



**The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
Thursday, November 10, 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*)

Library Personnel: 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, Patricia Smith, and Rick Kavin

B. Not Present: Deniece Johnson, Lavern Rice, and James Earle

IV. Agenda Approval

A. There was one change, to change the name of "Budget 2022" to "Budget 2023" and also to table it until December

B. Pat Smith made the motion to approve the November 2022 agenda with the noted change

C. Crystal Smith seconded the approval of the agenda

D. **Motion passes 4-0**

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Pat Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the October 2022 Board meeting

B. Crystal Smith seconded the motion

C. **Motion passes 4-0**

VI. Open Public Address

A. (*no public comment*)

VII. Presentations

A. Financials *(presented by Board President Elizabeth Yull as Ann is on vacation)*

1. *(see "October 2022 Memo" from Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*
2. **Total fund balance** (as of October 31, 2022) was approx. **\$2.3M**
 - a. \$886,000 in cash/investments, of which \$65,000 is in TFPL's operating checking account
 - b. This is a \$63,000 decrease from previous month due to operating activity
 - c. The next quarterly appropriation from the City is anticipated to arrive on or around November 15
 - d. Roughly \$125,000 of various trust funds and trust fund income has been designated for various purposes. Approximately \$243,000 was released from restriction during the period to cover construction-related expenditures.
3. **Grant revenue and donations, Library materials and programming expenses, audit expenses, and technology hardware and software were over budget**
4. **Personnel expenses, facilities and utilities expenses, security expenses, legal fees, and planned expenditures from surplus for the Reading Room/tech upgrades 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 and donations** over budget by \$141,000, as TFPL does not budget for private grants.
7. **Personnel expenses** under budget by \$122,000 due to vacancies in budgeted positions, combined with the second payroll register in October not having been received at the time Ann prepared this report
8. **Library materials and programming expenses** are over budget by \$18,000 due to timing of large purchases for the collection and pop-up library expenses covered by a grant
9. **Facilities and utilities expenses** are under budget by \$60,000 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 October invoice. The invoices are typically billed a month late.
11. **Legal fees** are under budget by \$11,000 due to fewer issues requiring legal consultation.
12. **Audit expense** is over budget by \$10,000 due to the additional audit being performed for the six months ending December 31, 2021
13. **Technology hardware and software** is over budget by \$17,000 due to timing of subscription invoices compared to the previous year.
14. **Planned expenditures from surplus for the reading room and tech upgrades** are under budget by \$461,000. The budget was amended to incorporate unspent budget amounts approved in prior years for the related projects into the current year budget. The revised budget amounts for the calendar year were spread evenly over twelve months.
15. **Net income** (as of October 31, 2022) was a deficit of approximately \$507,000. This compares to a budgeted deficit of \$1,396,000 for the period, which is a positive variance of \$889,000. Excluding the Reading Room and technology upgrades offset by trust funds released, there is a

positive variance against the operating budget of \$186,000, which is primarily due to grants received that were not budgeted and the receipt of the insurance reimbursement for the HVAC repairs.

16. **Motion to Accept the Financial Report**

- a. Motion made by Patricia Smith
- b. Motion seconded by Crystal Smith
- c. **Motion passes 4-0**

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

1. One building maintenance worker has departed

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

1. Ntozake Shange Birthday Celebration
 - a. Hosted birthday celebration event with Todd Evans in honor of Ntozake Shange
 - b. Local poets presented Shange's work along with their own
 - c. The event was well-attended and well-received
 - d. Pat hopes to make it an annual event
 - e. Event idea began via Trentoniana Room's Zine on Shange and her work
2. December Local Author Event
 - a. Book presentations, tabling, etc.
 - b. Will likely request a \$10 donation from each participating author
3. January Ernie Kovacs Birthday Celebration
 - a. May partner with Passage Theatre

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

1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

- a. **R.I.S.E. Center**
 - i. Director, Youth Services Supervisor, and head of Young Adult Services visited RISE prior to its opening to discuss partnerships
 - ii. Will work to provide kids with opportunities to obtain Library Cards and other resources
 - iii. Rick inquired about a book cart for the Center – will coordinate with Adira
- b. **Certificates of Appreciate** mailed to community partners with several recipients sharing them on social media
- c. **Patriots Week**
 - i. TDA no longer hosting/running Patriots Week
 - ii. Meetings being held weekly with a number of community organizations to ensure there are activities throughout the week
 - iii. Patriots Week will return in its full form in 2023

2. **MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- a. **Social Media**
 - i. More than 17,000 views across the various outlets
 - ii. Since May, there has been a 20% increase in Facebook views, 600% increase on Instagram, and 400% increase on Twitter
 - iii. Total engagement is highest on Instagram
 - iv. New Adult Services Librarian Robert is spearheading the social media efforts

- b. **Outreach**
 - i. October outreaches include TASK, McCorristin and Pellettieri senior living homes, and the Mercer County Fall Festival
 - ii. Providing digital access and resources
- 3. **BUILDING & TECHNOLOGY**
 - a. **Mental Health Calls**
 - i. Several patrons struggling with mental health issues required staff to call for assistance from TPD
 - ii. All matters were settled calmly and peacefully
 - iii. TPD was able to obtain services for the patrons
 - b. **The Library Corporation (TLC)**
 - i. Upgrade of integrated library system (ILS) is complete
 - ii. There were some minor issues, including public access to the online catalog
 - iii. All issues have been resolved and the system is 100% operational
 - iv. Transition went smoothly
 - c. **Public Restroom Policy**
 - i. Policy approved by the Board is now in place
 - ii. Restrooms will be locked until further notice due to major issues with patrons utilizing the restrooms for other purposes
 - iii. Since the policy was implemented several weeks ago, such issues have decreased significantly or stopped altogether according to both Maintenance and Security staff
- 4. **STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**
 - a. **Vacation Time**
 - i. Staff vacation requests were approved for January through March
 - ii. Floating Holidays (FH) were set for Christmas and New Year's Day, since they fall on Sundays this year when TPFL is closed
 - b. **Security Positions**
 - i. Director conducting interviews in preparation for end of current security contract
 - ii. Two part-time security guards will be hired beginning Nov. 23rd
 - c. **Health Benefits**
 - i. Benefits for Adult Services Librarian were not put in place as expected
 - ii. Issue has been resolved with the Division of Personnel at City Hall
 - d. **NJLA Youth Services Forum**
 - i. Youth Services Supervisor and head of Teen Services attend the Forum
 - ii. Topics included storytimes, nonfiction collection development, attracting teens to the Library, and STEAM
- 5. **CONTINUING EDUCATION & MEETINGS**
 - a. **Mercer County Youth Services**

- i. Chief of MCYS toured the building in September to discuss how TFPL might partner for restorative justice programming
- ii. Second visit in October from Family Presiding Judge Rodney Thompson
- iii. Both visits were successful and will likely result in a mutually beneficial partnership

6. LIBRARY SERVICES

a. Ntozake Shange Birthday Event

- i. Hosted in partnership with Todd Evans
- ii. Local poets read a Shange poem and a poem of their choice
- iii. There were 25 attendees

b. Pop-Up Libraries

- i. TPFL will continue the program in a reshaped form
- ii. Will include a new service from Baker & Taylor called Boundless (*see attached document*)
- iii. Libraries are changing from requiring devices and an app to a scannable QR code
- iv. Pop-up libraries will move to new locations via partnership with Trenton Public Schools
- v. Will begin in January, and locations will be announced in conjunction with Baker & Taylor and TPS

c. Milk Down Mondays

- i. Hosted by Central Jersey Health Consortium on the last Monday of each month at TFPL
- ii. Last month, the session topic was Black infant mortality with eight patrons attending

d. Donnelly Homes – Street Teams Kickoff Event

- i. Library staff attended and engaged with residents
- ii. Staff shared flyers, discussed TFPL services and resources, and distributed 85 books to children and teens

e. Halloween

- i. **Trunk-or-Treat (TPD)**
 - Staff conducted outreach at the Trenton Police Department on N. Clinton Ave
 - 1500 youth and their families served
- ii. **Library Trick-or-Treat**
 - 250 youth attendees with their caregivers

f. Program Attendance

- i. 371 patrons attended youth and teen programs (aside from Halloween)
- ii. 235 patrons attended various adult programs, including 40 attendees for the Census jobs session
- iii. 400 patrons used the wireless printing service

7. COLLECTIONS & MATERIALS

a. eLibrary NJ

- i. Renewal was signed
- ii. Price increase due to patron usage (price is scaled to use)
- iii. Average of 267 patrons use the service each month

b. Newsbank

- i. Remains the most popular database
 - ii. Access to more than 3,000 newspapers
 - iii. Average of 1,253 users per month
 - c. **Collections Development**
 - i. Staff continue to spend down the collection development budget with approximately \$5,265 spent in October
 - ii. Roughly \$9,000 left to spend by the end of the year, with each Department being given certain criteria and parameters to expand particular collections
 - iii. After the weeding process, more titles are being added than deleted
 - iv. 325 titles added and 242 deleted in October
 - d. **Most Checked-Out Title**
 - i. For the second month in a row, *The 48 Laws of Power* by Robert Green was the most checked out non-fiction selection
 - ii. Published in 1998
 - iii. “Power is an integral part of our societies and lives. In *The 48 Laws of Power*, Robert Greene distills 3,000 years of history into 48 laws to help us understand how we can masterfully acquire power and avoid being manipulated or crushed by others.”
8. **FINANCES/FUNDING**
- a. **NJ Department of Health Grant**
 - i. Retracted after a meeting to discuss the grant guidelines
 - ii. Criteria were much more specific than had been previously described
 - iii. After discussion with DOH staff, it was decided that the grant would not be a good fit for TFPL
 - b. **American Rescue Plan Grant**
 - i. Final ARP grant reports submitted for three grants totaling \$60,000
 - c. **Municipal Funding**
 - i. Though there was a significant increase in the ⅓ mill for the City of Trenton this year, it does not exceed the \$2M the City currently provides annually
 - ii. Unlikely there will be an increase in funding for the Library
9. **TRENTONIANA**
- a. **Patronage**
 - i. Busy month in October
 - ii. 72 total visitors and inquiries
 - iii. Group of 12 visiting Trenton dropped in at the Library
 - b. **Meetings & Community Partners**
 - i. Archivist attended meetings with the Trenton Historical Society and NJLA History along with two virtual meetings
 - ii. Other engagements included Archives & History Day at Brookdale Community College, the rededication of the “Shaky Bridge,” and Rahway Public Library to discuss organizing their own local history room
 - c. **Volunteers**

- i. There are now four volunteers working in Trentoniana
- ii. This is in addition to the part-time Library Associate working with Trentoniana

d. **Art Gallery**

- i. Archivist met with Adult Services Librarian to discuss Art Gallery exhibits and supplies
- ii. Adult Services Librarian will take over Gallery duties

VIII. Action Items

A. Bill List

- 1. (*see "TFPL November 2022 Unpaid Bills"*)
- 2. Approval of Bill List
 - a. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the November bill list
 - b. Rick Kavin seconded the approval of the bill list
 - c. **Motion passes 4-0**

IX. Old Business

A. HVAC

- 1. The project is COMPLETE at long last
- 2. Final inspections completed on Thursday (11/3)
- 3. Final invoice will be paid in December

B. Strategic Plan

- 1. Rebecca circulated an agenda that was used for a meeting between the Director, Board President, and Deniece (*see attachment*)
- 2. Survey to be sent out in January
- 3. Staff to do mind-map/SWAT analysis in Jan/Feb
- 4. Input to be drawn from community, staff, and other stakeholders to update Mission and Vision statements

X. New Business

- A. ~~Budget 2022~~ Budget 2023 (*tabled until December meeting*)
- B. Revised Staff Manual (*tabled until December meeting until final version is drawn up*)

XI. Announcements

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, December 8, 2022, beginning at 6:00 pm

XII. Executive Session (*if required*)

- A. Executive Session entered at 6:56pm
- B. Executive Session exited at 6:59pm

XIII. Adjournment

- A. Elizabeth Yull makes a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavin
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary

*Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
November 10, 2022*