

October 15, 2024
Joint Free Public Library
Of Morristown and Morris Township
Board of Trustees

The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Joint Free Public Library of Morristown and Morris Township was called to order at 6:05pm.

Representing Morristown was: Nancy Bangiola, President

Representing Morris Township were: Don Kiel, Vice President; Geoff Brooks, Treasurer; and George Quillan

Also present were: Deanna Quinones, alternate for Mayor Dougherty; Anne Piascik, alternate for Superintendent Mucci; Beth Quirk-Hendry, alternate for Mayor Guariglia; Chad Leinaweaver, Director; and Mary Lynn Becza, Assistant Director

Pursuant to a resolution of the Board and to RS 10:4-10, "Open Public Meetings Act," the president announced that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided by posting notices of the meeting in the Library, by handing the Clerks of Morristown and Morris Township notices of the meeting, and by mailing to the Morris County Daily Record and the Star Ledger copies of the notices of the meetings all more than forty-eight hours prior to the meeting.

Minutes

The September 17, 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Brooks presented the 9-month report through Sept, reflecting 70% of expenses accounted for, and noted that the library is within budget for the year. The report was received.

The director introduced Arlene Sprague, head of Children's services, as the next in a series of information conversations between department heads and the board. Ms.

Sprague discussed her department's approach to engaging children ranging from infants to young adults. She noted the popularity of Take & Make craft projects, story time offerings (which have been expanded to accommodate interest by parents with much younger children), scavenger hunts, summer reading programs, book clubs, and interactive stories and sing-alongs using props the staff makes using inexpensive craft materials. In response to questions, Ms. Sprague addressed the department's goals of making the library a place young people feel welcome and have fun, with the intent to establish it as a building block for their future achievement. She noted the limitations on outreach and collection expansion due to budget and explained that staff and resources are often stretched thin. She also provided a statistic that 50.4% of the library's overall circulation in September was Children's Room materials. The library's popularity among older kids is evidenced by a waiting list for teen volunteers and a post-pandemic increase in high school students coming in to do homework, use study rooms, and socialize.

Director's Report:

The following are major points presented by Mr. Leinaweaver:

*A library staff member returned to work after recovering from an incident in which she was struck by a car on Miller Road.

*Part-time library assistant Ava Ikbal joined the staff in October. Interviews are underway for a second part-time position in the department.

*Budget: The library is within budget for the year. Equalized valuation numbers were received from the State Division of Taxation and the NJ State Library this month. Mr. Leinaweaver has reworked the 2025 budget based on this information and will present it to the Budget Committee for review.

*Technology: Lease on photocopiers ceases next month; replacement services are in the works. Research continues into telephone and paging system options. Ongoing standard repairs and upgrades continued, as did some larger projects by Jason Carter and David Greene.

*Patrons have begun receiving email notifications through Patron Point, a registration tool tied to the online catalog. The visuals and messaging in the emails are very attractive and have received positive response.

*Felix Vallovera started ordering for the adult Spanish language collection, with a goal of expanding it to meet patron needs.

*Personnel evaluations: The director consulted other libraries' evaluation forms to craft a fresh approach to upcoming annual staff evaluations.

*Busy time of year for the library, including participation in the Fall Festival on the Green, and preparations for the Morristown Festival of Books and the collaborative Day of the Dead event.

*New school year brought new story time season to Children's Dept: Baby Stories & Songs, preschool stories, family stories, and daycare story time visits are held throughout the week. A fall theme of "Fly anywhere with books" was initiated for young reader collections; YA displays celebrated the start of Spooky Season.

*Bookmobile repairs are complete, and the fall bookmobile program is in planning stages with local schools.

*History Center archivist Jeff Moy has been helping repair photo links for the library's MorristownGreen articles and recovering photos from older posts.

*Announcement of changes coming to MAIN catalog next year: Major project in conjunction with other libraries that may join into a super-consortium. M&MT Library would remain one of the largest in the group. Cost savings with new catalog is significant; from patron viewpoint, changes won't be very noticeable.

*Tech support offerings: Very low interest in classes offered in past; one-on-one instruction is more common. Some instructional videos are offered on the library's YouTube channel.

*Professional development continued apace for staff and Library Director.

Building and Grounds Report:

The following are the major points presented by Ms. Becza:

*Bids were accepted for the leaded glass restoration project.

*Cleaning and masonry repairs to the side of the building are complete.

*Ducts on an older section of the roof have fallen into disrepair. Heavy-duty duct tape was used as a temporary measure to keep moisture out.

*The lawn has been aerated and grass seed planted. Winterizing of the lawn will be held off until early November.

*Annual testing of fire alarms was carried out in the building by Fire Control, and a quarterly inspection of the fire sprinkler system took place in October.

*Staffer Tim Lynch was commended for heroically repairing a staff toilet.

- *The telephone in the elevator has been replaced.
- *A new projector screen will be installed in the meeting room.
- *The new doors on Miller Road will be opened for special events.

Committees:

*Budget: The Board went into closed session at 7:16pm and returned to open session at 7:38pm. Treasurer Geoff Brooks discussed the appropriation figures provided by the state. The Board held the first reading of the revised 2025 budget. Several opportunities for increased budget areas were discussed, including a significant increase to the collections budget and a slightly larger facilities figure to cover anticipated repairs. The Board went into closed session at 7:50pm and returned to open session at 7:58pm.

*Education: No report.

*Foundation: Meeting scheduled for Nov. 12.

*Insurance: No report.

*Branding & Marketing: No report.

*Personnel: The director reported that two people may go on leave, though details are still to be determined. A motion carried to hire Miranda Braemer as Children's Library Assistant at \$15.50 an hour.

*Nomination: No report.

*Facility and Grounds: The committee met to discuss Foundation funding for landscaping projects and other beautification efforts. Electronic sign is still under consideration. The library is in discussion with the Presbyterian Church about planting trees in the shared area between the buildings.

New Business:

*The first reading of the revised 2025 budget was approved.

*A motion carried to award the leaded glass restoration contract to Femenella & Associates for the bid amount of \$59,214. An additional bid alternate of \$4,742 to allow for clear Plexiglas in the window openings during repair was also approved.

Old Business:

*Treasurer Geoff Brooks reported that no building appraisal is required for insurance purposes this year.

Meeting adjourned at 8:06pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deanna Quinones