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**MINUTES OF THE MONROE TOWNSHIP
LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
February 16, 2021**

ATTENDING:

Members

Benjamin Baum, President
Robert Isaacs
Prena Shah
Anne Corey
Lisa Chen
Stephen Dalina
Helaine Evans
Bernadette Yannacci
Kelly Roselle
Vinisha Patel

Staff

Leah Wagner
Karen Klapperstuck

Friends of the Library

Michele Mucher
Joyce Ragucci

The meeting of the Monroe Township Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 6:29 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 JANUARY 19, 2021 MEETING

Lisa Chen asked that a correction be made to her name in the motion for the Resolution for the Construction Grant.

Robert Isaacs moved that the minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting be accepted with the above noted correction. Lisa Chen seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 21, 2021 MEETING

Anne Corey moved that the minutes of the January 21, 2021 meeting be accepted as presented. Lisa Chen seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Leah Wagner reported that Library staff continues to work in two teams and has now been working this way longer than the Library was closed last spring. With the Department Heads, Leah has begun to plan for reopening. It is our hope that the staff could begin to work together again in the spring. Being on the two teams has kept the staff safe but it has also been hard to be separated, communication suffers as well as morale. Much depends on the rate of vaccination and number of cases locally.

Leah also informed the Board that Circulation Supervisor MaryAnn Reiner will be retiring on April 30th. MaryAnn was hired in 1995 as a Library Assistant and has been the Circulation Supervisor for 23 years.

Leah discussed what the Library staffing needs are moving forward. A Community Engagement Coordinator is being proposed. This would be a supervisory, non-union position that will bring the Circulation and Outreach departments under the same supervisor, provide a coordinator for programming and a coordinated approach to working with community groups and organizations. The Circulation Department will have a new manager who will oversee the day to day operations of the department and report directly to the Community Engagement Coordinator.

Leah attended an informative webinar entitled, *Planning for the Post Pandemic Library*. The speakers discussed the changes to service, space and user expectations that will result from lock downs, social distancing, remote work and learning and more. The link was also included in the Board Packet.

Leah met with Assemblyman Benson to discuss funding for all New Jersey libraries. NJLA and the State Library are asking for full funding of Per Capita State Aid be restored. Currently New Jersey libraries receive a third of their state funding.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Karen Klapperstuck discussed the 2020 Annual Report which was sent to the Board. The report will be shared with the Township and on the Library's website. Benjamin Baum asked if it could be shared in more ways so that residents would have more access.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Leah Wagner informed the Board that the books were closed out for 2020. The fund report looks as it should at this time of the year.

Leah discussed that the quarterly reimbursement to Monroe Township for services such as utilities, landscaping, employee benefits, etc. was not accurate this year. An additional payment of \$60,013 is required. In the past when this has happened, the money is transferred from Reserves to cover the cost. Leah will work with George Lang, Township CFO, to try and get a

more accurate estimate for the year so that the budget can be amended as necessary to account for the increase.

Whereas the Library is required to reimburse the Township of Monroe additional funds that exceed the budget in the amount of \$60,013.00, and

Whereas the Monroe Township Public Library Board of Trustees wishes to expend funds currently held in reserve from previous years,

Now, therefore, does the Monroe Township Public Library Board of Trustees agree to transfer \$60,013.00 from Library Reserves to cover this expense.

Robert Isaacs moved that the resolution be accepted. Anne Corey seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Resolution passed.

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL REPORT

Mayor Stephen Dalina reported that Terence Van Dzura is the new council member.

Mayor Dalina is actively trying to get more COVID vaccination doses for Monroe Township. The Senior Center vaccination site is currently for Middlesex County residents only but appointments are dependent on the number of vaccination doses received each week.

The Township is moving forward with the Master Plan. A new stakeholders committee will also be formed to assist with the plan.

The Township put out a call for citizens to volunteer to serve on boards, commissions and committees.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Joyce Ragucci reported on Friends activities. The Friends met earlier in the day on February 16. Membership dropped a bit this past year for a variety of reasons. The Friends plan to do a Drive-By Membership Drive in 2021.

The Glory Gospel Singers program is scheduled for next week. Joyce and The Friends are eager for a large turnout as the program is really fantastic.

The Friends have booked a speaker for Women's History Month. It will be a Feminist Walk through Harlem and is scheduled for March 24.

MONROE TOWNSHIP SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Kelly Roselle reported that the schools have returned to hybrid learning.

Kelly also discussed partnering with Library Staff on multiple projects. Young Adult Librarian Emily Mazzone is assisting with the development of the new summer reading list and is participating in meetings with school staff.

Kelly has reached out to Lynnette about Disability Awareness Month and how we can partner for differently-abled people.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Vinisha Patel announced that the title for this year's One Book Read is *When Dimple Met Rishi* by Sandhya Menon. Many students are very excited that the list of titles was much more diverse than in previous years and more accurately represents the MTHS student population.

Vinisha reported that the Rho Kappa Honor Society is busy working on multiple projects, including recognizing influential NJ African-American/Black figures through the morning announcements. They are also putting together Children's Activity Books for Dey Farm (schoolhouse, farmhouse, and barn).

The Environmental Action Club participated in the 36th Winter Conference for the Alliance of NJ Environmental Educators at the end of January where they attended workshops on climate action, aeroponic gardening, and freshwater ecosystems. They were also able to connect with regional educators (informal & formal). The EAC podcast is finally live. The group is also working with the Virtual Green Fair Planning Committee.

Science National Honor Society hosted Dr. Mikhail Varshavski, D.O. (known as Dr. Mike on social media). He spoke to students about the positives/negatives of pursuing a career in medicine and why he chose family medicine.

MTHS scholarship (Senior Awards) deadline today, an increase in opportunities will hopefully help more students & their families during this time of economic struggle.

FOUNDATION REPORT

The Foundation met on February 4. The discussions centered on what to do next and how to proceed. Those at the meeting decided to wait and see how things go since it is a hard time to host events to solicit donations. The Foundation will meet again on May 6 at 7pm to further discuss and make decisions.

OLD BUSINESS

Leah Wagner updated the Board on the status of the Construction Bond Grant. The Township Council passed a resolution regarding funding and another resolution to hire Anthony Iovino to help manage the project and write bid specs, etc.

NEW BUSINESS

Leah Wagner discussed with the Board thoughts about reopening the Library. The plan would be to phase in everything, starting with Grab & Go, increasing hours, etc. Curbside will not go away - it is helpful to know when people are coming to pick up their items at the drive-thru. It is likely we will not need as many computers for public use as we did before the pandemic. Programming will probably remain online or outside, weather-permitting, for quite some time. A decision will not be made without further discussion with the Library Board and the Township Office of Emergency Management.

Leah Wagner presented the job posting for the Community Engagement Librarian position.

Robert Isaacs moved that the job posting be accepted as presented. Helaine Evans seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Benjamin Baum and Leah Wagner discussed obtaining a lawyer specifically for the Library. Leah will continue to investigate options and referrals and report back to the Board at a future meeting.

ACTION ON BILLS

Prena Shah moved the payment of the January bills with checks #17427 - #17459, in the amount of \$423,356.29. Anne Corey seconded. The motion passed.

Robert Isaacs moved the payment of the February bills with checks #17460 - #17475, in the amount of \$35,290.49. Lisa Chen seconded. The motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Monroe Township Library Board of Trustees is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 16** at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Anne Corey moved that the meeting adjourn; Robert Isaacs seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Klapperstuck