



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

**Library Personnel:** Sharon Shrieves-Ward (Interim Director)  
Shanna Leggett (Administrative Assistant)

**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 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, Patricia Smith, Lavern Rice, and Rick Kavin
- B. Not Present: Deniece Johnson and James Earle

**IV. Agenda Approval**

- A. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the August 2023 agenda
- B. Lavern Rice seconded the approval of the agenda
- C. **Motion passes 5-0**

**V. Approval of Minutes**

- A. One amendment was made to the July 2023 minutes:
  - 1. In Section VIII(A), “Bill List,” it was noted that Crystal Smith informed the Board at the July meeting that the Purchase Request sheets were not available at the time that she signed the checks for that month
- B. Lavern Rice made the motion to approve the minutes from the July 2023 Board meeting
- C. Crystal Smith seconded the motion
- D. **Motion passes 4-0 with Patricia Smith abstaining due to her absence at the July meeting**

## VI. Open Public Address

- A. Two members of the public present
- B. *(no comments from the public)*

## VII. Presentations

- A. Financials *(presented by Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*
  1. *(see “July 2023 financial reports” from Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*
  2. **Total fund balance** (as of July 31, 2023) was approx. **\$2.4M**
    - a. \$1,060,000 in cash/investments, of which \$229,000 is in TFPL’s operating checking account
      - i. \$300,000 check for Capital Fund deposited in August and will be reflected next month
    - b. This is a \$35,000 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, insurance 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 and donation income** is over budget by \$8,000, as TFPL does not historically budget for private grants and donations.
  7. **Personnel expenses** under budget by \$145,000 due to vacancies in budgeted positions and a change in the health benefit plans. There have been no health and prescription invoices received for May, June, or July premiums yet.
  8. **Facilities and utilities expenses** are under budget by \$14,000.
  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 \$40,000 due to timing of purchases for the collection and the exhaustion of the remaining credits from Baker & Taylor from last year.
  11. **Technology hardware and software** is under budget by \$7,000 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 July 31, 2023) was a surplus of approximately \$7,000. This compares to a budgeted surplus of \$22,000 for the period, which is a positive variance of \$15,000. Excluding the expenditures on renovations, there is a positive variance against the budget of \$70,000 from operations. (Extra \$200,000 was added in by Ann to reflect the

additional funding from the City. And, next \$200,000 appropriation from the City should arrive on or around August 15<sup>th</sup>.)

14. **Updated Budget**

- a. Staff adjustments
  - i. Additional Librarian 2
  - ii. Additional part-time Library Associate
  - iii. Move to Supervising Librarian position
- b. Facilities and Maintenance increased
- c. Large increase to Software Licenses due to need for a multi-year license purchase as well as significantly higher-than-expected fees so far in the first half of the year

15. **Check Washing Issue**

- a. \$2,000 stolen via two washed checks
- b. Money will be credited back
- c. Liz worked with PNC Bank to secure the account and set up a new one, but the current type of account that TFPL has no longer exists – Lavern will assist in selecting a sensible type of account and fraud protection
- d. Additional security measures (Positive Pay, alerts, etc.) implemented

B. **Personnel Report** (*presented by Interim Director Sharon Shrieves-Ward*)

1. Librarian 1 Position has been posted (*see Section VII(D)3a below*)
2. Approval for L2, L4 (Supervising Librarian), and Director – can be posted without Civil Service certification with a note about provisional

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

1. Friends will sponsor Tom Malloy's gallery reception
  - a. Barbara Johnson has donated funds and this is an appropriate use
  - b. Opening is August 23<sup>rd</sup>
  - c. Additional works will be hung before the opening
2. Pat will work with Sharon to promote Library Card Sign-Up Month in September (*see Section VII(D) below*)

D. **Director's Report** (*presented by Interim Director Sharon Shrieves-Ward*)

1. **BUILDING MAINTENANCE**

- a. **State Fire Safety Inspection** conducted to ensure compliance with all regulations and verify functionality of extinguishers, alarms, and exit lights
- b. **HVAC**
  - i. Air filters in AC units inspected and cleaned
  - ii. Routine maintenance conducted on central HVAC system to ensure optimal performance

2. **MARKETING and PR**

a. **Divine Kidz Academy**

- i. Visited twice a month by Children's staff member Stephanie
- ii. Last month, 60 kids attended

b. **Paint-n-Sip**

- i. Twenty kits created by Mimi and Damaris and distributed to patrons

3. **STAFF and VOLUNTEERS**

a. **Adult Services Librarian 1 Position**

- i. Five candidates applied
  - ii. Two have previous experience in a library but do not meet the educational requirements
- 4. **LIBRARY SERVICES and PROGRAMMING**
  - a. **July Book Club** had five attendees to discuss *Frankenstein: The 1818 Text*
  - b. **Social Media**
    - i. Traffic has decreased during the summer, but is expected to increase again in correlation with large events such as plays, performances, and other popular programs
  - c. **Library Cards**
    - i. Updated accounts: 76
    - ii. New accounts: 76
  - d. **Total Circulation:** 2663
- 5. **COLLECTIONS**
  - a. **Book Donation**
    - i. Louis LeFevre bequeathed his books to the Library
- 6. **TRENTONIANA**
  - a. **Visits and Inquiries**
    - i. Room open for 17 days in July
    - ii. 18 patrons visited
    - iii. 33 inquiries via email, phone, and the online research form
  - b. **Social Media**
    - i. Instagram (@trentoniana1906) has 782 followers
    - ii. Facebook (@trentoniana1906) has 1,169 followers
  - c. **Trenton Historical Society** meeting attended by Archivist Laura Poll on July 10<sup>th</sup>
  - d. **Library Associate & Library Assistant Positions**
    - i. William Buie resigned effective July 20<sup>th</sup>
    - ii. Christopher Loos, who was hired as the Library Assistant (Special Project) and will begin this month, will be promoted to Library Associate
    - iii. Library Assistant position will be re-advertised if necessary after two candidates from the first round are interviewed
  - e. **Gallery**
    - i. “Tom Malloy: Trenton’s Artist Laureate” installed on July 31<sup>st</sup> and runs through September 23<sup>rd</sup>
    - ii. Show includes 22 pieces both from the Library’s permanent collection and loaned from private collections
    - iii. Friends will sponsor the opening (*see Friends’ Report above*)
- 7. **FINANCES and FUNDING**
  - a. **Capital Improvement Fund**
    - i. The Library received a check for \$314,000 for the roof

## VIII. Action Items

### A. Bill List

- 1. (*see “TFPL August 2023 Unpaid Bills”*)
- 2. The necessary Purchase Request sheets were available this month
- 3. Approval of Bill List

- a. Reimbursement for Medicare Part B was deducted, but otherwise all standard
- b. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the August bill list
- c. Lavern Rice seconded the approval of the bill list
- d. **Motion passes 5-0**

## **IX. Old Business**

### **A. Levy Construction Contract**

1. Two representatives from Clark Caton Hintz came over to speak with Liz and Sharon to discuss three current projects (roof, ramp, and Reference Room)
2. Levy is the contractor for the Reference Room
3. Contract is signed
4. Levy will get proper permits from City Hall, and work will likely begin in September

### **B. Capital Improvement Fund/Roof**

1. Check received for \$314,000 from NJ State Library
2. Liz will investigate the terms of the match

## **X. New Business**

### **A. Lawyer Contract**

1. Seeking an attorney specializing in contract and employment law and a background in NJ state library rules/law
2. Lavern will seek recommendations

### **B. Director Search**

1. Position has been advertised
2. Anyone on the list will be appointed on a “provisional” basis
3. For Supervising Librarian position, must contact Civil Service to determine why certain individuals were left off of the list

### **C. Landscaping Contract**

1. Seeking a new landscaper after the previous contractor weedwacked the lilies
2. \$125/week for mowing (there is very little lawn), \$1200 for 12 yards of mulch(!), etc.
3. Current contract with ABM lasts through December
4. May assign to Maintenance if feasible
  - a. Must purchase weedwacker and other necessary equipment

### **D. Vacant Positions**

1. Director, Librarian 4 (Supervising), Librarian 2, Librarian 1, Library Assistant

### **E. Budget Revision**

1. Additional \$200,000 from the City incorporated (*see Ann’s notes in Section VII(A)14*)
2. Patricia Smith made a motion to adopt the revised budget reflecting the additional City funding
  - a. Lavern Rice seconded the motion
  - b. **Motion passes 5-0**

## **XI. Announcements**

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, September 14, 2023, beginning at 6:00 pm
- B. Pat Smith announced a Book Giveaway on August 26<sup>th</sup> from 11am-3pm on the corner of Brunswick Ave and Violet Street (*contact trentonreads1719@gmail.com*)

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

- A. (*none required*)

**XIII. Adjournment**

- A. Patricia Smith makes a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 6:58pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kaviv  
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary