

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
MidPointe Library System Board of Trustees
Monroe Library, Rothwell Room
Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**

I Call to Order by Vice-President

Mr. Wright, President, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

II Opening Exercise

III Roll Call

The roll was called, and the following members were present:

Mr. Michael Huff, Mrs. Eleanor Stewart, Mr. Richard Szopinski, and Mr. Keith Wright.

Those absent: Mrs. Kristen Bramblett, Mrs. Deborah Houser, and Mr. Bill Jones

Also present were: Mr. Travis Bautz, Library Director; Mr. Paul Gabbard, Monroe Branch Manager; Ms. Cari Hillman, Community Engagement Director; Mrs. Brielle Maynor, Public Services Director; Ms. Kathy Stengel, Human Resources Director; Ms. Emily Vance, Fiscal Officer.

IV Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Szopinski motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to approve the agenda as presented.

“Aye” Huff, Stewart, Szopinski, Wright

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-29

V Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VI Approval of Minutes

Mr. Huff motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of March 15, 2023, as presented.

“Aye” Huff, Jones, Stewart, Szopinski

“Nay” None

“Abstain” Wright

Motion Approved 23-30

VII Fiscal Officer’s Report

Financial Report, Investments, and Donations:

Ms. Vance reviewed the March 2023 financial report. She commented that the Library received a large property tax disbursement which is why the revenue was so large in March. Mr. Bautz reviewed the received gifts and commented that the foundation received donations totaling \$1,675 in March. The board discussed the financial structure of the foundation and how it supports MidPointe.

Mr. Szopinski motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to approve the Financial Statement, Investments, and Donations report for March 2023 as presented by Ms. Vance.

Mrs. Houser arrived at 1:07 pm

“Aye” Houser, Huff, Stewart, Szopinski, Wright

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-31

(Report on file in Fiscal Officer's office)

Deputy Fiscal Officer:

Ms. Vance reported that after evaluating the finance department jobs and the prior discussions about the department structure, she is recommending that the Deputy Fiscal Officer job description be modified to reflect no supervisory or management duties. This would facilitate succession planning and continuity in the department. Ms. Stengel commented that she forwarded the new Deputy Fiscal Officer and specialist job descriptions to the compensation analyst who did an analysis on the jobs which showed that the new deputy job is similar to the current specialist job and the new specialist job is at a lower skill level than the current specialist job. Making this change would be a lateral move with no pay change and no exemption status change for the current specialist. Ms. Vance recommended that since the duties are essentially the same as the current specialist, to change her title to Deputy Fiscal Officer and swear her in at the next board meeting. The board concurred.

VIII Yankee Road / Liberty Project

Mr. Bautz reported that the bid opening was on Friday April 14th, that there were four contractors that were there but only one submitted a bid. He later found out that the three who did not submit a bid were trying to get one last number for the glass to put in the bid, but they could not get a quote for the glass component of the project. The one submitted bid was 20% over budget. By law since the bid was more than 10% over the budget, the bid must be rejected. In looking at the rejected bid breakdown, they had a very large number for the glass component which accounted for the large bid. The architect did some follow up and said it was a market and manpower issue related to glass; that they are going to evaluate the complexity of the wall of glass and see if there can be any adjustments to the building plan to make it more appealing to installers. They are also looking at the budget to reevaluate the expenses, but the current market conditions are driving up the costs. A meeting is scheduled with the architects next week to follow up and reevaluate to see if there is another design that gives the light we want but a different glass configuration, but the budget and schedule may need to be revised.

IX Director's Report

Monthly Statistical Report:

Mr. Bautz reviewed the monthly statistics. Circulation was up by 8% overall; Liberty was flat; LOW was up; Middletown was down by 6%; Monroe was up by 16%; Trenton was up by 18%; and West Chester was up by 4%. AV was down by 47%; digital was up by 12%; patron visits were up by 20%; there were 381 programs with over 7,600 attendees; PC usage was up by 4%; Wi-Fi was up by 21%; there were 915 room bookings which is a huge demand for our meeting rooms; there were 174 passports accepted and processed; collection maintenance was even; community engagement averaged 52 minutes of virtual programming per day with an average of 91 engagements per day; there were 739 new cards registered for the month; and the call center had approximately 1,800 calls for the month, which was approximately 5,000 minutes.

Public Policy Manual Update:

Mr. Bautz reported that he is recommending changes to the manual. He shared a redline copy with the board which showed the changes regarding overnight parking; enforcement of parking policies; changes to the lost property items language, and the section was moved to another area in the policy. Mr. Szopinski motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to approve the changes to the public policy manual as presented.

"Aye" Houser, Huff, Stewart, Szopinski, Wright

"Nay" None

Motion Approved 23-32

Staff Survey Results:

Mr. Bautz reported that a 10-question staff survey with an open comment text area was sent to all staff. After reviewing and summarizing the results and comments, we found that 95% of the staff felt our mission was important; that overall, we're doing well with training, and employees feel they can learn and grow. The lower rated topics were pay, benefits, and departmental cooperation. We are going to delve deeper into the lower rated areas and see where we can improve by increasing communication; to be more present at the branches; provide more communication about pay and benefits; consider some suggestions that were made such as bringing shelvers back, so we will evaluate hiring seasonal shelvers to help with the high level of shelving that occurs during the summer reading program. Going forward we will look at how to keep improving and will continue to conduct staff surveys.

eRate State Contract:

Mr. Bautz discussed the eRate reimbursement program which provides partial funding for MidPointe's digital access. The State of Ohio and OPLIN worked together to get pricing for internet access on behalf of libraries. We compared their results to our pricing results and the best choice is an option through the State of Ohio which is a five-year contract that has more megabytes for less than what we pay now. Since it is a multi-year contract, we would need board approval. Mrs. Houser motioned, seconded by Mr. Huff, to accept the presented Spectrum State of Ohio Quotation for Services for the next five years.

“Aye” Houser, Huff, Stewart, Szopinski, Wright

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-33

X Public Services Report:

Mrs. Maynor reported that we suspended the Covid test deliveries from the Ohio Department of Health as patron requests for the tests have significantly decreased. Service providers are still being contacted to provide counseling services at the branches. At Liberty, 539 items were borrowed from the hold lockers; the branch manager along with the West Chester branch manager, shared MidPointe’s 2022 Annual Report at the Chamber Alliance’s 60 Second Connect event. At LOW, 8 items were borrowed from the Wayne Township lockers in March; and the installation of GPS units in all of the library vehicles was completed. At Middletown, 370 students received books and new shoes at various schools at the Shoes 4 the Shoeless events. Monroe branch manager, Mr. Gabbard, reported that the new movie night program has been very successful; that a new partnership with the high school and junior high has been created to have the students get a library card and staff will deliver their books on hold to the school and they will pick up the returns; have some new programming for during the summer reading program; and the senior lunch program will start mid-May. At Trenton, the branch manager shared MidPointe’s 2022 Annual Report at the Village of Seven Mile’s council meeting on April 10th; the summer food service program will have meals provided by the Children’s Hunger Alliance whereby they will provide donated meals to the Library with no recordkeeping or meal service requirements. At West Chester, five tours were given to community groups; and usage of the new study rooms began as soon as they were completed. The board discussed the situation that recently occurred due to petitioners collecting signatures at the West Chester Library. Mr. Bautz commented that he contacted the Butler County prosecutor, who is our legal representative of record, who said our policy of petitioners being outside is good; that petitioners have a First Amendment right to collect signatures in the parking lot of the Library; that Second Amendment rights are allowed in our parking lot. Mr. Bautz added that the Library remains non-political, and he will find out if a restricted zone can be designated for amendment rights.

XI Community Engagement Report

Ms. Hillman reported that the Library had 1,626 minutes of virtual programming watched in March with 2,830 engagements. An Instagram post that featured a “sneak peek” of the building rendering of the new Liberty branch received the highest engagement on that platform for the Library ever. The first Lunch & Leisure for Seniors program at Trenton, which featured the Superintendent of Edgewood City Schools, Kelly Spivey, giving a presentation about the school levy ballot issue in May, had an attendance of 43 which was the highest attended lunch. Future presentations include the Foster Grandparents program from AmeriCorps, and a Medicare seminar. The Meals at Monroe program will start on May 11th and is scheduled to continue every Thursday from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. A community concert at the Trenton Community Park featuring Fleetwood Gold is scheduled for July 21st; and many special events and programs are scheduled throughout the summer; the

Middletown branch will host an Electric Vehicle Showcase on Friday, May 12th in the parking lot from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm; and backpacks are being donated to the Faith Alliance summer lunch program. MidPointe was featured in a wrap-up story in the “Journal-News” regarding the new Liberty location. Ms. Hillman added that the first of the new literacy boxes were distributed in April.

XII Human Resources Report

Staffing and HR Updates:

Mr. Szopinski motioned, seconded by Mr. Huff, to approve the following personnel changes as presented by Ms. Stengel:

Accept the employment of Joey OLeary, effective 3/12/2023; non-exempt; full-time; Middletown, IT Technician, at pay level four;

Accept the employment of Caroline O’Connor, effective 3/12/2023, non-exempt; part time; West Chester; library associate; at pay level one;

Accept the employment of Jessica Burford; effective 3/12/2023; non-exempt; part-time; West Chester; library associate; at pay level one;

Accept the employment of Hannah Rogers; effective 3/12/2023; non-exempt; part time; West Chester; library associate; at pay level one;

Accept the employment of Chris Moses; effective 3/12/2023; non-exempt; part time; West Chester; library associate; at pay level one;

Accept the hours and job change request of Lindsay Ross-Roberts; effective 3/5/2023; non-exempt; from full time to part time; Liberty; from library specialist to library associate; from pay level three to pay level one;

Accept the retirement of Deborah Slater; effective 4/5/2023; exempt; part time; Assistant Fiscal Officer.

“Aye” Houser, Huff, Stewart, Szopinski, Wright

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-34

Ms. Stengel reported that turnover for March was 1.0309% and year to date was 7.4027%. As of March 2023, MidPointe has had six new hires and seven terminations. We have three openings and are actively recruiting.

Employee Handbook Updates:

Ms. Stengel presented updates to the employee handbook. The changes to the professional development and travel and expense policies are to update and streamline the policies. The other policy changes are to eliminate the word “substitute” and replace it with the word “seasonal” since we no longer have substitute employees and to facilitate the hiring of seasonal employees. Mrs. Stewart motioned, seconded by Mr. Szopinski, to approve the changes to the professional development, travel and expense, bereavement, leave of absence, personal leave, and short-term disability policies in the Employee Handbook as presented, effective immediately.

“Aye” Houser, Huff, Stewart, Szopinski, Wright

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-35

XIII Board Comments

Mr. Huff asked if we have considered having interns at the Library, which we discussed that we have had interns pre-Covid. He also asked if the makerspace was available to individuals and businesses, which was discussed that small businesses have utilized it for their small projects since it would not be cost effective for larger businesses to use it for large printing projects. Mrs. Stewart thanked Mr. Bautz for considering EV chargers, which Mr. Bautz commented on that depending on the length and location of the power trenches it could be expensive. Mrs. Houser commented that they have professional development ready to roll out at the end of May for early literacy, and an early childhood conference and she offered library staff to join their training.

XIV Adjournment

Mr. Wright adjourned the meeting at 2:11 p.m.
23-36

President

Secretary