



**The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
January 13, 2022 at 6:00pm**

Trustees: Elizabeth Yull (President), Crystal Smith (Treasurer), Rick Kavin (Recording Secretary, Mayor's Delegate), Deniece Johnson, Lavern Rice, and Patricia Smith

City Council Liaison: Robin M. Vaughn (*not present*)

Staff: Rebecca FrancoMartin (Director)

I. Call to Order

A. Elizabeth Yull, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm

II. Announcement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law

A. Announced by Director Rebecca FrancoMartin

B. Statement is hereby made that adequate notice of this meeting was given by:

1. Posting written notice prominently at the Trenton Public Library main entrance, the Library website, and Facebook.
2. The mailing of said notice to the *Trentonian*.

III. Roll Call for Quorum

A. Present: Elizabeth Yull, Crystal Smith, Deniece Johnson, Patricia Smith, Lavern Rice, and Rick Kavin

IV. Agenda Approval

A. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the January 2022 agenda

B. Deniece Johnson seconded the approval of the agenda

C. **Motion passes 6-0**

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Rick requested the following corrections:

1. Rick was *not* present at the December 9 meeting due to a funeral, so should be noted as "Not Present"
2. Removed highlights in Section V
3. Corrected the date at the bottom of Page 1 from "November 18, 2021" to "December 9, 2021"
4. Points of clarification:
 - a. When is the new May 2022 meeting date?
 - b. Was there a vote taken to make this change?
5. As Rick was absent, Director FrancoMartin acted as the Recording Secretary. This has been reflected at the bottom of the document.

B. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 2021 Board meeting with the above amendments

C. Crystal Smith seconded the motion

D. **Motion passes 6-0**

VI. Open Public Address

- A. No members of the public present via Zoom
- B. *(no public comment)*

VII. Presentations

- A. Financials *(presented by Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*
 1. *(see “December 2021 financial reports” from Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*
 2. Total fund balance (as of 12/31/21 for TY budget) was **\$2.8M**
 - a. \$1.5M in cash/investments, of which \$292,000 is in TFPL’s operating checking account
 - b. This is a \$161,000 decrease from previous month due to operating activity
 - c. Roughly \$368,000 of various trust funds and trust fund income
 3. Grant income over budget by \$35,000 since TFPL does not routinely budget for grants
 4. NJ State Aid over budget by \$14,000 because base appropriation increased over prior years’ average payments
 5. Personnel expenses over budget by \$82,000 due to 2020 hazard pay paid out in July – an additional appropriation was received from the City to cover the expense
 6. Library materials, programming expenses, and planned expenditures from surplus for the Reading Room and tech upgrades are over budget
 7. Insurance expenses, facilities and utilities expenses, telephone and fax expenses, and security expenses were all under budget
 8. Net income (as of December 31, 2021) was a deficit of approximately \$114,000. This compares to a budgeted surplus of \$33,000 for the period, which is a negative variance of \$147,000. Excluding the reading room and technology upgrades, there is a positive variance against the operating budget of \$84,000.
 9. The Director noted that a disbursement will be made by FEMA, but there have been significant delays
- B. Personnel Report *(presented by Rebecca FrancoMartin)*
 1. *(no personnel changes)*
- C. Friends of TFPL *(presented by Pat Tumulty)*
 1. The Friends aided TFPL with the Holiday Gift Giveaway
 - a. Pat noted the exemplary work of both Ebony and Damaris
 - b. Pat commented that the event was well-organized and well-received
 - c. The Friends gave a \$250 donation to buy additional gifts
- D. Director’s Report *(presented by Director Rebecca FrancoMartin)*
 1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**
 - a. **Patriots Week**
 - i. Event scheduled for Dec. 27th was cancelled by the sponsor, the Old Mill Hill Society (OMHS) due to COVID
 - ii. Future event will be scheduled when it is safe to gather a large group in the TFPL Reading Room
 - b. **Trenton NAACP**

- i. Leslie Summiel of the Trenton NAACP attended the last OMHS meeting
 - ii. Wants to partner with OMHS and TFPL on Community Conversations
 - iii. Director will be meeting with Mr. Summiel to discuss topics/format
- 2. **MARKETING**
 - a. **Trenton Daily**
 - i. Reporter Drew Mumich of *Trenton Daily* interviewed Librarian Jungwon DeVone and Director FrancoMartin about the Holiday Recipe Exchange
 - ii. Mumich will report on TFPL events moving forward
 - b. **Monthly Adult Programming Calendar**
 - i. Template created for adult programs and events
 - ii. First issued for Jan. 2022
 - c. **Z-Fold Brochure**
 - i. Being created to advertise mission, services, and events in preparation for new logo
- 3. **BUILDING & TECHNOLOGY**
 - a. **Maintenance and IT**
 - i. Ticketing system created to ensure accurate records
 - ii. Provides a simple and efficient way to communicate needs within the building
 - b. **Door Counter**
 - i. Installed in November
 - ii. Supervising Librarian Shanshan Ming has gathered statistics
 - iii. Total December visits: 3,994
 - iv. Average daily visits: 166
 - v. Wednesdays are highest-traffic days due to tablet giveaway program (average of 226 visits on Wednesdays)
 - vi. Friday mornings are also busy (9-11am), while evenings are generally slow (5-8pm)
 - c. **Project Structured Cabling Plans**
 - i. Provided to TFPL in two formats:
 - Hard copy
 - Digital version by Maestro
 - ii. Will serve as a guide for future IT companies that may be awarded a contract by the City
 - d. **Maintenance**
 - i. Spread thin with large portion of time devoted to items related to the HVAC project
 - ii. Team members have also experienced personal issues and illnesses requiring time off
 - iii. Despite these challenges, the team continues to respond to staff needs, provide daily building maintenance, and engage vendors
- 4. **STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**
 - a. **COVID**

- i. Illness and related stress has taken its toll on staff, though they continue to rally when it comes to job performance, assisting one another, and providing support
 - ii. The Director praised the work and dedication of the staff under very challenging circumstances in providing more services than normal to patrons in need
 - b. **Page – Restraining Order**
 - i. A TFPL Page is experiencing stalking from a former boyfriend stalking, including while at work
 - ii. The Page ultimately obtained a restraining order against the individual
 - iii. Both the Director and Security Officer are aware and working to ensure the Page’s safety and the safety of the TFPL staff and property
 - iv. The individual has been formally banned from the Library
 - c. **Staff Day (Friday, Jan. 21st)**
 - i. Will *not* be a full-staff in-person event anymore due to COVID concerns – instead, staff will work in small groups
 - ii. Will instead be a **Staff In-Service Day** that will provide time for staff to catch up on individual or small group projects, receive training on requested topics, and review the staff manual and emergency procedures
 - iii. There will be an unannounced fire drill during the event
- 5. **CONTINUING EDUCATION & MEETINGS**
 - a. **Mercer County College**
 - i. Met with James Kerney Campus Director to discuss agreement between the two organizations’ libraries signed in the 90s
 - ii. Will continue to partner in new ways once a new agreement is formalized
 - iii. Areas of concern include WiFi hotspots for students as well as an outlet for in-person resources and services provided by TFPL
 - b. **Fresh Start Program**
 - i. Met with New Jersey State Library (NJSL) to discuss continuation of program for returning citizens
 - ii. Funding awarded for a six-month period ending June 2022
 - iii. NJSL is hopeful there will be additional funding to further extend the program
 - iv. There is high demand for this program and related services from TFPL patrons
 - v. Both the Program Manager and Social Worker previously assigned to TFPL returned to business hours at the Library beginning Wednesday, Jan. 12
 - c. **Baker & Taylor**
 - i. Attended quarterly meetings
 - ii. Director voiced concerns about delay of grant-funded Pop-Up Libraries and lack of communication
 - d. **Ingram Content Group**
 - i. Meeting scheduled due to concerns with Baker & Taylor

