MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

November 17, 2025

The Board of Trustees of the Millburn Free Public Library held their regular monthly meeting on Monday November 17th, 2025, at 7:30 p.m. Present were Ms. Sherman, who presided, Mrs. Eisner, Mrs. Binder, Mrs. Kelly, Ms. Chenofsky Singer, and Mr. Banick. Mr. Cohen and Ms. Panarelli were absent.

Ms. Sherman opened the meeting and read the Sunshine Law Announcement.

MINUTES:

Ms. Sherman asked the Board to review the minutes.

Ms. Sherman asked for a motion to accept the minutes of October 20th, 2025, as submitted with the corrections made to three surnames Kitchen, Adams and Cohen. Mrs. Binder so moved. Mrs. Eisner seconded. All were in favor.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mrs. Eisner and Mr. Banick compared vouchers to proposed expenditures prior to the meeting.

Vouchers #7852 - #7910 and payrolls for November 17, 2025, as directed by the Township amounting to $622,265.57 and charged to the library's appropriation were approved for payment or ratified for payment.

Ms. Sherman asked for a motion that the Bill Lists for November be approved. Mrs. Kelly made a motion to approve the Bill Lists as submitted. The motion was seconded by Ms. Chenofsky Singer. All were in favor.

The Bill Lists were approved as presented.

Mrs. Kelly asked why substitute librarian Cynthia Coulter is not being paid the customary way for substitutes. Mr. Banick said that she will no longer be paid by voucher. She is now an employee of Atrium Payroll Services LLC and if her services are needed, she will be hired through the agency going forward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Sherman asked if there were any Public Comments. Mrs. Kelly reported for the Friends.

The Friends have been very busy with their annual membership appeal. The kickoff was publicized by email and in the library's fall newsletter. Mailing went out on Saturday November 15th before noon. A big social media campaign will follow.

Programming is going very well. Museum Night held on November 11th was packed. Art historian Larissa Bailiff gave a great presentation that was about the MET. The Friends hope that patrons will check out passes and enjoy the museum.

The Fireside Book Club will meet virtually on Monday December 1st. The book will be "What We Can Know" by Ian McEwan. The moderator will be Millburn Librarian Laura Sims. Registration is open and the books are available at the reference desk.

Stephanie Murphy from Greenwood Gardens will present an adult only program on Thursday December 11th at 2 p.m. Participants will make whimsical handmade snowflake decorations.

Registration is open for the Chess Tournament on social media and the library's website. The tournament as of now will be held in Meeting Room A. The elevator is still out of commission, but the crowd attending should be able to use the stairs. Special accommodations can be provided if needed.

The Little Seed Library continues to thrive. An article will be in next month's Vicinity Magazine. Over two hundred packets were distributed last month. Such great publicity has helped attract participants to the program.

After a caring local resident reached out to the Friends to share that a local elementary school in Irvington needed Spanish language books, the Little Free Library donated a collection of thirty-five Spanish language books. The Friends were happy to do it as they had the requested books on hand.

Ms. Sherman thanked Mrs. Kelly for her report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Banick shared with the Board correspondence he received from former resident Steve Brown who currently volunteers at the Millburn Library regarding his disappointment in not being issued a non-resident library card. Mr. Brown felt that the director's response to his request was brief, terse and lacked sufficient detail. As a result, the patron has requested that his letter be shared with the Board. The Board thanked the director for sharing the correspondence with them.

Mr. Banick reported on Buildings & Grounds. Inspections were held today November 17th. The library passed the electrical inspection and a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy for the building was issued. Administration offices are reopened. Programs will begin to be held in the second-floor meeting rooms.

Mr. Banick introduced Mr. Don Fiore, project architect, to a question-and-answer session with the Board.

Mrs. Kelly asked why the hallway paneling seams are so visible. Mr. Fiore explained that the material was chosen because it offers long-lasting durability and requires minimal maintenance, making it ideal for both maintaining the appearance and functionality of the walls.

Mr. Fiore addressed the elevator as it relates to programming and civil rights of patrons. Holding programs on the second floor of the library while the elevator is out of service creates significant accessibility barriers for patrons who wish to attend. Many community members may be unable to attend. To ensure fairness and compliance with accessibility laws the library should have Plan B in place for all programming. This would be relocating to an accessible ground-floor space or an alternative accessible venue until the elevator is repaired and operational. Otherwise, the library could be exposed to potential legal liability.

Mrs. Kelly said that in the case of the Chess Tournament the Friends have a Plan B to accommodate participants if necessary.

Mr. Fiore reported that he is in the final stages with the contractor to complete the project punch list.

Mrs. Binder asked if the current heating system on the stage in Meeting room A could be upgraded and the floor heating unit moved off the stage. Mr. Fiore was happy to confirm that yes, he will look at how this can be done. Mrs. Binder thanked Mr. Fiore saying, "thank you that would be great." Mrs. Binder feels that the library is doing the renovation so let's do this now as well.

Mrs. Kelly agreed that the one regret the Board has is that they did not look at the heating system in Meeting Room A. The location of the unit on the stage takes away from the rest of the renovation.

Mr. Banck cautioned that with the winter months coming the upgrade is better suited to begin after heating season ends.

Mrs. Binder asked Mr. Banick and Mr. Fiore to please review the heating project now to assess what it entails rather than postponing. It is important to have clarity now as soon as possible. She asked that they report back with their findings and the Board can go from there.

Mr. Fiore said, "will do." Mrs. Binder responded, "thank you."

Mrs. Kelly stated that looking at a project plan vs. what she sees in person as the completed project can be very different. Mrs. Kelly stated that she feels the current suggested location (Meeting Room B) for the sensory room at the library does not meet the needs for its intended purpose. A sensory friendly room should provide a calm, quiet, and accessible environment that supports regulation and focus. The proposed area in Meeting Room B is in a high traffic area and will not have proper sound control of noise levels. Mrs. Kelly said that a sensory friendly room would truly set Millburn apart from other libraries.

Mrs. Kelly asked Mr. Fiore if the large space in the rear of Meeting Room A can be reconfigured to allocate a portion for a sensory friendly room while still maintaining adequate storage capacity.

Mr. Fiore said, "yes that is easy enough to look at and definitely makes sense." He asked Mrs. Kelly to let him know what size room is needed.

The Board then discussed how a sensory friendly room was approved in the project plans. Room B was to do dual duty. Mrs. Kelly responded that may have been the case but that her vision was not clear and that she wishes to revisit the request. The Board agreed that making dedicated room for a sensory friendly space is an easy adjustment.

The Board thanked Mr. Fiore for his attendance and for addressing the questions from the Board.

Mrs. Binder asked Mr. Banick for a complete financial accounting of the Second Foor Renovation Project including all expenditures.

Mrs. Kelly asked Mr. Banick for the new audio-visual specifications for the Board's review.

Mrs. Binder asked Mr. Fiore when the library can expect the final Certificate of Occupancy to be issued. Mr. Fiore said January 2026.

Mrs. Binder asked if the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy has a timeframe in which it will expire. Mr. Fiore said yes that they go from thirty, sixty or ninety days. He will have to ask the inspector what the timeline is for Millburn.

Then Board again thanked Mr. Fiore for his informative answers.

Mrs. Kelly asked for guidance regarding potential scheduling and program overlaps between the Friends and the library's own events. Do potential program presenters need to be directed to library staff? Can the Friends use the same presenters or do clear distinctions need to be made? Mr. Banick stated that the Friends are free and welcome to run parallel programming alongside library events. These programs are organized

independently, and the library does not have ownership or control over the presenters engaged by the Friends.

Mr. Banick thanked Mrs. Binder and the Friends for planning the very successful library program at the Upton.

Ms. Sherman thanked Mr. Banick for his report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

There were no Committee Reports.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no New Business.

There was no Executive Session.

Ms. Sherman asked if there was any further business before the Board before adjournment.

Seeing none, Ms. Sherman requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Kelly "so moved." Mrs. Eisner seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Giambattista