

**Minutes of the Annual Organizational Meeting of the  
MidPointe Library System Board of Trustees  
Middletown Library, Community Room  
Wednesday, January 18, 2023, 1:10 p.m.**

**I Call to Order by President**

Mr. Wright, President Pro Tem, called the meeting to order at 1:16 p.m.

**II Opening Exercise**

**III Roll Call**

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

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

Those absent: Mrs. Deborah Houser, Mr. Bill Jones

Also present were: Mrs. Amy Abernathy, Middletown Branch Manager; Mr. Travis Bautz, Library Director; Ms. Cari Hillman, Community Engagement Director; Mrs. Nicole Condrey, City of Middletown Board Liaison; Via, Condrey service dog; Mrs. Brielle Maynor, Public Services Director; Mrs. Deborah Slater, Fiscal Officer; Ms. Kathy Stengel, Human Resources Director; and Ms. Emily Vance, Deputy Fiscal Officer.

**IV 2023 Board**

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

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-01

Mrs. Slater, Fiscal Officer, gave the oath of office to Mr. Wright as President of the MidPointe System Board of Trustees.

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

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-02

Mrs. Slater, Fiscal Officer, gave the oath of office to Mrs. Bramblett as Vice President of the MidPointe Library System Board of Trustees.

Mr. Wright opened the nominations for Secretary of the Board. Mr. Szopinski nominated Mrs. Stewart for Secretary. Mr. Huff seconded the nomination. There being no further

nominations, the nominations were closed, and Mrs. Stewart assumed the office of Secretary of the Board of Library Trustees.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-03

Mrs. Slater, Fiscal Officer, gave the oath of office to Mrs. Stewart as Secretary of the MidPointe Library System Board of Trustees.

Board Meeting Calendar:

Mr. Bautz mentioned that in 2022, holding the trustee meetings on the third Wednesday of each month and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday when there was a holiday conflict, went well. He mentioned that in December 2023 there could be a holiday conflict and suggested moving the December meeting to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday due to Christmas being later that week. The board agreed with the calendar and having the December meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup>. The 2023 meetings will be held at various MidPointe branches throughout the year as indicated on the calendar.

Board Committees:

Mr. Bautz reported that there are no openings on the committees and if no board member wishes to serve on a different committee, then no changes would be made to the committee roster. The board agreed with the committee roster as presented.

## **V Adoption of Agenda**

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

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-04

## **VI Public Comment**

Mayor Condrey commented that the Roosevelt School site that backs up to Sunset Park was approved to put homes on the site; the Lincoln School site is in progress and a developer is considering putting townhomes on that site; the sports complex site near 175 has been moved across the street behind Kettering, groundbreaking is anticipated in the fall of this year and it is a multi-year development project. Council approved money to go to the community center project for a gymnasium; the fire station project will be moving forward since the levy passed. The board discussed the downtown skating rink.

## **VII Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Szopinski motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of December 14, 2022, as presented.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-05

### **VIII Hiring of the Fiscal Officer**

Mr. Wright stated that the next agenda item is the re-hiring of the Fiscal Officer. The Fiscal Officer is appointed by the Board of Trustees usually 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. Due to Mrs. Slater announcing her retirement at the December 14, 2022 board meeting, the appointment will be through her last day of employment in 2023. Mr. Wright asked if there was any discussion regarding re-hiring Deborah Slater as Fiscal Officer. There was none. Mrs. Bramblett motioned, seconded by Mr. Szopinski, to re-hire Deborah Slater as the Fiscal Officer for the time period of the 2023 organizational meeting through her last day of employment in 2023, at a part time bi-weekly salary of \$3,420.60.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-06

Oath of Office, Fiscal Officer:

Ms. Stengel gave the oath of office to Mrs. Slater as Fiscal Officer of the MidPointe Library System.

Oath of Office, Deputy Fiscal Officer:

Mrs. Slater, Fiscal Officer, gave the oath of office to Ms. Vance as Deputy Fiscal Officer of the MidPointe Library System.

Ms. Vance was excused at 1:39 pm.

### **IX Fiscal Officer’s Report**

Financial Report, Investments, and Donations:

Mrs. Slater reviewed the December 2022 financial report. Mr. Szopinski motioned, seconded by Mr. Huff, to approve the Financial Statement, Investments, and Donations report for December 2022 as presented by Mrs. Slater.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-07

(Report on file in Fiscal Officer’s office)

Resolution for Tax Advances from Butler County:

Mrs. Slater 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. Mrs. Slater read the resolution. Mrs. Bramblett motioned, seconded by Mr. Szopinski, to approve the resolution to advance property tax revenues from the Butler County Auditor.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-08

Resolution for the Appreciation and Acknowledgment of Staff, Volunteers, and Citizens: Mrs. Slater discussed the purpose for the annual resolution. The board discussed that approximately \$175,000 will be used for these purposes including the summer reading program. Mrs. Slater read the resolution. Mr. Szopinski motioned, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, 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” Bramblett, Huff, Stewart, Szopinski, Wright

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-09

## **X Director’s Report**

### Monthly Statistical Report:

Mr. Bautz reviewed the year-end statistics. Circulation overall was up by 7% over 2021 circulation; Liberty was up by 9%; LOW was down significantly; Middletown was relatively flat with an increase of 1%; Monroe was up by 90%; Trenton was up by 13%; and West Chester was flat. AV was down by 4%; print was up by 8%; digital was up by 875% since 2012; patron visits were up by 44%; program attendance had a huge increase; PC usage was up by 29%; Wi-Fi was up by 36%; meeting room usage increased by 100%; there were close to 9,000 new cards registered for the year. The board discussed remote service, the lobby stop service, the books by mail service, discarded and donated books; and state library statistics.

### Liberty Update:

Mr. Bautz reported that the latest design board renderings are on display at the front of the room and invited the board to take a look at them; they are meeting with the architects next week; the floor plan is still being tweaked; colors, paint, and ceiling acoustic baffles will be chosen soon; Library Design has been retained for the furniture and shelving; the prices of some items have gone up since the project began; and an article was in the local paper about the project.

## **XI Public Services Report:**

Mrs. Maynor reported that Butler County Emergency Management Director, Matt Haverkos, contacted us about our locations serving as warming centers during extreme cold weather; Mr. Bautz and Mrs. Maynor met with the CEO of Access Counseling Services to discuss updates to the MOU; and they attended the first 2023 Community Health Assessment initiative. At Liberty, 285 items were borrowed from the hold lockers; and passport acceptance services began January 12<sup>th</sup>. At LOW, 1 item was borrowed from the Wayne Township hold lockers; and the bookmobile had a new generator installed and a gas tank

sensor issue diagnosed. Mrs. Abernathy reported that at MID, staff passed their annual passport recertification; they have begun the hiring process for job openings; they are focusing some of their outreach to the high school and junior high school; and the Access Counseling case manager has been seeing patrons every day. At Monroe, Mr. Bautz, Mrs. Maynor and the branch manager, Mr. Paul Gabbard, met with the Monroe City Manager to discuss using the city community room to expand the senior lunch program to Monroe as well as other programs and services that could be offered to the Monroe community. At Trenton, staff successfully completed their 2023 annual passport recertification; the property was surveyed to determine property lines; and new security cameras were installed. At West Chester, a meeting was held with Lakota school officials to discuss after-school student needs which resulted in the authorization of school resource officers to work alongside the current police officers that cover the after-school security needs; staff successfully completed their 2023 annual passport recertification; staff is working with RJE Business Interiors on the installation of additional small study rooms where the periodical shelving used to be in order to turn the existing quiet study room into a reservable meeting room; and the makerspace completed 300 Express 3D and vinyl prints.

Mayor Condrey and Via were excused at 2:10 pm.

## **XII Community Engagement Report**

Ms. Hillman reported that the library had 1,534 minutes of virtual programming watched in December with 2,671 engagements. Views on YouTube were up 22% from 2021 despite focusing on in-person programming in 2022. Programming and promotions included 23 patron entries in the MidPointe Short Story Writing contest; the Friends, Food and Fun for Seniors program continues to grow at West Chester. The Delivery/Books by Mail service is being featured in recent promotions. Community events & partnerships include the Middletown City School Creekview Elementary student incentive; the Liberty Early Childhood School's Literacy Week; a donation of branded bags to Hopewell Early Childhood School for their Literacy Luau; and a patron sent in a photo of a bat house that she constructed for Christmas gifts by learning from a book from the Monroe branch.

## **XIII Human Resources**

Staffing Updates:

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

Approve the employment of Salem Holden, effective 12/25/2022; part time; non-exempt; West Chester; library associate; public services; at pay level one;

Approve the resignation of Katie Depew, effective 12/31/2022; part time; non-exempt; Middletown; library associate; public services;

Approve the resignation of Deavon Arnold, effective 1/3/2023; full time; non-exempt; West Chester; library associate; public services;

Approve the resignation of TT Dirr, effective 1/5/2023; part time; non-exempt; West Chester; library associate; public services;

Approve the resignation of Tori Dimerling, effective 1/5/2023; part time; non-exempt; West Chester; library associate; public services;

Approve the termination of Kristen Campbell, effective 1/9/2023; full time-non-exempt; West Chester; library associate; public services, and  
Approve the resignation of Cas Rogers, effective 1/13/2023; part time; non-exempt; Middletown; library associate; public services.

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

“Nay” None

Motion Approved 23-10

Ms. Stengel reported that turnover for December was 1.0526% and is 20.4023% for 2022. As of December 2022, we had 23 hires and 19 terminations. We have nine openings and are actively recruiting.

Employee Handbook (discussion):

Ms. Stengel reported that the employee handbook needs a comprehensive update. Our employment attorney suggested changing the format and to have stand-alone policies for legal and public employment items, and guidelines for the remainder of employee expectations in a handbook. The board agreed to leave the format to the discretion of the employment attorney in updating the employee handbook.

Fiscal Officer Posting:

Mr. Bautz discussed that to continue the recruiting process, we would like the board to send him and Ms. Stengel the skills, qualities, and characteristics that a fiscal officer should have so we can develop interview questions that will quantify and measure the applicant’s qualifications. We would like to schedule the interview either before or after the board meeting in February. Ms. Stengel discussed the interview materials that include the job description, resume, applicant question answers, cover letter, letters of recommendation, the interview process, a sample of MBI interview questions, and interviewing legalities.

**XIV Board Comments**

There were no board comments.

**XV Adjournment**

Mr. Wright adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

23-11

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President

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Secretary