

**Milford Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
June 15th, 2026**

President Ya'nelle Powell called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM.

Present: Ya'nelle Powell, Joe Zurzolo, Patti Calhoun, Meredith Wise and Averí Richards

Staff Present: Lea Rosell

Approval of Minutes: Patti made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting. Meredith seconded.

Director's Report: May circulation remained slightly below the prior year, consistent with a statewide decline in the circulation of physical materials. Despite this decrease, daily library traffic increased considerably, indicating that more patrons are using the library's spaces, services and other resources. Adult programming attendance increased significantly compared with the previous year. The increase was attributed to additional programming and improved collaboration among staff members, despite turnover in the adult programming position. Children's programming attendance also increased. Consistent weekly story times have been implemented, with a recent program attracting approximately 55 children compared with an average of approximately 15 children during the previous year. Teen programming also continues to perform well. Public computer usage increased substantially compared with the prior year. The previous year's numbers were unusually low because the library's computers were unavailable for an extended period following a cybersecurity incident. All staff evaluations have been completed. A personnel matter arising during the high school graduation period was addressed, and no additional board discussion was required. Verizon is discontinuing most traditional landline services, except for required emergency lines such as the elevator telephone. The library will transition to a new service that is expected to reduce its telephone expenses by approximately half. The existing public fax line will be removed. Digital faxing will remain available through EnvisionWare. Patrons requiring the transmission of unusually large documents may be referred to a nearby business offering traditional fax services. The library purchased a one-year GrantStation subscription for \$139 to identify additional construction and capital funding opportunities. An application will also be submitted to the Crystal Trust. Staff will continue researching grants that do not require matching funds. Lea is participating in construction de-scoping meetings with individual contractors and trades. Although library representation is not required at each meeting, participation has provided valuable information regarding the scope of work and responsibilities of the contractors. A magnetic scheduling board has been placed on the Director's office door so staff members can more easily determine her availability during the construction planning process. The summer reading kickoff was held the previous Saturday and attracted approximately 400 families throughout the event. Activities included face painting, crafts, movies, popcorn and a Friends of the Library book sale. The Music in the Park banner has been completed and will be installed by the City. Press releases have been distributed, and an advertisement package was purchased for the local

movie theater to promote the summer events. The library is also coordinating a promotional partnership with Dolce for a Milford Public Library-themed drink special during July and possibly August. The funding formula for independent libraries in Sussex County was discussed. Seaford Library previously received assistance through a hold-harmless arrangement after experiencing funding losses resulting from reduced services under its former administration. Independent library directors agreed to provide only partial assistance this year because Seaford has not consistently participated in countywide advocacy efforts. A letter was prepared and approved by the independent library directors advising Seaford's board that future assistance may be discontinued if its participation does not improve. The importance of continued advocacy and accountability regarding Sussex County library funding was also discussed. Board members may attend a future Seaford board meeting depending on the response received.

Financial Reports: Electronic subscription expenses increased because the annual NewsBank payment was recorded during a different month than the previous year. The Director will investigate a \$1,015 entry listed under other income, which may be related to the Twelve Days in Downtown Milford program. A certificate of deposit valued at approximately \$55,000 is reaching maturity. The funds will be transferred into the library's checking account and subsequently moved to an account managed by Kit and Hosaic. The funds will remain relatively liquid in case they are needed during construction. Overall income and expenses remain close to budget. Although the financial report reflects a deficit of approximately \$50,000, approximately \$42,000 of that amount represents a budgeted transfer that will not be used unless necessary. Interior and other maintenance expenses were higher than budgeted. Approximately \$6,919 was spent addressing repeated toilet and plumbing problems. It was determined that the existing system is residential rather than commercial grade. The construction plans include a commercial plumbing system with sufficient flushing capacity, which should eliminate the need for grinders and reduce future repair expenses. Adult programming expenses appear higher than budgeted because the library received a Delaware Division of the Arts Creative Aging grant. Because the grant was issued by the State of Delaware, both the revenue and related expenses must be reflected in the operating budget. Lea also updated the Delaware Paid Family Leave expense based on the library's first full year of payments. Joe made a motion to approve the financial reports. Meredith seconded.

FY27 Budget: Sussex County funding increased for the upcoming fiscal year. The proposed budget was updated to reflect the library's actual insurance and workers' compensation costs. The Delaware Paid Family Leave allocation was increased from \$1,440 to \$3,000. To maintain a balanced budget, the proposed transfer from the Hosaic account was adjusted to \$44,571. An updated copy of the budget will be distributed to the Board.

Construction Report: Construction de-scoping meetings will continue over the next two weeks. Following those meetings, the library expects to receive a final project cost. Any remaining funds may allow previously removed or optional items to be restored to the project scope. Staff members are developing plans to relocate collections and services from the main library area to the Smith Room during construction. This includes measuring shelving, determining how collections can be consolidated and arranging for the installation of data ports so staff

computers can continue connecting to the Delaware Division of Libraries network. The construction team is also determining how shelving and books will be moved while flooring work is completed. Due to the load limitations of the building's concrete slab, contractors may need to use manually operated rolling scaffolding instead of heavier equipment. The power study previously completed by the University of Delaware was insufficient for the construction project. Nipple Electric has been hired to complete a comprehensive power study. The demolition permit application has already been approved, and the construction manager remains in contact with the City of Milford regarding the schedule. The Chamber of Commerce remains in the lower level and may continue using the space until construction begins.

New/Old Business: Lea reported that a library volunteer and summer employee received a Rotary scholarship. The Rotary organization praised the quality and diverse interests of this year's scholarship recipients.

Administrative Matters and Public Comment: N/A

Adjournment: Joe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Patti seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:42 AM.

The next regular board meeting will be held at 10:00AM on Monday, July 20th, 2026 in the Bailey Room at MPL.