- ii. ICG is a large provider of physical materials and other library/education-related materials and provides access to more than 17 million items that B&T order to ship to public libraries
- iii. TFPL may contract with ICG as a secondary provider until we can make a fully-informed decision about whether they should be the primary provider

6. **COLLECTIONS & MATERIALS**

a. **Newspapers**

- i. Delivery remains spotty, mainly for the *Trenton Times* and the *Trentonian*
- ii. The *Trentonian* has been the largest problem – it is also a high cost to maintain and their billing is incorrect
- iii. Papers are currently available online as well
- iv. A “dummy” library card has been created to allow patrons to read newspapers on the database so that they may exceed allotted computer time to read the digital versions if print versions are not available
- v. TFPL will purchase one daily copy of the *Trentonian* for archival purposes and eliminate the subscription

b. **Circulation of Physical Materials**

- i. Remaining steady at an average of 2,200 items per month
- ii. Increase expected due to rejuvenation of Adult Non-Fiction collection and the in-house county of physical materials utilized by patrons while visiting the Library

c. **Adult Non-Fiction**

- i. Revitalization moving rapidly
- ii. Collection Development Librarian Sharon Shrieves-Ward is managing the carts for B&T accounts
- iii. Ordering completed by all Reference staff for their specific sections
- iv. Weeding is still ongoing
- v. The project has purchased \$27,808.06 in materials of a total budget of \$30,000
 - Difficult to spend entire budget due to lack of relevant materials for certain collections, such as the English as a Second Language collection

d. **Midwest Tape (TFPL’s DVD vendor)**

- i. Provided new contract updated with reduced processing fees

7. **FINANCES/FUNDING**

a. **Library Construction Bond (LCB)**

- i. NJLA formally announced the LCB proposed awardees and the intent for the Governor to sign the bill as submitted
- ii. NJSL sent an email to proposed awardees (including TFPL) indicating the same
- iii. Proposed awardees will receive an email about their award sometime this week

8. **LIBRARY SERVICES**

a. **Reference**

- i. A **Museum of the American Revolution** pass has been added to the TFPL collection of circulating museum passes
 - ii. The **NJSL + Literacy Partners Lab** is open, with an official launch on Monday, Jan. 24th
 - Christian Malave, a former TFPL Page, was hired as the Labor and Literacy Guide, which is a grant-funded position
 - Technical Services Librarian Mimi McBride is partnering with Christian as a mentor
 - Computer classes every Tuesday at 1pm
 - Helping to fill in gaps for one-on-one appointments for the grant program as needed
 - Supervising Librarian Shanshan Ming is overseeing the project
- b. **Children's**
- i. 515 **Youths** served this month through outreach, in-person class visits, take-home crafts, storytimes, programs, and the Holiday Gift Giveaway
 - ii. The **Holiday Gift Giveaway** served a record-high 250 youths, with \$800 and more than 70 toys donated to provide gifts
 - iii. Supervising Library Assistant Eboni Love is overseeing general operations for Youth Services
- c. **Young Adult**
- i. The **Teen Action Group (TAG)** has grown to 15 registered participants, with a core group of 6 regularly volunteering at TFPL
 - In December, TAG aided with holiday decorations and wrapping gifts for the Giveaway
 - Two members starting a knitting club for youth ages 9-17
 - ii. **Zine After School Club**
 - Collaboration between Library Associate Adira Fuller-Warren and Archivist Laura Poll
 - Goal is to increase literacy and writing skills among patrons who are reluctant to write and create outside a school setting
- d. **Circulation**
- i. **Library Cards**
 - 208 library cards created or updated
 - Adult patron accounts make up bulk of new cards
 - TPS students' lunch account numbers *already* on file as their TFPL library card number, so less pressing need for student enrollment for their own cards
 - ii. **Collection Weeding**
 - Circulation staff and Reference Team collaborated to send 24 boxes of weeded materials from the

