



**The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees  
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608  
July 8, 2021 at 6:00pm**

**Trustees:** Elizabeth Yull (President), Crystal Smith (Treasurer), Rick Kavin (Recording Secretary, Mayor's Delegate), Deniece Johnson, Lavern Rice, 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, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 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, Crystal Smith, Deniece Johnson, Patricia Smith, and Rick Kavin

B. Not Present: Lavern Rice

**IV. Agenda Approval**

A. Patricia Smith made the motion to approve the July 2021 agenda with the following amendments

1. "Approval of Emergency BOT meeting" removed (as the last emergency minutes were approved at the June meeting)
2. Addition of "Hazard Pay" to New Business

B. Deniece Johnson seconded the approval of the amended agenda

C. **Motion passes 6-0**

**V. Approval of Minutes**

A. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 2021 Board meeting

B. Deniece Johnson seconded the motion

C. **Motion passes 5-0-1 (Patricia Smith abstained)**

**VI. Open Public Address**

A. No members of the public present via Zoom

B. (*no public comment*)

## VII. Presentations

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

1. (*see “June 2021 financial reports” from Ann C. Zawarkay, CPA, CGMA*)
2. As of June 30: \$1.8M in investment accounts
  - a. \$61k decrease due to operating activity
3. \$2.7M total fund balances
4. \$369k various trust funds and trust fund income to be released
5. Personnel, salaries/taxes, health benefits, materials, programming, facilities/utilities, security, room upgrades all under budget
  - a. Facilities/utilities likely not to hit under after fiscal year is closed out
6. Technology is over budget \$7k due to final payment of Collection HQ software (outstanding invoice from May 2020 for media box equipment)
7. With Reading Room and technology upgrades excluded, still under budgeted deficit
8. Net income was a deficit of approx. \$151k
  - a. Budgeted deficit for period was \$999k
  - b. Positive variance of \$848k
  - c. Positive variance from operations of \$220k to end fiscal year (accrual from funds owed by City)

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

1. (*no personnel changes*)

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

1. Pat met with the Director to discuss how the Friends can best help the Library
  - a. Outreach – getting out in the community
  - b. Distribution of materials/literature
  - c. Participate in civic meetings (neighborhood associations, etc.) on behalf of the Library
2. Friends will provide a report on their activities, locations visited, etc.

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

#### 1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

##### a. **Meeting space**

- i. Not yet officially open to the public, but increasing number of inquiries
- ii. Small non-profit/community groups (up to ~10 individuals) have been using spaces on case-by-case basis
- iii. Meeting spaces should be open to public in September
- iv. On the schedule:
  - a. Interfaith Caregivers for senior exercise classes – beginning in September
  - b. Book Club Bridal get-together – August 7<sup>th</sup>  
(*policy will need to be developed for such events so that they do not affect services during patron hours*)

##### b. **Lunch program** partnered with Capitol Y – July 6<sup>th</sup>

#### 2. **MARKETING**

- a. Director is working on a **marketing plan** for the Library to increase patronage and awareness of the Library and its services

**b. Trifold**

- i. Looking to produce a handout with info on basic services, calendar events, and increasing library awareness
- ii. First task: canvassing local neighborhood
  - a. Friends will assist in outreach for certain wards/neighborhoods
  - b. Provide calendar of events/informational flyers at the end of each month for the following month's schedule
  - c. The Director has previously attended civic association meetings, but due to the lack of a Supervising Librarian has been less available to do so
  - d. Deniece also suggested strengthening connections with City museums and other entities and encouraging them to share physical and digital pamphlets with their patrons
  - e. Crystal suggested promoting the upgrades to the Library facilities themselves as a means to promote the services and resources at the Library, including via a video tour of the Library building
- iii. Will need a graphic designer/marketing expert to assist with rebranding and promo materials to increase community engagement with the Library
  - a. Budgetary surplus will allow for more professional and robust marketing strategies and tactics
  - b. Expand branding and promotion

**3. BUILDING & TECHNOLOGY**

**a. IT Upgrade**

- i. Approx. 75% complete
- ii. Largest amount of outstanding work is hardware to be replaced and installed:
  - a. New servers
  - b. Ubiquity switch
  - c. Dream Machine
  - d. WiFi extenders
- iii. IT department is working to resolve outstanding issues and will be working at least one full day per week until upgrades are complete, as the upgrade was supposed to be completed in December 2020 and then May 2021
  - a. This has been the upgrade schedule for the last 2 weeks
  - b. Director met with City officials yesterday, who are seeking to increase the availability of the IT staff to the Library

**4. STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

**a. Interns & Volunteers**

- i. Worked 79.5 hours in Trentoniana
- ii. A page was assigned to the room for the current staff

## 5. CONTINUING EDUCATION & MEETINGS

### a. ALA Conference

- i. Director attended virtually
  - a. Focus on policy updates and service enhancements
- ii. Staff continue to attend virtual training sessions

### b. American Rescue Plan

- i. Met with Mayor's Delegate and have been continuously emailing relevant City staff
- ii. Items currently on the document related to TFPL:
  - a. \$500k reimbursement of HVAC fees
  - b. A Bookmobile (\$350k)
  - c. Request for a Social Worker
    - Help with services
    - Connect with necessary resources
    - Library staff cannot handle personal information, while a licensed social worker could
    - Able to be present later than at other municipal buildings due to longer open hours
    - Position would be added based on a grant
- iii. Rick encouraged Board members and Friends to contact their Council members and promote and engage with [www.TalkTrenton.org](http://www.TalkTrenton.org) to show support for these plans
- iv. Crystal suggested a TPD "outreach" officer be placed at the Library to allow for an offsite location for social services
  - a. Rick will contact TPD representatives to discuss such a plan
  - b. Director suggested that there may be support and statistics available from the NJ State Library and will contact them

## 6. COLLECTIONS & MATERIALS

- a. **Circulation** of combined materials increased by 15% since June
- b. **Collection Development Librarian** is reviewing current magazine and newspaper subscriptions in preparation for returning these items for patron use in the Fall
- c. **Physical Collection & eBooks**
  - i. In addition to ordering materials for physical collections, a large order was placed for eBooks in the Overdrive Marketplace
  - ii. Circulation of digital items continues to remain steady
    - a. 216 checkouts in last 30 days
    - b. 1,269 in last 6 months
  - iii. The above numbers is in addition to the physical materials collection

## 7. FINANCES/FUNDING

### a. PACF Grant

- i. Deposited into our operating account for \$2,500 for support of educational activities to prevent youth summer slide

8. **LIBRARY SERVICES**
  - a. **Juneteenth Outreach at Mill Hill Park**
    - i. Huge success!
    - ii. 20+ people registered for e-cards
    - iii. 30 new adult & YA books were distributed
    - iv. Informational flyers and calendars distributed to 100+ people
    - v. Great residential and community organization feedback, esp. regarding reopening, longer hours, and community partnerships
    - vi. Hoping that this will lead to Library participation in more community events
  - b. **Reopening**
    - i. Increased patronage/connections with patrons
      - a. 12% increase in total visits to the Library
      - b. 24% increase in computer usage
      - c. 35% increase for faxing
      - d. Increase in social media engagement in both general TFPL and Trentoniana accounts – 75% on main Facebook page
  - c. **Teen Action Group**
    - i. Up to 8 members!
  - d. **Summer reading**
    - i. Underway with programs for children, teens, adults & staff
9. **TRENTONIANA**
  - a. Large shift of books, boxes, and materials in S2 and S3 sections of the stacks to create storage space for *Trentonian* newspaper archives
  - b. Books written by authors on the façade of the building were re-catalogued as part of Trentoniana extension collection
    - i. Archivist has displayed these works so that patrons can read them at the Library
  - c. **37 visitors in person and 14 incoming inquiries** via email, phone, and the research form

## VIII. Action Items

### A. Bill List

1. (see “TFPL July 2021 Unpaid Bills”)
2. Approval of Bill List
  - a. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the July 2021 bill list
  - b. Deniece seconded the approval of the bill list
  - c. **Motion passes 6-0**

## IX. Old Business

### A. HVAC Update

1. Work cannot begin without permits, **which we are still waiting for**
2. Library Director, Board members, Mayor’s Delegate, Clark Caton Hintz, etc. have all contacted the City’s Department of Housing & Economic Development

### B. Insurance Renewal Complete

1. Mostly the same as previous policy, with some proportionally minor dollar amount adjustments
- C. Staff Day - **reminder, Friday July 23, 2021**
1. Typically, the staff have breakfast together before activities begin
  2. Text Director or Shanna for entry if doors are locked

**X. New Business**

A. Board Ideas for Action (*document attached*)

1. Review of Board Bylaws
  - a. **Shanna will email to the Board**
2. Total Review of Library Policies (in conjunction with Director and staff)
  - a. Some need to be redated
  - b. Some can be consolidated
  - c. Others must be completely revamped, eliminated, or added
  - d. To be reviewed on case-by-case basis
  - e. Likely a six-month, ongoing project
3. Increase Board advocating for the Library within the community and with City Gov't
4. Develop a Strategic Plan
  - a. Review Mission and Vision
  - b. At least five years into the future
  - c. Done by Committee to include Lib staff, community and Bd members
    - i. **Director will recommend staff and patrons for a committee**
    - ii. Meetings beginning in September?
5. Encourage Board to volunteer at the Library in a department of their choice
  - a. 2-4 hours a month
  - b. Good for understanding functions of Library, building rapport with staff/patrons, etc.
  - c. Can "pre-schedule" with relevant staff
6. Additional Board member input
  - a. Crystal: Board should implement one major fundraising initiative each year
    - i. Include key City staff/community stakeholders
    - ii. Friends can also participate and promote
  - b. Deniece: major event for Library's 120<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2022
    - i. Director mentioned previous, pre-COVID idea for an indoor mini-golf tournament
    - ii. Deniece suggested a Gala event at the Library

B. Fiscal Year to Calendar Year

1. City has moved to Calendar Year budget – developing 6-month bridge budget with full calendar year budget for 2022
2. Director and Mayor's Delegate met with City Administration and Finance representatives
  - a. Team suggested no urgent need to move to CY with regard to payments from City (which will remain quarterly), but may make sense for efficiency and ease of budgeting to match City schedule

- b. TFPL receives \$2m each year, which will not change with regard to the budget schedule
    - c. Director spoke with both financial advisor and auditors, who suggested it may make sense
  - 3. Crystal Smith made a motion to move TFPL to a calendar year budget in line with the City of Trenton
    - a. Patricia Smith seconded the motion
    - b. Motion passes 6-0
- C. Restoration to Building Exterior
  - 1. Need to put a bid out, as the cost is significantly over the bid threshold
  - 2. We received an estimate from A. Pennacchi & Sons for \$132,565 for all repairs
  - 3. Director and Mayor's Delegate met with City representatives to discuss the necessary structural expenditures and upgrades
    - a. City Chief of Staff and Business Administrator will visit the Library to tour the facility and receive updates on damage, renovation costs, and other needs
- D. American Rescue Plan Act Grant (NJSL)
  - 1. Resolution to be signed by Board President
  - 2. Director submitting request for funding (must relate to digital services, outreach, etc.)
  - 3. Two options:
    - a. \$25,000
    - b. \$100,000
    - c. Millennium Strategies suggested submitting for the smaller amount, since the larger dollar amount is designed for larger, regional library systems
  - 4. Request will be submitted for "Pop-Up Libraries"
    - a. Can be located anywhere, ideally in a high-traffic/high-visibility area
    - b. Can be relocated based on use, and statistics are provided to Library staff
    - c. Currently available at a reduced cost
    - d. Patrons can download books to their phones and devices for a set limit of time (two weeks, etc.)
    - e. Would be a marketing tool for the Library while also conducting community outreach and providing digital services
    - f. Pop-Ups also direct users to the physical branch to obtain a Library card, use services, etc.
- E. Approve "Abuse & Molestation Policy" – draft circulated by Director
  - 1. No current policy, so insurance company suggested the Board adopt one with clear definitions and guidelines
  - 2. Draft policy applies to all staff, volunteers, patrons, Board members, etc.
  - 3. Deniece suggested certain edits to the draft to allow for clearer language and to be aligned with state requirements/language
  - 4. Deniece also suggested adding particular language to specifically address at-risk individuals as well as specified penalties, appeals process, investigation procedures (outside of police investigation), etc.

- a. Crystal also noted that there should be procedures to address staff status during an active investigation
- b. Library must follow up to ensure law enforcement has contacted CPS/DCF/other relevant agencies
5. Crystal suggested using state law/language directly to ensure compliance, especially with regard to reporting requirements
6. Director and Deniece will update language and circulate to attorney/insurance company; Board will vote on changes at the August meeting

F. Hazard Pay

1. Rick made a motion to authorize the Director to submit a formal request to the City of Trenton to process and disburse the premium (hazard) pay approved for TFPL staff via City Council Resolution 21-266 in accordance with the guidance distributed by the US Department of Treasury
  - a. Crystal second the motion
  - b. Motion passes 6-0

G. September Board Meeting Date change/cancel (September 9, 2021)

1. Meeting will be moved from Thursday, September 9 to Thursday, September 2, 2021

**XI. Announcements**

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is Thursday, August 12, 2021, beginning at 6:00 pm

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

**XIII. Adjournment**

- A. Deniece Johnson makes a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavim  
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary