

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
MidPointe Library System Board of Trustees
Trenton Library, Community Room
Wednesday, December 13, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**

I Call to Order by President

Mr. Wright, President, called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

II Opening Exercise

III Roll Call

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

Mrs. Kristin Bramblett, Mrs. Deborah Houser, Mr. Michael Huff, Mrs. Eleanor Stewart, and Mr. Keith Wright.

Those absent: Mr. Bill Jones and Mr. Richard Szopinski

Also present were: Mr. Travis Bautz, Library Director; Mr. Andrew Brossart, Bradley Payne Advisors, LLC; Mrs. Nicole Condrey, Middletown City Liaison; Mrs. Emily Foote, Fiscal Officer; Ms. Cari Hillman, Community Engagement Director; Mrs. Karen Jones, Deputy Fiscal Officer; Mrs. Brielle Maynor, Public Services Director; Ms. Kathy Stengel, HR Director; and Ms. Brenda Wehmer, Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP.

IV Adoption of Agenda

Mrs. Stewart motioned, seconded by Mrs. Houser, to adopt the agenda as presented.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-78

V Public Comment

Ms. Foote introduced Mr. Brossart who discussed that his firm is a municipal advisory firm and give financing advice to public entities; he reviewed the market update and financing example handout which detailed what the role of an advisor is, the tax-exempt interest rates and benchmark yields, financing examples for a \$2 million project with 5, 10, and 15 year amortizations, and important disclosures. Ms. Wehmer then discussed her firm’s role as a bond counsel to assure that any debt is legal and valid, and any borrowing proposal complies with laws, applicable legal requirements, and government issuances.

Mrs. Condrey commented that this is her last meeting as she did not seek re-election as mayor. She reported that three new council members were elected; she completed the State of the City report and it will be released soon; the park/sewer project should be completed by the end of 2025; the community center will break ground in the spring of 2024; the city now owns the Central Connections building and some senior services are still being provided there; and the new library board members may be appointed in December.

VI Approval of Minutes

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

“Aye” Huff, Stewart, Wright

“Nay” None

“Abstain” Bramblett, Houser

Motion Approved 23-79

VII Fiscal Officer’s Report

Financial Report, Investments, and Donations:

Mrs. Foote reviewed the November 2023 financial report. Mrs. Bramblett motioned, seconded by Mr. Houser, to approve the Financial Statement, Investments, and Donations report for November 2023 as presented by Mrs. Foote.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-80

(Report on file in Fiscal Officer’s office)

Resolution – 2024 Annual Appropriation

Mrs. Foote reviewed the 2024 appropriation documents, reporting that the routine expenditures are normal and appropriate, and the salary and expenditures did increase as approved last month. Mr. Wright added that everything was in line; the salary increases were needed; and overall from 2023 to 2024 there were minor increases and some decreases. Mrs. Foote mentioned that the bid opening for the Liberty construction project was last week, and the lowest bidder was DER Development with a bid of \$8,964,700, included other components of architectural, furniture, computer, and equipment, and included a completion date of March 2025. In the current budget she estimated 85% of the \$8,964,700 would be spent in 2024 and remaining expended in 2025. She reviewed the Revenue vs Expenditure Through 2030 spreadsheet and the same spreadsheet that included debt issuance. Issuing debt would give the library a cushion and reserve totaling \$4.1 million in 2025, as opposed to a \$2.1 million cushion without debt issuance. The board discussed that the project amount is included in the 2024 appropriation; that debt issuance would give a cushion in 2025 and give the board options; the levy expiring in 2025 and the property valuations; and the facilities plan. Mrs. Foote then reviewed the general fund line items which totaled \$16,930,118; the capital improvement fund which totaled 10,429,997; the Douglas J Bean Progress Fund which totaled zero; the Rothwell Fund that totaled \$1,000; and the grand total of all funds of \$27,361,115 including the \$6,000,000 transfer to the Capital Improvement Fund. Mrs. Bramblett motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to pass the Annual Appropriation Resolution as presented.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-81

Mrs. Stewart motioned, seconded by Mr. Huff, to approve a \$6,000,000 cash transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Fund with an effective date of January 1, 2024, to have a sufficient cash balance for the Capital Improvement Fund 2024 Appropriation Budget.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-82

Discussion – Debt Issuance

The board discussed any debt issuance, and the consensus was to wait for the new board in 2024 to make any decision about issuing any debt.

VIII Director’s Report

Monthly Statistical Report:

Mr. Bautz reviewed the monthly November statistics. Circulation was down 1% overall; Liberty down by 3%; LOW was up by 175%; Middletown was down by 14%; Monroe was up by 7%; Trenton was down by 8%; and West Chester was down by 8%. Print was flat; AV was down by 11%; digital items were up by 20%; patron visits were up by 21%; there were 226 programs with 6,847 attendees; PC usage was down by 5%; Wi-Fi usage was down by 15%; there were 861 room bookings; 61 passport applications were processed; 4,262 items were added and 2,066 items were removed; community engagement averaged 100 minutes of virtual programming watched per day, had 2,065 social media engagements for the month, and had 10,471 social media followers; there were 585 new cards registered for the month; and the call center had 1,446 calls for the month, totaling 3,732 minutes.

West Chester Updates:

Mr. Bautz reported that the new strategy to manage occupancy during the after-school hours when the high school across the street releases students, has reduced the behavior issues. The school has been remaining open for an hour after school so parents can pick up their student at the school, and a supplemental contract teacher has been helping to monitor our doors, help students with homework, and identify students with behavior problems. Patron comments have been positive; comments from parents of students have been mixed, as we anticipated. The board discussed students parking in the library parking lot and not the school lot; parents who continue to pick up their student in our parking lot; and students from other schools who are bused to our parking lot.

Project Updates:

Mr. Bautz reported that the lowest bid was DER Development, and they were awarded the site work project. DER has worked tirelessly to meet deadlines, keep a clean site, and work with the neighboring residents. Our architects, LWC, did their due diligence, and an interview to make sure all requirements were needed and made a recommendation to award the contract to them. Two alternates were accepted for enhanced electronics and commissioning. To move forward with the contract, a motion to award the contract needs to be made. Mrs. Bramblett motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to award the building construction contract for the Yankee Road/Liberty Township Branch project to DER Development Company and enlist the Executive Director and Fiscal Officer to execute all necessary agreements and documents for the projects. The total construction project has a not to exceed a dollar value of \$9,100,000.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-83

IX Public Services Report:

Mrs. Maynor reported that case manager services have resumed, and the Toys for Tots campaign was highly successful. At Liberty, 419 items were borrowed from the holds lockers; and passport services resumed on December 7th. AT LOW, 11 items were borrowed from the Wayne Township holds lockers; and the manager met with Cincinnati Children’s Liberty Campus staff about bringing Lobby Stop services to the hospital building. At Middletown, all materials that were housed in the Ohio Room are being relocated elsewhere since the space is being reallocated for the makerspace; and the manager is coordinating the ordering of the makerspace equipment with the IT Director; AARP is planning 2024 tax services at the building; and various building projects are ongoing. At Trenton, building projects included painting the community room, the concrete work near the entrance; the new seasonal vinyl’s in the children’s area were made in the makerspace and not only look good, they really help to block the sun; and the Trenton Business Community Association group make good use of the community room. At West Chester, AARP is planning 2024 tax services at the building; current building projects include converting the existing storage room into office spaces; coordinating with the township on parking lot repair bids; quotes are being gathered to retrofit the ceiling pendant lights with LED; and the makerspace completed 258 Express vinyl and 3D print jobs.

X Community Engagement Report

Ms. Hillman reported that in November, the Library had 3,078 minutes of virtual programming watched with 2,056 engagements. A new library app will be introduced in January. New promotional campaigns include the launch of Tumblebooks; the digitization of Bishop Fenwick yearbooks; and the upgrade to NoveList Plus. The senior lunch programs were featured in a “Journal-News” article. Upcoming events and partnerships include promotional stickers for the new Cincinnati Children’s Proton Therapy Extended-Stay apartments; donating books to the Middletown ELC Winterfest on December 8th; providing an activity for the Liberty Township Breakfast with Santa on December 9th; and participating in the Middletown “Santa Run” on December 16th.

XI Human Resources Report

Staffing and HR Updates:

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

Approve the employment of Lindsey Coulter; effective 12/2/2023; non-exempt, part time; Middletown; shelver; public services; at pay level zero;

Approve the employment of Nicole Owens; effective 11/14/2023; non-exempt, part time; Middletown; library associate; public services; at pay level one;

Approve the employment of Seã Watson; effective 11/12/2023; non-exempt, part time; Middletown; library associate; public services; at pay level one;

Approve the employment of Chris Schlau; effective 11/12/2023; non-exempt, part time; Middletown; library associate; public services; at pay level one;

Accept the status change of Paige Rivera; effective 11/26/2023; non-exempt, from part time to full time; West Chester; library associate; public services; no pay change;
Accept the resignation of Krista Dickman; effective 11/17/2023; non-exempt, part time; Middletown; library associate; public services; and
Accept the resignation of Emily Miller; effective 12/2/2023; non-exempt, full time; West Chester; library associate; public services.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-84

Ms. Stengel reported that turnover for November was 3.0612% and is 26.1256% year to date. As of November 2023, we have had 27 hires and 25 terminations for the year.

XII Board Comments

Mr. Bautz presented Mrs. Bramblett with a token gift of appreciation for her 4 years of service on the Library Board. She commented that she remains supportive of the library and wishes she did not need to leave. Mr. Bautz presented Mr. Wright with a token gift of appreciation for his 7 years of service on the Library Board. He commented that it has been a pleasure working with the library for the past 7 years and hopes to work with the library again, perhaps with the foundation. Although not in attendance, Mr. Bautz had a token gift of appreciation for Mr. Szopinski for his 8 years of service on the Library Board.

XIII Adjournment

Mr. Wright adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.
23-85

President

Secretary