The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
February 12, 2026 at 6:00pm

Trustees: Lavern Rice (President), Elizabeth Yull (Treasurer), Rick Kavin (Recording Secretary, Mayor's Delegate), Brittany Littlejohn, *Robert McGuckin (Superintendent's Delegate)*, Blanca Ohler, and Patricia Smith

(**italics* indicate that the trustee was not present at this meeting)

City Council Liaison: Councilwoman Jennifer Williams *(not present)*

Library Personnel: Karen O'Malley (Director)

I. Call to Order
   A. Lavern Rice, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:00

II. Announcement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law
   A. Announced by Director Karen O'Malley
   B. Statement is hereby made that adequate notice of this meeting was given by posting written notice prominently at the Trenton Public Library main entrance, on the Library website, and on social media.

III. Roll Call for Quorum
   A. Present: Lavern Rice, Brittany Littlejohn, Patricia Smith, Elizabeth Yull, Blanca Ohler *(via Google Meet)*, and Rick Kavin
   B. Not Present: Robert McGuckin

IV. Agenda Approval
   A. Lavern added a presentation from Children's Librarian Eboni Love to the agenda
   B. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the February 2026 agenda with the noted correction
   C. Elizabeth Yull seconded the approval of the agenda
   D. Motion passes 6-0

V. Approval of December 2025 Minutes
   A. Rick Kavin noted several corrections to the December 2025 minutes:
      1. Italicized Board member Robert McGuckin's name to indicate his absence at the December 2025 meeting
      2. Corrected a typo in the word "Materials" in Section VII(A)7
      3. Corrected the date of the approved bill list from October to November 2025

4. Updated the Director's Report so that "Maintenance Updates" and "Capital Projects" are Items 10 and 11, respectively (rather than sub-sections of Item 9)

B. Elizabeth Yull made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 2025 Board meeting with the noted corrections
C. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the minutes
D. Motion passes 5-0-1 with Brittany Littlejohn abstaining, as she had not yet been appointed to the Board and thus did not attend the December 2025 meeting

VI. Approval of January 2026 Reorganization and Regular Meeting Minutes

A. Rick Kavin noted one correction to the January regular meeting minutes: updating the Treasurer from Lavern Rice to Elizabeth Yull under "Bill List"
B. Elizabeth Yull made the motion to approve the minutes from the January 2026 Reorganization and Regular Board meetings with the noted correction
C. Rick Kavin seconded the approval of the minutes
D. Motion passes 3-0-3 with Blanca Ohler and Patricia Smith abstaining due to a previous absence and Brittany Littlejohn abstaining since she had not yet been appointed to the Board and thus did not attend the January 2026 meetings

VII. Open Public Address

A. One member of the public present
B. Pat Tumulty inquired about the art program for the opening of the Mel Leipzig event that she saw in the *Trenton Downtowner* whether it was on the calendar – there seems to be some confusion, as that event was not held at the Library.

VIII. Presentations

A. Financial Report *(presented by Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*
    1. *(see "January 31, 2026 financial reports" from Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*
    2. First month of new budget year, so less to report
    3. Several donations received, both generally and for Trentoniana
    4. Retirement benefit issue persists – accrued expense of $125k recorded as an estimate for unbilled retiree health insurance premiums as of Dec. 31, 2024. No amounts accrued for 2025 or 2026 retiree benefits to date. This marks two years of unaccrued retirement benefits for a total of $250k – charged to both budget years, so already taken out. Medicare payment made (they are made a year in arrears) – paid total for 2025 (does as reimbursements). Those payments are noted on the January Bill List. 2026 payments (for 2025 year) charged to this current budget year
    5. State aid is traditionally received in the fall and thus is under budget for the year-to-date
    6. First quarterly City appropriation typically received in February – not yet received (last couple of quarters have been late by a month or so)
    7. Interest income is over budget for the year-to-date due to negotiated rate increases with PNC midway through 2025
    8. Personnel expenses slightly under budget due to vacancy

9. Facilities and utilities combined are under budget – no significant repairs required in January
10. Materials and programming expenses under budget for year-to-date due to changes in purchasing practices to accommodate circulation data and a change in materials vendor
11. Tech expenses under budget for year-to-date due to timing of annual subscription renewals
12. Net operating income deficit of $57,000 compared to break-even budget for the year – not unusual for January due to timing of expenses

B. Bill List *(presented by Treasurer Elizabeth Yull)*
    1. *(see "TFPL January 2026 Unpaid Bills Report")*
    2. Approval of Bill List
        a. Large payment (~$21k) to City of Trenton for previous overpayment
        b. PSE&G bill was ~$15k, which is actually low for the weather
        c. Rick Kavin made the motion to approve the November bill list
        d. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the bill list
        e. Motion passes 5-0-1 with Brittany Littlejohn abstaining

C. Friends of TFPL *(presented by Friends President Pat Tumulty)*
    1. Pat Tumulty spoke about the feature on the Friends in the *Shelf-Life* magazine. Pat will also solicit Friends memberships at various TFPL events.

D. Presentation from Youth Services Librarian Eboni Love on TFPL Internship Program
    1. One-year Page program has been active for a year
    2. Hire three students from Trenton high schools to work six hours per week
    3. Shelving, circulation, archives, Children's Room
    4. Originally received 21 applications, interviewed six, and hired three
    5. Interns started in June 2025 – extremely successful for both students and staff
    6. Measurable Impacts:
        a. Assist Children's Services and youth patrons
        b. Customer service, problem solving, public engagement, shelving and organization, collections work
        c. Getting the word out to teens and high school students
        d. Building lasting connections with TFPL
        e. Exploring Library careers and fields, and learning how to balance work, school, and social life
        f. Trentoniana intern's weekly hours has really moved archival projects forward, including digitization
        g. Children's Room has never looked better!
        h. Seeking to hire new interns in June

E. Director's Report *(presented by Director Karen O'Malley)*
    1. *(see "Director's Report January 2026")*
    2. Snow day – Library was closed January 26, 2026
    3. Library Magazine *Shelf-Life* Issue #2 published, featuring Rev250

a. Program listing for entire year
b. Also creating monthly event brochures – they look great!

4. Meeting with Mayor's Office in mid-February for discussion about East Trenton Library. Karen had previously created a draft plan in late 2024 and presented that to the City Recreation Department. Karen and the Board updated Brittany on the various previous branch libraries and the history of those closures. The East Trenton Library building had been redone as a community center previously. There was also a discussion of general library funding for NJ public libraries at all levels of government, including the effects of Trenton's tax base, the status of TFPL as a non-county library, etc. Karen also showed the funding for other Mercer County libraries and how much more they receive due to more ratables.
5. Staff In-service days tentatively planned for March, June, September, and December
6. Spring programs planned for all Departments
7. Ongoing Needs:
    a. Need a list of retirees from the Library to reimburse City for health premiums
    b. Requested a meeting with BA to discuss 2026 budget
    c. Ongoing personnel matter requiring an attorney – info forthcoming
8. Building and Grounds:
    a. Director and Maintenance Supervisor meeting with PSE&G to determine ways to become more energy efficient – follow-up scheduled to determine results of implemented recommendations
    b. Elevator out of order for several weeks – part on order
    c. Emergency drain pipe replacement is underway. Bathrooms are functional though there was another leak that indicated that the blockage extends into the street – City crews have been on site to remedy, including today. Asphalt was laid down today as well (rather than large metal plates over the holes)
    d. New phone system quotes being collected and will be presented to Board in March
    e. Repairs completed for historic heavy-duty steel doors in front of old building
    f. Boiler has a condensation pipe issue that will need to be resolved at some point
    g. TFPL is in violation of state fire code and has been fined $36k – Telly is following up with City for variance. OPRA requests continue to be extended
    h. Ramp project to resume when weather is warmer

IX. Old Business / New Business

A. Draft of 2026 Budget
    1. Based on figures from 2025

2. "leftover" funds put into Maintenance line item – may be adjusted based on salaries/taxes
3. Tuition Reimbursement program included in Staff Development – currently $6k but can be increased based on need
4. Replacements for Baker & Taylor ongoing – going directly to publishers

B. Pat – Liz – 6-0

X. Announcements

A. Black History Month Event
   1. February 21st (10am-4pm)
   2. Local Author Book Fair, Taste of Soul Lunch, Trentoniana Exhibit, Community Organization Tabling, Community Photo-Op
   3. Special Performance from Queen Nur (2pm-3pm)
   4. Each Department is involved and participating
B. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, March 12, 2026, beginning at 6:00 pm

XI. Executive Session *(if required)*

A. *(none required)*

XII. Adjournment

A. Elizabeth Yull made a motion to adjourn
B. There were no objections
C. Meeting adjourned at 6:51pm

Prepared and submitted by:

Rick Kavin
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary