

**Minutes of the Organizational Meeting of the  
MidPointe Library System Board of Trustees  
Middletown Library, Board Room  
Wednesday, January 22, 2025, 1:10 p.m.**

**I Call to Order by President**

Mrs. Stewart, President Pro Tem, called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

**II Opening Exercise**

**III Roll Call**

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

Mr. Andrew Dunn, Mrs. Deborah Houser, Mr. Michael Huff, Mr. Jay Marlow, and Mrs. Eleanor Stewart.

Those absent were: Mr. Tim Essex

Also present were: Mr. Travis Bautz, Executive Director; Mrs. Emily Foote, Fiscal Officer; Ms. Candy Hefner, PAC Treasurer; Ms. Tabitha Hill, Middletown Public Services Supervisor; Ms. Cari Hillman, Community Engagement Director; Mrs. Karen Jones, Deputy Fiscal Officer; Mrs. Brielle Maynor, Public Services Director; and Ms. Kathy Stengel, Human Resources Director.

**IV 2025 Board**

Oath of Office (3), Election of Officers:

Mrs. Stewart, President Pro Tem, opened the floor for nominations for President of the Board. Mrs. Houser nominated Mrs. Stewart for President. Mr. Huff seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, the nominations were closed, and Mrs. Stewart assumed the office of President of the Board of Library Trustees.

“Aye”           Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

“Nay”           None

Motion Approved 25-01

Mrs. Foote, Fiscal Officer, gave the oath of office to Mrs. Stewart as President of the MidPointe System Board of Trustees.

Mrs. Stewart opened the nominations for Vice-President of the Board. Mr. Huff nominated Mr. Marlow for Vice-President. Mrs. Houser seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, the nominations were closed, and Mr. Marlow assumed the office of Vice-President of the Board of Library Trustees.

“Aye”           Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

“Nay”           None

Motion Approved 25-02

Mrs. Foote, Fiscal Officer, gave the oath of office to Mr. Marlow as Vice-President of the MidPointe Library System Board of Trustees.

Mrs. Stewart opened the nominations for Secretary of the Board. Mrs. Houser nominated Mr. Huff for Secretary. Mrs. Stewart seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, the nominations were closed, and Mr. Huff assumed the office of Secretary of the Board of Library Trustees.

“Aye”                 Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

“Nay”                None

Motion Approved 24-03

Mrs. Foote, Fiscal Officer, gave the oath of office to Mr. Huff as Secretary of the MidPointe Library System Board of Trustees.

Mr. Bautz announced that the City of Middletown appointed Mr. John James from Trenton to fill the remaining months of Bill Jones’ term.

Board Meeting Calendars (3) (drafts)

Mr. Bautz reviewed the three calendar drafts which included Option 1 with a regular board schedule; Option 2 with no meeting in July and an earlier meeting in December; and Option 3 with no meeting in July and August and an earlier meeting in December. The board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each option and adopted the Option 2 board calendar.

Board Committees:

Mr. Bautz reported that there is an opening on the Facilities committee. The board unanimously agreed to place newly appointed trustee member John James on the Facilities committee.

**V Adoption of Agenda**

Mr. Marlow motioned, seconded by Mrs. Houser, to approve the agenda as presented.

“Aye”                 Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

“Nay”                None

Motion Approved 25-04

**VI Public Comment**

Guest, Mrs. Heffner, mentioned that she got a new library card to replace her expired card.

**VII Approval of Minutes**

Special Meeting, December 11, 2024:

Mrs. Houser motioned, seconded by Mr. Huff, to approve the minutes of the special board meeting held on December 11, 2024, as presented.

"Aye" Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

"Nay" None

"Abstain" Dunn

Motion Approved 25-05

Regular Meeting, December 18, 2024:

Mr. Huff motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting held on December 18, 2024, as presented.

"Aye" Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

"Nay" None

"Abstain" Dunn

Motion Approved 25-06

## **VIII Fiscal Office**

Hiring of the Fiscal Officer:

Mrs. Stewart stated that the next agenda item is the re-hiring of the Fiscal Officer. Mrs. Stengel added that, in accordance with O.R.C. 3375.32, the Fiscal Officer is appointed by the Board of Trustees, for a one-year term from organizational meeting to organizational meeting and serves at the discretion of the board. The employment is governed by the policies of the library as adopted by the Board of Trustees. Mrs. Stewart asked if there was any discussion regarding re-hiring Emily Foote as Fiscal Officer. There was none. Mr. Dunn motioned, seconded by Mr. Marlow, to re-hire Emily Foote as the Fiscal Officer for the time period of the 2025 organizational meeting until the 2026 organizational meeting at a full-time bi-weekly salary of \$4,529.60, annualized for 2025 as \$117,769.60.

"Aye" Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

"Nay" None

Motion Approved 25-07

Oath of Office, Fiscal Officer:

Mrs. Stewart gave the oath of office to Mrs. Foote as Fiscal Officer of the MidPointe Library System.

Oath of Office, Deputy Fiscal Officer:

Mrs. Foote, Fiscal Officer, gave the oath of office to Mrs. Jones as Deputy Fiscal Officer of the MidPointe Library System.

Set the Bond for the Fiscal Officer:

Mrs. Stewart stated that next is to set the bond for the Fiscal Officer. The bond is required by O.R.C. 3375.32 with the surety to be approved by the board and conditioned for the faithful performance of the official duties required of the Fiscal Officer. Mr. Huff motioned, seconded by Mr. Marlow that the bond for Emily Foote, Fiscal Officer, be set at \$250,000 for the time period of the 2025 organizational meeting until the 2026 organizational meeting.

"Aye"           Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

"Nay"           None

Motion Approved 25-08

## **IX    Fiscal Officer's Report**

Financial Report, Investments, and Donations

Mrs. Foote reviewed the December 2024 financial report. She inquired if the board still wanted to include the Total Investments By Fund section on the investment page in the report. The board agreed the section was not needed. Mrs. Houser motioned, seconded by Mr. Dunn, to approve the Financial Statement, Investments, and Donations reports for December 2024 as presented by Mrs. Foote.

"Aye"           Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

"Nay"           None

Motion Approved 25-09

(Report on file in Fiscal Officer's office)

Resolution for Tax Advances from Butler County:

Mrs. Foote presented a resolution that asks the Butler County Auditor to advance property tax revenues. She commented that this is an annual resolution so the library can receive levy revenue advances throughout the year. Mr. Dunn motioned, seconded by Mr. Marlow, to approve the resolution to advance property tax revenues from the Butler County Auditor to the MidPointe Library System.

"Aye"           Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

"Nay"           None

Motion Approved 25-10

Appreciation and Acknowledgment of Staff, Volunteers, and Citizens:

Mrs. Foote discussed the purpose for the annual resolution. The board discussed that the budget of \$160,350 will be used for various purposes including the summer reading program and the annual staff development day. The board discussed the amount, and Mrs. Foote assured them that she could come back to the board and ask for an appropriation increase if it was not enough. Mr. Marlow motioned, seconded by Mr. Dunn, to approve the Resolution Approving Expenditures for Appreciation of Staff, Volunteers, and Citizens as presented. A copy of the resolution is made a part of these minutes.

"Aye"           Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

"Nay"           None

Motion Approved 25-11

Mrs. Foote mentioned that the Year End Financial Report for 2024 has been completed and a copy is in the board packet. She discussed the various fund categories. She added that she partnered with the Ohio Auditor of State and Software Solutions Inc. to create new processes for the year-end financial report which will reduce any potential errors for finance departments.

**X     Director's Report**

Mr. Bautz reviewed the year-end statistics. Circulation overall was up by 3% over 2023 circulation and have had steady growth since Covid in 2020; Liberty was down slightly; LOW was even; Middletown was down by 1%; Monroe was up by 5%; Trenton was up by 10%; and West Chester was down by 4%; print circulation has held steady; digital was up by 19%, there were 9,223 new cards registered for the year; patron visits were up by 3%; program's offered were down by 16% and attendance was up by 16% so we are having fewer programs with a higher attendance; PC usage was up by 1%; Wi-Fi was up by 7% over the past year; and meeting room usage increased slightly. The board discussed programming and an upcoming patron programming survey.

Mr. Bautz added that he will distribute a redline version and clean version of the patron policies for the board to review and discuss at the next board meeting.

**XI    Facilities Report — Liberty/Yankee Road Construction**

Mr. Bautz reported that the construction completion date is March 31<sup>st</sup>; punch lists have been developed and are being worked on; various contractors are all in the building at the same time working on the building. He reviewed a change order spreadsheet.

**XII   Public Services Report**

Mrs. Maynor reported that the case manager assisted 45 people in December. At Liberty, 95 coats and 140 pairs of socks were collected during the Liberty Center Share the Warmth coat drive. At LOW, the bookmobile has had its winter maintenance and driving training will be conducted for several staff members. Ms. Hill, Middletown public services supervisor, reported that the storytime room that was revamped into a social play room has been very popular and there has been an increase in the Pointe Assist one-on-one appointments and passport appointments. At Monroe, new deck furniture has arrived and will be set out in the spring. At Trenton, passport appointments have increased. At West Chester, staff areas have been painted; fixtures in the staff areas are being retrofitted for LED lighting; and AARP will offer tax aid services to the public beginning February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**XIII Community Engagement Report**

Ms. Hillman reported that 4,227 minutes of virtual programming was watched in December with 4,480 social media engagements. The January edition of the new early literacy eNewsletter has had an almost 50% open rate. Programming and promotions include January’s database feature “Novelist.” A programming survey is currently ongoing to determine the possibility of adding additional off-site program offerings. Community events include the January 20<sup>th</sup> Martin Luther King Jr. Day event; a book collection being donated to a free little library at the Butler County Juvenile Court; and the Pen Connection Project has been launched to connect older adults with a young pen pal. CE was contacted by Channel 12 and asked to do a story about our library’s being warming centers when temperatures get low.

**XIV Human Resources Report:**

Staffing and HR Updates:

Mr. Marlow motioned, seconded by Mrs. Houser, to approve the following human resources report as presented by Ms. Stengel:

Approve the employment of Ellen Turkelson; effective 12/29/2024; non-exempt; part-time; Middletown; public services; shelver; at pay level zero;

Approve the employment of Kara Harbeson; effective 1/5/2025; exempt; full-time; LOW; branch manager; public services; at pay level six;

Approve the promotion of Beth Smalley; effective 1/5/2025; non-exempt; full-time; Middletown; from library associate to patron services lead; public services; at pay level three;

Approve the change of Tori Ebert Dimerling; effective 1/19/2025; non-exempt; part time to full time; West Chester; library associate; public services; no pay change;

Approve the termination of Lena Edison; effective 12/26/2024; non-exempt; part-time; West Chester; shelver;

Approve the termination of Hannah Rogers; effective 12/30/2024; non-exempt; part-time; West Chester; library associate;

Approve the termination of Jessica Burford; effective 12/30/2024; non-exempt; full-time; West Chester; library associate; and

Approve the termination of Paige Rivera, effective 1/2/2025; non-exempt; full-time; West Chester; library associate.

“Aye”           Dunn, Houser, Huff, Marlow, Stewart

“Nay”           None

Motion Approved 25-12

Ms. Stengel reported that turnover for December was 7.6190%, and for the year is 14.2011% which is much lower than 2023 turnover; that we have 102 employees and are actively recruiting and interviewing for nine open positions.

Employee Handbook:

Ms. Stengel reported that the handbook which the board approved in December 2024 with an effective date of 1/1/2025 was rolled out to employees. During the rollout we discovered that we need to add some passages back into the handbook and employee suggestions were made for more clarification. Any changes will be brought to the board.

**XV Board Comments**

Mr. Huff inquired about the status of the levy. Mrs. Foote advised that she and Mr. Bautz attended the city council meeting yesterday and they approved the levy, she will pick up the packet from the city for review by our attorney and then the last step is to take it to the board of elections for the May 6<sup>th</sup> election. Mr. Dunn inquired about the Liberty space. Mr. Bautz advised that the lease will terminate the end of May but he has not heard anything from mall management about continuing some type of service at the location. Mrs. Houser inquired if the library has heard anything from the community regarding the change in administration and deportations since the schools have received comments. Mrs. Maynor advised she has not heard any feedback from managers. Mr. Bautz added that we may be seen as a government agency so we may not hear anything but to please let us know of any updates regarding this. Ms. Stengel inquired if anyone knows of a venue space for our staff day that could accommodate approximately 100 people with a large room and several smaller rooms for breakout sessions to let her know.

**XVI Adjournment**

Mrs. Stewart adjourned the meeting at 2:06 p.m.  
25-13

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President

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Secretary