The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
April 9, 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

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 under "Legal Notices," on the *Trentonian* website, and on social media.

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

IV. Agenda Approval
   A. Elizabeth Yull made the motion to approve the April 2026 agenda
   B. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the agenda
   C. Motion passes 4-0

V. Approval of Minutes
   A. Elizabeth Yull made the motion to approve the minutes from the March 2026 Board meeting with the noted correction
   B. Rick Kavin seconded the approval of the minutes
   C. Motion passes 4-0

VI. Open Public Address
   A. One member of the public present
   B. Pat Tumulty had no comments

VII. Presentations

A. Financial Report *(presented by Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*

1. *(see "March 31, 2026 financial reports" from Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)*
2. Retirement benefit issue persists. 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.
3. State aid is traditionally received in the fall and thus is under budget for the year-to-date
4. First quarterly City appropriation scheduled to be received in February – not yet received. The voucher was signed on April 1st for Q1. In 2025, the first appropriation was received in May, which is when the second quarterly payment is scheduled to arrive
5. Interest income is over budget for the year-to-date due to negotiated rate increases with PNC midway through 2025
6. Personnel expenses slightly under budget due to temporary vacancies as well as retiree benefit accruals
7. Facilities and utilities combined are under budget – no significant repairs required in 2026 to date, with the drainpipe repair charged to the 2025 budget
8. Publicity and fire licensing over budget due to timing of yearly expenses
9. Legal fees over budget due to an ongoing employment matter – will flatten out as year continues and matter resolves
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 – many renew in the summertime
12. Net operating income was a deficit of $175,000 compared to break-even budget for the year – not unusual for end of Q1 due to timing of expenses, and this will even out once first quarterly appropriation is received from the City
13. Councilwoman Williams spoke about the upcoming City budget and requested that the Director send her a list of Library budgetary needs and any previous quotes/plans for the roof and masonry work

B. Bill List *(presented by Treasurer Elizabeth Yull)*

1. *(see "TFPL March 2026 Unpaid Bills Report")*
2. Approval of Bill List
   a. PSE&G bill was ~$12.7k – down as the weather breaks
   b. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the March 2026 bill list
   c. Rick Kavin seconded the approval of the bill list
   d. Motion passes 4-0

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

1. Pat Tumulty thanked the Director for inviting the Friends to the groundbreaking for the accessible ramp and spoke to the positivity of

the event. She was also impressed by the community support as well as the attendance of various dignitaries from all levels of government. She also expressed her happiness that the elevator was finally in working order after a delay getting the necessary parts for repair. Pat thanked the Board and Director, as well as the TFPL staff, and also expressed her gratitude to Councilwoman Williams and the rest of the Council for helping to provide the funds for the project.

D. Director's Report *(presented by Director Karen O'Malley)*
    1. *(see "Director's Report for March 2026")*
    2. Groundbreaking Ceremony for accessible ramp held April 1
        a. Attendees included Mayor Gusciora, Councilwoman Feliciano, State Senator Shirley Turner, HED Director Dr. Diego Minnacapelli, Board President Lavern Rice and members Brittany Littlejohn, Elizabeth Yull, and Rick Kavin, and other dignitaries, staff, and community members
        b. Youth Services Head Librarian Eboni Love was recognized by the City of Trenton with a Community Impact Award. Mayor Gusciora presented her with a plaque, and Eboni spoke passionately about her love for the Library and dedication to the community, especially the youth
    3. Training being set up for online instruction for upcoming Q1 staff in-service day. Next in-person in-service day will be held in June
    4. June 29th – Take It To The Streets and Summer Reading Kickoff event
    5. Ongoing Needs:
        a. Need a list of retirees from the Library to reimburse City for health premiums
        b. Requested a meeting with BA and/or ABA to discuss 2026 budget
    6. Personnel Updates:
        a. Open Positions:
            i. Librarian 1 – on hold
            ii. P/T Circulation Assistant – interviews scheduled
            iii. P/T Trentoniana Assistant – TBD
        b. Departures:
            i. P/T Trentoniana Library Associate resigned after finding a full-time position
    7. Youth Services:
        a. Copeland Elementary School has scheduled Library tours for their entire school in June – will discuss the Summer Reading program
        b. Youth Services Department Head Eboni Love received a Community Impact Award from the City of Trenton for Women's History Month, which was presented at the groundbreaking ceremony for the accessible ramp and doors. The entire TFPL family (and the Board!) is very proud of how she represents the Library throughout our community
    8. Trentoniana:
        a. Nearly 74 hours total research time (4,435 minutes)
        b. Total Visitors: 126

9. Building and Grounds:
    a. Elevator repairs are complete!
    b. Ramp project has begun *(see above for details on groundbreaking)*
    c. FOIA requests continue to be extended re: fire code

VIII. Old Business / New Business

A. Vote on Audit Engagement Letter for 2025 Audit
    1. Letter was reviewed by the Director and Board
    2. Elizabeth Yull made a motion to approve the Audit Engagement Letter from Mercadien for auditing services
    3. Lavern Rice seconded the motion
    4. Motion passes 4-0

B. Vote to hire a Landscaping service for 2026
    1. Director noted that TFPL had previously used landscaping services before transitioning to the maintenance team providing those services. Maintenance Supervisor suggested having a summer maintenance service as well as spring and fall cleanings would facilitate the upkeep of the grounds while allowing the maintenance team to care for the inside of the building. There will be weekly outdoor maintenance as well as garden work (entrance from the back parking lot can be used while gate is locked). Telly is obtaining quotes from local landscaping companies.
    2. Board President suggested holding the vote so that work can begin, with the Director to select the best quote provided
    3. Lavern Rice made a motion to hire a landscaping service for the summer months
    4. Elizabeth Yull seconded the motion
    5. Motion passes 4-0

IX. Announcements

A. Councilwoman Williams spoke about an upcoming installation at the Grant School coming on May 20th to honor the poet and playwright Ntozake Shange, who authored *for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf*. The event will be sponsored by the Black Heritage Trail of the NJ State Historical Commission, which highlights African American history throughout New Jersey. Councilwoman Williams will share the information with the Director. Liz also noted that the research for the event was conducted by Trentoniana staff. Pat Tumulty mentioned a similar event from several years ago held at TFPL, as well as an event featuring Todd Evans's work that incorporated local poets. TFPL also has a Zine about Shange available to patrons.

B. Rick: **Continuing Education hours** can be earned via the NJ State Library's webinars. The most recent session from March 25th, which discussed changes to the NJ Open Public Meetings Act, was shared to their YouTube channel at TheNJStateLibrary. The next session will focus on AI.
    1. Pat Tumulty noted the upcoming Trustee Institute to be held in person on Saturday, October 17th at the Monmouth County Library, which will be the first in-person version since COVID. It will be presented by the NJ State Library and the NJ Library Trustee Association.

C. Rick: **Financial Disclosure forms** are due by April 30th! If you have NOT yet received an email from the City Clerk's Office, please let Rick know ASAP so you can complete this required form and avoid any penalties
D. Councilwoman Williams is holding the North Ward CPAC meeting next Wednesday, April 15th, at 5:30pm. The featured presenter will be Jay Watson
E. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, May 14, 2026, beginning at 6:00 pm

X. Executive Session *(if required)*

A. Entered at 6:32pm
B. Exited at 6:42pm

XI. Creation of New Title

A. Elizabeth Yull made a motion to create the Civil Service title Program Coordinator Special Events at the Trenton Free Public Library
B. Patricia Smith seconded the motion
C. Motion passes 4-0

XII. Adjournment

A. Lavern Rice made a motion to adjourn
B. There were no objections
C. Meeting adjourned at 6:50pm

Prepared and submitted by:

Rick Kavin
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary