



**The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
July 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

Library Personnel: Sharon Shrieves-Ward (Interim Director)
Shanshan Ming (Supervising Librarian)

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 Interim Director Sharon Shrieves-Ward

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, Lavern Rice, and Rick Kavin

B. Not Present: Patricia Smith and James Earle

IV. Agenda Approval

A. Lavern Rice made the motion to approve the July 2023 agenda

B. Crystal Smith seconded the approval of the agenda

C. **Motion passes 5-0**

V. Approval of Minutes

A. June 15, 2023 Regular Meeting (Rescheduled from June 8 due to hazardous air conditions related to wildfires in Canada)

1. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 2023 Board meeting
2. Lavern Rice seconded the motion
3. **Motion passes 4-0 with Deniece Johnson abstaining due to her absence at the June 15th meeting**

- B. June 29, 2023 Emergency Meeting
 - 1. Deniece Johnson made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 29th Emergency Board meeting
 - 2. Lavern Rice seconded the motion
 - 3. **Motion passes 5-0**

VI. Open Public Address

- A. Pat Tumulty spoke of both former Director Rebecca FrancoMartin's and outgoing Supervising Librarian's dedication and hard work to the Library and to the City of Trenton. She praised the improvements they've made to the Library and wished them well with what comes next.
- B. Councilwoman Crystal Feliciano arrived and spoke of her previous conversations with Director FrancoMartin. She expressed support for additional funding for the Library (especially capital improvements), a bookmobile, and additional staff.

VII. Presentations

- A. Financials (*presented by Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA*)
 - 1. (*see "July 2023 financial reports" from Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA*)
 - 2. **Total fund balance** (as of June 30, 2023) was approx. **\$2.5M**
 - a. \$1,095,000 in cash/investments, of which \$264,000 is in TFPL's operating checking account
 - b. This is a \$41,000 decrease 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.
 - 3. **Trentoniana donations and planned expenditures from surplus for the Reading Room/tech upgrades were over budget**
 - 4. **Personnel expenses, facilities and utilities expenses, audit expenses, Library materials and programming expenses, and technology hardware and software 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 \$8,000, as TFPL does not historically budget for private grants and donations.
 - 7. **Personnel expenses** under budget by \$95,000 due to vacancies in budgeted positions and a change in the health benefit plans.
 - a. There have not yet been any health premium or prescription invoices received for May or June.
 - b. Ann is not yet sure how this will be deducted – monthly payment? Deduction? Etc.
 - c. This on-paper "surplus" will continue to widen until the bills come due.
 - 8. **Facilities and utilities expenses** are under budget by \$13,000.
 - a. This is especially good since utility bills have been high in the summer.
 - 9. **Audit expense** is under budget by \$20,000 due to timing of the start of the audit compared to prior years.

10. **Library materials and programming expenses** are under budget by \$39,000 due to timing of purchases for the collection and the use of remaining credits from Baker & Taylor from last year.
 - a. Some renewals are one-year instead of two-year, which affected the budgeted funds.
 - b. Baker & Taylor credits are exhausted, and three bills were finally paid using budgeted funds rather than the credits.
 11. **Technology hardware and software** is under budget by \$10,000 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 \$55,000 since the project was not budgeted for 2023.
 13. **Net income** (as of June 30, 2023) was a surplus of approximately \$40,000. This compares to a budgeted deficit of \$35,000 for the period, which is a positive variance of \$75,000. Excluding the expenditures on renovations, there is a positive variance against the budget of \$130,000 from operations.
 14. **PNC Account**
 - a. Roughly \$2-3k appreciation per month from PNC account
 - b. Investments will remain until the account matures
 15. **Next COT Appropriation** will be in August
- B. Personnel Report (*presented by Interim Director Sharon Shrieves-Ward*)
1. Library Associate Will Buie will be resigning
- C. Friends of TFPL (*presented by Pat Tumulty*)
1. Summer Reading being promoted for both adults and youth
 2. Pat reiterated support for a bookmobile and expressed excitement at working with Councilwoman Feliciano on fundraising for this purpose, including a Gala event
- D. Director's Report (*presented by Interim Director Sharon Shrieves-Ward*)
1. **BUILDING MAINTENANCE**
 - a. **Outdoor Lighting**
 - i. Spot/flood lights attached to the building repaired and converted to LED
 - ii. Increased lighting provided in front and rear of building as well as parking lot area
 - b. **Children's Room Bathroom Pump** has been repaired
 - c. **Reference Area Renovation**
 - i. Temporary bookshelves being rented
 - ii. Book removal/temporary relocation scheduled for July 31
 - iii. Levy Construction currently waiting on permits, with an August start date for renovations to begin (depending on availability of materials)
 - d. **Elevator**
 - i. Temporarily vinyl tile installed in elevator cab by maintenance
 - ii. New cab walls have been ordered
 - iii. Permanent floor will be installed with new wall panels
 - e. **Summer Start-Up of HVAC**
 - i. Unit has a broken fan and a burnt-out motor
 - ii. Currently operating on three-out-of-four fans

- iii. Replacement parts have been ordered
- 2. **COLLECTIONS and MATERIALS**
 - a. **Top Titles**
 - i. Adult Fiction: *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus
 - ii. Nonfiction: *BOSH! on a Budget* by Henry Firth
- 3. **STAFF and VOLUNTEERS**
 - a. **Resignations:**
 - i. Library Director Rebecca FrancoMartin resigned effective 7/7
 - ii. Supervising Librarian Shanshan Ming will resign effective tomorrow, 7/14
 - iii. Sharon Shrieves-Ward has been appointed as Interim Director and will replace Shanshan as Supervising Librarian
 - iv. The Board has begun a search for a permanent Director
 - b. Library Associate William Buie (Trentoniana) was awarded an **Equity Scholarship** from the NJLA Conference
- 4. **FINANCES and FUNDING**
 - a. The **Library budget** for 2023 has been revised with a \$200,000 increase from the City of Trenton, which will have to be approved and adopted by the Board
- 5. **LIBRARY SERVICES**
 - a. **Upcoming Events** – flyers available in Board members’ binders and online
 - b. **Children’s Home Society**
 - i. Hosted a workshop for mothers and expecting mothers
 - ii. Brought in their own parent group to meet TFPL patrons for a “mingle session”
 - c. **Summer Reading**
 - i. Official kick-off date was **June 26**
 - ii. **Book Drive** saw 648 books given away to 163 youth attendees
 - iii. **85 total participants** have signed up for Summer Reading so far
 - d. **Monthly Adult Book Club**
 - i. Five patrons participated in June
 - e. **Program Attendance**
 - i. Mercer County Utility Assistance Outreach remains highest-attended (69 attendees)
 - ii. People and Stories is second-highest (31 attendees)
 - iii. Total of 211 attendees for all June programs and events
 - f. **Juneteenth** – two major events:
 - i. Storytelling with Queen Nur
 - ii. Juneteenth Community Celebration
 - g. **Visits and Usage for June**
 - i. **Total TFPL Visits:** 7,468
 - ii. **Total PC Usage:** 1,705
 - Adult: 1,337
 - Young Adult: 68
 - Children’s: 300

- iii. **Databases**
 - Most-used were Newsbank (1,305 uses) and eLibraryNJ (328 uses)
 - iv. **Wireless Print Services** used by roughly 300 patrons
6. **TRENTONIANA**
- a. Four new items and two accessions added to the **Special Collection**
 - b. Archivist Laura Poll participated as a peer reviewer for the **New Jersey Historical Commission’s General Operating Support Grants**
 - c. **Visits and Inquiries**
 - i. Room open for **14 days** in June
 - ii. **18 patrons visited**
 - iii. **41 inquiries** via email, phone, and the online research form

VIII. Action Items

A. Bill List

- 1. (*see “TFPL July 2023 Unpaid Bills”*)
- 2. Crystal Smith informed the Board that the Purchase Request sheets were not available at the time that she signed the checks for the month of July
- 3. Approval of Bill List
 - a. Deniece Johnson made the motion to approve the July bill list
 - b. Lavern Rice seconded the approval of the bill list
 - c. **Motion passes 5-0**

IX. Old Business

- A. Library Construction Bond (*see Director’s Report 1c – “Reference Room Renovation”*)
- B. HVAC (*see Director’s Report 1e – “Summer Start-Up of HVAC”*)
- C. Elevator Renovation (*see Director’s Report 1d – “Elevator”*)

X. New Business

- A. Summer Reading (*see Director’s Report 5c – “Summer Reading”*)
- B. Budget/Approval
 - 1. Due to the additional \$200,000 appropriated by the City of Trenton to TFPL for CY2023, a revised budget must be created and approved
 - 2. Interim Director Sharon Shrieves-Ward will develop a revised budget to present to the Board for adoption at the next regularly scheduled meeting

XI. Announcements

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, August 10, 2023, beginning at 6:00 pm
- B. A press conference will take place at TFPL tomorrow (Friday, July 14th) at 10am with the Mayor and Municipal Courts Director Tonya Stewart to discuss the remote court program that originated during the lockdown era.
- C. The Board thanks outgoing Supervising Librarian Shanshan Ming and former Library Director Rebecca FrancoMartin for their service! Their contributions to the Library and the City of Trenton at large are greatly appreciated and will be deeply missed. Best of luck to them both in their future endeavors!

XII. Executive Session (*if required*)

- A. Executive Session entered into at 6:40 pm
- B. Executive Session ended at 6:54 pm

XIII. Adjournment

- A. Deniece Johnson made a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 6:59 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kaviv
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary