



The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Middletown Township Public Library was held on June 21, 2017 at the Middletown Main Library. At 7:03 pm Ms. LaTona opened the meeting in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act with Roll Call.

**Present:**

<u>  X  </u> Perry	<u>  X  </u> Vitkansas	<u>  X  </u> Siwiec	<u>      </u> Smith
<u>  X  </u> Bucco	<u>  X  </u> VanNest	<u>  X  </u> Fox	<u>  X  </u> Berson
<u>      </u> Lucchese			

**Absent:** Smith and Lucchese

Also in attendance: Elizabeth Matecki, McOmber & McOmber, Director, Kim Rinaldi, Secretary, Wendy LaTona and Finance Clerk, Margaret Anthony

**Salute to the Flag**

**Public Portion:** Several Middletown Residents were in attendance, however, all declined to speak at this portion of the Public Session.

**Approval of June Minutes:**

Mr. Siwiec motioned to accept the Regular Session minutes as well as the Executive Session minutes, seconded by Mr. Vitkansas and carried unanimously by roll call vote with an abstentions from Ms. Fox, Mr. Bucco & Mr. VanNest.

Mr. Bucco motioned to accept the May 31, 2017 Special Board meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Perry and carried unanimously by roll call vote with abstentions from Mr. Siwiec, Ms. Fox and Ms. Berson.

**Financials:**

Mr. Siwiec asked how are making out compared to our projections of our overall budget. Mr. Siwiec asked “Is there anything that stands out”? Ms. Rinaldi and Ms. Anthony both responded “No.” Mr. Bucco then motioned to accept the 2017 Voucher List, along with the 2017 Overview Checks, Financial Report as of 4/30/17 and 5/31/17 as well as the Statement of Financial Assets as of 5/1/17 and 6/1/17, seconded by Mr. Vitkansas and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

**Correspondence Submitted: -**

- Resignation letter from Renee Cohen for retirement
- Email from new patron, David Prown who attended Makers Day and submitted a picture of his son at the Merlin Magic Ball project that Ms. LaTona and Ms. Anthony participated in.
- Thank you card from Sharon & Kylie Lane to the Children’s department for all they do for the children
- Letter from Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation representative for the Children’s department’s support and the support of the Library. Ellie Strbo and her husband Joe built an amazing Lemonade stand for the children of the library to participate in the program.

-Email submitted by Board Secretary, Tara Berson, who thanked Ellie Strbo and Susan Gioia for doing a project with her daughter's Girl Scout Troop to earn a badge. They were commended for the  
-Email Submission regarding the Sunday Closings from: Thomas Valenti, Dennis Morrone, Arya Connett, Renee Cohen, Christine Goetz, Lori Golusinski, Johanna Ericson, Arya Connett, Michael Onischenko, Kylie Swanson, Karen Marone, David Kosiniski, Shirley Warren, Matthew Anderson, Ruth Anderson, Maki Ishil, Brianne McConnell, Ann Albano, Laura Cusson, Melissa Marshall, Liz Leipzig, T.J. Griffin, Pam Thompson, Mary Hussey, Stacey Lebitz, and Susanne Sclafani

### **New Business:**

**Meeting Room Policy: First Reading/Discussion: Mr. Perry:** Expanding hours for members of the public that are looking to use the facility on Saturdays after closing hours is a way that the library could generate revenue for a space that is sitting empty. Hours available for use would be from 6:00pm to 10:00pm. A building maintenance staff member would be assigned to the event and would assist and would receive their hourly rate paid for their time. They would be responsible to monitor the event, assist the organization renting for set up, etc. and close the building. **Mr. Perry** asked for comments, questions, and concerns. **Mr. Bucco** asked how much was the proposed fees? **Mr. Perry** responded \$150.00 for two hours and 300.00 for four hours giving the library an opportunity to utilize the space when the library is closed and could help assist in lessening the amount of funds used from reserves each year. **Mr. Siwiec** asked what happens if the employee assigned to monitor the event does not show up or cannot make it. **Ms. Rinaldi** said she would make sure the event was covered properly by a library employee. **Mr. VanNest** asked if the same parameters in renting our space during normal operating hours would apply in regards to limiting our liability. **Ms. Rinaldi** responded if applicable the renter would need to submit their own liability insurance –submission for rentals are usually 30 days in advance and they would need to make the any appropriate documentations necessary at that time. **Mr. VanNest** also wanted to make sure staff will not be scheduled to work if there are no events and **Ms. Rinaldi** confirmed that no one would be assigned if there are no events scheduled. **Mr. Bucco** suggested that a deposit be made in case of any damages or perhaps a cleaning fee. **Mr. Perry** stated that Section 5 covers damages should any unforeseen issue occur. **Ms. Fox** asked is the library equipped with an AED device and would the employee have access and be trained if there was an emergency. Ms. Rinaldi responded “yes” and that employees have gone through the proper training. Mr. Vitkansas motioned to accept the first reading, seconded by Mr. Siwiec and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

### **Revision of the Borrower Services Policy: First Reading/Discussion**

Ms. Rinaldi explained previous that policy was if a family's overdue fines exceeded \$50.00 they would lose their ability to check out items. We have decided to change it to \$15.00. This would make it easier for patrons to repay their fines before they reach too high of a level that they would not be able to pay it back as well as help eliminate them going to collection. Mr. Bucco motioned to accept the first reading of the Revision to the Borrower Services policy, seconded by Mr. Perry and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Ms. Rinaldi began discussing the Sunday Closings - the library is currently using funds from its reserves so it needs to make some harsh decisions that can put money back into its budget and reduce the amount of reserves that are tapped into each year. Every year we are doing more with less. The proposal is being made because it would save the library money in the budget, keep the materials that the public need and want, as well as deter the library from having to discuss possible layoffs in the future. Closing is a way to find funds and avoid other cuts elsewhere. Mr. Perry said we cannot continue to dip into our reserves funds. Since 2014 we have averaged approximately the use of \$102,000 every year. That is quite a bit of money. There is a ton of money that goes into the operation of this building. Mr. Vitkansas asked how long would the current reserves last? Mr. Perry said five years and then at which time the Board would have to make very serious decisions about cuts including materials, and perhaps staffing in order to sustain the library's budget. Library is closed already from Memorial Day to Labor Day with an

approximate savings of \$16,000 and if we close the rest of the year it would be an additional savings \$37,530 at the current payroll that we have. An average Sunday costs the library \$1,000 in payroll on Sundays. If we close for the year we are saving 37%. This does not include savings on utilities. We are trying to become more efficient with those as well and finding other ways to save regarding the utility bills. Mr. Perry said I do not want to cut services or the materials on the shelves. We need to address this problem and we need to address it now. If we do something now we can make smart choices instead of dramatic ones later. **Mr. VanNest** commented that this is provided that other costs stay flat. But is not very likely, Ms. Rinaldi has been hiring more part-time people than full-time people. However, healthcare costs – Year 14/15 we had a \$25,000 increase in healthcare costs, Year 15/16 we had a \$ 128,000, increase in healthcare costs and in Year 16/17 \$106,000 this is just for the library. We do not know what next year is going to bring.

**Ms. Fox** – Requested that Ms. Rinaldi submit a daily circulation number of patrons for the next meeting with a comparison of Saturdays and Sundays. Asked what Monmouth County does on Sundays – and also asked that she provide what other successful libraries or larger independent libraries equivalent to MTPL do with their budgets, hours, etc., year round to have as a comparison. Get a hold of their minutes and see how they save their money

**Mr. Siwiec** wanted to make sure that the public is aware that this is a Library Board decision and has nothing to do with the Township Committee. **Mr. Perry** echoed those sentiments and reminded that this discussion was placed on the agenda so we could save the library money and keep the services going.

**Mr. Bucco** motioned to accept first reading of the Borrower Services policy, seconded by Mr. Perry and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

#### **No reports from the President, Personnel or Finance Committee**

**Strategic Planning Sub Committee members** met in May. In attendance were: Ms. Rinaldi, Mr. Bucco and Ms. Berson. Ms. Rinaldi reported to the Board that she will use the State Library Strategic Plan as a guide to include data survey, Census information, go out to the community to get Focus Group information on services they would like to see the library. Some of the Strategic Planning goals will be marketing on Social Media about available programs, how they will prepare to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the library in 2021, possibly branding the library, elect a staff liaison for feedback and to discuss their plan. Ms. Rinaldi would like the board to participate in the focus groups with the community and herself.

**Director's Report:** (as submitted – see attached).

Some highlights include:

- Staff training on Harassment and Bullying
- Installation of a new wireless security system which will allow for better monitoring and this system is accessible by the management team of the library on their desk tops and mobile phones.

#### **Public Session**

**Susan L, 133 Clubhouse Drive, Middletown NJ 07748** – I do not represent any group

My sister retired from the County System – and would like to clarify their operating hours. Eastern Branch and Main headquarters are closed on the Sunday Memorial day and Father Day's weekend to Labor Day. All other Sundays 9—5 Saturdays as well 9—5 smaller branches are closed on Sundays not sure if they are open on half or full days on Saturday – smaller branches are closed on Friday mornings.

**Ricki Rudowitz, 35 Bonnie Drive, NJ** here to talk about the potential Sunday closing. Asked if anyone on the board is an observant Jew. Jews who are observant would not be able to come to the library on Saturdays to utilize the services. I am a regular user of the library and I come often on Sunday and it is a really busy day. I also googled East Brunswick are closed on Summer Sundays but open 1-5 the rest of

the Sundays. It is going to affect part of the Middletown larger community. I think the Board should look at other options to save money. Maybe charge for reserving books. People tend to be irresponsible to reserve a book and if you charge a fee it could help.

**John Linestewarts 60 Bayside Drive, Atlantic Highlands**, I am one of your source of revenues. I am a member but do not live here. Princeton is open everyday all year round. Feels it is very important that Sunday stay open for the students. They need to be able to come and research at the library and there is a reason showing a downfall and there is a reasons for showing how we are doing in international tests and the kids needs to be able to do their homework and research.

At the end of the Public Session, Mr. Perry thanked the public for coming out and participating

At 7:47pm Mr. Perry executed the Executive Session Resolution, seconded by Mr. Bucco and carried all in favor for the Board to enter into Executive Session for no more than 20 minutes. No action will be taken when returning to Regular Session. (8:05pm)

at 8:06pm, the Board of Trustees began **for the Good of the Order**

Mr. Perry apologized for not attending the Strategic Planning meeting. Kim and I have been discussing the future of libraries and we need to look at what the 22<sup>nd</sup> Century library is going to be like and some of the small changes we are doing make sense and are making us use the library the best we can. Keep this momentum up and keep this library which is already better than the Monmouth County library. Mr. Perry thanks the Board and its willingness to discuss how to make it even better.

Mr. Vitkansas – Nothing to add

Mr. Siwiec –Reflected on audience reaction to Board discussions.

Mr. Bucco – Nothing to add

Mr. VanNest Kim came to the library at what could have been seen as the best or worst of times three years ago. I appreciate you finding ways to solve issues that are arising.

Ms. Fox – thanked Ms. Rinaldi and Ms. LaTona and thanked Ms. Matecki for being present and for the knowledge that is available to the Board in case they need it.

Ms. Berson –Nothing to Add.

At 8:12pm Mr. Perry motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Siwiec and carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Tara Berson  
Board Secretary  
July 19, 2017