



The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
May 5, 2022 at 6:00pm

[The change from May 12 to May 5 was confirmed by the Board at the Dec. 2021 meeting]

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

(**italics* indicate that the trustee was not present at this meeting)

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

Staff: Rebecca FrancoMartin (Director) and Shanna Leggett (Administrative Assistant)

- I. Call to Order**
 - A. Elizabeth Yull, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:07 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, Deniece Johnson, Patricia Smith, Lavern Rice, and Rick Kavin
 - B. Not Present: Crystal Smith and James Earle
- IV. Agenda Approval**
 - A. Deniece Johnson made the motion to approve the May 2022 agenda
 - B. Pat Smith seconded the approval of the agenda
 - C. **Motion passes 5-0**
- V. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Pat Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the April 2022 Board meeting
 - B. Lavern Rice seconded the motion
 - C. **Motion passes 4-0-1 with Deniece Johnson abstaining due to her absence at the April 2022 meeting**
- 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. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA)*

1. *(see “April 2022 financial reports” from Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA)*
2. **Total fund balance** (as of April 30, 2022) was approx. **\$2.1M**
 - a. \$1.4M in cash/investments, of which \$197,000 is in TFPL’s operating checking account
 - b. This is a \$199,000 decrease from previous month due to operating activity and payment of construction-related invoices
 - i. Payment of construction invoices related to the Library Construction Bond improvements required a transfer of \$300,000 from the Northfield capital reserve account to the PNC operating checking account at the beginning of May
 - ii. This transfer will be reflected in the May financial reports – roughly \$60,000 remain in PNC account
 - c. Roughly \$368,000 of various trust funds and trust fund income
 - d. Next quarterly appropriation disbursement from the City will be in June (\$197,000)
3. **Personnel expenses, planned expenditures from surplus for the Reading Room/tech upgrades, Library materials and programming expenses, and audit expenses were over budget**
4. **Facilities and utilities expenses and security expenses were under budget**
5. **E-rate reimbursement program** is giving a credit for internet service instead of cash payment. TFPL is only paying for internet service above and beyond what the credits cover each month.
6. **Grant revenue** over budget by \$120,000, as TFPL does not budget for private grants
7. **Personnel expenses** over budget by \$12,000 due to a third regular payroll occurring in March
8. **Library materials and programming expenses** are over budget by \$22,000 due to timing of large purchases for the collection
9. **Facilities and utilities expenses** are under budget by \$63,000 due to repairs on the HVAC offset by an insurance check received for \$76,000
10. **Security** is under budget by \$8,000 due to timing of submission of the April invoice. The invoices are typically billed a month late.
11. **Audit expense** is over budget by \$15,000 due to timing of the invoices and the additional audit being performed for the six months ending December 31, 2021 – two audits are occurring simultaneously, which allows for some savings
12. **Planned expenditures from surplus for the reading room and tech upgrades** are over budget by \$669,000 due to a delay in the timing of the project which was budgeted for in a prior fiscal period
13. **Net income** (as of April 30, 2022) was a deficit of approximately \$614,000. This compares to a budgeted deficit of \$107,000 for the period, which is a negative variance of \$507,000. Excluding the Reading Room and technology upgrades, there is a positive variance against the operating budget of \$162,000, which is primarily due to

grants received that were not budgeted and the receipt of the insurance reimbursement for the HVAC repairs.

14. **James Kearney Trust** roughly at \$250,000 (income and corpus) – Liz suggested using

B. Personnel Report (*presented by Director Rebecca FrancoMartin*)

1. Adult Services Librarian will be leaving TFPL on May 7, as her family purchased a home far from the Library

C. Friends of TFPL (*presented by Pat Tumulty*)

1. **Trenton Book Fair (April 24, 2022)**

- a. 25 authors participated
- b. Lots of positive feedback from both authors and patrons
- c. Authors sold copies of their books, which were also purchased for the Trentoniana Collection when relevant
- d. Three Board members participated (Liz, Rick, and Pat)
- e. Friends helped serve refreshments, guide patrons, etc.
- f. Staff was hugely supportive (*thank you!*)
- g. Successful as a “friend-raising” event

D. Director’s Report (*presented by Director Rebecca FrancoMartin*)

1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

- a. **Plainfield Public Library** coordinator for the NJSL+ Digital Literacy program visited TFPL to see the computer lab, meet with IT, and discuss our local partnerships
- b. **City Contract Administrator** requested assistance with scoring bids for the City grant writers and the Director will assist

2. **MARKETING/PUBLIC RELATIONS**

a. **Trenton Journal**

- i. Kenneth Miles and Stacy Heading visited TFPL with a group of teens working on their Trenton Story during a six-week workshop
- ii. Kenneth, who runs *Trenton Journal*, has been publicizing Library events, writing articles about the Library, and featuring video clips

3. **BUILDING & TECHNOLOGY**

a. **Children’s Room**

- i. Replacement carpet has been ordered and will arrive by the end of May – this will be carpet tiles
- ii. Installation will be scheduled within a few days of arrival
- iii. Room is currently open after a deep clean, carpet sanitization, etc.
- iv. Caution tape currently at back wall where the damage is to keep children distant

4. **STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

- a. **Union Head Shop Steward and President** will visit staff during May to address the current lack of a Library Shop Steward
- b. **Quarterly Vacation Time** has been submitted by staff and approved for July through September 2022

5. **CONTINUING EDUCATION & MEETINGS**

- a. Director and Melanie will be attending the **American Library Association Conference** in Washington, DC from June 23-28
- b. Shanshan will attend the **NJLA Conference** on Thursday, June 23

6. LIBRARY SERVICES & PROGRAMMING

a. Monthly Services Report (April 2022)

- i. **4% Increase in Total Visits** from March to April (5,397 → 5,615)
- ii. **480 Youth Patrons** participated in various programs
 - This is a nearly 50% increase from March
- iii. **360 Patrons** attended **18 Adult Programs**
 - This does *not* include the **62 attendees for the Revolutionary Conversation** held on Sat., April 30, which was for all ages
 - **S.H.O.W. LavaLove® event** at CURE Insurance Arena
 - Adult Services staff attend on April 30
 - Engaged with ~100 individuals
 - Distributed TFPL brochures and flyers
 - More than 100 free books provided to community members
- iv. **3,500+ Uses of Various Databases**
 - NewsBank (2,500+ newspapers) and EBSCOHost (research/reference access to articles, journals, and books) were used the most

b. Bingo by United Health Care

- i. Patrons that visit TFPL daily can participate
- ii. United is hosting bingo at the Library and also sharing health and healthcare information
- iii. The daily visitors are very engaged in this, which is a group that typically does not engage with programming, so this will continue

c. Hoopla successfully launched on April 26

- i. Hoopla is a digital media service offered by local public libraries
- ii. Allows patrons to borrow movies, music, audiobooks, e-books, comics, and TV shows to enjoy on a computer, tablet, or phone – functions as its own streaming service
- iii. Funded through a grant (\$5,000)

d. Trenton Authors Book Fair

- i. Highly successful and well-attended
- ii. Positive feedback from many attendees

e. Passage Theatre

- i. Hosted a Community Dialogue for upcoming play, *Group!*
- ii. Topic of discussion was mental health and addiction
- iii. Twenty patrons attended

f. Sprout U

- i. Visited TFPL for dress rehearsal in preparation for the Revolutionary Conversation Living Museum
- ii. Teens were introduced to Young Adult Space and its dedicated Library Associate
- iii. Several students obtained Library Cards
- iv. Sprout U Director seeking to partner further with TFPL

