



**The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees**  
**Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608**  
**Thursday, April 8, 2021 at 6:00pm**  
**[Meeting in person with Zoom option]**

**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 (*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 (via Zoom), Crystal Smith, and Rick Kavin  
B. Not Present: Deniece Johnson and Alfonso Llano

**IV. Agenda Approval**

- A. Elizabeth Yull asked to add review of proposals of the accessible ramp to Old Business  
B. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the April 2021 agenda with the above amendment  
C. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the agenda  
D. **Motion passes 5-0**

**V. Approval of Minutes**

- A. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from **both** the regularly scheduled March 11, 2021 meeting and the March 29, 2021 Emergency Board Meeting concerning HVAC bids  
B. Crystal Smith seconded the motion  
C. **Motion passes 5-0**

**VI. Open Public Address**

- A. Other than presenters listed below, only Library Page Ned K. was present via Zoom  
B. (*no public comment*)

## VII. Presentations

- A. Financials (*presented by Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA via Zoom*)
  1. (see “April 2021 financial reports” from Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA)
  2. Final payment from FY2020 received from City
  3. Total fund balances roughly \$2.8M
  4. Ahead of budget by \$74k for fiscal year on operating basis
  5. E-Rate reimbursement changed – credits used to offset cost of internet, rather than receiving a check
  6. Personnel, health, operational, technology, security expenses under budget
    - a. Audit under budget by \$17,500 – bill is forthcoming
  7. Adult programming over budget due to clothing donation of \$16k
- B. Personnel Report (*presented by Shanna Leggett*)
  1. (no personnel changes)
  2. PNC accounts are not being used, but the account fees are still being charged
    - a. Shanna will provide Treasurer Liz Yull with the appropriate account numbers
    - b. Liz will contact PNC bank
    - c. Lavern suggested asking PNC to wave the fees and that moving some functions online would result in a reduction in fees
- C. Friends of TFPL (*presented by Pat Tumulty*)
  1. Pat has been working with Rebecca on speaking engagements featuring authors who have made contributions to or write about Trenton-centric themes
  2. June 8<sup>th</sup>: *The Engineer’s Wife* by Tracey Enerson Wood, a fictionalized version of the life of Emily Roebling
    - a. Pat will promote the event (and others) through the Friends of TFPL Facebook page
    - b. Liz suggested reaching out to the Roebling Museum for cross-promotion
  3. In June 2022, the Library will celebrate its 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary and suggested that this could be a good kick-off event
- D. Director’s Report (*presented by Director Rebecca FrancoMartin*)
  1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**
    - a. **Trenton Artworks – Art Making Day**
      - i. Artworks will serve as a pick-up spot for Grab’n’Go Art Bags
      - ii. 30 bags were received, and all were distributed quickly
      - iii. Button making station
        - Organized by TFPL’s part-time Children’s Library Associate
        - Button maker purchased through a grant from the Smith Family Foundation for participating children
    - b. **City of Secaucus – Donated Clothes**
      - i. Outreach Librarian acquired a donation from the City of Secaucus
      - ii. More than 200 items of Ralph Lauren men’s business clothing received valued at \$16,500
      - iii. Clothing will be distributed through the Fresh Start program for returning citizens to use during job interviews
    - c. **Fresh Start**
      - i. Program featured on NPR
      - ii. Discussed how critical services are provided to formerly incarcerated even during a pandemic
      - iii. Involved libraries were promoted, including TFPL
  2. **BUILDING AND TECHNOLOGY**

- a. **Energy Audit**
    - i. EDF fellow working with the City of Trenton to conduct energy audit
    - ii. Efficiency of HVAC, windows, etc. being evaluated
  - b. **IT Materials**
    - i. The City is putting out a bid to discard IT materials no longer in use
    - ii. TFPL will partner with the City to have our materials included and free up space at the Library
    - iii. Library staff is currently cataloging appropriate materials for disposal
3. **STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**
- a. **McDonough Librarianship Award**
    - i. Archivist Laura Poll to be nominated by the Director
    - ii. Will be recognized for work with TFPL, training college students in the field, etc.
    - iii. If awarded, ceremony will be on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> at Monmouth County Library
  - b. **Volunteers in March 2021**
    - i. 214.5 total volunteer hours (roughly 30 full working days)
    - ii. Special thanks to Trentoniana interns and volunteers!
4. **CONTINUING EDUCATION AND MEETINGS**
- a. **Trenton Symposium**
    - i. The Director, along with our Trentoniana Librarian and Board Treasurer Liz Yull, attended the event
    - ii. NJ State Librarian Jennifer Nelson presented on available services
    - iii. Director met with Ms. Nelson to update on TFPL
    - iv. Library grants meeting with Millennium Strategies on April 8<sup>th</sup> regarding:
      - Second round of Library Construction Bond (application contingent on HVAC project not going over budget due to matching requirement)
      - Dollar General (for early literacy/youth services)
      - NJ State Library (for technology needs)
    - v. May receive \$10k through CARES Act – process of requesting such funds still being developed
5. **COLLECTIONS AND MATERIALS**
- a. **Collection Management**
    - i. TFPL continues to add and remove items at approximately the same rate
    - ii. During the month of March, 707 titles were added and 773 deleted
    - iii. About 12% of the deleted titles were information manuals that were outdated – this section has been rearranged and updated
  - b. **Trentoniana**
    - i. An additional 262 Trentoniana items from the display cases throughout the Library have been catalogued
    - ii. Historic items in cases catalogued so that public can view the entries online for in-Library use
  - c. **Circulation**
    - i. Circulation is increasing once again
    - ii. March circulation was up 46% from previous month

