Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes  
June 20, 2023  
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 Ross Licitra, Director Judith Tolchin, and Assistant Director Heidi Amici

Absent:

Guests: County Counsel Meghan Bennett, Deputy County Administrator Christopher Marion

The meeting was called to order at 9:49 am.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairperson Brian Boms opened the meeting of Tuesday, June 20, 2023 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.”

Agenda Approval
A Motion to approve the June 20, 2023 Agenda was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.

Minutes
Chairperson Brian Boms gave a few minutes for review of the meeting minutes from May 16, 2023. Opportunity was given for additions, corrections, and suggestions. A Motion to approve the Open Public Meeting minutes of May 16, 2023 was made by Marcy McMullen and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Brian Boms abstained. Approved.

Library Commission Remarks
Chairperson Brian Boms extended his thanks to Director Judi Tolchin and Assistant Director Heidi Amici for their continuing hard work behind the scenes in the lead up to the Headquarters renovation. He adds his kudos to all involved for moving the project along as expeditiously as possible.

Library Liaison Report
County Commissioner Ross Licitra had nothing new to report, but did want to discuss the security project for Headquarters and Eastern Branch with JCT Solutions during the Capital Projects portion.

Financial Report
May Financials - Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets

Director Tolchin submitted the May 2023 Financial Report to the Commission, including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets wherein the 2023 Detail Budget Account charged year to date is $3,686,947.66 posted to the Approved Budget of $17,885,000; this total includes encumbered amounts. The Reserve Budget, with remaining 2022 funds reflects $3,401,928.30 remaining in unencumbered funds. The Capital Account for the renovation is $1,578,252.16 remaining unencumbered as of May 31, 2023. These funds are reserved for the completion of the adult library and the lobby. Lobby furniture must now be allocated within the Operating Budget.

A Motion to approve the May 2023 Financial Report including the Detail Budget, Check Writing, Reserve Budget, Capital Budgets, and Grant Budgets was made by Barbara McMorrow and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.

Headquarters Renovation Report

Deputy County Administrator Christopher Marion stated that after two bids were rejected last year, the Board of County Commissioners asked us to go back and revise specifications to include electrical infrastructure which would allow for a generator. Settembrino Architects put together a new set of specifications which went out to bid February or March of 2023. On May 10, 2023 two bids were received, one of which contained errors. The corrected bids were then both evaluated. The lowest bid was awarded to M&M Construction Company of Cranford, NJ by the Board of County Commissioners, at their last meeting. The total base bid amount is $4.63 million dollars. He noted that the Board of Commissioners put together a special smaller bond ordinance to cover the cost of the electrical work. The next steps are to get the contracts signed and executed followed by a kick-off meeting. The project is expected to be underway by the end of 2023.

Commissioner Licitra inquired if there were plans to include new carpeting in the children’s area of the library. Director Tolchin stated that this could be funded through the operating budget, and that she will consult with the Buildings & Grounds department to obtain quotes from a contractor to be presented at the September 2023 meeting. She stated that the budget could also allow for a few new furnishings for the children’s area. Director Tolchin extended her thanks to Deputy County Administrator Christopher Marion and the Board of County Commissioners in addition to The Monmouth County Department of Engineering for all that they’ve done to help this renovation move along every step of the way.

Director Tolchin noted that several add alternate items are not included in the base bid amount. Those items will not be included in this phase, but can be addressed at a later time under a different Capital Project if necessary. These include the lower-level restrooms, meeting room 8 amenities, and store-front glazing in the DVD room. In addition, the LED lighting in the adult reading room stacks will not be addressed through this contract but will be addressed by Buildings & Grounds.

The Headquarters renovation project is more than 10% above the submitted cost. As a result, a Substantial Change request has been forwarded to the Engineering Department and will then be sent to the New Jersey State Library. In addition, the New Jersey State Library has changed some
of the reporting requirements under the grant. They have consolidated the timing as opposed to added new reports. Those reports will be addressed by August 1, 2023 and all necessary signatures will be obtained.

**Capital Projects – County Library Facilities**
Director Tolchin stated that the parking lot at Headquarters was repaired with new asphalt and striping. There has also been some additional restriping in the upper parking lot. Thank you to the Monmouth County Roads Department for their work. It looks great and is much safer.

The Eastern Branch canopy is also moving forward in the engineering plans. The construction poses some challenges, but alternate entrance options are being considered which will may require some modifications at the Eastern Branch.

County Commissioner Licitra inquired about the plans for security systems at Headquarters and Eastern Branch. Director Tolchin stated that a meeting was held, which including Building & Grounds to determine the needs of each location. Interior area as well as exterior parking lot cameras, which will be monitored the Monmouth County Sheriff’s Department, will be included. Capital funding will need to be secured from the County to bring the project forward.

**SHI Pricing Proposal**
Director Tolchin stated that Deep Freeze software is needed to keep our computers safe. She explained that the software wipes down the computer when it is shut down, and when restarted it is a fresh computer. This software prevents both public and staff computers from being impacted by viruses.

Assistant Director Heidi Amici added that the software also pushes Windows and browser updates. It also provides a “thaw space” where staff can save files, so they won’t be wiped out when the computer restarts. The Deep Freeze software has had a considerable positive impact, freeing up staff time and resources and is a standard within libraries.

Director Tolchin stated that the 5-year renewal came in at $37,427. This includes 325 staff and public computers at all of our branch locations.

**A Motion to approve the procurement of the Deep Freeze Faronics software for SHI International in the amount of $37,427 for a 5-year renewal period with the authorization for the Director to sign the voucher was made by Marcy McMullen and seconded by Maryann Musich. Unanimously approved.**

**Caregiver Kits**
Director Tolchin stated that the library has partnered with the Monmouth County Office on Aging to bring Caregiver Kits to patrons. In addition, the Friends of the Monmouth County Library generously donated the accompanying tote bags, which really made it a team effort. These kits include information and brochures, which patrons can keep. There are 2 kits currently in circulation, and more will be added if interest and need arises.
**Summer Reading Challenge**
The Summer reading challenge kicked off on June 1st 2023 and runs through August 15th 2023. There are categories for participants of every age. The challenge includes “1000 Books Before Kindergarten,” an ongoing initiative which will work in conjunction with our summer reading program to encourage early literacy before entering school. There is also Read to Me program for pre-readers, Vacation Reading Club for independent readers through 6th grade, Tweens & Teens, for grades 6-12, and Adult Summer Reading for ages 18 and up. Prizes are awarded to each group upon completion of the challenge.

**Holiday Schedule and Closures (June 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023)**
Director Tolchin stated that September 11th was declared a holiday for 2023 by the Board of County Commissioners, and the library will be closed on that day. The Library was also closed on June 16th in observance of Juneteenth.

Commissioner Licitra added that although the holiday is federally observed on June 19th, Monmouth County follows state guidelines, which will be the 3rd Friday in June going forward.

Director Tolchin wanted to clarify that the library has always closed on Father’s Day. In years past, we did not state that we were closed for the holiday, because we had already begun our summer operating hours.

**Director’s Report**
Director Tolchin shared that staffing hours have increased to 4,098 weekly, which is an increase of 70 hours per week, with some of the new hires. The proposed employee change of status submitted to the county though the Personnel Department, and then County Administration will increase the weekly hours to 4,158 by changing 6 part-time Library Assistants to full time. Other promotional opportunities were also submitted to the County to further develop the work force and offer better succession opportunities. Additionally, a change has been made in our table of organization. Three part-time Library Assistants have been changed to two full-time positions.

Director Tolchin thanked all of the staff who were involved in the interview process, as there were a large number of internal candidates.

The reciprocal borrowing agreement between the Monmouth County Library and the Ocean County Library resulted in a payment of $10,000 due to the Monmouth County Library. This means that more people from Ocean County borrowed from Monmouth County Library than Monmouth County residents borrowing from Ocean County Library last year. An invoice will be sent to the Ocean County Library for $10,000 to offset the circulation costs. We receive $1 per circulation, with a cap set at $10,000. However, last year the circulation did exceed that at around 20,000 check outs.

Chairperson Boms asked if historically is it usually Ocean County who borrows more from Monmouth county or does it go back and forth? Director Tolchin stated that for the last several years, Monmouth County Library has received a $10,000 payment from Ocean County. However, last year the payment was closer to $5,500.
The Teen Advisory Board recognition will take place on July 13th at the Board of County Commissioners workshop meeting. A decision will be made with Commissioner Licitra’s office whether the certificates will be presented to all TAB members, those who volunteered during Makers Day or just those who will be attending the meeting.

Director Tolchin introduced Katie Kenny who will now be taking the Library Commission meeting minutes. She added that we will miss Kim Conover tremendously who has gone on to take some time off. She was a great addition to our library system and we wish her all the best.

**Assistant Director’s Report**
Assistant Director Heidi Amici stated that Mary Patterson, who was Branch Manager of Hazlet is now Branch Manager of Ocean Township, Jennifer Brennan, who was a Branch Services Librarian is now Branch Manager of Hazlet, and Rebecca Kim, who was a Headquarters Reference Librarian is now Branch Manager of Howell.

The Holmdel branch hosted a very successful event on June 15th. Nellie Lahoud, who researched thousands of pages of documents seized in the U.S. raid of Osama Bin Laden’s compound joined them for an author talk. Holmdel Branch Manager Trish Shrodo partnered with the Holmdel Town Council as well as the Holmdel Veterans Initiative to provide the event. The Holmdel Library Foundation purchased copies of Lahoud’s book, *The Bin Laden Papers* and had a local caterer donate food. There were 153 in attendance, a great turnout.

**Commissioner Comments**
Commissioner Marcy McMullen commended Branch Manager Trish Shrodo for her work on June 15th event at the Holmdel Branch. She shared the email Trish sent out to attendees, which included information about the event as well as detailed directions on getting there and navigating Bell Works. She is doing a great job and is an asset to the library.

**Public Comments**
A Motion to open the meeting to public comment was made by Marcy McMullen and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. 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 Marcy McMullen and seconded by Barbara McMorrow. Unanimously approved.

**Next Meeting**
The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at the Monmouth County Library Eastern Branch at 9:30 am.

**Scheduling of Closed Executive Session at Next Meeting**
A Motion to schedule a Closed Executive Session at the next meeting on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 was made by Mary Ann Musich and seconded by Marcy McMullen. Unanimously approved.
Adjournment
A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Marcy McMullen and seconded by Mary Ann Musich. Unanimously approved.

The public meeting concluded at 10:31 am.

Submitted by Katie Kenny