MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

December 22, 2025

The Board of Trustees of the Millburn Free Public Library held their regular monthly meeting on Monday December 22nd, 2025, at 7:30 p.m. Present were Ms. Sherman, who presided, Mrs. Eisner, Mrs. Binder, Mrs. Kelly, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Banick. Ms. Chenofsky Singer 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 November 17th, 2025, as submitted Mrs. Eisner so moved. Mrs. Kelly seconded. Mr. Cohen abstained. All were in favor. Ms. Sherman asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the December 2nd Special Meeting as submitted. Mrs. Kelly so moved. Mrs. Binder seconded. Mr. Cohen abstained. All were in favor.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

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

Vouchers #7911 - #7957 and payrolls for December 22, 2025, as directed by the Township amounting to $340,637.41 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 December be approved. Mr. Cohen made a motion to approve the Bill Lists as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Kelly. All were in favor.

The Bill Lists were approved as presented.

Mrs. Kelly asked why a purchased was made from the Israel Book Shop? Were the materials purchased not able to be obtained through the library's current book vendors? Is this a specialized shop? Mr. Banick said "yes" the vendor was used to purchase books that are translated into Hebrew.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

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

The Friends annual membership appeal is moving along. Everyone is happy that the previous year's membership levels have been attained.

Chess lessons ended on Saturday December 20th.

Member-Merchant membership cards were distributed to the staff on Tuesday December 23rd. Mr. Cohen asked if any new merchants signed up for the program. Mrs. Kelly said "no", but that the Friends will be reaching out in January 2026 to new establishments in the township to see if they would like to participate in the initiative.

Ms. Sherman thanked Mrs. Kelly for her report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Banick reported on the renovation. The library is in the final punch list phase. Everything should be wrapped up shortly. The garden lighting will be installed in the next couple of weeks. The heating elements on the stage in Meeting Room A will be removed as part of the current project.

Mrs. Kelly and Mr. Banick spoke regarding a dedicated sensory room to support individuals with sensory processing needs that visit the Millburn Library. The sensory room cannot be added as part of the current renovation project. The architect, Mr. Fiore, will put plans together for adding one using some of the storage area on the second floor. The project will be funded separately, if the Board wishes to pursue the idea.

Mrs. Kelly also addressed sensory programming for the library. It was noted that sensory programming should be delivered by licensed professionals with appropriate expertise, rather than by current library staff, who are not trained specialists in this field.

Mrs. Eisner further noted that offering sensory programming for adults would be beneficial and inclusive for the broader community.

Mrs. Kelly stated that she will provide the Library Director with contact information for licensed professionals in the field to assist with planning future programs. Mr. Cohen also noted that the Paper Mill Playhouse offers successful sensory programs for each of its productions and suggested the library uses this model as a reference.

The Board reiterated its request that the architect explore the possibility of subdividing the second-floor storage space to accommodate a dedicated sensory room for patrons who may need access to the space outside of regularly scheduled programming.

Mr. Fiore responded that he would review this request as part of the library's next capital project.

Mr. Banick reported on the elevator. The Board was informed that testing of the elevator jack system is underway. Once testing is complete, OTIS will contact the State to arrange for the final inspection. In response to a Board inquiry regarding timing, Mr. Banick stated that the ideal completion target is the end of January 2026.

Mr. Cohen stated that the public information session for the joint field project is scheduled for January 13th, 2026. He asked whether the session could be held at the library. Mr. Banick advised that this would likely not be possible due to the elevator not yet being in service, as its inspection is not expected to be completed in time for use on January 13th. It was noted that the meeting location would need to be advertised in advance, and because the elevator cannot be relied upon to be operational by that date, it would be best to keep the meeting at the Bauer Center to avoid accessibility issues.

Mr. Banick informed the Board that the sprinkler control valve in the first-floor janitor's closet is leaking and that a bucket has been placed to catch the drip. He stated that Town Hall will handle the repair, as it is responsible for certain maintenance functions for all public buildings. Mr. Cohen reminded Mr. Banick that the Town is not required to perform this work, as it already funds the library annually, and noted that this assistance is appreciated.

Mr. Banick reported on Technology. The new public black and white printer has been purchased.

Mr. Banick reported on Statistics. Typed statistics were provided in the packet for Board review.

As part of reviewing statistics on programming, Mrs. Binder asked whether the Zumba program is ongoing or a one-time event, nothing that most participants prefer ongoing classes. Mr. Banick responded that it is a one-time event. Mr. Cohen asked where the program was being held, and Mr. Banick stated it was downstairs. Mr. Cohen inquired whether the loud music disturbed other patrons, as the library is generally intended for quiet use. Mr. Banick explained that the plan is to move programs of this type to the second floor once the elevator is operational.

Ms. Sherman thanked Mr. Banick for his report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The Board activated the Nomination Committee for 2026. The members assigned to the committee are Mrs. Binder, Mrs. Kelly, and Mr. Cohen.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board introduced for approval the holiday schedule and Board meeting dates for 2026. Ms. Sherman requested a motion to approve the holiday schedule and Board meetings dates as submitted for 2026. Mrs. Eisner so moved. Mrs. Kelly seconded. All were in favor.

The board entered Executive Session at 8:25 PM. to discuss non-union white-collar personnel matters and returned to regular session at 9:10 PM. Mrs. Kelly, member of the Personnel Committee, reported on the outcome. It was noted that 3% raises were awarded for 2026 to the three non-union white-collar staff members. Minutes of the Executive Session were not taken by Mrs. Giambattista.

In closing out the meeting, Mrs. Eisner stated that benchmarks need to be met for the Library's 2026 vision. She also noted that the committees should be more proactive in addressing issues within the library rather than being reactive. The Board agreed with her comments.

Mrs. Binder offered Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year wishes, extending best wishes for all good things. The Board joined in expressing their good wishes.

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. Eisner "so moved." Mrs. Kelly seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Giambattista