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**MINUTES OF THE MONROE TOWNSHIP
LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
September 21, 2021**

ATTENDING:

Members

Benjamin Baum, President
Lisa Chen
Robert Isaacs
Anne Corey
Helaine Evans
Bernadette Yannacci
Riya Karnik
Kelly Roselle
Mayor Stephen Dalina

Staff

Leah Wagner
Karen Klapperstuck

Friends of the Library Representative

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 JUNE 15, 2021 MEETING

The minutes from the June 15, 2021 meeting of the Library Board of Trustees were presented.

Helaine Evans moved that the minutes of the June 15, 2021 meeting be accepted. Robert Isaacs seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Leah Wagner reported that the Library has been busier this summer than last year. While larger programs remain on zoom or outside, many of our smaller events and programs are being held in person using the meeting room.

Leah discussed the recent flooding in Rossmoor and elsewhere in Monroe Township. The Library was asked to collect monetary donations from the community to provide relief to residents impacted by the flood. Approximately \$25,000 was collected. Distribution of gift cards will begin on Wednesday, September 22. Leah thanked The Friends of the Library for partnering on the project and Karen Lassiter for her work in the effort.

Leah updated the Board on recent hires to fill open positions due to retirements and inter-department transitions of staff. Included in the board packet are reports from Natasha (Outreach) and Lynnette (Youth Services).

Middlesex County Board of Elections asked if the Library would serve as an Early Voting Center for the county. Early voting will begin on October 23 and end on Sunday, October 31. The Library remains a regular polling location on Election Day, November 2.

The Library continues moving towards normal service! Leah recommended that the Library return to pre-pandemic hours beginning on October 1, 2021.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Karen Klapperstuck reported that the computers have been completely re-opened and the Print Release stations and wireless printing (funded in part by The Friends of the Library) are operational. Some network equipment was damaged during a recent storm which meant internet access was limited for about a week while new equipment could be ordered and installed.

Karen also reported that the RFID project will be getting started soon. Staff will convert items to the new system and then in 2022 the new self-check systems will be delivered and installed.

Karen was elected to the Libraries of Middlesex Automation Consortium (LMxAC) Executive Board. Reference Librarians Lauren Uslan, Tyler Rousseau and Jennifer Rojas are all serving on different LMxAC and Libraries of Middlesex committees..0

FINANCIAL REPORT

Leah Wagner discussed the current fund report. Everything is as expected..

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL REPORT

Mayor Dalina first thanked the Library for stepping up to assist flood victims; it truly has been a team effort for the entire Township. The situation was unlike anything he had ever seen, except on television. He said that he cannot thank everyone in the town enough.

The Mayor reminded the other Board members that this is the first time ever in New Jersey that early voting will be allowed and it will take place right here in Monroe!

Other ongoing initiatives are the Master Plan and a plan for implementation and distribution of COVID vaccine booster shots.

The Mayor also thanked Leah for participating in the first Mayor Dalina Show.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Francine Kitts reported that the Friends hosted a Membership Drive on September 18. The event included a balloon artist, live music and packaged food/drink for attendees to take with them. However, it was not as successful as the Friends would have liked.

The book sale, on the other hand, was very successful. The Friends raised over \$2,000. The mini book sale is on-going.

The Friends are happy to provide wireless printing capability and the museum pass program.

The next Friends event is the Community Yard Sale to be held in the Library parking lot on October 2. The Friends will also be selling coffee, books and have a membership table.

MONROE TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATOR

Kelly Roselle discussed that school is back and in-person. The district's safe return to in-person plans are outlined on the website and are updated as additional information becomes available.

Kelly reported that the schools are experiencing a staff shortage, especially in substitute teachers.

Kelly also informed the Board that Dr. Alvich, the superintendent, is retiring effective November 2. Interviews are being conducted for an interim superintendent.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Riya Karnik was welcomed to the Board at her first meeting as Student Representative. She reported that the transition back to in-person learning has been tough for some students. The school is doing everything possible to keep the students safe and the students will adjust.

FOUNDATION REPORT

The Foundation meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 23, 2021.

OLD BUSINESS

Leah Wagner reported on the construction grant. The bid opening was held and the contract was awarded to Hannah's Mechanical of Milltown. The first construction meeting is scheduled for the week of September 29, 2021.

NEW BUSINESS

Leah Wagner asked the Board to approve the return to pre-pandemic hours, which include staying open until 9pm Monday through Thursday and full days on Sundays.

Anne Corey moved that the Library change operating hours to pre-pandemic status. Benjamin Baum seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Leah Wagner asked the Board to formalize the transfer of funds for the RFID project as voted on at the June 2021 Board of Trustees meeting. The following resolution was read into the minutes:

Whereas the Monroe Township Public Library wishes to contract with SHI International to purchase an RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) system under State Contract Number CK04, Subcontract Number 19-34, 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 contract with SHI International and transfer \$83,545.00 from the Library Reserves to cover this expense.

All were in favor.

Leah Wagner asked the Board to approve Karen Lassiter moving from part-time Library Assistant in the Youth Services department to full-time Library Assistant in the Outreach and Reference department.

Bernadette Yannaci moved to approve the hiring of Karen Lassiter as full-time. Helaine Evans seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed.

ACTION ON BILLS

Lisa Chen moved the payment of the July bills with checks #17613 - #17647, in the amount of \$369,554.62. Anne Corey seconded. The motion passed.

Lisa Chen moved the payment of the August bills with checks #17648 - #17695, in the amount of \$203,637.00. Anne Corey seconded. The motion passed.

Lisa Chen moved the payment of the September bills with checks #17696 - #17723, in the amount of \$235,893.82. Anne Corey seconded. The motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Benjamin Baum congratulated Karen Klapperstuck on her election to the LMxAC Executive Board.

Lisa Chen asked for a brief update on the strategic plan. Karen Klapperstuck reported that the survey closed, having received just shy of 1,700 responses. Karen and Leah Wagner are scheduled to meet with the consultants on Friday, September 24. Then Karen will convene another meeting of the strategic planning committee.

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Helaine Evans moved that the meeting adjourn; Lisa Chen seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Klapperstuck