

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
February 9, 2021
Headquarters Library

Present: Chairperson Nancy Grbelja and Library Commissioners Brian Boms, Barbara McMorro, Mary Ann Musich, Marcy McMullen, and Frank Wells; also present County Commissioner Lillian Burry, Director Judith Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici

Guests: Muriel Smith, Publicity Consultant; Fay Szakal, Special Counsel; and Christopher Marion, Deputy County Administrator

The meeting convened at 11:03 am.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairperson Nancy Grbelja opened the meeting of Tuesday, February 9, 2021 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.”

Oath of Office

New Commissioner Marcy McMullen was sworn in by Freeholder Lillian Burry with the following oath:

“I, Marcy McMullen, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the Governments established in the United States and in this State, under the authority of the people. I will faithfully, impartially, and justly perform all the duties of the office of Commissioner of the Monmouth County Library Commission, to the best of my ability, so help me God.”

Commissioner Mary Ann Musich, was sworn in for another term of service by Freeholder Lillian Burry with the following oath:

“I, Mary Ann Musich do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the Governments established in the United States and in this State, under the authority of the people. I will faithfully, impartially, and justly perform all the duties of the office of Commissioner of the Monmouth County Library Commission, to the best of my ability, so help me God.”

Minutes

Chairperson Nancy Grbelja gave a few minutes for review of the meeting minutes from January 12, 2021. Opportunity was given for additions, corrections, and suggestions.

A Motion to approve the Open Public Meeting minutes of January 12, 2021 was made by Barbara McMorro and seconded by Brian Boms. Marcy McMullen abstained. Approved.

Library Liaison Report

County Commissioner Lillian Burry stated the Monmouth County Board of Commissioners will be discussing the County budget at their next scheduled meeting. The Monmouth County Library budget will be discussed during the course of this meeting.

County Commissioner Burry suggested Saturday, May 15, 2021 as the date for the sculpture dedication event. The Monmouth County Library Commission agreed to this event date. County Commissioner Burry will work with Director Tolchin to send invitations.

The library received a proclamation from Monmouth County brought forward by county Commissioner Burry recognizing the tremendous work providing library services during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Director Tolchin thanked County Commissioner Burry for recognizing the library.

There remains one vacancy on the Monmouth County Library Commission.

New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act Update

Director Tolchin stated that the due diligence request and tax questionnaire have been submitted. Additional documentation to support the grant are due by March 1, 2021. In order to complete the additional documentation, resolutions are being brought before the Monmouth County Library Commission.

A resolution to approve the Headquarters renovation in acceptance of the New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act Grant was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Barbara McMorrow.

Unanimously approved as written below.

The Monmouth County Library Commission resolves to approve the Monmouth County Library Headquarters renovation project at 125 Symmes Drive, Manalapan, New Jersey with a total project cost of \$3,900,000.00 and authorizes entering into a Grant Agreement between the New Jersey State Library as granter and the Monmouth County Library as grantee.

A resolution for the authorization of a signatory was made by Brian Boms and seconded by Frank Wells.

Unanimously approved as written below.

The Monmouth County Library Commission resolves to authorize Chairperson Nancy A. Grbelja to act as signatory for the grant agreement between the New Jersey State Library as granter and the Monmouth County Library as grantee for the New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act with a grant amount of \$1,950,000.00 and matching funds of \$1,950,000.00 regarding application number 01-13-2801. The Monmouth County Library Commission further authorizes email contact to be established with the recipient County Library Director Judith Tolchin at the email address jtolchin@monmouthcountylib.org.

A resolution to establish matching funds was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Marcy McMullen.

Unanimously approved as written below.

The Monmouth County Library Commission resolves to establish matching funds in the amount of \$1,950,000.00. The Monmouth County Library Commission authorizes the use of the following sources of matching funds allocated and dedicated the completion of the

Headquarters renovation with the New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act Grant: the Capital Account totaling \$1,485,770.84, the Capital Account totaling \$60,486.02, the Capital Account totaling \$216,385.20, and the Detail Budget Account totaling \$187,357.94 for a combined total of \$1,950,000.00. The Library further authorizes Craig Marshall, Finance Director for the County of Monmouth, to provide the necessary documentation and verification regarding the availability of matching funds.

A resolution to certify exclusive library use of New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act funds was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved as written below.

The Monmouth County Library Commission resolves to certify exclusive library use of the New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act Grant funds. The Monmouth County Library Commission certifies in this shared space certification for the Monmouth County Library Headquarters renovation at 125 Symmes Drive, Manalapan, New Jersey that no part of the project funded through the New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act Grant will fund space used by another agency.

Financial Report

January Financials - Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets

Director Tolchin submitted the January 2021 Financial Report to the Commission, including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets wherein the 2021 Detail Budget Account charged year to date is \$702,708.83 posted to the Temporary Budget of \$3,887,103.17. This total includes encumbered amounts. The 2020 Reserve Budget reflects \$2,943,260.02 remaining unencumbered. The remaining Capital Account for the renovation is \$60,486.02 unencumbered from the first capital appropriation of \$977,000 and \$1,485,770.84 unencumbered from the second capital appropriation of \$1,497,000.00 for a total of \$1,546,256.86 remaining unencumbered as of January 31, 2021. These funds are reserved for the completion of the adult library and the lobby, including lobby furniture. There is an additional \$216,385.20 available from the toilet renovation and has been allocated as matching funds as a recipient of the New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act Grant.

The Estate of Charles Raffetto Grant Detailed Account status reflects \$3,038.80 remaining in unencumbered funds. These funds were used for the sculpture and site amenities.

A Motion to approve the January 2021 Financial Report including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

A voucher for approval for Fourth Quarter Fringe Benefits was submitted for Commission approval in the amount of \$698,101.82 payable to Monmouth County.

A Motion to approve the voucher for Fourth Quarter Fringe Benefits in the amount of \$698,101.82 and authorize the Library Director to sign the voucher was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Brian Boms. Unanimously approved.

A voucher for approval for Envisionware Mobile Printing was submitted for Commission approval in the amount of \$14,938.00.

A Motion to approve the voucher for Envisionware Mobile Printing in the amount of \$14,938.00 for annual licensing fees associated with mobile printing and authorizing the Library Director to sign the voucher was made by Marcy McMullen and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Unanimously approved.

Library 2021 Budget

Director Tolchin drafted a Library Budget for 2021 in the amount of \$17,885,000.00. The budget includes an excess of \$187,000.00 for matching grant funds and \$213,000.00 to permit construction to repair and replace fixtures in the Headquarters lower gallery restrooms. The rest of the budget remains unchanged from the 2020 budget at \$17,485,000.00. An additional \$400,000.00 will be necessary from the Fund Balance to finance and fund the Headquarters renovation. This is a one year change that will not be anticipated in the 2022 budget. The library's budget remains within the parameters of the sustainable plan developed by Craig Marshall, County of Monmouth Finance Director.

A Motion to approve a resolution establishing a budget of \$17,885,000.00 including the renovation matching grant funds; the budget further includes funding for the renovation of the lower gallery restrooms for a combined \$400,000.00. The Monmouth County Library Commission authorizes the use of the Fund Balance for the \$400,000.00 was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.

Library 2021 Tax Levy Recommendation

Director Tolchin stated she has spoken with Craig Marshall, County Finance Director, regarding the appropriation of monies for the tax levy. This will require Monmouth County Board of Commissioner approval. The tax levy for 2020 was \$15,850,000.00. It is recommended to increase this by 1.89% for a total of \$16,150,000.00 in consideration of the long term sustainable plan. County Finance Director Craig Marshall believes this increase will allow the library to spend down the Fund Balance in a reasonable manner and become independent of Fund Balance need in the future. It is important to note that Sea Girt is no longer a member of the Monmouth County Library system, effective January 1, 2021, and some reallocation is necessary because of this.

A Motion to endorse a 1.89% increase to the Library Tax Levy [\$16,150,000] to support the budget of \$17,885,000.00 at the recommendation of County Finance Director Craig Marshall and Library Director Judith Tolchin was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Unanimously approved.

Children's Services – Member Libraries

Director Tolchin stated, due to the pandemic, Children's librarians have not been reporting to member locations as all in person programming has been cancelled. The library is currently conducting all programming in virtual formats only. Director Tolchin has drafted a statement regarding the suspension of this service to share with member library locations:

During this uncertain time, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, we continue to safeguard our staff and our patrons by suspending all in-person programs and meeting room use until such time as it is safe to resume activities. In lieu of in-person programming, the Library offers online, virtual programming services with both live and pre-recorded options.

Director Tolchin feels strongly about maintaining staff safety during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Currently, there are no libraries in the State of New Jersey holding in-person children's programming. The Monmouth County Library Commission is in agreement that in-person programming should remain suspended at this time. The Library has invested in new computers and wireless tablet stations to add to virtual based services.

Monitor Positions

The library currently has 36 monitors active on payroll most of which have not been scheduled for hours since April 2020. Director Tolchin is seeking approval from the Monmouth County Library Commission for the library to begin the next step with regard to these positions.

CARES Act Project Status

Assistant Director Amici stated the tablet station equipment has been received and is awaiting installation. Additionally, eight branch locations have received self-checkout machines with the ability to accept credit card payments for fines and fees. The library has begun the bank account setup to be able to begin accepting credit card payments. Assistant Director Amici has been working with the Monmouth County Finance Department for additional paperwork. The library is hoping to have the self-checkout machines installed soon. Additionally, the outdoor wireless installation at the Headquarters and Eastern branches has been set back due to weather and will hopefully be completed soon.

Director Tolchin stated, if additional CARES Act funding becomes available, she has requested it be used for the ionization process of the HVAC system and touch-less toilet room fixtures.

Security System Status Update

Director Tolchin stated she spoke with Robert Compton, Buildings and Grounds and a video security system would need to be more elaborate and costly than previously anticipated. It has been suggested that the library submit a Capital Funding Request for such a project. Director Tolchin also indicated that the library would be interested in a lower-level internal monitoring system. These systems would be for the Headquarters and Eastern branch locations as they are County owned and operated buildings.

A Motion to request Capital Funding to install a video surveillance security system at the Headquarters and Eastern branch locations was made by Barbara McMorro and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Director's Report

Director Tolchin stated Kate Hardy, Senior Management Assistant, has brought forward a records management request. Currently, all of the library records are listed under the Monmouth County Library Commission in the County Records Information Management System (RIM) including accounts payable, purchasing, payroll, personnel, and financial revenue. The listed Records Custodian is Renee Swartz and there is no listed Records Manager. Kate Hardy is listed as the Requester when she is logged into the system. Marie Minneci is the only other Library employee in Library Administration who has access to RIM and could act as Requester in Kate Hardy's absence. In order to request permission from the State to shred records after the library has met the retention requirement, we need to submit a disposition request which would require the signature on each form by the Records Custodian, Records Manager, and the Requester. The disposition request would then have to be notarized prior to submission to the State for review.

Director Tolchin is requesting a separation of the library's records from the Monmouth County Library Commission's records.

A Motion to separate the Library's records from the Monmouth County Library Commission's records was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.

A Motion to approve the Library Director Judith Tolchin as the Record Custodian for the Library's records and Assistant Director Heidi Amici as Records Manager for the Library's records was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. Unanimously approved.

A Motion to change the Monmouth County Library Commission Records Custodian from Renee Swartz, Former Commission Chairperson, to Library Director Judith Tolchin and Nancy Grbelja, Commission Chairperson, as Records' Manager of the Commission's documents, including but not limited to, Commission Meeting Records was made by Brian Boms and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.

Presently, most library locations are maintaining their regular hours of operation; some branch locations have modified hours due to cleaning schedules. At this time, the library does not see a need to alter any service hours and will continue to provide services based on each branch's current schedule. Many locations have seen a reduction in patron traffic during evening hours and the library will continue to monitor patron traffic. Additionally, the library will continue to suspend Sunday hours at this time and will revisit the topic in the fall.

Progress is being made in staffing positions and new temporary staff members have begun training. But, with the recent snow storms staffing issues still arose; specifically, the Allentown branch had to be closed early due to this. The library will continue all on-going recruitment efforts. The library is also experiencing retirements occurring throughout the year.

Over 3,000 magazine titles have been added to Overdrive as of February 1, 2021. The library is working on publicizing this new addition to the collection.

Currently, there is no authorization for library workers in general to be vaccinated unless they personally meet the requirements established by the State of New Jersey.

Director Tolchin would like to commend Laura Migliore, Programming Coordinator on all the fantastic work she and her department are doing. There are many upcoming virtual programs, including: What's It Worth (virtual appraisal program), an art history program, and a history program titled *Out of Rushmore's Shadow: The Luigi Del Bianco Story*. Currently, the library is reviewing issues related to streaming events, such as licensing concerns, and is considering suspending movie licensing due to the cancellation of in-person programming.

Donna Mansfield, Grant Writer, applied for the Gilder Lerhman Revisiting the Founding Era Grant. The library was awarded the grant in the amount of \$800.00 and a program on the founding fathers' era will be held soon.

It is suggested that the Food for Fines program be suspended for this year due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Monmouth County Library Commission agrees that the program will not be held this calendar year.

The library is reviewing the expense per item in Overdrive. Currently, the library pays an average of \$0.91 per circulation. It is expected that the price per circulation will increase over time [to \$2.00.] The library will continue to dedicate monies to the electronic collection as it is a vital and important service to patrons.

The library would like to review the Inter Library Loan Policy. Director Tolchin would like to recommend a four-year to seven-year embargo for any municipalities that leave the Monmouth County Library system. The Monmouth County Library Commission requested a draft of the policy be presented at the next scheduled meeting for review and approval. Additionally, it was suggested that, going forward, if a library leaves the County Library System that library equipment such as computers and tablet stations be returned to the Monmouth County Library. It was recommended that Special Counsel be consulted regarding this.

The library is in the process of gathering information and statistics for the completion of the State Aid Report. The State has requested additional information be included in this year's report relating to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Once the report is completed, the signature of the Monmouth County Library Commission Chairperson will be required for submission.

Assistant Director's Update

Assistant Director Heidi Amici stated the Tinton Falls Library has been closed for approximately three and a half years. Assistant Director Amici would like to delete the expired patron profiles from the system to avoid errors with any concurrent Monmouth County Library profiles. Currently, the Borough of Tinton Falls would like the expired profiles to remain in the system.

The library is in the process of ordering a third delivery van.

The Technology Services Department is continuing the deployment of the Windows 10 computers. It is anticipated that the project will be completed by December 2021.

Inclement weather has delayed the installation of the outdoor wireless at the Headquarters and Eastern Branch locations. The library is hopeful that installation can occur soon.

The library is resuming the student database access card project. The program will be piloted with the Freehold Regional and Shore Regional School Districts.

Publicity Consultant Report

Publicity Consultant Muriel Smith stated she has submitted a press release on the Monmouth County Library Commission Reorganization and submitted stories on Love Your Library in February programs and Black History Month programs.

Closed Executive Session

A Closed Executive Session was not held during the course of the meeting.

Commissioner Comments

The Monmouth County Library Commission welcomes Commissioner Marcy McMullen and they are excited to have her as a member of the Commission.

Commissioner McMullen inquired about the patron traffic levels on Saturdays and if it has increased. Overall, in-branch patron traffic has reduced due to the pandemic. Many patrons are utilizing the curbside pick-up service for obtaining their library items. The library continues to promote short browsing and one-hour per person per day use of public internet computers. Additionally, the library has socially distanced tables and chairs with a one-chair per table policy. The library continues to reach out to the community via online programming.

Commissioner Musich inquired about the use of the library among the senior population. Many seniors are utilizing the curbside pick-up service to obtain their library items.

Public Comments

A Motion to open the meeting to public comment was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Let it be known for the record that no comments were made.

A Motion to close the meeting to public comment was made by Brian Boms and seconded by Frank Wells. Unanimously approved.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at the Monmouth County Library Headquarters at 11:00 am.

Scheduling of Closed Executive Session at Next Meeting

A Motion to schedule a Closed Executive Session at the next meeting on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Unanimously approved.

The meeting concluded at 12:32 pm.

Submitted by Kimberly Conover