## 6. FINANCES

### a. Audit

- i. Currently ongoing
- ii. Several meetings with the City
- iii. Still working to obtain certain City documentation
- iv. Auditors will be presenting report next month

### b. Annual Report for State Aid has been submitted

## 7. SOCIAL MEDIA

- a. Social media outlets continue to expand their reach
- b. Social Justice Instagram page gained 30 followers over the past month, and engagement is up 30%
- c. The Trentoniana Facebook page has 780 followers and its Instagram has 614
  - i. Facebook increased by 62 followers in the past month
  - ii. WordPress blog continues to grow with 3 stories at this time –  
**Rebecca will share link**

## 8. LIBRARY SERVICES

### a. In-Person Meetings

- i. We have unofficially returned to small in-person group visits to the library when safe and possible
- ii. “The Chosen Generation” preschool attended two storytimes with Ms. D in the garden

### b. Sidewalk Obstacle Course

- i. To engage our youth outdoors for Summer Reading this year, a sidewalk obstacle course is being created for the kids to play on in front of the Library
- ii. The design has been laid out and a temporary sketch was made on the sidewalk to ensure it would work well
- iii. A special semi-permanent sidewalk chalk will be used to last approximately two months

### c. Youth Services

- i. A total of 473 youth were served in March through a combination of virtual programming and take-home crafts

### d. E-Cards

- i. 19 E-cards were made for TCHS students & teachers in March

### e. Book Discussions – “One Book, One Trenton” (*Kindred*) and Beyond

- i. Continuing book discussions after the *Kindred* discussion series ends
- ii. There will be two virtual book talks with authors:
  - Tuesday, May 25: “The Lost Family: How DNA Testing is Upending Who We Are” with Libby Copeland
  - Tuesday, June 8: “The Engineer’s Wife” with Tracey Enerson Wood
  - **Rick will distribute both books to Councilwoman Vaughn via the Clerk’s Office**

### f. “Reference by Mail” with New York Public Library

- i. Partnering with NYPL to provide “Reference by Mail” to incarcerated people
- ii. Will be discussing a partnership with the Fresh Start program through the State Library to provide service statewide

- iii. NYPL can answer questions from all over the country – TFPL can respond to inquiries from incarcerated Trentonians to build a relationship in advance of their release
- iv. TFPL will coordinate with the Mayor’s Office of Returning Citizens as well
- g. **Trentoniana**
  - i. During the 14 days the room was available to researchers, a total of 48 patrons visited
  - ii. There were an additional 12 inquiries via the research form online
  - iii. A student from Rutgers Douglass College Externship Program worked remotely (from Texas) the week of March 15<sup>th</sup> with archivist to fulfill credit requirements

**VIII. Action Items**

A. Bill List

- 1. (see “TFPL April 2021 Unpaid Bills”)
- 2. Approval of Bill List
  - a. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the April bill list
  - b. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the bill list
  - c. **Motion passes 5-0**

**IX. Old Business**

A. Technology Upgrade

- 1. Met with City’s IT representatives
- 2. Currently 40% complete
- 3. Project will be complete by end of May 2021, including staff and patron PCs
- 4. Work will be completed on Saturdays – five days of work required

B. Extension of COVID-19 Sick Leave Pay

- 1. FFCRA ended Dec. 31, 2020 for any COVID-related sick/paid leave for quarantine purposes
- 2. TFPL extended to April 1, 2021
- 3. Extension would cover those who contract COVID or are exposed at work at the Library
- 4. Crystal Smith made a motion to extend the policy by 120 days to July 31, 2021
  - a. Patricia Smith seconded the motion
  - b. **Motion passes 5-0**

C. Labor Contract Finalized and Awaiting Signatures

D. Accessible Ramp Proposals

**X. New Business**

A. Staff Day (Friday, July 23, 2021)

- 1. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve Staff Day plans for July 23
  - a. Crystal seconded the motion
  - b. **Motion passes 5-0**

B. Tuition Reimbursement Policy

- 1. **Tabled** until the May meeting to allow for Board review

C. Library Birthday Party (119 years!)

- 1. Likely to be outside – walkthrough or takeaway program
- 2. Library staff may dress in period garb
- 3. May feature garden walk featuring local art and indoor displays of historic artifacts and other pieces

4. Director is seeking donations of both funds and materials
  5. Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup> date will allow for promotion of June 8<sup>th</sup> book discussion event
- D. Potential Plant Purchases for Library
1. Vinelike plants can be displayed throughout the Library
  2. Princeton Library did something similar
  3. **Crystal and Rebecca will research further**

**XI. Announcements**

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, May 13, 2021, beginning at 6:00 pm
- B. Board elections will be conducted at the May meeting
- C. The next meeting will feature the return of snacks!

**XII. Executive Session (*none required*)**

**XIII. Adjournment**

- A. Patricia Smith makes a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavin  
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary