



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

June 18, 2025

Trustees: Holley Barreto, Kushanava Choudhury, Robert Ginsberg, Mayor Mark Freda, Jeffrey Liao, Keisha Smith-Carrington, Sebnem Tuzun

Library Staff: Erica Bess, William Chong, Jennifer Podolsky, Karen Rackley, Sonja Vloeberghs

Others: Gerard Stankiewicz (Samuel Klein and Company, LLP), Dan Rappaport (member of the public)

At 6:04 p.m. Ms. Tuzun called the meeting to order and announced that this meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was included in a list of meetings on the annual notice statement. The change in location of the meeting was sent to the municipal clerk, the Princeton Packet, Town Topics and Trenton Times and posted in the library, on the library's and municipality's websites and filed in the Administration Office on June 16.

Approval of Consent Agenda – Mr. Ginsberg motioned to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Smith-Carrington seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

- May 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- Final May Bills
- Preliminary June Bills

Board Materials – Ms. Tuzun mentioned the board materials included in the board packet. There was no discussion on the included materials.

Audit Presentation – Mr. Ginsberg introduced Mr. Stankiewicz, a partner at Samuel Klein and Company, the library's auditors. Mr. Stankiewicz noted that the library will receive a clean audit opinion with no comments or recommendations that require the board to prepare a corrected plan of action. He noted the library has a well-developed system of processing its transactions and a good accounting staff. He also noted that the support staff was very helpful, especially Susan Orsini, senior accountant, and Mr. Chong, finance director.

Mr. Stankiewicz noted the accounting records were presented appropriately. From a random sampling, the auditing team determined that all expenditures were properly documented, charged to the correct line item, charged to the correct fiscal year and confirmed that the library is in compliance with the Local Public Contracts Law. He noted that the auditing team performed a random sampling of payroll and the authorized salaries, hourly employees and hourly rates were proper, the required backup information (e.g., w-4, I-9) was on file, and the bank reconciliations agreed to the general ledger. Mr. Stankiewicz discussed the audit report in greater detail and noted the library stayed within its budget.

Mr. Stankiewicz noted that the final audit report will be issued once the State provides them with the pension and benefits information.

Public Comment – Mr. Rappaport said he received an email from Not In Our Town that stated their group was no longer allowed to use the library. Ms. Podolsky noted that the library has had a long standing partnership with NIOT. She noted that while preparing the library’s programming schedule for 2025, the library needed to reduce the amount of programs with NIOT to make the best use of the library’s budget.

Mr. Rappaport relayed a negative experience he had with a staff member when he asked about xeroxing papers for work. Ms. Podolsky said she would follow up even after further discussion revealed that it was most likely a misunderstanding by the library staff member who did not know that a Xerox machine was.

Mr. Rappaport asked if the library could return to being open until 9 p.m. on Fridays. Ms. Podolsky explained that the library looks at statistics (days of the week, time of day and the visitor count) to determine the best use of funding to operate and staff the library. She noted that several years ago the library reduced its hours on Fridays and increased its hours on the weekends. She noted that due to budget constraints, it is unlikely that the library will open after 6 p.m. on Fridays.

Mr. Rappaport noted that bicycle parking outside of the library is missing. He said that as part of the Princeton Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, they are concerned with adequate bicycle parking in all of Princeton. Ms. Podolsky deferred to the mayor as that is municipal property. The mayor said he will look into it.

Ms. Kim Dorman shared how the library became involved with providing ideas for creating a lineage registry for Einstein’s Begonias (kudos to Nora Walsh, Adult Services librarian, for providing Stephen Hiltner with many suggestions), and that the library was mentioned in Princeton Perspectives survey of “What hidden gem have you discovered around greater Princeton?” for its wonderful children’s book section and for Dancing Under the Stars (kudos to Marissa Warren, head of Youth Services, and Janie Hermann, programming manager).

President’s Report – In Mr. Van Buren’s absence, Ms. Tuzun read his report: “Our preparations now regarding the budget are very important as they should set the direction for how we prioritize and manage going forward. Thanks to the staff for moving us forward by thoughtfully considering how we can realize our strategy in these challenging times.”

Friends and Foundation Report – Ms. Barreto reported that the Friends and Foundation will have an Around Town event on Sept. 30 with Vishaan Chakrabarti, founder of The Practice for Architecture and Urbanism, on Oct. 17 - Beyond Words with Mary Roach and her new book “Replaceable You: Adventures in Human Anatomy,” and on Oct. 28 an Around Town event with Katie Kitamura, author of “Audition.”

Ms. Barreto reported the bookstore sales were nearly \$15,000 this month, and the Friends and Foundation are on track to meet or exceed last year’s results.

Finance Committee Report – Mr. Liao noted the Finance Committee met yesterday with Mr. Stankiewicz to review the audit report. Mr. Chong noted that Ms. Chernik, former Finance Director, did a great job with the books and records for the accounting, making the audit go smoothly.

Personnel Committee Report – Ms. Tuzun noted the committee met with Mr. Van Buren and Ms. Podolsky. “Due to the recent enactment of the NJ Pay and Benefits Transparency Act, effective June 1, 2025, the personnel committee convened on Wednesday, June 4, to undertake a comprehensive review of the library’s compensation policy and salary guideline procedures. This practice aims to guarantee the library compensation practices remain aligned with its strategic objective, effectively attract and retain skilled professionals, uphold internal equity and fully comply with all legal mandates, particularly the

new State legislation concerning compensation information and job postings. The committee's ongoing review seeks to ensure fair and competitive remuneration for all library personnel."

Policy Committee Report – There was no report.

Strategic Oversight Committee Report – There was no report.

Fundraising Report - Ms. Barreto conveyed Ms. Keesling's appreciation to the trustees - those that have taken the fundraising training and those that are scheduled to receive the training. She will be emailing the trustees fundraising talking points after all trustees have taken the training.

Director's Report - Ms. Podolsky noted that meetings will be scheduled with several trustees to discuss the anticipated budget process. She shared information from the BoardBUZZ which was posted to the board website. She noted the Summer Reading Soirée on July 16, and encouraged the trustees to look at the bulletin board in the Youth Services department.

Unfinished Business – None.

Correspondence - None.

Acceptance of the 2025 Audit Report - Mr. Ginsberg motioned to accept the 2025 Audit Report; Ms. Smith-Carrington seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Comments – Mr. Ginsberg recommended the library have a visual progress report on the Spark Lab construction. He asked if the library found someone to fill the library's planters [yes, D&R Greenway].

Proposed Agenda Items – There were no proposed agenda items. Programming Outcomes (proposed in May) will be presented in July.

Meeting Schedule/Adjournment – Mr. Ginsberg motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Oster seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2025. (There was discussion about the date and time of the July board meeting and its conflict with the Summer Soirée. The board will consider changing the date and/or time of the July board meeting.)