Adult-Non-Fiction collection to Sustainable Shelves at B&T to be recycled

- Supervising Library Assistant Melanie Carrol is managing this project

e. **Outreach**

i. **Pop-Up Libraries**

- Installed and currently in use at:
 - TASK
 - Starbucks
 - East Trenton Collaborative
- Waiting on three additional devices from B&T:
 - YMCA
 - YMCA (youth content)
 - Trenton Transit Center
- B&T is in transition and thus moving slowly
- Supervising Librarian Shanshan Ming had scheduled time to meet with clients at both TASK and ETC, but both were postponed due to COVID concerns

f. **Trentoniana**

- i. 18 patrons visited during open hours
- ii. 30 inquires received via email, phone, and research form
- iii. Archivist Laura Poll created a **Zine Collection Development Policy** (*see attachment*) based on information gathered from the online course she took, which concluded on Dec. 15

VIII. Action Items

A. Bill List

1. (*see "TFPL January 2022 Unpaid Bills"*)
2. Approval of Bill List
 - a. Lavern Rice made the motion to approve the January bill list
 - b. Deniece Johnson seconded the approval of the bill list
 - c. **Motion passes 6-0**

IX. Old Business

A. Approval of Logo

1. The new proposed logo will be easier to transfer digitally
2. The logo conforms to the colors of the new Young Adult space
3. The logo is more modern, but keeps the shape and feel of the previous logo
4. **The Board approved the logo by acclamation**

B. Approval of Mural Design

1. Both the Young Adult room and Graphic Novel area proposals were displayed
2. Artists will start ASAP to be done by the spring, when their work takes them outside
3. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve
4. Deniece Johnson seconded the motion
5. **Motion passes 6-0**

C. HVAC Update

1. Under 1% asbestos, so no air monitoring is required under state law
2. However, the approved bid requires air monitoring if any asbestos is found
3. Issues with timely notification from vendor regarding requests
4. Biweekly meetings held with Clark Caton Hintz as well as the vendor (EMY)
5. EMY will be issued a cease-work order if these issues continue – they have been notified to that effect. They have since been compliant with the approved contract.

D. Tuition Assistance Reimbursement Update

1. Two TFPL employees are participating
2. Both are receiving high marks in their coursework
3. The individuals will be reimbursed for their tuition upon submitting their qualifying grades

X. New Business

A. Lawyer Contract – Appoint Flynn Martin

1. No longer have a contract with previous firm
2. Vicki Flynn has been servicing TFPL and the cost will actually be a bit lower
3. Ms. Flynn provided advice on major issues including union negotiations
4. Ms. Flynn is currently serving as special counsel
5. Motion to appoint Flynn Martin as TFPL legal counsel
 - a. Crystal Smith made the motion
 - b. Patricia Smith seconded the motion
 - c. **Motion passes 5-0-1 with Deniece Johnson abstaining**

B. Budget for Calendar Year 2022

1. Line item for tuition reimbursement will be moved to Professional Development
2. “Books/eBooks” line item separated out into individual Departments
3. Crystal Smith made a motion to approve the 2022 Calendar Year budget
4. Rick Kavin seconded the motion
5. **Motion passes 6-0**

C. Zine Collection Development Policy (*see attachment*)

1. Questions were raised about the prohibition on certain language that could be perceived as bigoted
 - a. Pat Tumulty noted the recent rise in controversy regarding prohibition of certain books, especially in public school libraries
 - b. Pat T. also noted that the NJLA recently released a policy on censorship in Libraries that may be instructive here
2. **Tabled** until the February meeting so that the Director can clarify with Archivist

D. Investors Bank Account

1. Transfer credit card transaction account to PNC Bank
2. Currently serves as a “middle man” account
3. Liz and Crystal will cancel Investors account once all credit card payments are moved over
4. Lavern Rice made a motion to move credit card transactions from Investors Bank account to the existing PNC Bank operating account

5. Seconded by Patricia Smith
6. **Motion passes 6-0**
7. Resolution will be prepared

XI. Announcements

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, February 10, 2022, beginning at 6:00 pm

XII. Executive Session (*if required*)

- A. Executive session entered at 7:12
- B. Executive session ended at 7:27

XIII. Adjournment

- A. Deniece Johnson made a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavlin
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary