Millburn Free Public Library

Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Board President Mrs. Kelly. She read the Sunshine Law statement, noting that the meeting had been properly noticed under the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. Library Director Mr. Banick began recording the meeting.

Present were Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Binder (via Zoom), Mrs. Eisner, Mr. Heinrichs, Ms. Panarelli, Mayor Saccomandi (via Zoom), Ms. Sherman, and Library Director Mr. Banick.

Approval of Minutes

Board President Mrs. Kelly asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the May 18, 2026, meeting. Hearing none, Mrs. Eisner moved to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Mrs. Binder. The motion carried unanimously.

Bills List Approval

Prior to the meeting, Trustee Mrs. Eisner and Library Director Mr. Banick reviewed the vouchers, wire transfers, handwritten checks, and regular check register checks against the proposed expenditures. Wire transfers for payroll dated May 8, 2026, in the amount of $109,816.39 and May 22, 2026, in the amount of $69,936.62; handwritten checks #8242–#8243 totaling $1,187.19; and regular check register checks #8244–#8292 totaling $55,174.95, for a grand total of $236,115.15, were submitted for approval.

Mrs. Kelly presented the bills list for approval and opened the floor for discussion. There being no questions from the trustees, Mrs. Kelly called for a motion to approve the bill lists as submitted. Ms. Sherman so moved, and Ms. Panarelli seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments / Friends of the Library Report

Friends of the Library Board President Ms. Gupta was unable to attend the meeting in person. Her monthly report on Friends activities was submitted in writing and included in the trustees' board packets.

Director's Report

Mr. Banick began his report by thanking the Friends of the Library for their continued support of the Summer Reading Program. He noted that the Friends generously sponsor all programming and prizes for the annual event across all age groups.

BCCLS

Mr. Banick reported that the Millburn Library is participating in the BCCLS Passport Program. Patrons are encouraged to visit participating member libraries throughout the system and have their passports stamped. Upon completing the program requirements, participants will be eligible to enter a raffle for a chance to win a prize. Mrs. Kelly asked whether the program had begun. Mr. Banick replied that it commenced on Monday, June 15, to coincide with the start of the Summer Reading Program.

Buildings & Grounds

Mr. Banick reported that proposals for the loading dock and ramp repair work had been received, with prices ranging from $15,500 to more than $30,000. He recommended awarding the project to ProContractors Masonry & Concrete LLC at a cost of $15,500.

Mrs. Binder inquired about Santagata Landscaping, noting that she had not been aware that the company performed concrete repair work in addition to landscaping services. Mr. Heinrichs asked whether there were any differences between the proposals submitted by ProContractors Masonry & Concrete LLC and Vali Construction, LLC, as the difference in price was only $850. Mr. Banick stated that there were no differences other than price. Mr. Heinrichs remarked that, given that fact, the library should proceed with the lower bid.

Mrs. Kelly requested the Board's approval to move forward with the repairs by ProContractors Masonry & Concrete at a cost of $15,500. The Board unanimously agreed and directed Mr. Banick to proceed with the work.

Mrs. Kelly then asked Mr. Banick to provide an update on the renovation inspections. Mr. Banick reported that the Library had received the final certificates of occupancy. He noted that some meeting room doors were not closing properly and would be replaced once the new doors arrived. He further reported that kickplates that had not yet been installed would be added upon delivery.

The Board expressed dissatisfaction with some of the door finishes. Mr. Banick stated that the architect for the second-floor renovation project had advised that the finishes met

industry standards and that any changes would need to be funded outside of the renovation budget. Mr. Banick further reported that the architect was exploring the possibility of refacing the doors with a veneer finish that could better meet the Board's preferences while remaining cost-effective.

Mrs. Kelly expressed concern regarding the durability of such a finish and questioned whether it could chip or crack from normal patron use. Mr. Banick stated that he would seek additional information and report back to the Board.

Programs & Statistics

Mr. Banick reported that programming remains strong. He noted that the ELL program continues to perform well, with both tutoring sessions and formal classes experiencing steady participation. He also highlighted the tremendous success of the Friends' Annual Book Sale. Visitation during the sale weekend pushed the Library's people count to more than 1,000 visitors.

Mrs. Kelly, Chair of the Book Sale, remarked that the event is a significant community attraction that draws visitors from beyond the Millburn-Short Hills community. She also commented on how gratifying it is to see so many members of the community come together at the sale.

Mr. Banick further reported that the sale was supported by 82 volunteers representing all age groups, who collectively contributed nearly 2,300 hours of service.

Mr. Heinrichs inquired about the summer outreach activities referenced in Mr. Banick's report. Specifically, he asked whether the outreach consisted of informational tables, whether library employees staffed the events or if participation was handled by the Friends, and whether staff participation occurred during normal working hours.

Mr. Banick explained that the outreach consists of informational tables promoting library services. He stated that the Marketing Librarian, along with other staff members as needed, staffs the events during their regular work hours. For larger community events, additional employees may be assigned, with work schedules adjusted to accommodate the event while maintaining normal shift hours.

Mrs. Kelly added that the Friends of the Library also participate in township events and make an effort to cover events that occur outside of regular employee work hours in order to support the Library.

Committee Reports – Naming & Fundraising Opportunities

Subcommittee members Ms. Panarelli and Ms. Sherman gave their report on their findings regarding naming opportunities within the Millburn Library. Ms. Sherman began by noting that the committee utilized materials from the Public Library Association, as well as questions previously submitted to the Library Attorney approximately five years ago, in conducting its research. The committee also reviewed the donation and naming policies of eight libraries.

Ms. Panarelli reported on her review of donations linked to naming opportunities. She examined policies at libraries similar to Millburn and found that these libraries often tie naming opportunities to capital fundraising campaigns rather than strictly to the monetary value of an individual donation.

Mrs. Kelly asked whether any of the libraries reviewed had naming opportunities that honored an individual's service or were designated in honor of a person. Ms. Panarelli replied that she had not found any such examples. She noted, however, that the donation amounts associated with naming opportunities varied considerably, ranging from relatively modest contributions for a dedicated shelf to substantially larger gifts associated with more significant naming opportunities.

Ms. Sherman added that the Livingston Public Library includes the Ruth L. Lockwood Memorial Library designation in its name. Mrs. Kelly asked whether Ms. Lockwood had served as the Library Director. Mr. Banick replied that she had and noted that Ms. Lockwood oversaw the substantial renovation and expansion of the Livingston Public Library approximately 20 years ago. He added that he believed the designation honors a specific wing of the library rather than the entire building.

Ms. Sherman stated that the Millburn Library should have a policy in place in the event a naming request is made, and that the Library should be prepared with clear terms for acceptance of any associated donation. She noted that this was a recommendation only and is being presented to the Board tonight. She further stated that the Library currently has no formal policy in place, as none has been reviewed by legal counsel or approved by the Board.

Ms. Sherman and Ms. Panarelli further reported recommended terms for naming opportunities. They stated that a name or organization should be used only once, and that a formal agreement should be in place with the Library Board prior to acceptance of any donation.

They further recommended that payment terms be clearly outlined in the agreement, along with all language specifying conditions of the naming, including plaque size and related

details, to be established in advance. They noted that any changes or removal of a naming would remain at the discretion of the Board.

They also stated that the Board would retain the right to determine the disposition of any removed plaques, including options such as archival storage, relocation within the Library (such as a wall of plaques), or return to the donor.

They discussed a suggested duration for naming rights of approximately 20 years.

It was noted that all of these recommendations would need to be reviewed by legal counsel before any formal approval by the Board.

Mayor Saccomandi asked whether Board decisions are made by majority vote or whether there are instances in which a supermajority is required. Mr. Banick responded that decisions are made by a majority vote.

Mrs. Eisner asked whether a section of the Library, such as the computer area on the first floor, could be named. Ms. Sherman replied that such naming would be possible if approved by the Board.

Mrs. Binder inquired whether, after 20 years, if no donor came forward to renew a naming opportunity, the Library would leave the existing name in place indefinitely. Ms. Sherman clarified that the intent would be for naming terms to be limited to no more than 20 years.

Mrs. Kelly asked whether the subcommittee had reviewed how long naming designations typically remain in place under other naming practices, noting that in the community and surrounding institutions—such as schools, building wings, and athletic field-naming designations often remain in place for periods exceeding 20 years. She specifically referenced Millburn High School's athletic field, which is named the Dr. Keith A. Neigel Field.

Ms. Sherman stated that she believes some naming designations are done in perpetuity and noted that there is a distinction between library naming opportunities and school athletic fields.

Mr. Heinrichs agreed, stating that schools typically name facilities in honor of individuals rather than based on the amount of money donated. He noted that the Library could choose to leave a name in place while still retaining the right to remove it if necessary. Mrs. Kelly agreed and asked how an "in honor of" designation would work if the space is tied to a donation amount. Mr. Heinrichs responded that the Library would be giving up a monetary opportunity by using only honorary naming.

Mr. Banick stated that the Library gallery is named the William R. Swinson Art Gallery. He noted that the Swinson family made a donation and the Library Board at the time named the gallery in his honor. He added that Mr. Swinson is the most recent past Director of the Library.

Mrs. Eisner added that brick walkways can be a successful way to offer naming opportunities, noting that her temple has used this approach effectively.

Mrs. Kelly cautioned that brick installations can sometimes present issues, clarifying that her concern was that bricks can be delivered cracked or damaged during installation, though she noted that if properly managed, such a project could work at the Library.

Mr. Heinrichs stated that he has a brick at Washington School in town. Ms. Panarelli added that a similar program exists at Hartshorn Elementary School and that the bricks have remained in place for many years and are considered quite beautiful.

Mr. Heinrichs asked whether a specific individual could have more than one item named in their honor. It was noted that while one individual would not typically have multiple naming recognitions, other family members could have their names associated with separate naming opportunities. Ms. Panarelli added that, if a donation is made, naming opportunities would be considered.

Mr. Heinrichs asked whether there would be a limit on the number of family members or names associated with naming opportunities. It was noted that the proposed policy does not prohibit this but also does not explicitly address it. Ms. Sherman stated that if such a situation were to arise, the Board would need to reach an agreement. Mr. Heinrichs agreed that it would be at the discretion of the Board, and Mrs. Kelly confirmed that the Board would make the final decision.

Mrs. Binder suggested that the proposed policy language of "$10,000 or more" should be clarified to state "no less than $10,000." Ms. Sherman responded that the Library attorney could provide appropriate wording for the policy.

Mrs. Kelly instructed Mr. Banick to forward the proposal to the Library attorney for review. Mr. Heinrichs added that there could be no motion to move forward on the matter at this time until the proposal is in final presentation form for Board approval.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

Mrs. Kelly inquired whether the second-floor renovation project had been fully completed, specifically asking about the status of the electrical work and the fire and burglar alarm systems.

Mr. Banick responded by discussing the Library's capital planning efforts. He reported that approximately 10 percent of the roof was repaired as part of the second-floor renovation project. While the roof is currently in sound condition, he stated that, as part of future capital planning, the Board should consider a complete roof replacement and determine an appropriate timeline for that work.

Mr. Banick then discussed the Library's HVAC system as part of the ongoing capital planning review. He reported that the boiler is approximately 50 years old and is covered under a maintenance contract. The system is regularly serviced and, in his opinion, could remain operational for many years.

Mr. Banick further stated that the air conditioning component was replaced in 2007. He reported that the system remains in good working order and continues to receive regular maintenance and servicing.

Mr. Banick then addressed the Library's electrical systems, including the panel boxes and transformers. He reported that one breaker failed during the previous year. Due to the age of the system, a replacement part was no longer available. As a result, the vendor servicing the system was required to obtain a refurbished part in order to complete the repair.

Following Mr. Banick's report, the Board discussed the age and condition of the Library's electrical infrastructure. Mayor Saccomandi noted that, based on his professional experience in the data center industry, electrical components such as breakers can remain in service for many years, while transformers may require periodic replacement. He stated that major switching equipment can also have a long service life unless changes in applicable fire or safety standards necessitate upgrades. He further remarked that equipment should not be replaced solely because of its age and that the existing systems could continue to operate effectively for an extended period.

Mr. Heinrichs agreed, noting that continued operation is feasible as long as components remain serviceable and replacement parts can be refurbished or obtained.

Mrs. Eisner inquired whether the Library's power usage had changed over the years. Mayor Saccomandi responded that the electrical equipment is rated for a specific amperage and that if demand exceeded the system's capacity, breaker failures would occur more frequently, which has not been the case. Mr. Heinrichs added that the Library's electrical usage has remained relatively unchanged.

Mr. Heinrichs inquired about the expected lifespan of the Library's air conditioning units. Mayor Saccomandi asked whether all three units had been installed in 2007, to which Mr. Bancik replied in the affirmative. Mayor Saccomandi commented that the typical life expectancy of such equipment is generally less than 20 years, although properly maintained commercial rooftop units can remain in service for more than 25 years and possibly approach 30 years.

In response to a question from Mr. Heinrichs regarding efficiency, Mayor Saccomandi explained that older systems are not necessarily less efficient than when they were installed, but that newer systems are designed to higher efficiency standards. He further noted that some service vendors have indicated that older units are often more durable, reliable, and easier to maintain because they rely less on electronic components and may be less prone to failure.

Mrs. Kelly returned to her earlier question regarding the status of the Library's alarm systems and asked whether both the fire alarm and security alarm systems were operational. Mr. Banick responded that the fire alarm system, which is required by code, remained in service throughout the renovation project.

Regarding the burglar alarm system, Mr. Banick stated that he had shut off the system during the renovation because of the number of contractors entering and leaving the building. He explained that the "Do Not Use" sign posted on the control panel was intended to prevent the alarm from being activated at closing and then inadvertently triggered by someone entering the building the following morning. Mrs. Kelly indicated that the sign prompted her inquiry and asked whether there were still enough contractors coming and going to justify keeping the system shut off. Mr. Banick replied that there were not.

Mayor Saccomandi stated that, in his opinion, it did not make sense for Mr. Banick to leave the building unprotected simply because contractors were coming and going. He noted that most alarm systems allow temporary codes with expiration dates and that any codes issued to contractors could be manually revoked. He further stated that it is common practice to issue a contractor or foreman a temporary alarm code valid for a specified period rather than shut off the entire system. Mayor Saccomandi expressed concern that

Mr. Banick had left the building without burglar alarm protection during closed and off-hours for extended periods and stated that he did not believe that was a prudent practice.

Mrs. Kelly agreed with Mayor Saccomandi's concerns and instructed Mr. Banick to restore the burglar alarm system to operation.

Mr. Banick asked if there was anything further the Board wished to ask him. There were no additional questions.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Next Meeting

There will be no Board meeting in July 2026, in accordance with the Board's 2026 meeting schedule adopted in January 2026.

Adjournment

Mrs. Kelly asked if there was any further business. Hearing none, Ms. Sherman moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Eisner. The motion carried with all Trustees voting in the affirmative, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Giambattista