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**MINUTES OF THE MONROE TOWNSHIP**

**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**March 15, 2022**

ATTENDING:

Members Staff

Benjamin Baum, President Alton Kinsey Leah Wagner

Robert Isaacs Riya Karnik Karen Klapperstuck

Lisa Chen

Bernadette Yannacci Friends of the Library

Anne Corey Francine Kitts

The meeting of the Monroe Township Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Benjamin Baum, President.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

It was noted that this meeting was in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 15, 2022 MEETING

The minutes from the February 15, 2022 meeting of the Library Board of Trustees were presented. Anne Corey asked that the status of the 2019 audit also be included in the Director’s Report as discussed at the meeting. Lisa Chen pointed out that the date of the January minutes also needs to be corrected.

*Lisa Chen moved that the minutes of the February 15, 2022 meeting be accepted with the above noted corrections. Anne Corey seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed.*

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Leah Wagner updated the Library Board on the construction project. The old boiler has been disassembled and removed. The new boiler was delayed but work resumed midday on 3/15. There is a change order which includes new struts for the new air conditioning unit. The new unit is heavier than the current units. The Library may need to close for the installation of the new struts if welding needs to be done inside the building. The Board will vote to formally approve the change order later in the meeting.

Leah discussed plans for the Farmers Market. Eleven vendors have indicated that they will definitely participate. Over 20 vendors have expressed interest. The application is with the Township attorney for review. The next step will be to send the official application to the interested vendors. Library staff is working with the Friends of the Library on this initiative. There will be a fee for vendors to participate. Leah explained that Thursdays were selected to avoid weekend competition and the 2pm-7pm time frame was selected to allow people who work to be able to enjoy the Farmers Market on their way home.

Leah reminded the Board that two Library staff members will be out on maternity leave this summer: Kelly Palombit and Jennifer Slavicek.

Lisa Chen asked Leah to talk about what happens on a legislative visit after seeing in the written Director’s Report that she visited with Senator Greenstein. Leah explained that when the New Jersey Library Association visits with legislators, a local librarian from that district often attends to discuss library services, projects and other library issues. The focus this year was on full funding of State Aid. Senator Greenstein will be re-introducing the bill to fully fund State Aid to public libraries.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Karen Klapperstuck provided an update on RFID. Library collections are being tagged with the RFID tags. Library staff in all departments are working their way through the entire Library in preparation for the full conversion to RFID at check out. The new self-check equipment has arrived. Some staff have completed a training webinar on the software. The installation will be done by a technician, on site, on March 29. Karen anticipates that the new self-checks will be available to patrons to use in mid April or the beginning of May.

Karen also discussed the Strategic Plan. The smaller strategic plan committee has had two meetings with Library Crossroads to fine tune the mission and vision statements. Goals are also being developed. The next meeting for that group is scheduled for March 30.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Leah Wagner discussed the current financial reports. The contractual line appears to be at 50% but that is because the purchase order has been cut for the construction change order. Once the transfer of funds is approved the money will be transferred back into that line item. Periodicals are also high because the Library pays for many of our subscriptions annually.

Anne Corey inquired where the money for the construction change order will be drawn. Leah explained that it is money that is in addition to the funds already allocated by the grant and the Township bond. As such, it will be paid from the money the Board of Trustees earmarked for building improvements at the December 2021 meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Leah Wagner reminded the Board that the Display & Exhibits Committee will meet after the May Board meeting.

Ben Baum will be in touch with Board members about committee appointments.

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL REPORT

Dr. Kinsey reported on Township happenings. The Mayor and Council are sending best wishes to Ukraine. Dr. Kinsey has a list of relief organizations that he can share with anyone interested.

Township meetings will resume in person as of April 1 with the statewide public health emergency being lifted.

The Mayor is laser-focused on the budget which will be presented within the next month. The Township’s priority is keeping taxes stable.

The Township is involved in numerous grants for roads, bathrooms and special needs playgrounds throughout the community. The Township is also partnering with Middlesex County on various paving projects.

Dr. Kinsey reported that the Township has been promised a 22% increase for the Township’s underfunded schools. The additional $1.7 million would bring the budget up to $9.6 million for the schools. A new funding formula is needed going forward.

As reported at the February meeting, the Police Department had an aggressive awareness campaign regarding the recent uptick in car thefts. There has been a decrease in incidents but the Police would like to remind residents to remain vigilant.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Francine Kitts reported on upcoming events and programs. This Friday (March 18) the Friends are hosting a program entitled Women’s Rights: Alice Paul. This event will be in person and on zoom. On March 22, the film *Hidden Figures* will be shown and the next day there will be a film/book discussion about it.

The Friends will have a membership table at the WinterFest ice sculpting event which is in partnership with the Cultural Arts Commission. The event was postponed from March 12 to March 19 due to the inclement weather.

Francine also announced that the Friends Book Sale will be on April 29 and April 30. There have been tons of donations so the sale should be great this year.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Riya Karnik informed the Board that state testing for Juniors is happening this week, while the other grades are all on a delayed start. Students are not excited about a return to state testing.

Riya also commented that about 65% of students are no longer wearing masks since the state mandate was lifted. The high school is making every effort to make sure that all students feel comfortable with their choice whether to wear a mask or not.

FOUNDATION REPORT

The Library Foundation held a meeting on March 10. The officers of the Foundation will remain the same with Alaine Nesti, Joe and Claudia Homoki and Robert Isaacs all keeping their positions.

The Foundation feels that donations and bequests are sufficient at this time. However, they would like to increase their visibility. The group is considering a future program on cryptocurrency and another on financial literacy for young people.The Foundation sponsored Pop-Up Shops will return this spring. And the group will investigate online giving.

Long-time member of the Foundation Charlie Dunlop passed away. The Foundation will be getting a brick in his memory.

The next Foundation meeting will be later in the spring.

NEW BUSINESS

A resolution was presented for the transfer of funds to cover the change order for the construction project.

*Whereas the Monroe Township Public Library has contracted with Hanna’s Mechanical Contractors Inc. through award of bid (Township Resolution #R-9-2021-203) for HVAC upgrades, and a change order has been presented in order to provide additional structural reinforcement underneath the existing rooftop unit curbs, and*

*Whereas the Monroe Township Public Library Board of Trustees wishes to expend funds from the Capital Fund,*

*Now, therefore, does the Monroe Township Public Library Board of Trustees agree to transfer $26,957.00 from the Capital Fund to cover this expense.*

*Robert Isaacs made a motion to approve the transfer resolution. Anne Corey seconded the motion. All were in favor.*

Leah Wagner asked the Board to formalize in person the amended Library hours this week to accommodate the construction work.

*Robert Isaacs made a motion to approve that Library hours be amended to 11am-7pm on Monday, March 14 through Thursday, March 17 and 11am-5pm on Friday, March 18. Dr. Alton Kinsey seconded the motion. All were in favor.*

ACTION ON BILLS

*Anne Corey moved the payment of the March bills with checks #17913 - #17950, in the amount of $440,594.62. Robert Isaacs seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed.*

OTHER BUSINESS

The State Aid reports were submitted. Jackie Gryszka did a lot of coordinating work and data entry to prepare the report for submission.

The Public Library Association Conference is next week. Both Leah and Karen will be out of the building to attend.

The next meeting of the Monroe Township Library Board of Trustees is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 19** at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Robert Isaacs moved that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Klapperstuck