



The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
December 8, 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, Deniece Johnson, Patricia Smith, Lavern Rice, and Rick Kavin

B. Not Present: James Earle

IV. Agenda Approval

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

B. Deniece Johnson seconded the approval of the agenda

C. **Motion passes 6-0**

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the November 2022 Board meeting

B. Pat Smith seconded the motion

C. **Motion passes 4-0-2 with Lavern Rice and Deniece Johnson abstaining due to absence at the previous meeting**

VI. Open Public Address

A. No members of the public present

B. (*no public comment*)

VII. Presentations

A. Financials *(presented by Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA)*

1. *(see “November 2022 financial reports” from Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA)*
2. **Total fund balance** (as of November 30, 2022) was approx. **\$2.5M**
 - a. \$1.2M in cash/investments, of which \$393,000 is in TFPL’s operating checking account
 - b. This is a \$328,000 increase from previous month due to operating activity
 - c. 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, legal fees, audit expenses, and technology hardware and software were over budget**
4. **Personnel expenses, facilities and utilities expenses, security expenses, 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 \$150,000, as TFPL does not budget for private grants. Some grants due come with associated costs (i.e. Pop-Up Libraries), but it is still added revenue that was not previously budgeted.
7. **Personnel expenses** under budget by \$103,000 due to vacancies in budgeted positions
8. **Library materials and programming expenses** are over budget by \$21,000 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 \$59,000 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 November invoice. The invoices are typically billed a month late, though this month about half was billed early.
11. **Legal fees** are over budget by \$9,000 due to an ongoing matter – the bill was expected, but this has pushed it into a deficit.
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 \$20,000 due to timing of subscription invoices compared to the previous year and some two-year renewals coming due and the shift to a calendar-year budget.
14. **Planned expenditures from surplus for the Reading Room and tech upgrades** are under budget by \$582,000. 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 November 30, 2022) was a deficit of approximately \$280,000. This compares to a budgeted deficit of \$1,341,000 for the

period, which is a positive variance of \$1,061,000. Excluding the Reading Room and technology upgrades offset by trust funds released, there is a positive variance against the operating budget of \$237,000, which is primarily due to grants received that were not budgeted and the receipt of the insurance reimbursement for the HVAC repairs. Deficit will turn positive as year end approaches and the Reading Room variance is reconciled.

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

1. Five new employees have been hired at TFPL
2. Two part-time maintenance workers were hired
3. Three part-time security guards were hired, as the previous security contract ended in November

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

1. **Holiday “Author Book Sale”** to be held at TFPL on Saturday, December 11 from 1-4pm. Many authors from the previous event will return along with some newcomers. The event is being presented in partnership with Classics Books.
2. Roughly twenty individuals signed up to be “Friends”
3. The Friends are supporting the Holiday Giveaway at the Library with a donation of \$300
4. The Friends are supporting holiday ornaments, coasters, etc. being sold through Trentoniana and donated \$200 for supplies
5. Gift wrapping to occur Tuesday and Thursday (12/13 and 12/15) for the Holiday Giveaway in partnership with the Youth Services Staff

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

1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

a. **Holiday Gift Giveaway**

- i. Youth Services received a \$400 donation from the **Trenton Police Department’s PBA** and a \$300 donation from the **Friends of the TFPL** to help support the Holiday Gift Giveaway program
- ii. More than ~~400~~ 130 requests have been received this year
- iii. This is the fifth occurrence of this annual event
- iv. Being run by the Youth Services staff

b. The **Friends** also donated \$200 to Trentoniana for holiday cards and ornaments

c. **Department of Children and Families**

- i. Resource Development Specialist visited TFPL with a colleague from the **Division of Child Protection and Permanency**
- ii. They toured the Library to determine how social workers might utilize the space for family visits
- iii. Currently, social workers meet with clients of all ages at TFPL
- iv. The Children’s Room is used for family visits to provide a safe, fun experience during visitations

2. **MARKETING**

a. **Patriots Week**

- i. Marketing materials created by Library staff in partnership with the Patriots Week Committee

- ii. 1000 postcards are being printed and will be distributed with the Library as the point of contact for the Committee
 - iii. This opportunity is being funded by the Trenton Downtown Association (TDA)
3. **BUILDING & TECHNOLOGY**
- a. **Roof Repair/Computer Lab**
 - i. The seal to the leaking pipe on the roof has been replaced
 - ii. During the repairs impacting the Computer Lab, a hole was made in the wall
 - iii. The City will repair the hole, and then TFPL Maintenance will repair the water damage to the molding and repaint the area so the Lab may reopen for services
 - b. **New tiles** will be installed in the children's bathroom and elevators to beautify the spaces and to prevent slips and falls
 - c. **Antivirus software** is installed and is up-to-date on the servers and all PCs
 - d. **Heat/Boiler**
 - i. The heat was not working properly during the last week of November
 - ii. The boiler, which was *not* part of the HVAC project, needed a repair to the pilot apparatus and the technician found an issue with a seal that will eventually need to be replaced, as it is deteriorating
 - iii. The repairs will be held until after the winter season to avoid losing heat during the cold months, as the repair will take several weeks
 - iv. This boiler was new compared to the other components so was not replaced during the HVAC project
 - e. **Children's Room Pump**
 - i. The Children's Room restroom pump to remove waste stopped working and the problem has been diagnosed
 - ii. There is a computer that operates the pump and it needs to be replaced
 - iii. It is on order and the repair will be completed as soon as it comes in
 - iv. This repair is covered under warranty, so the part is covered (though labor will have to be paid)
 - f. **Mural** to be installed by Leon Rainbow in the Gallery area
 - i. The mural will be grayscale to avoid distracting from displayed art
 - ii. The mural will be muted, but will acknowledge the "artsy" focus of the space
 - iii. Signs will also be installed to direct patrons to the Art Gallery
4. **STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**
- a. **Staff Appreciation Day**
 - i. All staff participated at Colonial Bowling on 11/30
 - ii. Event was a huge success that allowed staff to bond in a recreational setting while decompressing and destressing

- iii. Moving forward, there will be additional opportunities to develop as a team that are not solely dedicated to Library content and integrate a balance of professional development and other bonding
 - iv. Staff had a good time, enjoyed working and hanging out together, and expressed the desire for similar events
5. **CONTINUING EDUCATION & MEETINGS**
- a. **Library Construction Bond**
 - i. Director will meet with the architect with Clark Caton Hintz assigned to the LCB renovation, roof, and masonry project
 - ii. This is a new architect and the previous architect trained him on the project
 - iii. Bid will likely go out in January for needed work
 - iv. Roof will likely be done first, while masonry project may wait until summer
6. **LIBRARY SERVICES**
- a. **Library Cards**
 - i. Access and sign-ups for Library Cards remains high
 - ii. 291 additional patrons updated or applied for a new Library Card in November
 - iii. Increase attributed both to increased patronage and new card/logo design
 - b. **Computer Class**
 - i. The group computer class had 17 attendees in November
 - ii. Attendance has grown significantly over the last several months
 - iii. This is in addition to Christian's one-on-one tutoring, and he has about 30 individual students
 - c. **ESL Class**
 - i. Supervising Librarian working to find a new instructor for ESL classes through Princeton University
 - ii. The Library's contact there is Duncan Harrison
 - iii. No classes taking place currently until a new instructor is found
 - iv. Previous instructors from the Mormon Church, who returned following the COVID closure and mitigation measures, have seemingly ghosted the Library
 - v. Liz suggested the organization "El Centro" at Sacred Heart
 - d. **Library Visits**
 - i. Both Library visits and computer usage decreased slightly in November, which is typical as the weather gets colder and the holidays approach
 - ii. There were 5,270 total visits in November
 - e. **Children's Room Tutoring**
 - i. Beginning in January 2023, tutoring will begin in the Children's Room on Saturdays
 - ii. A high-school aged Girl Scout is providing tutoring for her Star Project, which typically runs through the academic year and ends in June

- iii. Tutoring will focus on reading, writing, and comprehension
 - iv. Tutoring for all ages is well-attended during weekend events
 - f. **Planned Parenthood**
 - i. Presented the “Spill the T.E.A.” program for young adults
 - ii. Six teens attended the presentation
 - iii. This was part of the I Am Trenton grant, which includes monthly events, seminars, etc. for teens
 - g. **Disability Rights of New Jersey**
 - i. Melissa Zeidler and DRNJ visited the Library to plan a special education law clinic
 - ii. This will be held in March 2023
 - iii. This is also a part of the I Am Trenton grant
7. **COLLECTIONS & MATERIALS**
- a. **Circulation Committee**
 - i. Circulation Committee to be formed in January 2023 with the goal of continuing to increase circulation
 - ii. Circulation of physical materials continues to hover around 2,000/month
 - iii. Circulation is expected to increase as TFPL continues to build and improve its collections
 - iv. Increases seen after varied displays, new materials, etc.
8. **FINANCES/FUNDING**
- a. **American Rescue Plan Grant’s** second installment was received
 - b. **FEMA Grant**
 - i. Reimbursement has not yet been received
 - ii. TFPL will receive roughly \$16,000
 - iii. TFPL has registered and created an account with NJ Start
 - iv. FEMA informed the Director that check will go out in the next round
 - c. **\$5000 Donation** received from Isles for art programming and supplies
 - d. **City Appropriation** was direct deposited, and a check was received for surplus funds totaling \$63,628.63
9. **TRENTONIANA**
- a. **Paid Intern** began working with the Archivist on 11/16 to organize and inventory the *Trentonian* newspapers filed in archive boxes in the stacks. Unfortunately, he has a broken ankle and does not have reliable transportation, so he will no longer be able to participate.
 - b. **Zines**
 - i. The Zine Instagram account has 359 followers
 - ii. A “Zine Fest” is being planned for the end of July
 - iii. Young Adult Librarian and Archivist collaborating to incorporate the teens into the Zines

VIII. Action Items

A. Bill List

- 1. (see “TFPL December 2022 Unpaid Bills”)
- 2. Approval of Bill List

- a. Lavern Rice made the motion to approve the December bill list
- b. Deniece Johnson seconded the approval of the bill list
- c. **Motion passes 6-0**

IX. Old Business

A. Strategic Plan

1. Draft plan distributed to Board by Director
2. Shanshan and Director creating survey to be distributed in January
3. Strategic Plan Committee being created amongst staff, who will in turn collaborate with the Board
4. Community meetings planned

B. Budget 2023

1. Director will clarify with Ann on line item 4000
2. Line item 8011 increased due to higher rate of purchases to accommodate demand for the music collection in the previous year
3. Deficit is budgeted to account for increasing costs as well as preparation to meet Census requirements with increased population of Trenton.
 - a. As the City population is now greater than 90,000, TFPL must have seven professionals and a total equivalent of 24 full time employees.
 - b. Director will engage new members of City Council regarding budget and other means of mitigating costs
 - c. Pat Tumulty (former NJLA President) explained the rationale of the NJ state personnel standards tied to population, which concern staff, materials, and other resources that must be available to patrons.
4. Lavern asked why fees (line 5080: Banking and Financial Fees) were being paid, as most banks allow for the waiving of fees with certain balance levels. Director will speak with banks to determine if the fees can be removed.
5. Crystal suggested increasing programming expenses due to both need and demand by patrons, as well as the goals of the Library generally. Director also noted that grants are not reflected in the budget, which typically fund much of the Library programming. (For example, the most recent \$20,000 grant received by the Library was for adult programming.
6. Motion to Crystal made the motion to approve the 2023 TFPL Budget
 - a. Lavern Rice made the motion to approve the 2023 TFPL Budget
 - b. **Motion passes 6-0**

C. Revised Staff Manual

1. Updated to reflect changes in policies, procedures, technology, etc.
2. Increased section on Diversity & Inclusion
3. Re-organized for ease of readability and navigation
4. Drawn from previous Manual, updated union contract, and state and national resources
5. This will be reviewed by the attorney after completion
6. Guides staff expectations and responsibility as well as dress code, ethics, discipline, vacation, harassment, etc.
7. Staff will sign that they have read and reviewed the document
8. Applies to staff, volunteers, and other representatives of the Library

X. New Business

A. Financial Disclosure

1. If Board members have not completed the Disclosure form, please reach out to City Clerk Brandon Garcia at clerk@trentonnj.org
2. Rick will redistribute the website and instructions to the Board (and hit back the Clerk for his own pin number, which the Clerk has not provided)

XI. Announcements

A. Liz presented two hat/wig stands by Stengl Pottery

1. One was found in an antique shop and another in an online auction
2. Both models are female and cost roughly \$300 each, though male models are \$15,000-\$25,000
3. They are named Della and June

B. Happy Board Birthdays to Lavern Rice and Director Rebecca Franco-Martin in January! (And Pat Tumulty, too!)

C. Liz thanked the Board for a productive and wonderful 2022!

D. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, January 12, 2023, beginning at 6:00 pm

XII. Executive Session (if required)

A. *(none required)*

XIII. Adjournment

A. Deniece Johnson makes a motion to adjourn

B. **There were no objections**

C. Meeting adjourned at 6:59pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavin

TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary