

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
March 8, 2022
Headquarters Library

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

The meeting convened at 11:06 am.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairperson Brian Boms opened the meeting of Tuesday, March 8, 2022 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.”

Minutes

Chairperson Brian Boms gave a few minutes for review of the meeting minutes from February 8, 2022. Opportunity was given for additions, corrections, and suggestions.

A Motion to approve the Open Public Meeting minutes of February 8, 2022 was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Frank Wells abstained. Approved.

The Closed Executive Session of February 8, 2022 was canceled due to a quorum not being met.

Commission Remarks

Chairperson Brian Boms stated that he and Vice-Chairperson McMorrow attended the member library meeting. It was informative to hear their concerns and what assistance they need. Many member library locations are working hard to restore children’s programming and program attendance.

Library Liaison Report

County Commissioner Lillian Burry requested information regarding the publicity consultant contract. Chairperson Boms and Director Tolchin will consult with County Counsel for additional information.

The Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners will be introducing the County budget today, March 8, 2022.

Financial Report

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

Director Tolchin submitted the February 2022 Financial Report to the Commission, including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets wherein the 2022 Detail Budget Account charged year to date is \$1,322,545.70 posted to the Temporary Budget of \$4,694,812.00; this total includes encumbered amounts. The 2021 Reserve Budget reflects \$3,867,580.96 remaining in unencumbered funds; still pending are fourth quarter fringe benefits as well as other 2021 expenditures. The remaining Capital Account for the renovation is \$81,252.16 unencumbered from the first capital appropriation of \$977,000.00 and \$1,497,000.00 unencumbered from the second capital appropriation of \$1,497,000.00 for a total of \$1,578,252.16 remaining unencumbered as of February 28, 2022. 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 that has been allocated as matching funds as a recipient of the New Jersey Public Library Construction Bond Act Grant. These funds have now been encumbered for architectural design fees. The Grant Detail Budget Account has funds that may be used for the Headquarters renovation, such as Joann Church donation in the amount of \$25,000.00, the Curtis W. McGraw Foundation fund in the amount of \$12,500.00, and the remaining Charles Raffetto fund in the amount of \$2,975.80 approximately totaling an additional \$40,000.00 for the renovation.

A Motion to approve the February 2022 Financial Report including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets was made by Marcy McMullen and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. Unanimously approved.

A voucher for approval was submitted in the amount of \$89,367.26 for CDW. The Commission authorized the purchase of computer monitors and electrical supplies.

A Motion to approve the voucher in the amount of \$89,367.26 for CDW was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Barbara McMorro. Unanimously approved.

Headquarters Renovation Update

Director Tolchin stated there are concerns regrading the renovation and cost escalation. Documentation has been submitted to County Engineering with the anticipated cost substantially exceeding previously estimated costs. The funding amount will need to be increased and funds may need to be allocated within the Operating Budget. Director Tolchin has a meeting scheduled with County Administrator Teri O'Conner to advocate for the project to move forward and discuss funding options and associated budget and tax levy impact. Director Tolchin will provide the Commission with updated information and costs after the meeting with County Administration.

Covid-19 Library Operations Update

Director Tolchin stated the Library will begin resuming some previously standard functions. Meeting room use and meetings can resume, children's programming resumed on March 7th, and resuming in-person adult programs is in process. Staff safety going forward remains important and registration for programs may be required. Movie programs at the Library can resume once the movie license is reestablished. At this time, the Library cannot offer hybrid programming (simultaneous in-person and virtual) as additional equipment is required. A vendor has completed a review and the Library is waiting for a proposal for the additional equipment.

Additionally, expanded permissions for presenters and performers may be necessary for a hybrid environment.

Collection Development and Management Policy

Director Tolchin stated updates are being made to the Collection Development and Management Policy. Currently, there is a national trend of book challenging and book banning. The Monmouth County Library endorses the American Library Association Principles, Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read. The policy will be used to support collection decisions and establish procedure for both print and digital material. The Commission was provided a copy of the policy for review and will discuss the policy further at the next scheduled meeting after consulting with County Counsel.

Monmouth County Library 100th Anniversary

Director Tolchin stated there are several milestones and significant dates that can be used throughout 2022 to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Monmouth County Library. On September 27, 1922 the Board of Chosen Freeholders passed the resolution to vote during the general election to establish the County Free Libraries. On November 7, 1922 the vote passed and Monmouth County became the fourth County Library to be established in New Jersey. In 1923 the Library opened and on July 9, 1923 the first book was cataloged. On October 17, 1923 a luncheon was held by a Library Commission member. The Library is excited to begin planning events to commemorate this milestone. The Monmouth County Library Commission selected September 18, 2022 to hold the celebration event. Invitations will be sent to Townships throughout Monmouth County, both members and non-members. It was suggested to have pins and tote bags made to commemorate the anniversary.

New Jersey State Library Per Capita State Aid Report

Director Tolchin stated the New Jersey State Aid Report is almost complete and ready for submission. The report is due on March 15, 2022 and will require the signature of the Library Director and Commission Chairperson for submission.

Branch and Member Report

Director Tolchin thanked Chairperson Boms and Vice-Chairperson McMorrow for attending the member meeting. It is wonderful to have the support and involvement of the Commission.

Member libraries are excited to see programming resume.

The Oceanport Branch will be resuming full business hours on March 14, 2022.

Director's Report

Director Tolchin stated the 2022 budget and associated tax levy will be presented at the April 12, 2022 meeting. After assessment of the Operating Budget relative to the construction renovation costs, much still needs to be resolved.

The Library will have 34 staff vacancies by April 2022. Several internal promotional opportunities are in process.

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission announced the Librarian 3 test. The Library is hopeful that more promotional testing dates will be forthcoming for other positions. Currently, the Library has made several provisional appointments.

The New Jersey State Library funding for Zoom will end in September 2022. The Library will need to evaluate the cost of funding a digital platform for virtual programming.

The Brain Fuse homework help assistance program will end in June 2022. Director Tolchin has reached out to Library Link New Jersey and inquired about their ability to provide a discount from the vendor should libraries want to continue the Zoom and Brainfuse.

Senior Management Assistant Kate Hardy has accepted a position within County Human Resources and will be transferring departments. We will miss her great work, support, and guidance.

Assistant Director's Report

Assistant Director Heidi Amici stated the Brielle Library has a new Library Board President and member. Assistant Director Amici provided them with updated budget information. They stated children's programming has been wonderful and they also look forward to the updated Collection Development and Management Policy.

Assistant Director Amici continues to work on the SirsiDynix contract quotes. The current contract will expire in December 2022.

Programming Report

Director Tolchin stated almost all available AARP tax assistance appointments have been filled. AARP has been doing their best to provide this service in a safe model. The Library will continue to work with AARP in the hopes of maintaining this service next year.

The Library is looking into table and chair furnishings that would allow patrons to easily set up meeting rooms on their own. With reduced staff and monitors, it is difficult to have Library staff set up rooms. A hold harmless agreement may be necessary and Director Tolchin will discuss this with County Counsel.

Commissioner Comments

Chairperson Boms reiterated the importance of visiting branch and member libraries. The Commission will schedule dates for visits and would like to coordinate with National Library Week (April 3-9 2022). County Commissioner Burry will present the Library with a proclamation in recognition of National Library Week.

It was suggested to meet with the Children's coordinator to discuss participating in a story time program.

A branch meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2022 if any members of the Commission would like to attend.

Public Comments

A Motion to open the meeting to public comment was made by Marcy McMullen and seconded by Barbara McMorro. Unanimously approved.

Muriel Smith thanked County Commissioner Burry for continuing discussion and expressed frustration with the matter and lack of communication. As this involves a contract and County departments, additional consultation with County Counsel is needed in order for the Library Commission to provide additional information.

A Motion to close the meeting to public comment was made by Marcy McMullen and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. Unanimously approved.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 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, April 12, 2022 was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment & Closed Executive Session

A Motion to adjourn the public meeting and enter into closed executive session to discuss the Library's Collective Bargaining Agreement and other personnel and legal issues as permitted by the Open Public Meetings Act was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.

No action will be taken after the completion of the executive session.

The meeting concluded at 12:44 pm.

Submitted by Kimberly Conover