



The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
June 12, 2022 at 6:00pm

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)

I. Call to Order

A. Elizabeth Yull, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 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

B. Not Present: James Earle

IV. Agenda Approval

A. Liz noted that there was a typo – “Electrician” should read as “Election”

B. Deniece Johnson made the motion to approve the June 2022 agenda

C. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the agenda

D. **Motion passes 6-0**

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Rick noted two amendments:

1. In Section VII (“Presentations”), “facilities and utilities expenses” were erroneously listed as both over and under budget. Those expenses were under budget.
2. Also in Section VII, under the Director’s Report in Subsection VII(D)-5 (“Continuing Education & Meetings”), the names of the two conferences were re-formatted in **bold** for continuity with the rest of the document.

- B. Lavern Rice made the motion to approve the minutes from the May 2022 Board meeting with the above corrections
- C. Deniece Johnson seconded the motion
- D. **Motion passes 6-0**

VI. Open Public Address

- A. Pat Tumulty noted that the new newsletter looks beautiful!

VII. Presentations

- A. Financials *(presented by Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA)*
 - 1. *(see "May 2022 financial reports" from Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA)*
 - 2. **Total fund balance** (as of May 31, 2022) was approx. **\$2.5M**
 - a. \$1.2M in cash/investments, of which \$242,000 is in TFPL's operating checking account
 - b. This is a \$45,000 increase 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
 - c. Roughly \$125,000 of various trust funds and trust fund income. Approximately \$243,000 was released from restriction during the period to cover construction-related expenditures.
 - 3. **Grant revenue, personnel expenses, Library materials and programming expenses, audit expenses, technology hardware and software, and planned expenditures from surplus for the Reading Room/tech upgrades 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 \$122,000, as TFPL does not budget for private grants
 - 7. **Personnel expenses** over budget by \$3,000 due to a third regular payroll occurring in March
 - 8. **Library materials and programming expenses** are over budget by \$20,000 due to timing of large purchases for the collection
 - 9. **Facilities and utilities expenses** are under budget by \$70,000 due to repairs on the HVAC offset by an insurance check received for \$76,000
 - 10. **Security** is under budget by \$11,000 due to timing of submission of the May 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
 - 12. **Technology hardware and software** is over budget by \$18,000 due to timing of subscription invoices compared to the previous year.

13. **Planned expenditures from surplus for the reading room and tech upgrades** are over budget by \$685,000 due to a delay in the timing of the project which was budgeted for in a prior fiscal period
 14. **Net income** (as of May 31, 2022) was a deficit of approximately \$265,000. This compares to a budgeted surplus of \$24,000 for the period, which is a negative variance of \$289,000. Excluding the Reading Room and technology upgrades offset by trust funds released, there is a positive variance against the operating budget of \$153,000, which is primarily due to grants received that were not budgeted and the receipt of the insurance reimbursement for the HVAC repairs.
- B. PNC Brokerage Account Investment Options (*presented via Microsoft Teams by Alexander Winter & Ann C. Zawarkay*)
1. Roughly \$700,000 in account to put into investments
 2. Three pots of money with low-risk investments with higher returns than status quo (~\$200,000+ in each):
 - a. 18-month investment, guaranteed return of 2-2.5%
 - b. Min. three-year investment, roughly 3.2% return
 - i. Can get a return of premium if need arises
 - ii. May withdraw 10% without penalty
 - c. Two-year investment with mid-range returns
 3. Board member Lavern Rice, who works in finance, noted that this arrangement was similar to our past situation and endorsed the plan
 4. **Crystal Smith made a motion to follow the recommendations of Alex Winter of PNC Bank**
 - a. **Lavern Rice seconded the motion**
 - b. **Motion passes 6-0**
- C. Personnel Report (*presented by Director Rebecca FrancoMartin*)
1. New Adult Services Librarian was hired and began working at TFPL in June
- D. Friends of TFPL (*presented by Pat Tumulty*)
1. Friends are supporting the 120th Anniversary Block Party
 - a. Donating \$250 for the event
 - b. Will be providing volunteers for the event
 - c. Seeking to solicit new members for the Friends both at the Block Party and during the City's Juneteenth events
 2. Available to distribute books, conduct outreach, etc., especially for programs like Summer Reading
- E. Director's Report (*presented by Director Rebecca FrancoMartin*)
1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**
 - a. **African American Cultural Collaborative of Mercer County**
 - i. Hosting Juneteenth event in Mill Hill Park
 - ii. TFPL staff working with AACC and will attend event
 - iii. New books to be given to children/families thanks to the RWJ donation to the Library
 - iv. Press event held today (6/9) on the steps of the Library
 - b. **ArtWorks**
 - i. Ongoing collaboration for past few months
 - ii. Humanities grant submitted for an art and education collaboration
 - iii. Executive Director no longer with ArtWorks

- iv. If grant is received, will have to be discussed with the ArtWorks Board
 - c. **Central Jersey Health Consortium**
 - i. Hosted a Rose Tea Party to bring awareness to the lactation resources available to families in the Trenton area
 - ii. Youth Services Librarian Eboni Love represented TFPL at the event to highlight the Mamava and Children's Room
2. **MARKETING/PUBLIC RELATIONS**
- a. All staff received **new business cards** with new TFPL logo
 - b. **Summer newsletter** created and professionally printed for distribution within the community – it contains all events
3. **BUILDING & TECHNOLOGY**
- a. **Maestro**
 - i. City IT company, Maestro, has a new coordinator who visited the Library with TFPL's IT technician for a walkthrough
 - ii. At this time, TFPL is at a standstill with planned projects and receiving assistance only with immediate technical issues
 - b. **Library Website**
 - i. Two new pages added: GED Services and Summer Reading
4. **STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**
- a. Interviews completed and roles filled for both the Adult Services Librarian and the part-time Library Associate for Trentoniana
5. **CONTINUING EDUCATION & MEETINGS**
- a. **Isles – GED and Pre-GED Courses** provided at the Library
 - i. Partnership will allow Isles patrons to study for their test and Isles will procure the testing
 - b. **120th Block Party**
 - i. Director and Supervising Librarian Shanshan Ming met with various community partners to discuss logistics for the June 11th event
 - c. **NJLA Conference**
 - i. Archivist Laura Poll and Supervising Librarian Shanshan Ming attend the NJLA Conference
 - ii. Laura presented on the topic of Zines and shared Zines created by TFPL
6. **LIBRARY SERVICES**
- a. **First Friday (May)**
 - i. Artist Zoe Lavatelli's "Death of Ark of Divine Fauna" was showcased in the Mezzanine Gallery
 - ii. 18 patrons visited the exhibit despite inclement weather
 - b. **Programming**
 - i. 331 patrons participated in Youth Services programming
 - ii. 246 patrons participated in Adult Services programming
 - c. **Library Visits**
 - i. 5,372 patrons visited the Library in May
 - ii. This is the third month in a row with more than 5,000 visitors

7. **COLLECTIONS & MATERIALS**
 - a. **American Library Association**
 - i. Order placed with ALA to curate a professional collection of books for staff
 - b. **Fiction Collection**
 - i. Staff currently weeding fiction collection in Reading Room to create space and ensure the collection is up to date
 - c. **Circulation**
 - i. Circulation of physical materials increased by 8% in May
 - ii. This is due in large part to concerted staff efforts across departments to showcase and promote books in creative ways
 - d. **Database Usage**
 - i. Combined usage of databases was 4,266
 - ii. Two most frequently used databases were Newsbank and World Book Online
8. **TRENTONIANA**
 - a. **“Voices and Votes: Democracy in America”**
 - i. Traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian Institute hosted at the West Windsor campus of MCCC
 - ii. Items related to the exhibit, such as a voting box, were loaned to MCCC to display as an extension of the exhibit
 - b. **“Fused Glass & Mixed Media”**
 - i. New installation in Mezzanine Gallery for month of June by artist Barry Hantman
 - c. **Zines**
 - i. Instagram account now has 262 followers
 - ii. Display of Library’s history zines dropped off at the Out-of-Step store at the Trenton Farmers Market
9. **FINANCES/FUNDING**
 - a. **Dollar General Grant**
 - i. \$3,000 grant awarded to TFPL by Dollar General to support youth summer reading
 - ii. Grant will help pay for programming, prizes, and STEAM events

VIII. Action Items

A. Bill List

1. (see “TFPL June 2022 Unpaid Bills”)
2. Approval of Bill List
 - a. Deniece Johnson made the motion to approve the June bill list
 - b. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the bill list
 - c. **Motion passes 6-0**

IX. Old Business

A. Election

1. Nominations from May 2022 Board meeting:
 - a. Board President: Elizabeth Yull
 - b. Treasurer: Crystal Smith
 - c. Secretary: Rick Kavin

2. Board President Elizabeth Yull solicited additional nominations from the Board for each position, with none put forth
 3. **The nominations were voted upon as a slate with no objections**
 4. Effective July 1, 2022, Elizabeth Yull, Crystal Smith, and Rick Kavin will serve as Board President, Treasurer, and Secretary, respectively
- B. HVAC
1. Most of the outstanding issues, including debris and refuse left behind, have been addressed
 2. Vendor must return to finish work related to ducts and start the condenser unit
- C. CDBG – Accessible Ramp & Doors
1. Five requests for bid documents thus far
 2. Submission date is June 24
 3. While ramp is under construction, anyone requiring accessible access may use staff door and elevator
- D. Children’s Room
1. New carpet installed
 2. Sheetrock installed but not yet sanded for bottom portion of wall that was damaged
- E. 120th Anniversary Block Party (11am-3pm this Saturday, June 11th)
1. Staff has met to discuss logistics, including a potential plan for rain (event will still be held, but indoors if necessary)

X. New Business

- A. Discontinuation of Zoom option for Board meetings
1. As no members of the public have attended via Zoom, meetings will be held exclusively in person
 2. Public is welcome to attend in person
 3. Ann will return to in-person attendance
- B. Locked Restroom Policy
1. Director distributed policy via email
 2. Bathrooms were previously locked during COVID, but have been unlocked for some time
 3. Policy to be instituted only if and when necessary
 4. Pat Smith made a motion to adopt the ‘Locked Restroom’ policy as distributed by the Director
 - a. Crystal Smith seconded the motion
 - b. **Motion passes 5-0-1 with Deniece Johnson abstaining**
- C. Budget – Approve Amendments
1. Amendment will allow budget to reflect correct funding
 2. Pat Smith made a motion to amend the budget as distributed by the Director
 - a. Crystal Smith second the motion
 - b. **Motion passes 6-0**
- D. ALA Expenses
1. Director will ask Ann to transfer an additional \$2,500 to petty cash to allow for expenditures as other funds were used for the Block Party and other necessary expenses
 2. Crystal Smith made a motion to approve the transfer as noted above
 - a. Lavern Rice seconded the motion

b. Motion passes 6-0

E. Bylaws

1. Director and Mayor's Delegate worked to update the bylaws, which had not been updated since 1997
2. Revisions based on 1997 version of bylaws, a set of sample bylaws from the NJLA, and some current versions from other NJ libraries
3. Vote on revisions to take place at July meeting after Board review

F. Branch Libraries

1. Liz raised the issue of the renovations to the East Trenton and Briggs Libraries
2. There is a need to remind the administration, ETC, and other stakeholders about the legal definitions and requirements of a proper "library"
3. Both the Director and Board President have spoken with ETC staff, administration officials, and others regarding the costs and requirements of a "library"
4. TFPL cannot operate a branch library based on current funding
5. The East Trenton Library project, for example, can be termed a "Reading Room," "Community Center," etc.
6. The Mayor's Delegate will speak with Mr. Andrew Bobbitt, and the Board President and Director will draft a formal memo detailing the issues to the administration

XI. Announcements

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, July 14, 2022, beginning at 6:00 pm
- B. Library "shelf-sitter" carvings available for \$20 – proceeds will go toward the Trentoniana Room

XII. Executive Session

- A. Executive Session entered at 6:58
- B. Executive Session ended at 7:05

XIII. Adjournment

- A. Elizabeth Yull made a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavin
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary