



**The Trenton Free Public Library Board of Trustees
Main Branch, 120 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
August 12, 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

Staff: Rebecca FrancoMartin (Director)

- I. Call to Order**
 - A. Elizabeth Yull, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:03 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 (*arrived at roughly 6:15pm*), Patricia Smith, Lavern Rice, and Rick Kavin

- IV. Agenda Approval**
 - A. Agenda will be amended to table "Abuse & Molestation Policy"
 - B. Lavern Rice made the motion to approve the amended August 2021 agenda
 - C. Patricia Smith seconded the approval of the agenda
 - D. **Motion passes 5-0 (Deniece Johnson was not present for the vote)**

- V. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Crystal Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the July 2021 Board meeting
 - B. Patricia Smith seconded the motion
 - C. **Motion passes 5-0 (Deniece Johnson was not present for the vote)**

- VI. Open Public Address**
 - A. Stacy Fannin
 1. Patron was banned from Library for six months and is disputing the issue
 2. He was not wearing his mask and was asked by security staff to comply with the stated Library mask policy
 3. Requesting a copy of incident report
 4. Board President Elizabeth Yull responded

- a. Detailed four incident reports written by staff to develop the letter banning Mr. Fannin, including his protestations that the Governor claimed he did not need to wear a mask and a threat to a member of the TFPL staff
- b. Board President provided specific policies that were violated
- c. Director and Board President will meet with Mr. Fannin
- d. Security as well as Library staff have spoken with Mr. Fannin numerous times about the mask policy, and Mr. Fannin was aggressive in response

VII. Presentations

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

1. (*see "July 2021 financial reports" from Ann C. Zawartkay, CPA, CGMA*)
2. E-rate reimbursement program is giving credit for internet service instead of cash payment. TFPL is only paying for internet service exceeding what the credit covers each month.
3. \$1.7M in investment accounts
 - a. \$98k decrease due to operating activity
4. Quarterly payment from the City arriving in August
5. \$2.8M total fund balances
6. \$368k various trust funds and trust fund income to be released
7. Personnel expenses are over budget \$102k due to hazard pay for 2020 paid out in July.
 - a. Appropriation revenue is also increased for additional payroll – leaves no impact on net income for period
 - b. This will be reimbursed by City by a mechanism to be determined
8. Health benefits, materials, programming, facilities, utilities, technology, security, room upgrades all under budget
9. Planned expenditures from surplus for the reading room and tech upgrades are over budget by approx. \$13k, due to a delay in project timing – budgeted for the last fiscal year.
10. Net income was a deficit of approx. \$68k
 - a. Loss is typical due to City payment in August, but will be reflected in September
 - b. Budgeted deficit for period was \$103k
 - c. Positive variance of \$34k

B. Personnel Report (*presented by Director FrancoMartin*)

1. (*no personnel changes*)

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

1. Met with Director to discuss supporting Library activities
2. Coordinating outreach
 - a. Will create t-shirts for Friends to wear while canvassing
 - b. Library Card Sign-Up Month in September
3. October is Friends of the Library Month
4. Library received a grant for digital access in the City
 - a. Pat congratulated the Director on receiving this grant
 - b. TFPL was one of fewer than 20 grants awarded to NJ libraries and received one of the highest dollar amounts (\$9,000)
 - c. Nine laptops received for use by the public within the Library

- d. These laptops will help with social distancing for patrons using computers
- 5. Pat thanked Rick for participating in the day's NJSL Trustee Check-In
- D. Austin Edwards
 - 1. Lifelong Trenton resident
 - 2. Large book donation from Newark to be made in connection from Newark Rotary Club member who recently passed away
 - 3. **Deadline of 9/30 to distribute 10,000-15,000 books**
 - a. Wide range of books by genre, age, etc.
 - 4. Coordinating with Director to deliver these books to TFPL
 - 5. Planning to coordinate volunteers, delivery, etc. to keep costs minimal, if any
 - 6. Elizabeth Yull asked why Trenton rather than Newark
 - a. Mr. Edwards noted that local groups had been contacted in Newark as well
 - 7. Crystal Smith inquired about how to distribute these books
 - a. Rebecca explained past donation programs with youth, seniors, etc.
 - b. Coordination with Mayor's Office, City Council, etc.
 - 8. Mr. Edwards will likely return for the September Board meeting as well
- E. Director's Report (*presented by Director Rebecca FrancoMartin*)
 - 1. **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**
 - a. **Old Mill Hill Society**
 - i. Planning Patriots Week event on Race and the Revolutionary War in December
 - ii. To promote, TFPL will host a Community Conversation (in person) on Monday August 16th at 6pm – Crystal Feliciano as moderator and Algernon Ward as a guest
 - Will also be available on Facebook Live
 - Information is available on Library, City, TDA, and Our Trenton websites
 - iii. This event will also be used to discuss how to best present this information to residents in a family-friendly way
 - 2. **MARKETING**
 - a. **Outreach**
 - i. Outreach is the strongest advertising tool for the Library
 - ii. National Night Out in Cadwalader Park feedback included many unaware of the Library reopening or being open at all
 - iii. Targeted outreach needs to continue across all four Wards
 - iv. Will coordinate with Friends of the Library to distribute information
 - v. Will also promote digital resources that can be accessed remotely
 - 3. **BUILDING & TECHNOLOGY**
 - a. **IT Upgrade**
 - i. Met with IT to discuss completion of upgrade and outstanding items (mainly back-end items like servers, WiFi extenders, etc.)
 - Crystal inquired about placing COVID-compliant dividers between PCs

- Staff expressed concerns about being able to safely assist patrons in the smaller space
 - With dividers, the space is very tight and would not be COVID-compliant
 - Space issues with moving tables due to ADA compliance
 - These issues may be remedied if TFPL receives the Library Construction Bond grant
 - **Rebecca will work with Telly to determine safe and effective options, including possibly purchasing different tables**
- ii. Second meeting held with engineer to discuss security of network and how to combat potential service disruptions and reduce impact on Library services
 - iii. Will next meet with architect to discuss a capital improvement assessment for the City
 - Clark, Caton, and Hintz assessment will be shared with City
 - Will be a full assessment including masonry, electric, plumbing, etc.
4. **STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**
- a. **Supervising Librarian**
 - i. Interviews complete and position has been filled
 - ii. Not yet announced to allow the individual to give notice to previous employer
 - b. **Youth Services** were rearranged to compensate for resignation of Youth Services Librarian, who is moving out of state
 - i. Staff rearranged to ensure no break in service
 - ii. Individual has been appointed – has experience, will be attending Masters program for Library Sciences (this program will allow her to serve as a full Librarian)
 - iii. Continuity ensured with familiar staff who are being promoted from within
 - c. **Staff Day – July 23rd**
 - i. Successful event that included team building, breakout sessions to discuss Library services and staff feelings on COVID operations, and library CORE Values (*see staff meeting notes*)
 - ii. Staff works very well together as a team
 - iii. Biggest staff issue is patron compliance with mask policy (masks are available at the Library for those who need them)
 - d. Staff received their **hazard pay** the pay period before last
5. **CONTINUING EDUCATION & MEETINGS**
- a. **Landmarks Meeting**
 - i. CDBG project (accessible ramp and doors in front of building) approved with stipulation that the Library choose an alternate historic color for overhang
 - b. **Plainfield Library**

- i. Visited for a tour and info session on becoming a **Hub or Spoke lab** to provide computer skills certifications to patrons from beginner to advanced
 - ii. Grant would provide new furniture, staff member (for at least one year), digital literacy training, etc.
 - iii. For advanced training, “hubs” would be available off-site
 - iv. Grant would be \$25,000, and TFPL should hear back by September
- 6. **COLLECTIONS & MATERIALS**
 - a. Ordering missing banned books for **Banned Book Month** in September
 - i. Some books on 2020 list (i.e. anti-police, anti-racism, LGBTQ+ themes, etc.) will be displayed to make patrons aware that there are still banned books!
- 7. **FINANCES/FUNDING**
 - a. **Budget meetings**
 - i. Met with City Chief of Staff, Business Administrator, and CFO to discuss budget and transition to Calendar Year from Fiscal Year
 - Capital funding for improvements
 - ii. A second meeting included a walkthrough at the Library with City BA, Asst. BA, IT Director, and Mayor’s Delegate to the Library Board
 - Walkthrough lasted roughly two hours with Director and Maintenance Supervisor
 - Eye-opening with regard to grave need for repairs and improvements
 - b. Grant for **Pop Up libraries** was submitted
 - i. Up to \$25,000
 - ii. Will likely hear back in September
- 8. **LIBRARY SERVICES**
 - a. **Fresh Start**
 - i. NJ State Library did not receive second year funding for Fresh Start
 - ii. Expected to wrap up Aug. 31st unless Institute for Museum and Library Services approves an extension through Dec. 2021 with remaining funds
 - iii. Will coordinate with City’s Office of Returning Citizens
 - iv. No funding for social worker, so TFPL not able to continue program without additional financial assistance
 - b. **September Return of Meeting Rooms & Services**
 - i. Meeting rooms and study cubicles set to reopen
 - ii. Newspapers and magazines will be made available for use in the Library
 - iii. Quarantine of returned materials will end
 - c. **Schedule & Hours**
 - i. Open 9am-5pm on Saturdays beginning Sept. 6th.
 - d. **Summer Reading**
 - i. Ends Aug. 16th
 - ii. Winners will be announced and receive prizes

- iii. Two programs: staff and patrons
- e. **Young Adult Programming**
 - i. 12 attendees at Teen Action Group party
 - ii. Two organizations would like to start virtual programming for fall
- 9. **TRENTONIANA**
 - a. Aerial photo of downtown Trenton circa 1950s was donated to the library
 - i. Board President Yull displayed the photograph
 - ii. Photograph is roughly three feet by three feet
 - iii. Donated by Albert Cooper, Jr.
 - iv. Photo taken before NJ State Library was built
 - v. Trentoniana Archivist will determine a more exact date
 - b. Professors from Princeton and TCNJ, along with a Princeton intern, met and began the first inventory of the 80 record boxes from the *Trentonian*
 - c. Google is now hitting uploaded searchable PDF files with the Trentoniana section of our website
 - i. Now, when you search for a keyword, Trentoniana items appear in results
 - ii. People can view documents, items, etc. in PDF form

VIII. Action Items

A. Bill List

- 1. (*see "TFPL August 2021 Unpaid Bills"*)
- 2. Approval of Bill List
 - a. Deniece Johnson made the motion to approve the August bill list
 - b. Lavern Rice seconded the approval of the bill list
 - c. **Motion passes 6-0**

IX. Old Business

A. HVAC Update

- 1. Everything except fire plans are ready from EMY
- 2. Once those fire plans are complete (hopefully in several days), City will send approval
- 3. Time to receive equipment is very long due to COVID-related industry delays
- 4. Heat will be ready for winter months

B. Abuse & Molestation Policy

- 1. (*tabled until September via agenda amendment*)

X. New Business

A. ARPA Grant for Library Services & Technology

- 1. **Elizabeth Yull will complete necessary paperwork**

XI. Announcements

- A. The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is **Thursday, September 2, 2021, beginning at 6:00 pm**. Please note that this will be the **FIRST**

Thursday of the month rather than the second (as is typical) due to a scheduling conflict.

- B. Elizabeth Yull would like to take two photos of the 2020 and 2021 Boards of Trustees

XII. Executive Session (*if required*)

XIII. Adjournment

- A. Patricia Smith makes a motion to adjourn
- B. **There were no objections**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 7:03pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Kavin
TFPL Board of Trustees Recording Secretary