

**Minutes of the October 16, 2023
Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting**

The 2182nd meeting of the Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Monday, October 16, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in accordance with New Jersey Law.

The meeting was called to order by President JoAnn McCullough at 7:00 pm.

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.

Roll Call:

Board Members Present: JoAnn McCullough, Presiding, Theodore Graham, Diana Lunin, Andrew Silver, Geoffrey Borshof and Lilian Ferguson

Board Members Absent: Brian Clarkson

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

Appeal Hearing: Andrew Fellerman

Library counsel Douglas Zucker presided over the Patron Suspension Appeal Hearing. Assistant Director, Selwa Shamy presented information about the incident. Mr. Fellerman was not able to attend the meeting therefore his appeal letter was entered into the record.

The Board of Trustees entered Executive Session to discuss Andrew Fellerman's appeal at 7:25 pm. The Board returned to regular session at 7:57pm. The Board voted that the original decision will be upheld for a six month suspension period.

Approval of Minutes:

The Minutes of the September 18, 2023 meeting stood approved. Diana Lunin made the motion and Geoffrey Borshoff seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Presidents' Report: None

Treasurer's Report:

Lisa Connell presented the Treasurer's Report:

Diana Lunin moved for the Resolution #23-44 Approving the Bills and Payables Between the September 18, 2023 and October 16, 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.

Diana Lunun moved for the adoption of Resolution #23-45 Pre-Approving Bills and Payables Due Between the October 16, 2023 and November 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.

Diana Lunin moved for the adoption of Resolution #23-46 Approving the September 2023 Bank Reconciliation Statement and Theodore Graham seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Reports from Support Organizations:

Report from The MPL Foundation - Janet Torsney

Annual Appeal

- The Foundation has been preparing for the annual appeal, which will take place November 1 through December 31. Historically, the year-end appeal has been the most consistent and largest source of funding for the Foundation. Our theme this year is “Montclair is a Library Town.” You can help with fundraising efforts by liking and sharing social media posts about the appeal; by forwarding emails to your friends, neighbors, and colleagues to encourage them to join you in supporting the library; and by making your own statements (on social media or in real life) about why you feel it’s important to support the library. Our 2023 budgeted goal for General Donations/Annual Appeal is \$260,000. We have received just over \$50,000 in General Donations to date so have a little more than \$200,000 to raise.

Little Read

- We are delighted to announce that we have surpassed our sponsorship goal of \$15,000 for the Little Read’s 15th Anniversary! \$15,500 in sponsorship funds were raised from the following supporters: Hackensack Meridian Mountainside Medical Center, Scholastic, Rosemary Iversen, Montclair Speech Therapy, East Side Mags, Itsy Bitsy Dental, Kurly Kurtosh, Montclair Cooperative School, Montclair Orthodontics, Montclair Tutoring, Pigtales and Crewcuts, Tutor Shack, Watchung Booksellers, West of Hudson, YMCA Montclair, Brinker, Gina Chung Fortt and Jon Fortt. Macaroni Kids has also signed on as a media sponsor.
- We have a full slate of volunteer guest readers signed up to read to school children on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and the Friday evening family party will include readings by local authors Henry Neff and Jorge Aguirre and former Foundation Board Chair Eve Schaenen. Eve was instrumental in starting the Little Read 15 years ago. A musical performance by Fyütch will round out the festivities. I hope we’ll see you there!

Donor Appreciation

- On October 12, the Foundation held a donor appreciation event at the home of Matt and Emily Hagen. Twenty or so guests joined us for an intimate conversation with Alice Elliott Dark about her novel, *Fellowship Point*. Local author Dionne Ford led

the conversation. Trustee Diana Lunin was in attendance with her husband, Joe, as was Library Director Janet Torsney. It was a very special evening.

Halloween

- Building on last year's popular event, the Foundation will provide support and assistance for this year's Sweet & Spooky Halloween at the Main Library on the afternoon of Saturday, October 28. Families are invited to come for a haunted hallway, spooky story-time, face-painting, and a puppet show! Costumes are encouraged.

Montclair Library Friends: Ed Robins

Ed Robin and Judy Beck, Aging in Montclair, met with Janet to discuss ways the library can help seniors.

Fifteen people attended the Bellevue Avenue Branch Library tour.

On October 20, Erin Roll, former reporter for the Montclair Local, conducted a guided tour of the Main Library in conjunction with the Little Read. Attendees met at the Cafe. The tour provided the opportunity to speak with and ask questions of librarians from all Departments. Participants also visited the Local History room and viewed original Montclair documents dating back to the 1890's.

The Friends volunteered at Open Book / Open Mind events on October 7 and October 14 and are planning to help out again on November 18.

Ed has been working with Janet on the Capital Improvement Plan for the Bellevue Avenue Branch Library plaza. He has been working with a botanist from the Friends of Anderson Park..

Friends of Bellevue Avenue Library, Inc.: Ilmar Vanderer

Ilmar reported that the Friends Book Sale was a success

Ilmar expressed his appreciation to Kristen for a letter of appreciation sent to the Friends of the Bellevue Avenue Library.

Ilmar applauded Ed Robin for his plans for the Bellevue Avenue Library plaza.

Cordelia Siporin reported that the Friends made about \$350.00 at their latest book sale. She expressed her interest in the plans for the Bellevue Avenue Branch plaza and hopes that the existing trees can be incorporated into the design.

Library Report:

Assistant Director Report: Selwa Shamy

Building & Safety

- Tim Flowers and Manily Jenkins took the Adult Mental Health First Aid training in September.

- Work to fix the floor at the Branch outside the bathrooms has been completed.
- A window in the Teen Room at the Main Library was fixed.
- The carpets were cleaned at the Main Library on Oct. 12, they look so much better!

Community

- The library etuk will be present at a Native American Heritage program at the Judy Weston Garden on Sunday, November 5.

Programming

- Latin American Heritage Month (Sept 15 - Oct 15) programming has made a big splash at MPL. Funded by a grant from Essex County, the library offered 20 programs with attendance over 600.
- Creative Aging Grant - a series on writing and another on bookmaking are almost complete. The MPL Foundation has applied for the grant again for '24.
- The popular Research your Home programs will be held again, in collaboration with the Montclair History Center and Montclair Historic Preservation Commission, on Oct. 14 and Oct. 18.

Schools

- The Back-to-School night presence of Youth Services staff created some meaningful connections and was thus fruitful.
- The Little Read is taking place from Oct. 18-20. At least 13 Kindergarten and preschool classes from public and private schools will travel to the Main and Branch libraries. All reader spots have been filled at both locations. There is a community party planned for the evening of Oct. 20.

Staff

- Second interviews for a full time position with Adult Services Department will take place the week of 10/16.
- We welcomed Alma Stone from Workforce 55+ to the Youth Services Department this month. She will mostly help with shelving and organizing the collection, but will also assist patrons in finding materials.
- Kelly Ziek of the MPL Foundation wrote a Partners for Health grant for a part-time social worker for a two year term. This would be a benefit for the entire Montclair community, we'll find out whether the grant was awarded by the end of October.
- Enola Romano, Youth Services Librarian who has been with the library for almost 26 years, has been nominated for the "[I Love My Librarian Award](#)."

Library Director Janet Torsney:

Partnerships

- The Community Conversation was better than we hoped: already cited in a township proclamation as an important literacy partner, great ideas flowing, helping to promote screening of Right to Read (probably do a library screening too) and working with MPLF on Literacy hub on our website.
- We nominated Fleet Feet for the I Partner with my Library Award. They were chosen for honorable mention.

- Applied for Wi-Fly grant with MNDC.
- Helped FIAF and First Lutheran Church organize community author events.

Building

- Free LED light install is complete. Estimated value: \$100,000.
- Architect working on phase one of BAB water-remediation project.
- Approval on Township-funded window film for Youth Services delayed due to missing budget line.
- BAB Kids Place already looks more welcoming. In addition to new furniture and equipment. We are exploring murals by Buzz Middle School students.
- MSU students came to café for initial study and returned to survey library users.

Programs and Services

- Colson Whitehead a great success: well-attended, humorous, thoughtful discussion; good partnership with MLF.
- OBOM Advisory Board met to plan next year: looks good.
- Big Read is coming together. Plan for community leader launch in January and roll out February through April. We now have a flyer so we can invite others to take part as they like.
- Met with Judy Beck and Ed Robin to discuss their senior program ideas.
- Co-chaired Anything Queer book club with Out Montclair.
- Postponed “Run for His Life” event with Fleet Feet and Odyssey Impact due to low registration.
- Looking forward to Little Read!

Township, Mayor, Council

- Met with Lisa Johnson about energy audit and PSEG partnership.
- Shared audit with Mayor and Council.
- Working with Township insurers and IT staff to ensure we meet cybersecurity and liability standards.
- Requested meeting with CFO and Deputy Manager about capital requests and building issues.

Finance

- Mandated funding set at \$3,572,977 (\$294,982 more than 2023). Appeals are open through 1/31/24.
- Waiting on requests from the Adult School, Building and Capital to complete the 2024 budget request. Will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and considered for approval at the November board meeting.
- Working with Ed Robin on capital donation. Elements include restoring BAB courtyard and new auditorium chairs.
- Received state aid \$22,526.
- Reworked general ledger and budgeting codes.

Technology

- Working on Erate install (saving \$55,000) and plans for next year.

- Working on audio-visual challenges.
- Admin copier broken; looking into leasing new one.

Other

- Attended BCCLS System Council meeting
- Road Map: Talked to Adam Renner about creating Ad Hoc group about Carnegie libraries

Adult School: Maurice Boyer

Maurice presented an overview of the Adult School of Montclair highlighting:

- Financial health of the Adult School Dept. We experienced an approximate 40 percent increase in total registrations between 2022 and 2023.
- Staffing needs: The Adult School needs 2 full-time employees. part-time coordinator for marketing and technology.
- Technology needs: New projectors that are compatible with 4K HDMI ports that are standard on most laptops. We also need a new Mac Book for instructor use so that they don't use external computers to display presentations on our projectors.

Old Business:

Nominating Committee Report

Diana Lunin reported that the proposed slate for the 2024 Executive Board will be presented at the November 13 Board of Trustees meeting.

In accordance with the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees, the Election will take place at the January meeting of the Board.

New Business:

Resolution #23-47 Adoption of 2024 Staff Salary Increase

Whereas, the audit of the library finances performed by Vinci, Lurch, and Higgins in accordance with NJSA 40A:5-4 and accepted by this body with the passage of Resolution # 23-42 found no irregularities, improprieties, or deficiencies in the financial management of the library, and

Whereas, the audit recommended the Board of Trustees adopt an individual resolution for a staff salary increase in addition to the adoption of the budget, and

Whereas, the Board of Trustees are committed to transparent finances, and

Whereas, the funds were budgeted and are available.

Therefore Be It Now Resolved by the Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of Montclair that a salary increase of 2% for all Montclair Public Library staff who have been employed by the Library for a year or more be approved effective December, 2023.

Theodore Graham moved to accept Resolution #23-47 Adoption of 2024 Staff Salary Increase JoAnn McCullough seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

2024 Hours of Operations. Holiday Closings & Board of Trustees Meeting Dates

Hours of Operations

	<u>Main Library</u>	<u>Bellevue Avenue Branch</u>
Monday	10 am to 6 pm	2 pm to 6 pm
Tuesday	10 am to 8 pm	10 pm to 8 pm
Wednesday	10 am to 8 pm	10 am to 6 pm
Thursday	10 am to 8 pm	10 am to 8 pm
Friday	10 am to 6 pm	2 pm to 6 pm
Saturday	10 am to 6 pm	2 pm to 6 pm
Sunday	1 pm to 6 pm	Closed

Holiday Closures

New Year's Holiday

Monday, January 1, 2024

Official public Holiday. All libraries closed.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Monday, January 15, 2024

Official public holiday. All libraries closed

President's Day

Monday, February 19, 2024

Official public holiday. All libraries closed

Easter

Sunday, March 31, 2024

Official public holiday. All libraries closed

Memorial Day

Monday, May 27 2024

Official public holiday. All libraries closed

Juneteenth

Wednesday, June 19, 2024

Official public holiday. All libraries closed

Independence Day

Thursday, July 4, 2024

Official public holiday. All libraries closed

Labor Day

Monday, September 2, 2024

Official public holiday. All libraries closed

Thanksgiving Holiday

Wednesday, November 27, 2024

The Library will close at 2 pm.

Thursday, November 28, 2024

Official public holiday. All libraries closed

Christmas

Tuesday December 24, 2024

All Libraries closed

Wednesday, December 25, 2024 Official public holiday. All libraries closed.

New Year's Holiday (2024/2025)

Tuesday, December 31 2024

All Libraries closed

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Official public holiday. All libraries closed.

The Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees 2025 Meeting Dates

The Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees will meet at 7:00 pm on the third Monday of the month except where noted:

January 8*	Schedule adjusted due to Martin Luther King Day
February 12*	Schedule adjusted due to President's Day
March 18	
April 15	
May 20	
June 17	
July 15	
August	No Meeting
September 16	
October 21	
November 18	
December	No Meeting

The Board of Trustees moved to adopt the 2024 Hours of Operation and Holiday Hours and Board of Trustees Schedule.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment:

At 9:15 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.