

## **Minutes of the July 15, 2024 Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting**

The 2192nd meeting of the Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Monday, July 15, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in accordance with New Jersey Law.

The meeting was called to order by President JoAnn McCullough at 7:08 p.m.

### 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, Andrew Silver, Brian Clarkson, Lilian Ferguson and Thamar Campbell

Board Members Absent: Diana Lunin, Geoffrey Borshof and Damen G. Cooper

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

### Approval of Minutes:

The Minutes of the June 17, 2024 Regular Meeting stood approved. Andrew Silver made the motion and Thamar Campbell seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

### Presidents' Report:

JoAnn McCullough reported that:

On Sunday, June 30 a false bomb threat was emailed to the Library. The timing of the email coincided with a Drag Story Hour we had scheduled at the Library. Everyone was safely evacuated and we are grateful to the Montclair Police who swept the building and helped assure the safety of our patrons and staff.

The Montclair Public Library is a Library for All. We have and will continue to serve the LGBTQIA+ community with programs, literature, and resources, not only during Pride Month but all year round. As librarians, we counter bias based in hate and ignorance with a commitment to uphold intellectual freedom, diversity, and inclusion. The power of libraries rests in their ability to bring people together, provide access to information and resources, offer new experiences and ideas, and celebrate all walks of life. Sunday's events make it clear that the Library's efforts are needed more than ever. We condemn actions rooted in hate, and we will continue undeterred in our efforts.

Personnel Report - JoAnn McCullough

Resolution #24-33 Hiring Radwa Ali as Director of the Montclair Public Library

Whereas, Radwa Ali has been a library professional since 2012 serving in leadership positions in New Jersey libraries for over a decade: Johnson Public Library, Hackensack - Technology Librarian 2012 - 2014, The Bogota Public Library - Director 2014 - 2017 and the Roxbury Public Library - Director 2017 - Present and,

Whereas, This is a full- time position regularly scheduled to work 35 hours per week during library hours; evening and weekend hours may be required, and

Whereas, The annual salary is \$135,000. Radwa Ali will be reporting to the Board of Trustees of the Montclair Public Library, who will determine her schedule and specific job duties, and

Whereas, Radwa Ali will begin working on July 22, 2024.

Therefore Be It Now Resolved the Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees shall hire Radwa Ali to fill the role of the permanent Library Director.

Andrew Silver moved to accept the Resolution #24-33 Hiring Radwa Ali as Director of the Montclair Public Library and Tamar Campbell seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Brian Clarkson presented the Treasurer's Report:

Brian Clarkson moved for the adoption of Resolution #24-29 Approving the Bills and Payables Between the June 17, 2024 and July 15, 2024 Board of Trustees Meetings be approved and the itemized summary be made part of the minutes and Lillian Ferguson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Andrew Silver moved for the adoption of Resolution #24-30 Pre-Approving the Bills and Payables Due Between the July 15, 2024 and September 16, 2024 Board of Trustees Meetings be approved and the itemized summary be made part of the minutes and Lillian Ferguson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Brian Clarkson moved for the adoption of Resolution #24-31 Approving the June 2024 Bank Reconciliation Statements and Tamar Campbell seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Resolution #24-32 Spending Additional Discretionary Funding from the Township

Whereas, the Montclair Public Library's 2024 request for discretionary funding was \$432,850; and

Whereas, on June 11, 2024 the Township Council approved \$515,000 in 2024 discretionary funding for the Montclair Public Library. Be it resolved that the \$82,150 in additional funds will be spent on staff, programs and materials.

JoAnn McCullough moved to accept the Resolution #24-32 Spending Additional Discretionary Funding from the Township and Tamar Campbell seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Resolution #24-34 Signatories on Montclair Public Library Bank Accounts

Be It Resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Montclair Public Library authorizes the following parties to sign transfers, withdrawal slips, and check in payment of goods and service:

- Library Director, Radwa Ali
- Treasurer of the Board of Trustees, Brian Clarkson
- President of the Board of Trustees, JoAnn McCullough
- Library Comptroller, Lisa Connell

Further Be It Resolved that transfers and disbursements will be signed according to the following schedule of authorization:

- Transactions up to and including \$5,000 (Five thousand dollars) require a single signatory
- Transactions exceeding \$5,000 (Five thousand dollars) require two signatories

Further Be It Resolved that the following exceptions are recognized and approved with the understanding that full documentation be presented to the Board of Trustees for review at the next scheduled meeting of the Board:

- Payments to Baker and Taylor for library materials require a single signatory
- Payments of utilities (natural gas, electricity, water, sanitation, and internet services) which are under \$12,000 (Twelve thousand dollars) which must be paid on a timely basis may be paid by the Comptroller and require a single signatory
- Payments to the New Jersey Department of the Treasury, Division of Pension and Benefits for benefits coverage (health insurance, dental insurance, pension fund payments and transfers) and payments to the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (for unemployment insurance) may be paid by the Comptroller and/or require a single signatory
- Transfers of funds to the payroll agency for the purpose of payroll may be paid by the Comptroller and/or require a single signatory
- Quarterly payments made to BCCLs for membership, services, and fees will require only one signatory.

Brian Clarkson moved to accept the Resolution #24-34 For Authorized Signers On Checks and Lillian Ferguson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

### Resolution #24-35 Designating The Library Purchasing Agent

Be It Resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Montclair Public Library authorizes Library Director, Radwa Ali as the purchasing agent for the Library in accordance with NJSA §40A 11-9.

Be It Further Resolved by the Library Board of Trustees that the Library can benefit from the expertise and increase in bid thresholds by working with AL B. Dineros, QPA, Purchasing Agent for the Township of Montclair in accordance with NJSA §40A 11-9.

Brian Clarkson moved to accept Resolution #24-35 Designating the Library Purchasing Agent and Lillian Ferguson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

### Reports from Support Organizations:

#### Report from The MPL Foundation - Sheila Boyd in person and Mary Packer virtually Karaoke Night at Tierney's

Despite Janet's injury, we are moving forward with the Karaoke Night fundraiser at Tierney's next Thursday, July 25 at 7 pm. We have approximately 50 tickets sold, with a goal of 75. As happened with the wine-tasting event, several people have donated tickets to be raffled off among library staff. Proceeds will benefit the library's Community Outreach efforts, as per Janet's request.

### StoryWalks

We are excited to be putting together the final pieces of the StoryWalk Festival! The stories are scheduled to be assembled and installed in the parks next week, in advance of the official launch on August 1. Join us for the ribbon-cutting on August 1 at 2 pm at the Wally Choice Community Center in Glenfield Park and/or for events and photo ops on Saturday, August 3 at 9 am in Watchung Park and 11 am in Nishuane Park. Even better if you bring some kids with you! The StoryWalk Festival is a partnership between the Library, Foundation, and Judy Weston Garden and will run through mid-September.

The StoryWalk Festival is just one of several library literacy initiatives for which the Foundation has provided support this spring/summer. Others include a Reading Support Hub on the library's website, the addition of more than 150 decodable books to the library's collection, and take-home kits with books and activities to support the Science of Reading.

### Board Updates

The Board Development committee of the Foundation is in the process of interviewing prospective Board members to fill two vacant spots on our Board. We plan to appoint new members and provide orientation before our next Board meeting in September.

### Donor Outreach

The Foundation reached out this month to about 50 of our most highly-committed donors to invite them to join our Legacy Society. A bequest is a relatively simple way to make an impactful gift that benefits the whole community, and we are incredibly grateful to Janet Torsney for her leadership and generosity in making her own commitment to the Legacy

Society with the aim of inspiring others.

### Save the Date

The next Lit Gala will take place on Thursday, May 8, 2025 at The Grove. Mark your calendars now!

### Montclair Library Friends:

Ed Robin congratulated Radwa Ali on becoming the Library Director.

He presented an overview of the Bellevue Avenue Library Plaza project and reported that a meeting is scheduled with representatives of the Montclair Historic Commission on Wednesday afternoon to review the plans for the Bellevue Avenue Library Plaza. Anticipating that they will sign off on the Plans.

Thamar Campbell moved to approve submitting an application to restore and repair the courtyard of the Bellevue Avenue Branch to the New Jersey Preservation Office. Lillian Ferguson second and the motion was approved unanimously.

Ed Robin will be meeting with Erik D'Amato, 1st Ward Councilor, to discuss holding his community meetings at the Bellevue Avenue Branch Library.

Friends of Bellevue Avenue Library, Inc.: *None*

### Library Report:

Assistant Director Report: *Selwa Shamy*

### Building & Safety

- Elevator: Additional maintenance work started on July 12 and will continue through Tuesday. The cost is \$10,100.
  - For those of you interested in details: Install new Dover-I2 Hydro Valve in tank, repair knocking piston and re-align & replace piston bearings, tune valve.
- Bomb Threat: An email was sent after 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 30 soon before the Drag Story Hour was scheduled to begin. Tim Flowers and staff evacuated the building so the building could be swept. First Congregational Church and the Bellevue Ave. Branch were also cited on the email as having bombs. When nothing was found, staff re-entered the library at 5:30 p.m. although it remained closed to the public.
  - A group session with a crisis counselor is scheduled for staff at work that day on July 17. A survey was sent to staff not present gauging interest in meeting in a group with a counselor.
  - The founders of Drag Story Hour reached out offering to share recommended safety procedures
  - The NJ Library Association Director shared information from the Illinois Library Association

- Tighter security procedures will be developed for potentially violent situations, including expanding and re-evaluating evacuation procedures for fires.

### Partnerships

- Selwa met with James Cotter from Radio Free Montclair to discuss the library contributing content. Adult Services Department Head Tracy Crawford has expressed an interest in podcasting so she will collaborate with her to develop ideas and recruit interested staff.

### Programming

- Summer Programming is fully underway. Selwa will give details about program and attendance numbers in her September report.

### Outreach

- Tim Flowers drove the van, Tom Hoesly drove the eTuk, and a combination of staff, Friends, and Foundation Board Members all threw out giveaways along the route.

### Hiring

- There are four active job postings: Youth Services Reading Specialist (FT), Adult School Programming Assistant (FT), Social Worker (PT), Facilities & Security Custodian (PT), Borrower Services Library Assistant (PT)
  - One Social Worker candidate will have a second interview on July 12.

### Library Director Report: Janet Torsney

#### Programs and Partnerships

- Launch event for Walk Read Montclair, which we are doing in conjunction with the Judy Weston Garden at Watchung Park, is set for August 1 at 2pm at Wally Choice/Glenfield. The author of *Fab Cab*, the book that will be in the park, will be on hand along with local officials and kids from the Grassroots Camp. *Fab Cab* is a decodable book informed by the MPS Science of Reading. Reach out to Community Conversation participants to invite them.
- Coordinated test with Readeezy, a non-profit, digital library for adolescent, teen and young adult struggling readers. We will share these books – free of charge – to tweens and teens.
- Distributed 113 books to local book clubs and created book clubs kits in anticipation of The September 12 *Poverty, by America* program with Partners for Health.
- Met with Montclair Film about collaborating on student projects

#### Buildings

- Getting bids/quotes for plumbing part of BAB water infiltration report (roof issues will be pursued separately)
- Opened insurance claim for elevator work
- Submitted HVAC repairs to township for possible reimbursement
- Working on application to State Historic Preservation Office about plans to restore BAB courtyard

- Meeting with PSEG about possible HVAC replacement on 7/16
- Updated building priorities are attached to the Director's Report

### Miscellaneous

- Recent turnover report (circulation divided by collection) showed that we have lower turnover rates than other BCCLS libraries with similar population and collection size. That --and the fact that collection size is the largest portion of our BCCLS fees -- makes a strong case for more weeding and a focus on aspects of the collection that do not circulate strongly. (Copy attached)
- Coordinated onboarding for new director including meetings with direct reports, department heads, board, foundation, BCCLS and NJLA (schedule attached)
- Wrote 50 letters to help establish Foundation's Legacy Society
- Encouraged staff to take advantage of Employee Assistance Program that is part of our enhanced ADP services
- Reached out to lawyer for help resolving unemployment issues
- Lots of very positive feedback for library on episode of Watchung Booksellers podcast

### Finance

- Met with auditor about draft audit
- Organized banking for new director
- Working with consultant to align general ledger with new budget

### Technology

- Implementing multi-factor authentication, a JIF requirement
- Applying for e-rate reimbursement from Comcast

### Policies

- Created new financial management and control policies as requested by auditor
- Revised cell phone reimbursement policy

### Meetings

- Attended BCCLS System Council meeting

Old Business: None

### New Business:

#### Discussion and Approval of the Adult School Summer Class Pricing

Brian Clarkson moved to approve the previously published Adult School Summer Class pricing. Andrew Silver seconded and the motion was carried unanimously.

#### Revised Policies - Janet Torsney on behalf of Diana Lunin

#### Financial Controls and Purchasing Policy FIN-1

#### Policy Statement

The Library will follow generally accepted accounting principles and comply with applicable state laws to provide an accurate report of the monies received and

expended to demonstrate good stewardship and its exercise of prudent financial decisions.

## Guidelines

### Purchasing items or booking performers/instructors

#### 1. Requisitions Forms

- a. Staff must submit a requisition form to their supervisor prior to purchasing items for the Library or booking performers/instructors.
- b. The requisition form must be accompanied by a quotation for the products or services. Because the Library benefits from the services of Montclair's Qualified Purchasing Agent, the following thresholds are observed:
  - If the item or service is under \$5,400.00 staff must only provide a quote from the vendor the item is being purchased from
  - Vendors who receive more than \$5,400.00 annually will furnish the library with a Business Registration Certification from the New Jersey Division of Revenue.
  - If the item or service is between \$6,000.00 and \$39,999.00 Staff will request quotations from at least two (2) vendors and include both with the purchase request.
  - Vendors who receive more than \$17,500 annually must comply with the "Pay to Play" threshold.
  - If the item or service is over \$40,000.00 (individually or in aggregate for the year), Staff should inform the Library Director who will issue bids for the goods or services. (Library materials are exempt from the bid process).
- c. Upon approval for purchase, the Library Director will sign the requisition form and submit it to the Comptroller.

#### 2. Purchase Orders for Library Services and Materials

- a. The Comptroller will create a Purchase Order and provide the Purchase Order number to the staff member to complete the purchase.
- b. The Comptroller will submit the purchase order to the vendor to obtain the Claimant Certification and Declaration.
- c. Upon receipt of the signed purchase order, the Comptroller will issue a check for the purchase.
- d. Checks will be signed according to Board of Trustees authorization.
- e. Checks will then be placed on the bill approval list for approval by the Board at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

#### 3. Purchase Orders for Adult School teachers

- a. Once all classes are entered into the system, purchase orders are generated for each instructor for teaching fees. POs for materials fees are also generated if the Adult School is collecting materials fees at registration for reimbursement to the instructor.
- b. Instructor and materials fees are compiled into a list for pre-approval at the board meeting closest to the start of classes for the semester.
- c. Instructors must return a signed PO in order to receive payment.

- d. If a signed PO is on hand, checks are issued only when class is completely finished, and submitted for review by the Comptroller, and approval and signature from the Director.

#### 4. Petty Cash

- a. Staff may purchase small items necessary for day to day operations of the Library not to exceed thirty dollars (\$30).
- b. Staff should seek permission from their supervisor prior to making purchase
- c. Upon purchase of the item, they must submit receipts and a signed reimbursement form.
- d. Reimbursement will only be made if presented within thirty (30) days of purchase.

#### Reimbursement

##### 1. Mileage

- a. Staff will be reimbursed for mileage driven for approved library business as budgetary restraints allow.
- b. Staff should submit a mileage reimbursement request at the end of the month.
- c. Reimbursement will only be made if the mileage reimbursement request is presented within the preceding month.

##### 2. Professional Development Travel

- a. Staff will be reimbursed for travel expenses according to the "Professional Development Policy" [PERF2]).
- b. Reimbursement will only be made if presented within thirty (30) days of travel.

#### Shop-Rite Card

1. The Montclair Public Library has a registered buying card at the Brookdale Shoprite located at 1409 Broad St. in Bloomfield, NJ. The card has been set up as tax exempt.

- a. The department supervisor will give the okay to make a purchase with the Shoprite Card.
- b. The purchaser will prepare a requisition with a list of items to be purchased along with their listed prices on the Shoprite website. Select the Brookdale location as the in-store purchase location.
- c. The correct fund code and budget line will be indicated on the requisition.
- d. The purchaser will print their name, sign and date the requisition as will their supervisor.
- e. The requisition will be approved by the Library Director who will then give it to the Comptroller.
- f. Once the Comptroller gives the purchaser the okay, they may make the purchases in the store.
- g. All in-store purchases shall be taken to the Customer Service Desk to check out. Make sure no tax has been charged and any outstanding coupons have been applied.
- h. Make a copy of the receipt and give the receipt to the Comptroller.

## Financial Controls

### 1. Circulation Desk

- a. Staff at the circulation desk will clear fines and enter any monies into the ILS immediately upon receipt.
- b. Each morning the income received from the previous day will be counted and given to the Administrative Assistant to deposit.
- c. Each evening the cash drawer will be counted and secured in the safe.
- d. The base for the drawer will be audited monthly by the Head of Borrower Services.

### 2. Copiers

- a. Staff on each floor will empty and count the monies in the copy machines at least once per month.
- b. This will be done with two (2) staff members present before the building is open to the public.
- c. Staff will leave the base amount in the coin receptor.
- d. All excess funds will be counted and given to the Administrative Assistant to deposit.

### 3. Access to cash

- a. The Administrative Assistant is the petty cash custodian and will only remit cash with proper documentation.

### 4. Deposits

- a. All monies received will be deposited within 48 hours of receipt.
- b. The administrative assistant will input deposits into Quickbooks and provide the comptroller with copies of the deposit records.
- c. Copies of all checks received will be made and included with the deposit record.

### 5. Reconciliation

- a. The comptroller will reconcile the accounts with the bank statements once a month.
- b. Copies of these reconciliations will be provided to the Board of Trustees as part of the Treasurer's report.

Theodore Graham moved to approve the Financial Controls and Purchasing Policy and Lillian Ferguson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

## Cell Phone Reimbursement Policy

BEN-12

### Policy Statement

The Library provides a cell phone reimbursement to certain employees who are on call.

### Regulations

The following full-time employees will receive reimbursement of cell phone costs due to the nature of being on call for Library business after hours and on weekends:

- Head of Facilities will receive seventy-five dollars (\$75) per month
- Technology Assistant will receive seventy-five dollars (\$75) per month.

Thamar Campbell moved to approve the Cell Phone Reimbursement Policy and Andrew Silver seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Public Comment:

Ed Robin expressed his appreciation to Janet Torsney and wished her well on the next chapter of her life.

Adjournment:

At 8:30 p.m. JoAnn McCullough moved to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting and Brian Clarkson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.