

**Minutes of the February 13, 2023  
Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting**

The 2175th meeting of the Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Monday, February 13, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. hybrid in accordance with New Jersey Law.

The meeting was called to order by President JoAnn McCullough at 7:10 pm.

Roll Call:

Board Members Present: JoAnn McCullough, Presiding, Theodore Graham, Marcos Vargas and Brian Clarkson

Board Members Absent: Geoffrey Borshof

Library Staff Present: Director Janet Torsney, Assistant Director Selwa Shamy, and Recording Secretary Linda Welch

Open Meetings Act:

President JoAnn McCullough announced that the meeting was in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was posted on the Library website, in the Library, at the Municipal Building and advertised in the Star Ledger. Notice of the change of venue to an Hybrid meeting was posted on the library website.

Approval of Minutes:

The Minutes of the January 9, 2023 meeting stood approved. Theodore Graham made the motion and Brian Clarkson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Presidents' Report:

JoAnn McCullough reported that the Executive Committee met on February 6 to discuss the agenda and Board vacancies.

Treasurer's Report:

Brian Clarkson presented the Treasurer's Report:

Brian Clarkson moved for the Resolution #23-13 Approving the Bills and Payables between the January 9, 2023 and February 13, 2023 Board of Trustees Meetings be approved and the itemized summary be made part of the minutes and Theodore Graham seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Brian Clarkson moved for the adoption of Resolution #23-14 Pre-Approving Bills and Payables due between the February 13, 2023 and March 20, 2023 Board of Trustees Meetings be approved and the itemized summary be made part of the minutes and Theodore Graham seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Brian Clarkson moved for the adoption of Resolution #23-15 Approving the January 2023 Bank Bank Reconciliation Statements and JoAnn McCullough seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Reports from Support Organizations:

MPL Foundation: *Mary Packer*

Grant to the Library

At the January 26 meeting of the Foundation Board, the Directors approved a \$75,975 distribution to the Library for the first half of 2023, with an anticipated grant of \$150,000 for the year. However, the Board will revisit the distribution amount for quarters 3 & 4 mid-year, so that adjustments to the amount can be made depending on how the Gala performs. The funds were awarded in support of new initiatives (including the Library of Things), online resources, programs & materials, the Adult School, technology, cultural access, professional development, community outreach, and administrative costs associated with these projects and programs.

The Foundation Board has been working to create a process for determining an annual distribution capacity for budgeting purposes, and will consider three key metrics moving forward:

- Prior year actual net ordinary income
- Current year budgeted net ordinary income
- Maintenance of a cash reserve to cover 6 months of budgeted expenses

As the Foundation's bottom line is determined in the last quarter of the year (with the annual appeal), the timing of the Foundation's budgeting is not aligned with the Library's. However, in future the Foundation will do its best to provide a conservative "goal post" in October for the upcoming year so that the Library Director can plan.

These procedures are based on the foundational principle that the Foundation exists to support MPL on an ongoing basis and in a way that supports the sustainability of our Foundation.

Gala

Tickets to the Gala will go on sale on Tuesday, February 21 at noon. Personal notes are being written in the printed invitations this week, and they will be mailed out on February 17. An online invitation will go out to the Foundation's mailing list on the 21<sup>st</sup>. We have received a significant amount of feedback that people are excited and want to attend, so we are hopeful for strong ticket sales. The Manor, our venue for the event, recently announced that they will be closing in July. While this won't directly affect our Gala, we hope that the opportunity to attend one of the last big parties there will be an added incentive to attend.

Sponsorship for the Gala has been more challenging than we anticipated. The feedback we are getting is that many schools and organizations are also asking during this timeframe, and that the uncertainties of the economy are making businesses cautious and conservative in their philanthropic decisions. Personal relationships are a big part of what

motivates this type of giving, so if any of the Trustees can make recommendations or introductions to potential sponsors we would be very grateful.

### 2023 Goals

The Foundation has set an ambitious fundraising goal for 2023 of just over \$470,000. The success of the Gala will play a big role in realizing that goal. In addition, we will continue to pursue grant opportunities in partnership with the Library Director and staff, and to develop relationships with individual donors.

### Montclair Library Friends: Ed Robin

- Expressed his appreciation to Mary, Gina and Ilmar for collaborating on a letter to the Montclair Local endorsing the Library's 2023 budget.
- The Friends have contacted the Mayor and members of the town council encouraging them to adopt the 2023 Library budget.
- Dawn Quinn has agreed to begin conducting library tours starting in April.
- The Montclair Library Friends are volunteering at the Open Book / Open Mind Events.

### Friends of Bellevue Avenue Library, Inc.: Ilmar Vanderer

- The Friends are preparing for their spring book sale.
- The Friends hope to resume the Music Mondays Series.

### Library Report:

#### Assistant Director Selwa Shamy reported that:

#### Staff

- One open position for an hourly librarian was recently filled in Adult Services.
- The Adult School has extended an offer for an hourly assistant.
- Interviews will begin soon for an open hourly library assistant position in Youth Services.
- Borrower Services will have an open hourly position to fill toward the end of February.

### Building

- AAA Facility Solutions will start as the new cleaning company for both buildings on February 15.
- The bathroom renovation for ADA compliance needs to be completed by June of this year while the township has asked that bidding documents for construction contractors be complete by March 1.

### Services

- Maurice J. Brown, Director of the Essex County Office of Citizen Services: Division of Senior Services, will visit the library on Monday, February 13 to assist Olivia Artis, social work intern, in facilitating services for our unhoused community members.

- The Library of Things Borrowing Agreement was shared with the library attorney. Borrowing policies have been created and preparations are being made to launch the program in mid-spring.

Selwa introduced the new Head of Youth and Teen Services Jodi Silverman  
Jodi presented an overview of her experience at other Libraries and reported:  
Schools

- The documents and forms for library cards for students were submitted to Marcos Vargas in mid-January. They are currently being translated into Spanish and Portuguese.
- Youth Services will be doing storytimes for classes via Zoom for pre-k through 2nd grade, and 3rd through 5th graders. This will hopefully be a precursor to visiting classrooms later in the year to promote summer reading.
- Spectrum360, a school for children on the autism spectrum and with related disabilities, have scheduled visits at both library locations.
- Youth Services staff responded to a request from Hillside school and have put together a book list of African-American titles as well as a bundle of books.

Community

- Staff will meet with members from African-American community groups on February 10 to talk about how the library can better provide services and outreach.
- YMCA - a program will be run by library staff once a month. They will alternately focus on toddlers and elementary school children.

Library Director Janet Torsney:

Finances

- Presented the budget at preliminary hearing with Township Acting Manager, CFO and Financial Consultant on January 10 and at official budget hearing at the January 17 Council meeting.
- The Township's Q1 disbursement (one-quarter of mandated funding: \$819,498.75) was received on February 8.
- The Foundation funding of \$150,000 has been tentatively approved.
- The Quick Book consultant came in for initial consultation.

Management

- OB/OM working through Adult School registration system
- Librarian suggested including Adult School questions in library count
- Evaluations are ongoing and should be completed soon.
- Adding anonymous supervisor review resulted in valuable information and ideas
- Working with the Assistant Director on 2023 training
- Reached out to Glen Ridge Library to see how we could support them on book banning
- Working with West Orange Library director about supporting them during construction
- Trained in procedures at Branch, Youth Services, Borrowers Services and Adult Services

### Collaboration and Outreach

- Met with Destination Montclair director
  - They might do the map requested by our Community Conversation Gardening Group
- Organizing meeting with High School staff about news literacy
- Met with Eric Scherzer of Board of Education Board about HVAC, sustainability, tutoring and other issues
- Consulted with Friends on their letter of support and library tours
- Meeting at Montclair State University with Dianne Mizzy, Natalie Beach and Rose Cali about working together
- Submitted Big Read application for a community read of *The Best We Could Do* with partners Montclair High and MFEE
- Working on Romance is for Everyone program with Out Montclair
- Montclair Flea for All tentatively scheduled for April 29
- We plan on doing two Odyssey Impact documentary/conversation series
- Open Book Open Mind 2023 program set
  - First program – His Name is George Floyd – in February
- Launch of community read, Crying in H Mart on April 15 sold out.
- MHS students will have a watch party in the auditorium
- Working with Outpost in the Burbs on joint Lenny Kaye program
- Working with Department of Motor Vehicles on hosting mobile event
- AARP tax advisors and Speertown quilters are meeting regularly at the library.

### Technology and Marketing

- Met with BCCLS about IT options
  - We could save more than \$250/unit on hardware and software through their volume discount. These include installation, updates, repair, remote assistance and a regular replacement cycle.
  - We will take advantage of these discounts and management tools to assure we have the equipment we need for staff and the public.
- Continuing to work with e-rate consultants on bids received and securing minimal filter
- Sending emails to new library card holders

### Capital Projects

- Developed Request for Qualifications for HVAC and BAB water-damage studies with Township QPA
- Talked to Geoscape Solar about possible HVAC/solar/LED lights installation
- Investigated getting bulk HVAC rate through School Bonds: unlikely
- Consulted with Township Planning department about CLG grants and other historic funding opportunities
- Met with Geoscape Global about free installation of HVAC, solar power, LED lights and windows
- Consulted with Township grant consultant about emergency funding for HVAC replacement

Old Business:

Resolution #23-16 Addendum To The 2023 Budget

Whereas, at the October 17, 2022 Board of Trustees meeting the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the 2023 Montclair Public Library budget of \$4,421,495 by voice vote; and

Whereas, changes in projected grant amounts required an adjustment in that line item from \$424,500 to \$336,174; and

Whereas, the revised total 2023 budget is \$4,333,169; and

Whereas, the Library Director has prepared a revised balanced budget for FY23 and presented it to the Board of Trustees for adoption; and

Therefore Be It Now Resolved that the Board of Trustees amends the 2023 Montclair Public Library budget, passed by unanimous voice vote at the October 17, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting, to decrease project grant income to \$336,174 and approves this addendum to the budget for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023.

JoAnn McCullough moved to accept Resolution #23-16 Addendum to the 2023 Budget and Brian Clarkson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Strategic Plan/Road Map Group Meeting

In Geoffrey Borshof's absence Theodore Graham presented a brief overview of the Strategic Plan/Road Map group meeting.

New Business:

Internet Access and Public Computers Policy INF - 4

Janet Torsney presented an overview of the new Internet access and public computers policy. The Board moved to adopt the policy by a verbal vote. The motion was carried unanimously.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment:

At 8:40 p.m. JoAnn McCullough moved to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting and Theodore Graham seconded. The motion was carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.