



# TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

*Library Board of Trustees*

*Meeting Minutes*

*Tuesday, September 14, 2021 – 4:30 P.M.*

**Present:** Rita H. Smith - Chairman  
Peter Vaccarelli  
Mary Veillette – left at 5:15 PM  
Robert Desmarais, Sr  
Patricia Fahey

**Also Present:** Rachel Primus, Recording Clerk  
Jo-Ann LoRusso, Library Director  
Diane Giudditta

**Absent:** William Stowell.

Rita Smith called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 4:30 P.M.

## **Approval of May 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

**VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Patricia Fahey and seconded by Peter Vaccarelli to **APPROVE** the May 11, 2021 meeting minutes with the following corrections: under Director's Report change the word conductivity to connectivity and change Pies and Pints to Pies and Pub.

## **Trustee Reports**

### **• Treasurer's Report**

Rita Smith said that Bill Stowell submitted a letter of resignation on June 30, 2021. She stated she received all the information from the Treasurer today, so there will be no report for this month's meeting, it will be ready for the next meeting. Rita reminded members that this December all positions will be up for re-election and if anyone is interested in the Treasurer position she encouraged them to run for it. Until then, Rita will compose the monthly report.

### **• Secretary's Report**

Robert Desmarais said he received a letter from the Middlebury Congregational Church Book Club. He read it into the record. He said the letter speaks to the quality and care of the library staff.

Robert also received a letter from the Estate of Marilyn Engelman dated August 2, 2021 which he read into the record. It included a monetary donation of \$2,500.00 to be used to purchase children's books for the library. Marilyn was a long time member of the trustees for over 50 years and her dedication and commitment was appreciated.

Rita Smith handed out a letter she received at her personal address from Shep Clark. She noted that any correspondence for trustees should be mailed directly to the library, not their personal addresses. The letter was received in July and was also addressed to Bill Stowell and Ed St John. The letter questioned why there are only 2 computers for public use and the area they are in feels noisy. Mr. Clark asked for this letter to be part of the minutes. Rita said they will discuss this further under the code of conduct.

- **Director's Report**

JoAnn said everyone received a packet and the statistics were included. JoAnn said they had a really good participation with the summer read. She noted that local business's donated gift cards and everyone who read a book was put into a drawing to win. JoAnn said the CT State Library had them keep track of the summer reads as well as complete the annual survey. She said the library received a grant from the American Rescue Plan Act in the amount of \$16,146.00. This money was put toward more Covid 19 equipment. JoAnn said they hired Carmela D'Onofrio for the full time Children's librarian position, Jami Richardson for the part time Library Specialist position in the children's area, and Tacey Dietlmeier for the part time Substitute Library Specialist position.

JoAnn said they are still in a global pandemic that continues to change every day. She said they will be offering more shcool book groups and have new story times with age groups that will be pre-recorded weekly sessions. JoAnn said they are extending their hours from 10:00AM to 2:00PM on Saturday's and Tuesday nights they will be open until 8:00PM.

**VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Robert Desmarais and seconded by Patricia Fahey to **APPROVE** the Director's Report.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

- **Code of Conduct Policy**

Rita said they have been visiting this policy often due to Covid-19 and the last time they reviewed it and made changes was on May 11<sup>th</sup>. There was a discussion regarding Mr. Clark's letter and his issue with the computers. It was noted that whatever policy is set, JoAnn has to enforce it. Bob Desmarais felt the decision should be made by the staff as long as it meets the trustee's guidelines and they are complying with what is required by the town and following Covid-19 guidelines. Pat Fahey asked if patrons were required to wear masks at all times while inside the library. JoAnn said that the CDC guidelines as of May 13, 2021 changed. She passed a copy to the trustees. It stated that if you are vaccinated, you no longer were required to wear a mask indoors. She said she did research this information and felt it was appropriate. On July 12, 2021 a sign was made stating vaccinated people were not required to wear masks, but unvaccinated were. JoAnn noted that most people are still wearing a mask because of the information they see on the news. Rita said the town buildings are requiring face masks and are contract tracing. JoAnn said if they are going to put up a new sign requiring masks they need a way to enforce it and they cannot make exceptions. Mary suggested waiting for the State to make a move before enforcing the requirement. JoAnn handed out a copy of the State of CT Executive Order 13A. Rita asked the trustees if they wanted to keep the Code of Conduct Policy as it is or if they wanted to update it with a mask requirement. Mary said she was ok with it as is, Pat said she was not comfortable with it currently because of the youth, Peter said he had mixed thoughts, and Bob said as long as they are in compliance with the State of CT and the Town of Middlebury. Peter said there seem to be different rules for different buildings and he feels it should come from the Town Hall. JoAnn felt they should revert back to the protocol in May, the heatwave is over and fall weather is here.

**VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Peter Vaccarelli and seconded by Robert Desmarais to **ADD** "in order to be in compliance with the State of CT and the Town of Middlebury Policies patrons must wear a face covering at all times while in the library unless under 2 years of age regardless of vaccination or not." Reviewed and Readopted by the Library Board of Trustees on September 14, 2021. There will also be a clip board for people to sign for contact tracing.

**Public Comment**

None

**Adjournment**

**VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Robert Desmarais and seconded by Peter Vaccarelli to  
**ADJOURN** to meeting at 5:24 PM.

These minutes are submitted subject to approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Primus

Recording Clerk

**Attachments**

Cc: Library Board of Trustees  
Library Director  
Town Clerk

Janice LeDuc  
Children's Librarian/ Assistant Director  
Middlebury Public Library

June 17, 2021

Dear Jo-Ann,

Please accept this letter as a formal notification that I am resigning from my position as Children's Librarian/Assistant Director of the Middlebury Public Library. My last day will be July 9, 2021..

This is when I wish to start my retirement. It has been a pleasure for me to work for my hometown and Jo-Ann LoRusso (Library Director). My experience at the Middlebury Public Library has been rewarding in so many ways over the past 35 plus years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janice S. LeDuc". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Janice S. LeDuc

William J. Stowell  
1 Elfin Place  
Middlebury, CT 06762

June 30, 2021

First Selectman Edward St. John  
Town of Middlebury  
1212 Whittemore Road  
Middlebury, CT 06762


Ed:

This is to notify you that I am resigning from the Library Board of Trustees effective immediately.

Sincerely,

  
William J. Stowell

Cc: Town Clerk, Brigitte Bessette

RECEIVED FOR FILING  
June 30 2021 at 9:30 <sup>A</sup>M.  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
MIDDLEBURY, CT  
  
TOWN CLERK

LAW OFFICES  
ENGELMAN & ENGELMAN  
459 MIDDLEBURY ROAD  
P.O. BOX 369  
MIDDLEBURY, CONNECTICUT 06762

TELEPHONE 203/758-8459  
FAX 203/758-8462

LAWRENCE H. ENGELMAN

MORTON H. ENGELMAN  
1924 - 1998

August 2, 2021

Middlebury Public Library  
of Middlebury, Connecticut  
Attn: Joanne LoRusso  
30 Crest Road  
Middlebury, CT 06762

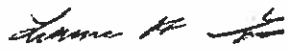
Re: The Estate of Marilyn S. Engelman



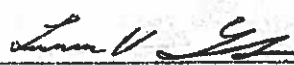
Dear Joanne:

Please find enclosed a check in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred (\$2,500.00) Dollars in connection with The Estate of Marilyn S. Engelman. This check represents a charitable bequest to the Middlebury Public Library in her Will. These funds are to be used to buy children books within twelve (12) months of receipt.

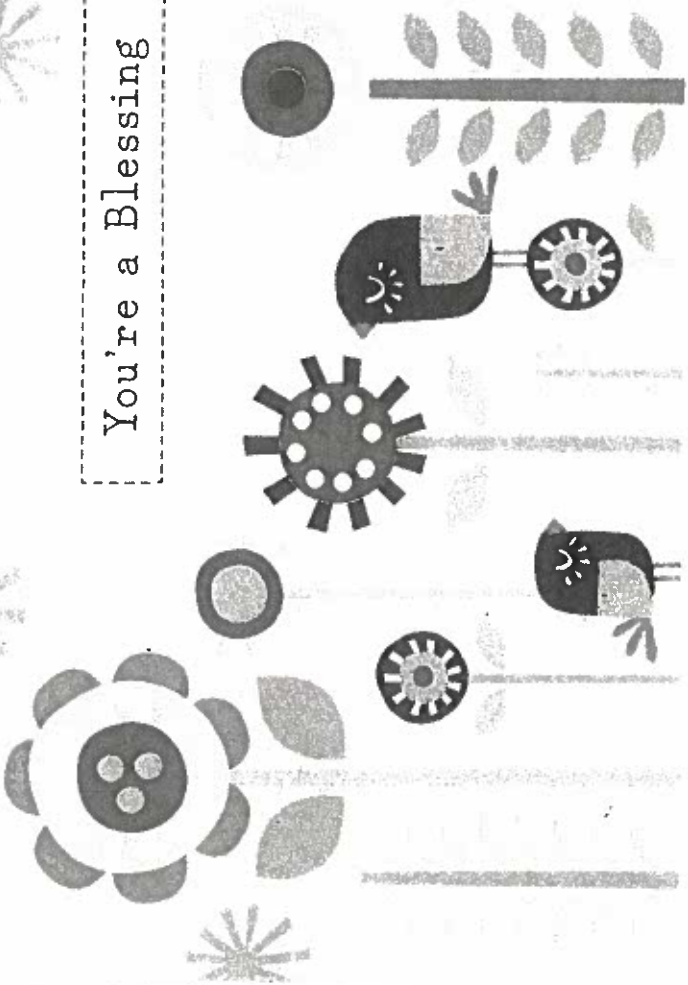
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

  
Lawrence H. Engelman  
LHE/ml  
Enclosures

<b>THE ESTATE OF MARILYN S ENGELMAN</b>		<b>130</b>
PO BOX 369 MIDDLEBURY, CT 06762		51-74172111
Date <u>08/02/2021</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK NUMBER
<b>PAY to the order of</b>	Middlebury Public Library	\$ 2,500.00
Two Thousand Five Hundred and 00/100-----		Dollars 
<b>ion</b> BANK		
For _____		
⑆ 211174178⑆ 1900623562⑆ 0130		

You're a Blessing



the Middlebury Congregational  
Church book club! Also, a  
big thank <sup>FROM</sup> <sup>HALLMARK</sup> you to each  
& everyone of you for  
your service!

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Dear Super Staff at  
Middlebury library,

8/3/24

Thank you kindly for the gift  
card to 8 Fifty restaurant!  
You guys are amazing!  
Thank you to Jennifer for  
always getting books for

120 Camp Road  
Middlebury, CT  
July 19, 2021  
203-758-1138

Rita Smith, Trustee/Chairman-MPL, Secretary-MPL, BOF-TOM  
Middlebury, CT

Re: Complaint

Hi Rita,

I enjoyed seeing you at the library last week as you were talking with Library Director JoAnn LoRusso.

The following questions about the Library have been prompted.

- Why are there only two computers for public use?
- What became of the six computers at the six workstations formerly for public use?
- Why is it so noisy in the area where the two computers are presently located for public use? The area is very noisy when young children and parents congregate in front of the plexiglass that shields workers in the kiosk. The sound bounces off the plexiglass.

I notice nothing in the MPL minutes regarding computers, and it seems that subject is important enough to merit at least a couple of sentences indicating the status of same at each board meeting.

Please include the above letter in your minutes of the next board meeting.

I hereby submit this letter in the nature of a constructive criticism hoping computer improvements will be made at the MPL so as to fully restore that benefit to patrons.

Very truly yours,  
  
Shep Clark

---

120 Camp Road  
Middlebury, CT  
July 19, 2021

Bill Stowell, Trustee-MPL, MPL Treasurer, TOM-BOF Chairman, Asst. CFO-TOM  
Middlebury, CT

Hi Bill,

You have so many civic and religious avocations, and you do them all very well.

On another note, the situation of the MPL computers continues to be annoying. As you know the MPL is one of the last to get aboard the governor's reopen Connecticut program regarding computers.

Hopefully, the MPL will not undertake any new initiatives until the computer situation is rectified. Since you are the TOM BOF chairman, and have a great deal to say in respect to the portion of town taxes allocated to the MPL, I am counting on you to help make the computer opportunities equal to the opportunities provided elsewhere at the library.

Thanks for your attention.

Very truly yours,

cc: Ed St. John, First Selectman, TOM (Courtesy Copy)

Shep Clark



To: Middlebury Public Library Board of Trustees

1 page

From: Jo-Ann LoRusso, Library Director

RE: Director's Report

September 14, 2021

## **Statistics for August 2021**

(Chart)

## **2021 Summer Read**

(Survey Chart)

Our goal this summer was to encourage our community to read together and to participate in engaging programs. The Middlebury Public Library's summer read was filled with educational and enlightening opportunities throughout the summer months for all ages.

The 2021 Connecticut State Library's Summer Reading Report for Middlebury Public Library was completed and submitted on September 2, 2021.

## **2020-2021 Connecticut Public Library Annual Survey**

The Connecticut State Library requires all public libraries to complete an extensive annual survey. The Middlebury Public Library completed and submitted the FY2020-2021 Public Library Annual Report on August 5, 2021.

## **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Application**

The Middlebury Public Library received an ARPA grant in the amount of \$16,146 to continue to provide our community with a clean and safe environment. We received desktop barriers, four touchless hand sanitizers, a phone charging station with lockers, five air scrubbers for air purification, two outdoor benches for outdoor Wi-Fi use, and pandemic related cleaning supplies.

## **Staff**

(Janice Leduc Resignation Letter)

Carmela D'Onofrio, MLS was hired for the full time Children's Librarian position. Janice LeDuc retired July 9, 2021 after 35 years of service.

Jami Richardson was hired for the part time Library Specialist position in the children's area. Brittany Parkhouse relocated out of state while continuing her education in the library science field online.

Tacey Dietlmeier, MLS was hired for the part time Substitute Library Specialist position in the cataloging/circulation area including Saturday hour rotations.

# AUGUST 2021

**Circulation**

**3535**

**Programs**

**Number of Programs**

**Number of Attendees**

**Adult**

**1**

**168**

**YA (12-18)**

**0**

**0**

**Children**

**2**

**16**

**Zoom Children**

**4**

**33**

**Family Program**

**2**

**331**

**Self Directed  
Ages 0-11**

**4**

**35**

**Self Directed  
Ages 12-18**

**3**

**10**

**Total Programs**

**16**

**593**

**Library Cards**

**Active Cards  
2,521**

**New Residents  
19**

**Collection Size**

**71,750**

# MIDDLEBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Tales & Tails Recap - Summer 2021

<b>Preschool &amp; Kindergarten</b>	33 Signed up	71 enteries		
<b>First - Fifth Grade</b>	81 Signed up	274 enteries		
<b>Teens</b>	38 Signed up	368 enteries		
<b>Adults</b>		June 82 Enteries July 161 enteries August 168 enteries		
<b>ADULT COMMUNITY</b>	<b>Contest</b>	<b>Prize Value</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Winner</b>
34 signed up 21 turned in	Devil Dog Contest	4 Passes to PEZ	PEZ Donation	Chanel Guo
12 photos 157 enteries	Dog Days	\$25	Your Healthy Pet Donation	"Spinch" Batista
171 enteries	Guess Animal Crackers	2 Bags Animal Crackers	MPL	Tie: Leana Velio Delailah Salicito
82 enteries	June Adult Tails & Tales	Le Bobadel \$20	Le Bobadel Donation	Jenna Martorelli
161 enteries	July Adult Tails & Tales	8 Fifty \$50	8 Fifty Donation	Cynthia Flisher
168 enteries	August Adult Tails & Tales	Vyne \$50	Vyne Donation	Mellisa St. Pierre

<b>TEEN</b>				
16 enteries	Nutmeg	Pies & Pubs \$25	Pies & Pub Donation	Kimberly Thompson
430 enteries	Tails & Tales Grand Prize	Amazon \$50	Friends, Inc.	Max Humphrey
	Other Prizes	Water Bottle (3)	MPL	Amaris Fontanez Kelley Buban Alexander
		Card Game (2)	MPL	Ariel Fontanez Gabriella Break
62 enteries	Scratch Off Tickets	Candy, books, popsocket	MPL	Teens
8 enteries	Novel In A Jar	Domenic's & Vinnie's Large 2 Topping Pizza	Domenic's & Vinnie's Donation	Stephanie Gleissner
<b>CHILDREN</b>				
27 enteries	Nutmeg	Rita's & a Book \$5.94	Rita's Donation	Jane Swan
71 enteries	Tails & Tales Grand Prize	Build A Bear \$50	Friends, Inc.	Gus Donorfrio
274 enteries	Tails & Tales Grand Prize	Build A Bear \$50	Friends, Inc.	Blake Berry
<b>Other Programs</b>				
<b>Community</b>	Birds of Prey	50 attendees		

<b>Teen</b>	Three DIY Crafts	June - 5 participants July - 10 participants Aug - 10 participants		
<b>Children</b>	Eight different take home craft	148 participants		
	Three storywalk & craft	46 participants		
	Three Tailgate storytime & craft	20 participants		
	Virtual Storytime	June - 47 participants July - 20 participants Aug - 33 participants		
<b>Surveys</b>	46 surveys returned See survey chart for details			

# MIDDLEBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Tales & Tales Summer Reading 2021

### Patron Survey Chart

	0-5 (33 signed up)	6-11 (81 signed up)	12-18 (38 signed up)	19+ June - 82/ July - 161/ August -	
Ages					
	12 turned in	19 turned in	3 turned in	12 turned in	46 surveys turned in
Felt Welcomed	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
	36	7	0	0	
Enjoyed Activities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
	30	6	1	0	9
Learned Something	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
	14	15	1	2	13
Got Help	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
	20	14	2	0	8

Plan To Take Part In Activities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
	26	10	1	0	7
First Time Participated	Yes	No, I have taken part before	N/A		
	19	17	3		
Like Most About the Library	Friendly Staff & Fun Programs		Friendly staff whenever we come		Love the programming/attention to the community.
	Info		The staff's amazing job helping us with books.		I love how helpful you are.
	Book Selection		Always willing to help with a smile.		A lot of books.
	New graphic novels & all the fun engaging programs		How interactive it was this summer		The kid's activities.
	I like that you have the books I like		The staff		I like that there are a lot of books to choose from.
	Staff is friendly		Graphic novels		Amount of books to choose from.
	I like because when we come to the library all the persons who work in the library are very nice & help us.		They let kids participate in things		All the programming & the people.

	All is clean.		The activities		The staff is great.
	Have projects for the kids.		The books.		The variety of books.
	Staff is friendly & helpful		Children area & selection.		Friendly staff.
	Everyone is very friendly and helpful		Wonderful staff.		
	Great selection of books for kids and very helpful staff		We love the library.		
Anything Else To Tell Us	We are so grateful for our library		Happy the library is open again		More choices for graphic novels.
	I wish we were part of the network with other libraries.		Open study room.		Be open on Saturdays
	I wish kid's selection was more welcoming & cozy to encourage kids.		Thank you for all your help finding great books.		More books
	Love the programs		Thank you for keeping us stocked with books.		Thank you
	New books are too low.		More children's graphic novels		Shelves are too low.



	Sometimes I get frustrated by the age restriction on programming		Thank you for all you do.		
--	--	--	---------------------------	--	--

Ages	0-5 (33 signed up)	6-11 (81 signed up)	12-18 (38 signed up)	19+ June - 82/ July - 161/ August - 168	48 turned in Total
Welcomed	12 turned in Strongly Agree	20 turned in Agree	3 turned in Disagree	13 turned in Strongly Disagree	N/A
Enjoyed	37 Strongly Agree	8 Agree	0 Disagree	0 Strongly Disagree	N/A
Learned	31 Strongly Agree	7 Agree	1 Disagree	0 Strongly Disagree	9
Help	15 Strongly Agree	15 Agree	1 Disagree	2 Strongly Disagree	14
Plan	20 Strongly Agree	14 Agree	2 Disagree	0 Strongly Disagree	10
	27 Strongly Agree	10 Agree	1 Disagree	0 Strongly Disagree	N/A
					8

First	Yes	No, I have taken part before	N/A		
	20	18	3		
Likes	Friendly Staff & Fun Programs		Friendly staff whenever we come		Love the programming/attention to the community.
	Info		The staff's amazing job helping us with books.		I love how helpful you are.
	Book Selection		Always willing to help with a smile.		A lot of books.
	New graphic novels & all the fun engaging programs		How interactive it was this summer		The kid's activities.
	I like that you have the books I like		The staff		I like that there are a lot of books to choose from.
	Staff is friendly		Graphic novels		Amount of books to choose from.
	I like because when we come to the library all the persons who work in the library are very nice & help us.		They let kids participate in things		All the programming & the people.
	All is clean.		The activities		The staff is great.
	Have projects for the kids.		The books.		The variety of books.

	Staff is friendly & helpful		Children area & selection.		Friendly staff.
	Everyone is very friendly and helpful		Wonderful staff.		All the books
	Great selection of books for kids and very helpful staff		We love the library.		The staff is always so helpful & pleasant.
Anything Else	We are so grateful for our library		Happy the library is open again		More choices for graphic novels.
	I wish we were part of the network with other libraries.		Open study room.		Be open on Saturdays
	I wish kid's selection was more welcoming & cozy to encourage kids.		Thank you for all your help finding great books.		More books
	Love the programs		Thank you for keeping us stocked with books.		Thank you
	New books are to low.		More children's graphic novels		Shelves are to low.
	Sometimes I get frustrated by the age restriction on programming		Thank you for all you do.		Can you please get books 3 & 4 of Cucumber Series
	Wish we could sit and read				