

May 20, 2025
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 6:04pm.

Representing Morristown were: Nancy Bangiola, President; Patricia Ard, Secretary; and Lisa Price

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

Also present were: Deanna Quinones, alternate for Mayor Dougherty; Beth Quirk-Hendry, alternate for Mayor Guariglia; Anne Piascik, alternate for Superintendent Mucci; 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, and providing same to the Clerks of Morristown and Morris Township as well as to the Morris County Daily Record and The Star Ledger, all more than forty-eight hours prior to the meeting.

Minutes

The April 15, 2025 monthly minutes were approved.

The director welcomed Bob Russell of HMR Architects. Mr. Russell first discussed the findings of his investigation into the causes of the January, 2025 sprinkler event. (Board members had received the report prior to the meeting). A sprinkler head that froze and burst was the immediate cause of its failure. Over the years, Mr. Russell noted, the insulation had been removed from its position around the sprinkler head by vendors who may not have understood its importance. Recommendations include the installation of a sprinkler shut off valve in an area known to all staff; a louvre to close the attic vents in winter; a roof hatch; and the possible "fencing in" of the new insulation to protect it from being displaced.

In other matters, Mr. Russell noted his firm will do the probe of the South St. tower that had been agreed upon at a prior meeting. The stained-glass project was successfully completed. And finally, Mr. Russell and Mr. Leinaweaver recommended that needed replacement carpet be distinct in different areas of the library, to save the cost of full replacement after any future incident. The marketing committee will consult with the director to determine if carpeting choice is a matter needing their assistance.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Brooks noted the library was one third of the way through its budget year. The report was received.

Director's Report:

*Mr. Leinaweaver stated that replacing various personnel was his top priority. He asked Jim Collins, the head of technical services, to assist on the young adult librarian hiring committee along with Abbi Hsu, the former young adult librarian.

*The director noted that a spate of recent incidents in the library has required significant staff attention and time. He detailed the preparation of written and digital incident reports to maintain a searchable history.

*Staff education day will not occur this year until the fall of 2025, due to the numerous hiring searches now occurring.

*The director is in talks with the Morristown police to do a review with him of the library with a view to ensuring staff and patron safety and best practices.

*See New Business below, for personnel issues.

Building and Grounds Report

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

* The grate at the Miller Rd. entrance to the library's back lot needs to be repaired. The lot will need to be closed for 2-3 days to ensure the successful completion and curing of the grate work. Ms. Becza will attempt to find alternate parking for patrons.

Committees

*Budget- In the summer, the director will prepare a preliminary draft budget.

*Education Liaison – Ms. Piascik informed the board that the principal of Thomas Jefferson elementary school has retired, and the principal of Woodland elementary school has resigned. The librarian position at Thomas Jefferson has not yet been filled.

*Foundation- A May 22, 2025 meeting is scheduled.

*Nominations -N/R

*Insurance- See above discussion re January, 2025 sprinkler event.

*Personnel- See New Business, below.

*Facility and Grounds-N/R

*Branding and Marketing—N/R

New Business:

The director discussed his suggestion to return to the pre-pandemic hiring of student summer pages to work 4-6 hours each week. His motion to hire student pages Charles Allen and William Frost @15.50/ hour was approved.

Mr. Leinaweaver led a discussion about recent federal actions that impact libraries.

At 7:23pm the board entered closed session to discuss ongoing litigation. The town and township mayors' representatives recused themselves. The board ended closed session at 7:40pm.

Old Business

N/R

Meeting adjourned at 7:41pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Ard, Secretary