MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

May 19, 2025

The Board of Trustees of the Millburn Free Public Library held their regular monthly meeting on Monday May 19th 2025 at 7:30 p.m. Present were: Ms. Sherman, who presided, Mrs. Eisner, Mrs. Binder, Mrs. Kelly, Ms. Chenofsky Singer, Mr. Cohen, and Mr. Banick. Ms. Panarelli was 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 April 21st 2025 as submitted with a correction to change the meeting date from April 24th to April 21st. Mrs. Kelly 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 #7494 - #7549 and payrolls as directed by the Township amounting to $510,119.37 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 April be approved. Mrs. Kelly made a motion to approve the Bill Lists as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Eisner. All were in favor.

The Bill Lists were approved as presented.

Mr. Cohen asked why on the Budget vs. Actual Report does it show an Income line item and a corresponding Expense line item for the Bequest. Mr. Banick stated that the fund is a holdover from the previous year that it is applied to the Fund Balance. Mr. Cohen stated that accounting for the funds in this manner could distort the figures of Actual Income vs. Budgeted Income. The Library is not expecting to get a Bequest every year. Fund Balance is also not an Income item. Mr. Banick agreed and understands that if it were treated as new income it would snowball year over year, but the Fund Balance is listed as income because it is available to be deployed. But showing Income and

Expenses at 23% of the budget could be misleading. It looks like the Library is way underspending. Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Banick to adjust these figures on the report going forward. Mr. Banick said he would break it out in his report so that current spending is compared with new, current revenue.

Mr. Cohen then asked Mr. Banick if Interest Income is reported, and if so where. Mr. Banick stated that it is reported under Miscellaneous.

Mrs. Kelly mentioned that there are more Out-Of-Town Memberships for 2025. She also stated that Overdue Fees have gone up. Mr. Banick stated that this figure reflects lost items.

Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Banick why some vendors appeared on the Handwritten Bill List and the Regular Bill List. This month it seems like there are more manual checks than usual. Mr. Banick explained that these were checks to vendors that he requested handwritten checks to these vendors to remain current with payments; they were not duplicate payments. The vendors were Vertilocity, Renwick, and Ingram. Mrs. Eisner said that as Treasurer she sees all the vouchers and initials everything.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

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

The Friends made their annual donation to the Library on May 7th in the amount of $16,545.00. This donation supports the Library's Museum Pass Program, Summer Reading Program, and Makers Day Program.

The Friends continue their outreach. The Native Seed Program is now available at the Library. It is located on the Glen Avenue entrance. Over 250 seed packets have already been distributed.

On Sunday May 18th the Friends participated in the Non-Profit Organizational Fair that was sponsored by the Millburn-Short Hills Chinese Association. It was a great day.

The Friends will march in the Millburn Township Memorial Day Parade on Monday May 26th.

The Little Free Library located at the pool will open on Saturday May 24th.

The Fireside Book Club will be held on Tuesday June 3rd. The book is "Akmaral", by Judith Lindberg. The moderator will be the author.

Chess Lessons are going strong. Chess Camp will be held at the Casa Colombo Civic Association in Millburn. The Association gave the Friends a wonderful deal.

The Friends Member-Merchant Initiative has a new member: The Simple Fare.

Ms. Sherman thanked Mrs. Kelly for her report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Banick reported on the Second Floor Renovation. The renovation continues to go well. The framing of new windows in Meeting Room A has begun. The elevator is scheduled to be completed by the end of May.

Mr. Banick reported on Buildings & Grounds. An electrical issue was fixed. The Department of Public Works repaired damaged Belgian Block Curbing in the Commuter and Library Parking Lot. Damaged sidewalks were repaired as well.

Mrs. Kelly informed the Board that she gets many people asking her about the renovation. Mrs. Kelly asked Mr. Banick that digital material concerning the ongoing renovation currently available on the Library's website also be displayed in print form on the first floor. This will better allow patrons to see what the completed renovation will look like. Ms. Chenofsky Singer said that the plans could also be put up on the TV Screen by the Circulation Desk. The Board agreed. The Board feels that patrons may not go onto the Library website regarding the renovation.

Mr. Banick reported on Personnel. A Library Assistant staff member attended the BCCLS meeting in West Orange. The NJLA Conference 2025 will be held from May 23rd to May 30th in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The ALA Conference 2025 will be held from June 26th to June 30th in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Staff members will attend both.

Mr. Banick reported on Finance. Mr. Banick will adjust the Library Financial reports to reflect the changes the Board has requested earlier in the meeting. The Library received an extra payment from JIF for the book drop accident in 2024.

Mr. Banick reported on Technology. BCCLS will install 12 new public computers and 8 staff computers that will support Windows 11.

Mr. Banick reported on Statistics. Visitation and Circulation have gone up. Reference is down 4%.

Mr. Banick reported on Programming. There were 76 adult programs. Mrs. Kelly asked if this number is correct. Mr. Banick said yes and that the number includes ELL encounters as well. Mrs. Kelly asked if Mr. Banick looks at the breakdown of how many people come per program. Mr. Banick said that attendance totals are counted but that he

prefers not to overanalyze or create a success test for the Librarians as there are many factors that can impact attendance.

The Board asked that ELL classes be kept separate going forward. They feel that there are a number of programs being offered. They would like a statistical breakdown on the programs that the Library pays to provide. They would like to see if there is any return on investment. Which ones are successful. Which work.

The Board feels that the information they are asking for could help the library enhance programming even more in the future. Maybe program times could be moved which would help with attendance. In closing, they asked that Mr. Banick look at programs in his reporting going forward.

Ms. Sherman thanked Mr. Banick for his report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mrs. Sherman reported that the Personnel Committee met on April 24th .

Mrs. Sherman read the following statement into the Board Minutes.

The following were present at the meeting:

- Sara Sherman – Board President
- Ruth Binder – Trustee
- Dorothy Kelly – Trustee
- Adam S. Abramson - Attorney
- Michael Banick – Director

Lisa Chenofsky Singer, Personnel Committee Member, was not in attendance.

The meeting started at 11:35 a.m.

The meeting was advisory in nature.

A discussion about personnel took place.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Banick stated that a Board Trustee informed him that the Library Board of Trustees is not following Official Robert's Rules of Order during their Executive Sessions. The tape recorder is being turned off and no minutes are being taken, transcribed and approved at the following Board Meeting.

In order for the Board to come into compliance the following will be done:

1. To begin an Executive Session, there must be a motion, a second, and a vote. A majority vote is needed to go into Executive Session.
2. Minutes of an Executive Session have to be taken. However, there should be no recording of the session, only handwritten notes, which are drafted into minutes and are not a transcript of the session. Any notes used to prepare the minutes are destroyed after the minutes are approved (see #3).
3. Minutes of the Executive Session will be approved at a subsequent Executive Session. These minutes will be separate from the general minutes of the open session and will only be seen by the trustees and select staff (i.e., the director or the business manager, who may have attended or been involved in their preparation).
4. If the approval of the previous Executive Session's minutes is the only order of business for an Executive Session, then the act of approving those minutes will also constitute the minutes of that very session. (Another additional set of minutes that say "the previous minutes were approved" is not necessary).
5. Any materials that are distributed for an Executive Session are confidential. They are collected and destroyed after the session.
6. The members must move, second, and vote to return to Regular Session.
7. Any action taken, or to be taken, as a result of an Executive Session will be recorded in the Open Session minutes.
8. Executive Session minutes will be retained separately from the general minutes and will only be accessible to the trustees and select staff (i.e., the director or the business manager, who may have attended or been involved in their preparation), until such time that they should be made publicly available, as determined by the circumstances.

Mr. Cohen informed Mr. Banick that the Executive Session minutes must be made available to the public when it is deemed okay. They are made available to the public just as the Regular Session minutes are. He wants to make sure that that point is made clear in item #8.

The Board then held a discussion regarding where the Executive Session minutes will be held until they are released to the public. The Board wants themselves, as well as any future new Board Members to have access to them. The Board decided that they should be held in the Director's Office.

The Board then held a discussion on the Director's yearly performance reviews, as outlined in the By-Laws of the MFPL Board of Trustees. Right now, the Director writes up a summary of his performance and submits it to the Board at year's end when asking for a raise for himself and the two non-union white-collar workers. Ms. Chenofsky Singer asked at this point that Mr. Banick share with the Board with the BCCLS salary survey data.

Currently the discussion regarding performance happens in Executive Session. The Board is concerned that if they were ever questioned there are no recordings or minutes of Executive Session discussions, even though any actions approved are read into the minutes of the Regular Session.

Going forward, the Board wants the Director's performance reviews written down. The Director's performance reviews will be put into his personnel file at the Library, but, as a personnel item, the review will not be accessible to the public. The Secretary for the Board will also need to take minutes during Executive Session.

Mr. Banick asked the Board to approve his hiring of a Part-Time Library Assistant for Sundays. The current staff member working these hours wishes to come off the schedule.

The Board asked if this will be a straight time pay. It will.

The Board asked if this is a union position. It is.

The Board asked if any other current staff members are interested in the hours. They are not.

The Board asked if Sunday rotations can be part of a staff member's work requirements. They can be, but this would need to be negotiated in the next union contract.

The Board suggested that Mr. Banick should look into universities that may have students interested in the position.

The Board is concerned that Mr. Banick may have a problem finding a candidate that will only work on Sundays and for only eight hours per month. Mr. Banick said that he feels he can fill the position, as the Library already has three other staff members who work schedules like this.

Ms. Sherman asked if there were any more questions or concerns from the Board. Seeing none she asked for a motion to approve the hiring of a Part-Time Library Assistant. Mrs. Eisner "so moved." Mrs. Kelly seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Banick asked the Board to approve closing the Library for asbestos abatement due to flooring removal on the second floor. The closure would be for two or three days. Ms. Sherman asked for a motion to approve the closure. Mrs. Eisner "so moved." Mrs. Binder seconded. All were in favor.

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. Eisner "so moved." Ms. Chenofsky Singer seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Giambattista