- v. This was featured in *Trenton Daily* – Director will circulate article
 - g. **120th Anniversary TFPL Block Party (June 11, 11am-3pm)**
 - i. Thirteen community partners confirmed to participate
 - h. **First Friday Mural Showing (Young Adult Lounge)**
 - i. Artists Lori Johansson and Leon Rainbow were featured
 - ii. 35 attendees
 - iii. Local media participated, interviewing the artists and showcasing the mural
 - i. **Easter Egg Hunt at Prospect Village**
 - i. Youth Services did outreach at the community center in Prospect Village, a THA property
 - ii. Staff distributed flyers and books and connected with other community organizations
 - j. **Fantastic Beasts: Tournament of Houses**
 - i. TFPL hosted a Harry Potter event where children played relay games, did crafts, and won prizes
7. **COLLECTIONS & MATERIALS**
- a. **Adult Non-Fiction Circulation** continues to increase, with for top titles in April:
 - i. *The New Soul Food Cookbook for People with Diabetes*, by Fabiola Gaines (2 times, up to 30 days)
 - ii. *A History of God* by Karen Armstrong (2 times, up to 30 days)
 - iii. *Mindfulness and Hypnosis* by Michael Yapko (2 times, up to 30 days)
 - iv. *Hypnotherapy for a Better Life* by Tig Calvert (2 times, up to 30 days)
8. **TRENTONIANA**
- a. **Joseph Bonaparte Paintings**
 - i. The Archivist spoke at the Old City Hall in Bordentown about the Bonaparte paintings
 - ii. Joseph Bonaparte maintained one of the largest and finest collections of European art in America until it was dispersed via estate auction in 1847
 - iii. Trenton mayor Joseph Wood is reported to have purchased six of these paintings to display in his Bloomsbury Court mansion on the Delaware
 - iv. Through his grandson Edward Stokes, the paintings (only ever identified as "the six Bonaparte paintings") eventually made their way to Morristown and then finally back to Trenton in 1939
 - b. **Trenton Authors & Imprints Collection**
 - i. Reorganized and inventoried in preparation for the Book Fair on April 24th
 - ii. Several sub-categories were created from the main Authors collection (Trenton Settings, Characters, Topics; Published in Trenton; Autographed, Inscribed to the Library)
 - iii. Bibliography of the circulating Local Authors collection was created

- iv. Appropriate books for these collections were purchased from the authors in attendance
 - v. Eight people visited the room during the event
 - c. **First Fridays**
 - i. Artists will feature in the Mezzanine Gallery during the events
 - ii. Artists have been scheduled for the May and June events
 - iii. Liz Aubrey volunteered to work on group shows for future months
9. **FINANCES/FUNDING**
- a. **Cities and Counties for Fines and Fee Justice**
 - i. Director and Mayor's Delegate completing application due at end of May
 - ii. Developing various outreach and engagement opportunities
 - b. **Isles**
 - i. Able to procure grant funding for projects in the Old Trenton Neighborhood
 - ii. After discussing Library needs, confident that submissions for roof replacement and masonry restoration will be eligible
 - iii. Moving forward with seeking these funds for these projects
 - iv. Was submitted on 5/4, with a final decision coming in June
 - c. **Trenton Historical Society**
 - i. Provided a letter of support to submit with Humanities grant application
 - ii. Grant will help fund partnership between TFPL and ArtWorks

VIII. Action Items

A. Bill List

- 1. (see "TFPL May 2022 Unpaid Bills")
- 2. Approval of Bill List
 - a. Deniece Johnson made the motion to approve the May bill list
 - b. Lavern Rice seconded the approval of the bill list
 - c. **Motion passes 5-0**

IX. Old Business

A. HVAC Update

- 1. Scheduled to complete on May 17
- 2. Engineer did a walkthrough to determine outstanding items
- 3. There will be a further delay to repair
- 4. Meeting on Monday to determine path forward with this construction company

B. Library Construction Bond – Letter of Certification completed

- 1. Mayor's Office provided letter to complete the process

C. CDBG Ramp & Doors

- 1. CCH reached out for approval on services to be rendered by engineers
- 2. Library will be reimbursed by City of Trenton

X. New Business

- A. Board of Trustees Nominations
 - 1. Board President
 - a. Patricia Smith nominated Elizabeth Yull
 - b. Rick Kavin seconded the nomination
 - 2. Treasurer
 - a. Patricia Smith nominated Crystal Smith
 - b. Rick Kavin seconded the nomination
 - 3. Secretary
 - a. Patricia Smith nominated Rick Kavin
 - b. Lavern Rice seconded the nomination
 - 4. **Nominations to be voted upon at the June meeting**

XI. Announcements

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, June 9, 2022, beginning at 6:00 pm
- B. Lavern inquired how to reserve a Community Room
 - 1. Typically, reservations are made online, but that has not been re-opened since COVID
 - 2. Once the HVAC project is over, the online form will return
 - 3. Interested parties can contact the Director directly
- C. First Fridays returning May 6 – new art exhibit in the Reading Room by Zoe Lavatelli (*The Death Arc of Divine Fauna*)
- D. June 11th – multiple activities in Trenton, including at TFPL
 - 1. 120th Anniversary Block Party (11am-3pm at TFPL)
 - 2. Mill Hill Garden Tour (noon-5pm)

XII. Executive Session (if required)

- A. *(none required)*

XIII. Adjournment

- A. Lavern Rice makes a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavin
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary