



**The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees  
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608  
April 13, 2023 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:** Crystal Feliciano (Not in Attendance)

**Library Personnel:** Rebecca FrancoMartin (Director)

**I. Call to Order**

A. Elizabeth Yull, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:03 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, and Patricia Smith

B. Not Present: Lavern Rice, Rick Kavin, and James Earle

**IV. Agenda Approval**

A. Deniece Johnson made the motion to approve the April 2023 agenda

B. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the agenda

C. **Motion passes 4-0**

**V. Approval of Minutes**

A. Rick Kavin made one correction to the March 2023 meeting minutes *in absentia*, correcting item VII(A)4 to clarify that the listed expenses were under budget

B. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the March 2023 Board meeting with the above amendment

C. Deniece Johnson seconded the motion

D. **Motion passes 4-0**

**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 "April 2023 financial reports" from Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA*)
2. **Total fund balance** (as of March 31, 2023) was approx. **\$2.5M**
  - a. \$1.1M in cash/investments, of which \$244,000 is in TFPL's operating checking account
  - b. This is a \$72,000 decrease from previous month due to operating activity.
  - c. TFPL is carrying approximately \$125,000 of various trust funds and trust fund income on its balance sheet that are designated for various purposes.
  - d. Request for Skelton Trust to released from restrictions.
3. **Trentoniana donations, technology hardware and software, and planned expenditures from surplus for the Reading Room/tech upgrades were over budget**
4. **Personnel expenses, facilities and utilities expenses, audit expenses, and Library materials and programming 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. **Trentoniana donations** over budget by \$1,000 and grant income is over budget by \$5,000, as TFPL does not historically budget for private grants and donations.
7. **Personnel expenses** under budget by \$5,000 due to vacancies in budgeted positions and especially lower-than-budgeted benefits costs
8. **Facilities and utilities expenses** are under budget by \$7,000.
9. **Audit expense** is under budget by \$10,000 due to timing of the start of the audit compared to prior years.
10. **Library materials and programming expenses** are under budget by \$17,000 due to timing of purchases for the collection.
11. **Technology hardware and software** is over budget by \$2,000 due to timing of subscription invoices compared to the previous year.
12. **Planned expenditures from surplus for the Reading Room and tech upgrades** are over budget by \$17,000 since the project was not budgeted for 2023. Some bills lingered into the new year even though the budget does not reflect the project in 2023.
13. **Net income** (as of March 31, 2023) was a surplus of approximately \$21,000. This compares to a budgeted deficit of \$8,000 for the period, which is a positive variance of \$29,000. Excluding the expenditures on renovations, there is a positive variance against the budget of \$46,000 from operations.

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

1. *Part-time Maintenance Worker resigned*

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

1. National Library Week: Event Poetry with Todd Evans
2. Open house April 24, 2023- Honoring community partners programming.
3. Fundraising goal \$2000.00 for Adult Programming.

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

1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS, MARKETING, and PR**

a. **Fathers & Men United**

- i. Fathers & Men hosted their annual Father-Daughter Dance
- ii. Youth Services Supervisor attended to inform attendees of services and resources available at the Library
- iii. Each child received a book for their personal home library

b. **Paul Robeson Charter School**

- i. Children's Staff attended the Parent Advisory Meeting
- ii. Staff informed families of services and resources available at the Library
- iii. Free books were distributed

c. **Dunn Middle School**

- i. Young Adult Coordinator and a bilingual Library Assistant attended an outreach event
- ii. Provided information to families
- iii. Discussed the Foreword Library Card program for teachers with Dunn Guidance Counselor (and TFPL Board Member) Crystal Smith

2. **BUILDING, MAINTENANCE, and TECHNOLOGY**

a. **Brainfuse Help Now**

- i. Database is providing learning resources for adults, such as GED prep
- ii. Labor & Literacy Lab will promote this service

3. **STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

a. **Health Benefits**

- i. Transition from state health benefits to Aetna went smoothly for staff
- ii. This is the same change that the City has made for employees generally
- iii. There were a few minor issues for retirees, but those have been resolved

4. **MEETINGS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

a. **"Legal Issues for Libraries: Spaces, Patrons, and Collections"**

- i. Webinar attended by Director
- ii. Session focused on handling the challenging or proposed banning of certain materials

b. **American Library Association Congressional Fly-In**

- i. Director attended in Washington, DC to represent libraries in NJ's 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District
- ii. There was a day-long training session for all attendees followed by a day on Capitol Hill
- iii. The goal was to provide opportunities to lobby congressional leaders for Library funding

c. **Old Trenton Neighborhood Stakeholders Meeting**

- i. Director presented to update community partners on the Library and the services and resources available to the community

5. **COLLECTIONS & MATERIALS**

a. **Inventory of Collections**

- i. Inventory currently being completed since the ILS system was updated
    - ii. Inventory will ensure collection is accurate when patrons search for materials
    - iii. Staff will remove or catalog any items not currently listed in the system
  - b. Baker & Taylor**
    - i. Book vendor is phasing out “Automatically Yours” service that automatically adds books for purchase for specific authors/series
    - ii. In its place, special carts will be shared with staff monthly to select these materials and their quantity
- 6. FINANCES/FUNDING**
  - a. Accessible Ramp & Front Door**
    - i. Library currently awaiting confirmation of additional CDBG funds
- 7. LIBRARY SERVICES**
  - a. Visits and Usage**
    - i. Patrons visits increased significantly, with 7,042 total visits in March (up from 5,650 in February)
    - ii. PC usage increased as well, with 1,793 uses in March (up from 1,508 in February)
  - b. Library Cards**
    - i. 78% increase in new and updated Library Cards from February to March
    - ii. Largely due to Paul Robeson Charter School requesting Cards for its students
    - iii. 208 of the new cards issued were for child residents
      - 170 were for Paul Robeson students
      - Remainder for were Copeland Elementary kindergarteners
  - c. Adult Programming and Events**
    - i. **Book Talk** with author Mary Beth O’Connor garnered 12 attendees
    - ii. **Fresh Art II**
      - Showcases local area artists
      - Opening reception highly successful with 25 attendees
    - iii. **Computer Lab**
      - Computer Lab repairs now complete
      - Individuals may now use PCs with webcam capabilities to take advantage of live tutoring
      - Labor & Literacy Guide will advertise this opportunity to the community
  - d. Youth Programming and Events**
    - i. **Coding Classes**
      - Provided to youth for free on Saturdays
      - Helping to prepare for upcoming “Hackathon” competition
    - ii. **Isles Environmental After School Club**

- 22 teens attended
  - Teacher from Daylight/Twilight now bringing her class to the Club
  - Club will be extended an additional five weeks
  - Club will be held in Community Room A to accommodate the growing group
- iii. **Thursday Game Nights**
    - 17 teen participants in March
  - iv. **Teen Advisory Group (TAG)**
    - Seven participants in March
    - Discussed ideas for Summer Reading programs and prizes
8. **TRENTONIANA**
- a. **Visits and Usage**
    - i. 33 patrons visited the Trentoniana Room in March
    - ii. 30 additional inquiries via email, phone, or the online research form
  - b. **Three Volunteers** continue to work with the Archivist to process maps and posters, inventory donations, and answer research inquiries
  - c. **City Records** now housed in a new area of the stacks after shifting of materials

### VIII. **Action Items**

#### A. Bill List

1. (*see "TFPL April 2023 Unpaid Bills"*)
2. Approval of Bill List
  - a. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the April bill list
  - b. Deniece Johnson seconded the approval of the bill list
  - c. **Motion passes 4-0**

### IX. **Old Business**

- A. Library Construction Bond
- B. NJSL Annual Survey

### X. **New Business**

- A. NJSL Meeting with State Librarian: "Security and Safety in Libraries"
- B. National Libraries Week – Open House on April 24, 2023
- C. Landscaping – Discussion ensued

### XI. **Announcements**

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, May 11, 2023, beginning at 6:00 pm

### XII. **Executive Session (*if required*)**

### XIII. **Adjournment**

- A. Patricia Smith and Deniece Johnson make a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 6:42 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca FrancoMartin  
TFPL Director