniture. Glenn and Judi stated one fabric would become damaged too easily and that was the reasoning for shifting to the blue colored fabric. Glenn stated the main area of the library chairs will have red backs.

Renee stated the topic was raised by the county about completing the ceiling portion of the headquarters renovation before going further with other aspects. Nancy Grbelja expressed concern for bringing in new carpet, paint, and furniture before updating the ceiling and lighting. Nancy stated there was a delay in receiving a proposed plan for lighting which is why the other portions continued forward, as to not delay the overall project. Additional funds were secured to complete the ceiling project and an estimate for an electrical engineer has been received. Nancy suggested purchasing what is needed to maintain and meet furniture deadlines, but holding the

furnishings in a storage area until the ceiling is complete. Glenn stated the plan going forward is in concurrence with completing the ceiling and electrical portion of the renovation prior to bringing in the new furniture. Glenn stated \$1.5 million is estimated to complete the core drilling at night and the remainder completed during the day. It is estimated at \$2 million to complete the entire core drilling at night. These budgets include the cost of electric, the ceiling, and painting including lighting for the adult and children's sides of the library. The architect has provided different phasing options to complete the project. **Option A:** this option contains six (6) phases, to be completed in parts. Phases one (1) through six (6) would each be completed by setting up barriers to complete the core drilling, moving of outlets, and data. Once this is done, Library Interiors could then install the furniture in that area. This option would make the work area(s) temporarily inaccessible. This option does not include completing the ceiling or lighting within each phase. Option A, Phases one (1) through six (6) would cost an estimated \$375,000. The additionally proposed phase seven (7) would add an estimated cost of \$125,000. This option does not include the cost of completing the ceiling and lighting. **Option B:** this option would be completed in phases. During each phase, a designated area would be partitioned off behind barriers and the ceiling, lighting, painting, and electrical drilling, moving of outlets, and data would be completed. Once this is done, Library Interiors could then install the furniture in that area. Option B would cost an estimated \$1 million to \$1.6 million. This option includes the adult, children's, and lobby areas.

Glenn stated it would be more affordable to complete everything all at once, as stated in Option B. When asked what the savings were, the response was a savings of \$100,000 and that it would be completed one (1) month sooner. Option A would require duplication, as areas would need to be sectioned off again at a later date to complete the ceiling, lighting, and painting. Glenn stated a cost savings may be found by using LED light bulbs and value engineering the lights. Judi stated that the current unencumbered funds do not match the full, proposed estimate so only purchase orders equaling current available funds can be submitted. Lillian asked about the HVAC system and if it could be added to the project. Judi stated the HVAC system is a capital project that would need to be submitted to the Freeholders for review and approval. It was discussed that the rooms downstairs would be used for the temporary storage of furniture. Nancy asked about the need for permits and Glenn stated yes, they are needed. The proposed glass walls in the renovation plan were suggested for removal. The response was that the glass walls are a desired element of the design, but they will need to be altered in height as to not create a ventilation concern.

The Commission added a suggestion of presenting this information in a different format going forward, such as a chart, to alleviate confusion in plan options and pricing breakdowns.

A Motion to approve Option B with the ceiling, lighting, painting, and electrical drilling, outlet moving, and data to occur all together, in phases and to approve the gray and teal fabric for the reading room chairs was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

Concern was voiced regarding stains and spots on the carpet. Frank Gomes stated, over time, stains and spots will occur. He has instructed maintenance on the proper cleaning techniques and regular upkeep will be needed to maintain the carpet. The next phase of flooring will require

packing up and moving a large amount of little parts. The circulation foyer will not be completed until the new circulation desk arrives, as to complete the circulation area all at once.

Veterans in Exempt Communities

It has been asked if the Monmouth County Library would offer a discount to veterans in exempt communities. Peter Doyle asked if the library would be reimbursed from the town(s) from which the veteran resides. Renee stated it would be a positive public relations effort to provide the discount. Judi stated even with a discount, veterans in exempt communities would fall under standard paid borrowers' access, which contractually does not allow the borrowing of e-books and e-audiobooks. Heidi stated the copy of the contract is old and would ask about getting an updated copy. Heidi then asked what documentation is needed to verify veteran status. Peter stated it is form DD-214 (this form acts as a certificate of release or discharge from active duty). Peter asked if the borrowing privilege would be one-way or reciprocal. Judi stated no, the card would function just as any other paid borrower. Nancy suggested a discount of \$50, which would equate to at 50% discount. Don asked how many veterans reside within the county. Frank stated an estimated 33,000 veterans. Muriel Smith stated the veteran discount would not be reciprocal, citing an example that a veteran residing in Middletown could obtain a Monmouth County Library card at a reduced rate but a veteran residing in a member community could not obtain a Middletown Library card at a reduced rate. Nancy asked if it was known how many veterans currently hold paid borrower cards. The answer to that question is unknown at this time. Concerns were raised that the discount would not be reciprocal and that the individual veteran is represented with full access to their community's library. Renee stated providing this discount would be in the spirit of patriotism and community service while recognizing their duty and hard work. Heidi stated a different line would need to be established and mapped in the system to track a paid borrower with a discounted veteran status card. She also stated a Monmouth County card can be presented in Ocean County for a reciprocal borrowing card at no cost. Don suggested that the discount be 25% since the potential impact is unknown and no other library is offering a discount currently. Renee suggested announcing it at the event near Veterans Day where the military band is playing.

A Motion to provide a 25% discount to veterans, in good standing presenting form DD-214, in non-member communities was made by Peter Doyle and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report – September 2018 Financials

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

Judi submitted the September 2018 Financial Report to the Commission including the Detail Budget, Grant Budgets, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, and Capital Accounts wherein the budget charged year to date was \$11,225,847.25 with a total, including encumbered amounts, of \$11,848,342.80 expended. She stated the remaining balance in the reserve budget was \$2,257,932.31. This amount would be returned to the fund balance at the end of the year, if it remains unspent. The Capital Account charged year to date was \$853,354.89 out of \$977,000 of the original capital amount. Remaining in Phase One funds was a balance of \$123,645.11 with a new allocation of \$1,497,000 for a total of \$1,620,645.11.

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

Audio-Visual System Replacement-Room Three

Judi requested an upgrade to the Audio-Visual System in meeting room three, with a budget not to exceed \$15,000. This would cover the cost of a new digital projector, speakers, and wiring.

A Motion to approve the upgrading of the audio-visual system in meeting room three with a budget not to exceed \$15,000 was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Don asked if that would include any monitors around the room. Judi responded no and stated monitors may be difficult due to the moving walls. She stated that is something that could eventually be considered.

Van Purchase

Judi stated a new van is needed and \$40,000 has been budgeted, with a not to exceed amount of \$50,000. Don asked if the purpose of the van to transport goods or people. The response was the van's intention is to transport goods.

A Motion to approve the purchase of a new van with a not to exceed budget of \$50,000 was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Judi stated the voucher was received from Craig Marshall for the third quarter fringe benefits in the amount of \$781,003.24.

A Motion to approve the third quarter fringe benefits was made by Nancy Grbelja and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Director's Report

Allentown Public Library's 19th into the 21st Century Invitation

Judi stated that the Allentown Library has invited the Commission to an event they are holding on Sunday, November 4, 2018 from 2pm – 4pm. The event is titled *Allentown Public Library's 19th into the 21st Century*. Judi provided each Commissioner with their formal invitation. Renee stated it would be wonderful if one or more Commissioners could attend the event. Judi stated if she does not need to attend a program on November 4th, she plans to attend this event at the Allentown library.

Eastern Branch Facilities

Judi stated the Eastern Branch Library is currently having an issue with mold. Mold was discovered in the government documents section and downstairs. It is being investigated as to where the moisture issue is located and this issue is also being addressed presently through the County Safety Officer, Kathy West.

Holmdel Plaque Dedication

Judi stated the Holmdel Township governing body would like to hold the plaque dedication on Monday, October 29th at 5pm. Renee stated the Eastern Branch event is the day prior. Judi stated all of the Commissioner's names are listed on the plaque.

Sea Girt Update

Ann Morris, Sea Girt Councilwoman and Library Liaison, was present for the meeting. She presented the factors being evaluated by Sea Girt for consideration to stay with or leave the Monmouth County Library system. Ms. Morris stated this will be a referendum question on the November ballot in Sea Girt. She stated, currently, Sea Girt has the second highest library tax in Monmouth County. As a member branch, the Borough of Sea Girt is still responsible for a large portion of their library's operating costs. While the Sea Girt municipal tax rate has decreased, the county library tax has increased. Based on concerns that they are receiving disproportionate services and in an effort to remain an effective steward of their residents' tax dollars, Sea Girt is considering leaving the Monmouth County Library system. The Sea Girt Library is important to its residents and the town council wants to ensure it provides this service in a fiscally responsible manner. Ms. Morris stated that the county is concerned by the possibility of lost tax revenue if Sea Girt left the system. She cited that a flyer distribution campaign to show what services would be lost to the community of Sea Girt, if they left the county system, was mentioned at the Monmouth County Library Commission meeting held on August 7, 2018. She asked for care to be taken to present just facts in any materials that may be distributed.

Judi stated the library tax, for Sea Girt residents, may increase due to state mandated minimums if the decision was made to leave the county system. She stated it is costly to run an effective library and being part of a system helps alleviate costs while providing extensive services. Judi cited that every request for materials, equipment, and supplies was provided to the Sea Girt Library. Additional equipment has also been offered over time, but physical space limitations prohibited the accepting of the materials. Purchasing and program budgets have been increased, as well as services further extended, for the Sea Girt library that equate to more revenue received than expended. Judi stated the property value, and therefore tax rates, are higher in the Sea Girt area and that is not something the county system is capable of adjusting. Ms. Morris stated there is no argument with the services that have been provided. She stated they had requested in the past assistance in expanding their physical space and staffing assistance and those requests were not met. Judi stated that was not met for the reason that the county system is not at liberty to offer building expansion assistance as the building is not county owned, but township owned. Regarding staffing assistance, the county provides staffing for county branches not member branches. As Sea Girt is a member branch, children's services is the only staffing assistance provided and that assistance has been provided. Ms. Morris stated they have contacted other independent libraries in Monmouth County to gather information and conducted research and feel that Sea Girt can deliver the necessary services independently. Frank asked what the overall population of Sea Girt is. Ms. Morris stated it is approximately 1,800 but will flex up to 6,500 in the summer months. Renee cautioned that Sea Girt should carefully consider their decision and evaluate the services uniformly received by being a member of the county system. Ms. Morris stated that they want to expand the physical library. Don asked if Sea Girt plans to expand their space, what would be the cost of the additional space. Ms. Morris stated they have already received a grant to make the building handicap accessible. To complete an expansion is

estimated at \$2 million and would include a municipal wing. Renee cited the recent renovations of the Atlantic Highlands and Holmdel libraries and stated that is the individual municipality's responsibility for the physical space. Ms. Morris stated that costs are continuing to rise. She stated they have consulted with attorneys and council regarding how to proceed, that it is ultimately a fiscal decision. Renee stated she would be pleased to see Sea Girt remain in the system and thanked Ann Morris for presenting.

Assistant Director's Report

Heidi stated she is working on obtaining a formal quote for the expansion of back-end equipment relating to the upgrading of ports behind circulation. The preliminary quote provided by the county is \$18,797.58. Heidi stated she desires to have everything here for when the electricians are on-site to expedite the process and avoid having to do anything after they are no longer here.

A Motion to approve the preliminary quote of \$18,797.58 for equipment needed for port upgrades was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

Publicity Report

Muriel Smith stated the anniversary kick-off event held at the Eastern Branch Library was wonderful.

Muriel stated the Two Rivers Times has asked her to providing writings for their paper.

Muriel asked, on behalf of Lillian Burry, if the Gold Star Mothers could use the Monmouth County Library as a food and donation drop-off spot. Judi stated the library has agreed to be a collection point and the group will be providing the box, signage, and pick-up of donations. She stated we could list the donation drive on the library's event keeper. Judi and Heidi stated collections such as this one have used the library as a drop-off point in the past. Muriel stated the intended completion is the 10th of November. Judi noted that date did not leave much time to collect items, but efforts would be made to ensure a quick and efficient set-up.

Closed Executive Session

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

The Commission adjourned to Executive Session at 1:49 pm.

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

The Commission resumed the regular session at 2:07 pm.

Commissioner Comments

Renee stated Don attended Archives Day at the Monmouth County Library. The Commission is concerned that the Archives Department did not acknowledge that Archives and Headquarters library are housed in the same facility.

Renee suggested contacting Buildings and Grounds regarding the state of the flowers outside of the Headquarters and Eastern Branches.

Renee suggested completing the Headquarters renovation update report at the beginning of the meeting.

Judi stated Grace Abramov is no longer able to attend the Trustee Institute event being held on October 27, 2018. Judi asked if she should cancel the invitation or if another Commissioner would like to attend in place of Grace. Don Burden agreed to attend.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at the Headquarters Branch Library at 10:00 am.

Scheduling of Closed Executive Session at Next Meeting

A Motion to schedule a closed executive session at the meeting on November 13, 2018, was made by Don Burden and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Don Burden and seconded by Nancy Grbelja. Unanimously approved.

The meeting concluded at 2:15 pm.

Submitted by Kimberly Conover