



**The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees**  
**Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608**  
**Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 6:00pm**  
**[Meeting via Zoom]**

**Trustees:** Deniece Johnson (President), Elizabeth Yull (Treasurer), Rick Kavin (Recording Secretary, Mayor’s Delegate), Alfonso Llano (Acting Superintendent of Schools), Lavern Rice, Crystal Smith, and Patricia Smith

**City Council Liaison:** Robin M. Vaughn (*not present*)

**Staff:** Rebecca FrancoMartin (Director) and Shanna Leggett (Administrative Assistant)

**I. Call to Order**

- A. Elizabeth Yull, due to the absence of Board President Deniece Johnson, called the meeting to order at 6:02 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, Patricia Smith, Lavern Rice, Crystal Smith, and Rick Kavin
- B. Not Present: Deniece Johnson and Alfonso Llano

**IV. Agenda Approval**

- A. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the March 2021 agenda with the correction below
  - 1. Rebecca made one addition regarding tuition assistance to ‘New Business’
- B. Lavern Rice seconded the approval of the agenda
- C. **Motion passes 5-0**

**V. Approval of Minutes**

- A. Pat Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the February 2021 Board meeting
- B. Crystal Smith second the motion
- C. **Motion passes 5-0**

**VI. Open Public Address**

- A. No members of the public present via Zoom (other than presenters listed in Section VII)
- B. (*no public comment*)

## VII. Presentations

### A. Financials (*presented by Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA*)

1. (*see "February 2021 financial reports" from Ann C. Zawarkay*)
2. 1.8M in cash and investment accounts, with \$533,000 in operating checking account (up \$116,000 from last month)
3. Total fund balance is ~\$2.8M
4. Received third quarter appropriation from the City
  - a. These payments are newly estimated annually based on Library payroll from previous year
  - b. Library payroll is subtracted from total yearly appropriation to Library, and then divided by four quarters
5. State aid to be received next fall
6. E-Rate reimbursement program changed – rather than receiving a cash payment, TFPL will not pay for internet service
7. Personnel expenses, salary/payroll taxes, materials/programming expenses, security costs, facilities and utilities costs, technology costs, Reading Room expenditures **under budget**
  - a. \$58,000 HVAC insurance reimbursement received – repair costs not yet included in year to date expenses
  - b. Reading Room and technology upgrade expenses under budget by ~\$502,000 due to the budget for these items being spread across 12 months, while actual costs will vary month-to-month
8. Health benefits **over budget** by roughly \$1,000
9. With variance for Reading Room/tech upgrades excluded (*see item 7b above*), **operational budget roughly flat (+\$47,000) for the year thus far**

### B. Personnel Report (*presented by Shanna Leggett*)

1. (*no personnel changes to report*)

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

1. Friends will now meet one week after the TFPL Board meetings, beginning next Thursday, March 18
2. Programming for Nat'l Library Week (April 4-10) to be discussed with Director – possibly outdoors?
3. Rebecca has been attending the Friends meetings

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

1. **Happy Anniversary to Ms. Shanna Leggett**, who celebrated seven years with the Library in February!
2. **Community Partners: Princeton University "Create Labs" Social Distancing Project**
  - a. Students visited the library with their professor to get a grasp on the layout of the library and how a light system could be integrated into a particularly high-use space to be used to its fullest advantage
  - b. They then presented some of their ideas in a virtual presentation with examples of various light installations used for various other purposes
  - c. The device they will install collects no personal data and erases that of the people in the space as they move in and out of it.
  - d. This will be located on the first-floor circulation area, incl. near the public restrooms, entrance, and copy/fax equipment, and be mounted from the drop ceiling it is designed for

- e. Hoping for installation in late spring
  - f. Princeton U. students and their supervising professor will maintain devices
3. Building and Technology
- a. **iSolved Time and Human Resources Management System** has been set up and all staff information has been entered, thanks to several meetings and the diligence in information sharing by our Administrative Assistant and Supervising Library Assistant
    - i. This will streamline recordkeeping, timesheets, etc.
    - ii. Technologically this is an upgrade though the cost is lower
  - b. **The Children's Office** is close to completion
    - i. This will allow for the efficient organization of all Youth services supplies and tools as well as several, highly functional workspaces for the staff
    - ii. All are invited to visit the Library and check out the new space
  - c. **Roof Updates**
    - i. One estimate received, two more anticipated
    - ii. Bubbles on roof
    - iii. Work to start ASAP to allow for HVAC system to be addressed
4. Staff and Volunteers
- a. Working toward the completion of **annual reviews** for all staff
  - b. Monthly meetings will alternate between full staff meetings and one-on-one meetings with individual staff members
  - c. After seeking various avenues to procure **vaccines** for staff, Alfonso provided assistance
    - i. Staff have completed a survey to ensure Alfonso is able to provide the Cure Arena vaccine manager with accurate numbers
    - ii. NJLA has indicated that Library workers will be part of the Phase 1C group
    - iii. **Rick will distribute City vaccine registration information to the Board to ensure that personnel are properly registered**
5. Continuing Education and Meetings
- a. **Director's Training** with the State Library
  - b. The Director was invited to partake in a **meeting with Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds Jackson** regarding funding for libraries
    - i. Highly productive meeting that provided
    - ii. Opportunity to speak about the lack of award for the Library Construction Bond and how that impacted the project
    - iii. Money (\$200M) for Libraries included in American Rescue Plan
      - Potential for large funding due to Mercer Co. only having the county, Trenton, and Hamilton Library systems
      - Funding good be used to bridge technological divide
6. Collections and Materials

- a. There were a considerable number of **Baker and Taylor invoices** in the amount of approximately \$16,000 dollars due to slow processing on their end
    - i. This is why this appears under budget in Ann’s update
    - ii. Quarterly meeting held on Tuesday (3/2)
    - iii. Bills will need to be pulled from current bill list to reduce the amount of the check issued
    - iv. Director requested an inquiry to ensure our billing is current, with updated accounting due sometime this week
    - v. Additionally, there are 400 items on backorder and a list of all titles will be sent
    - vi. Once received, Collection Development Librarian and the Director will review the list to determine how to manage these titles to ensure our patrons have access in a timely manner
  - b. **Collection Development**
    - i. Director has met with Collection Development Librarian to discuss updating our weeding and selection policy to reflect current best practices and community needs
    - ii. Guidelines to be formulated for Librarians with less experience to allow for this skill to be practiced and developed
  - c. **Children’s Collection inventory** is complete with replacement copies ordered for lost, presumed lost, and worn copies of our popular children’s series and books
    - i. Anticipating higher summer reading demand
    - ii. Lists already received from some school librarians
  - d. **Dr. Seuss Discontinued Titles**
    - i. Inquiry from *Times of Trenton* (nj.com) regarding the six recently discontinued titles
    - ii. Director submitted statement regarding the handling of these titles, though it was not used in the article
    - iii. Currently possess five of six in the Library’s collection
    - iv. Titles will not be pulled from the collection
      - Will not be on the shelf
      - Will instead be preserved in the closed stacks
  - e. Technical Services Librarian **cataloging** for Trentoniana and Urban Fiction items
  - f. A number of **holdings codes** (which define a collection or category of material) were duplicates, and there are an excessive number of profiles, including those for closed branches
  - g. **System Updates**
    - i. Updated settings in catalog system to block holds on Trentoniana items that are for in-house use only
    - ii. Fines have been restored to Wifi hotspots as they had been inadvertently blocked
7. **Finances:** There have been **budget adjustments** made for FY ‘22 that eliminate the overage while allowing us to implement the tuition assistance program we previously discussed.
- a. \$51,153 in donations received (July 2019 – Jan. 2021)

- b. Pat Tumulty congratulated Rebecca and the staff on such substantial contributions
- 8. **Social Media**
  - a. New social media team is doing a fantastic job engaging the community
  - b. Number of postings remain about the same
  - c. Engagements increased by 94% on Facebook and 50% on Instagram (from January to February)
- 9. **Library Services and Programming**
  - a. **Fresh Start** services will resume and we will be working to provide additional services
    - i. Case management, entrepreneurship, women’s issues, etc.
    - ii. Working with DC Public Library, so will include out-of-state opportunities as well
  - b. **Circulation** up for February by 39.75% (from January)
    - i. This is up significantly after decreases due to curbside-exclusive service
  - c. **Computer use** also increased by 53% from January to February, while sessions remained at about 30 minutes each
  - d. Adult, virtual program “**Free Your Life of Clutter!**” on 2/26
    - i. Highly successful with 12 participants out of 31 sign-ups
    - ii. Hosted by User Needs Librarian
  - e. This year’s **summer reading** theme is *Tails and Tales*; check it out here: <https://www.csllpreads.org/>
  - f. **Youth Engagement**
    - i. **520 youth served** in February via take-home craft bags, Comic Book Online, Virtual Storytime, Young Scientist Club, and Virtual Programming
    - ii. 4 young adults took part in **TAG (Teen Action Group)**
      - Presented ideas for programming
      - Requested “Shelf Help,” a survey-based recommendation and reservation engine for materials, which the library is already implementing
    - iii. Our Young Adult Library Associate is working on **connecting with local community partners** to increase services to teens throughout Trenton and how to connect with our homeless teens
- 10. **Trentoniana**
  - a. Two classes from the College of New Jersey began working in the Trentoniana room
  - b. Virtual tour was given by the archivist to the Interactive Multimedia Class
  - c. A history class will be visiting on Wednesdays – tables set up in Poetry Café, will use Trentoniana Room in shifts

## VIII. Action Items

### A. Bill List

1. (see “TFPL March 2021 Unpaid Bills”)
2. Elizabeth Yull inquired about remaining funds owed to Clark Caton Hintz – the Library is receiving bills as work is performed
3. Approval of Bill List

- a. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the March 2021 bill list
- b. Lavern Rice seconded the approval of the bill list
- c. **Motion passes 5-0**

## **IX. Old Business**

### **A. UPDATE: Main entrance ramp & door replacement**

1. Rebecca shared several renderings from CCH of options for the front of the Library (**Rebecca will distribute to the Board**)
2. Ramp's solid walls will be replaced with wire rope to allow for increased visibility and a more modern, open look
3. Stairs will be open, as on historic side of the building
4. One option includes seating area built into the steps
5. Some options also include seating/tables area at the top of the ramp
6. Design decision can be voted upon at next Board meeting, and will then go before the Landmarks Commission
7. This project will be financed with already-approved and allotted CDBG funds
8. During construction, the entrance on the historic side will be used, with the rear staff entrance used as an accessible entrance

### **B. UPDATE: HVAC**

1. Rebecca met with the Landmarks Commission on Wednesday – project was approved
2. Bids coming in by Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>
3. Hoping for work to be completed by summer season
4. Addendum issued due to asbestos – this will need to be abated (City has account with ~\$17,000 that can be used for this purpose)

### **C. Library Construction Bond (second round)**

1. No date yet
2. Director spoke with Millennium Strategies on applying for Round 2
3. Funds currently set aside to address Second Floor Adult Space by Board Resolution last year
4. Library will have to put up matching funds, but the bond would be substantial

### **D. Budget Update (*added to agenda*)**

1. Additional funding due to salary and benefits for past employees being left in budget
2. Update adds in \$10,000 for staff tuition assistance
3. Motion to adjust budget to include an amount of \$10,000 for FY22 for the purpose of Tuition Assistance for staff seeking Masters of Library and Information Science degree, with Rebecca to submit a policy for consideration
  - a. Patricia Smith made the motion to amend the FY22 budget as described
  - b. Crystal Smith seconded the motion to amend the FY22 budget
  - c. **Motion passes 5-0**

## **X. New Business**

### **A. Color Palette / Logo / Website**

1. Digital logo needed for marketing purposes
2. Allow for color continuity throughout the building

3. Website colors difficult to read, especially for those with vision impairments

**XI. Announcements**

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, April 8, 2021, beginning at 6:00 pm
- B. The next meeting will return to an in-person meeting at the Library
- C. Crystal has been using Rocket Language to learn Spanish and highly recommends it
- D. *Kindred* discussion group to begin on March 16<sup>th</sup>

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

- A. (*no session necessary*)

**XIII. Adjournment**

- A. Crystal Smith makes a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavim  
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary