



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

December 17, 2025

In Attendance

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

Library Staff: Erica Bess, Laura Bishop, Becky Bowers, William Chong, JiHae Ju, Jennifer Podolsky, Karen Rackley, Sonja Vloeberghs

Teen Reps: Lily Ludewig

At 6:04 p.m. Mr. Van Buren called the meeting to order and announced that pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was provided as part of the annual schedule of meetings to the municipal clerk, Princeton Packet, Town Topics and Trenton Times on Jan. 3, 2025. The notice was posted in the library, on the library's and municipality's websites and has remained continuously posted as the required notices under the Statute. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the library's Administration Office.

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.

- Nov. 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- Final November Bills
- Preliminary December Bills

Board Materials: There was no discussion on the Monthly Director's Report or the Monthly Statistics.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

President's Report: Mr. Van Buren thanked the staff, Ms. Podolsky and the trustees for a successful year.

Friends and Foundation Report: Ms. Barreto noted that the Friends and Foundation:

- reviewed the two board candidates at a meeting in November.
- made \$15,000 more from fundraising events than in 2024.
- will hold their first Friends event in 2026 in March with Colm Toibin.
- endowment is valued at \$19.8M, with a net investment gain of \$2.3M.
- approved an additional \$25,000 to the library for 2026, to cover funds not received from the University as the University has discontinued their funding for these events.

Teen Representative Report: Lilly Ludewig introduced herself as a senior at PHS, and reported the teens' recent activities, upcoming events, social media and collaborations. Lilly noted the teens held an end of the year favorite event, Book Flood - high school students from the area wrapped and swapped books as well as enjoyed food and activities; Teen Book Tuesdays - short videos of book recommendations posted on social media for teens; and Keeping Tabs - the teens podcast on Spotify that has a large audience.

Lilly reported the upcoming a capella night – a capella groups from schools in the area and high schoolers gather on a Friday night to sing, chill and have good snacks. They have many social media - many posts - of note there are pamphlets that advertise Princeton small businesses and the Boba guide, designed by Lilly, that provides fun places and third spaces to hang out.

The teens will be collaborating to offer a free SAT tutoring program, a dance party with the KPop groups from the University and Princeton High School, and collaboration with the municipal student board which will be in conjunction with a capella night.

Finance Committee Report: Mr. Liao noted that the committee met and discussed the amendment to the budget with the goal of limiting the use of fund balance to a reasonable amount.

Personnel Committee Report: Ms. Tuzun noted the committee met and reviewed the eight applications for the open board of trustees seat; three applicants were interviewed and the committee's recommendation will be passed to the mayor for consideration.

Policy Committee Report: Mr. Ginsberg noted the committee did not meet.

Strategic Oversight Committee Report: Ms. Barreto noted the committee met and discussed the proposed amended budget.

Fundraising Report: Ms. Barreto reported that the Development Office is on track to meet or exceed the annual appeal goal. They have raised almost \$150,000 for the endowment this year (last year was \$5,000). Ms. Barreto noted that Claire Bertrand will be the new full time Development manager. Ms. Bertrand will be handling a big picture strategy for the bookstore and will manage the work for the Friends and Foundation events. The Development office will hire a book store assistant.

Director's Report: Ms. Podolsky noted the library's Staff Development Day was a great day with breakfast, 30-minute lightning sessions given by staff, a preview of the Spark Lab, lunch, fun and games and delicious desserts. A dessert contest was held with 10 desserts; winners received gift cards. Ms. Podolsky thanked the trustees for contributing gift cards and thanked the staff for all of their hard work.

Ms. Podolsky noted the BoardBuzz was posted on the board's website with information about the Charlie Cart. Ms. Bishop provided additional information about the cart which is a mobile kitchen obtained from the University to be used by the library for food education programs.

Ms. Podolsky noted the Spark Lab should open at the end of January.

2026 Proposed Operating Budget - Amendment: Mr. Ginsberg motioned to approve the amendment to the 2026 proposed operating budget. Mr. Liao seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Mayor Freda abstained. All others voted to approve the amendment to the 2026 proposed operating budget.

Correspondence - There was no correspondence.

Resolution 2025-30: Sylvia Beach Way Public Entry Doors Replacement - Award of Contract: Mr. Ginsberg motioned to approve the Resolution 2025-30:. Ms. Tuzun seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Friends and Foundation Board Members: Mr. Ginsberg motioned to approve the two Friends and Foundation Board Members recommended by the Friends and Foundation. Ms.Oster seconded the motion. A few questions were asked about how many board seats (18) and the number of unfilled seats (xx). The motion passed unanimously.

2026 Meeting Dates. Ms. Barreto noted that the meeting dates were not included in the board packet. Mr. Ginsberg motioned to approve the 2026 board meeting dates as the third Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. Ms. Smith-Carrington seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Comment: Mr. Ginsberg acknowledged and thanked Mr. Choudhury for his time on and contributions to the board of trustees.

Proposed Agenda Items: There were no proposed agenda items.

Resolution 2025-31: Executive Session for Personnel Matters: At 6:35 p.m., Mr. Ginsberg motioned to approve Resolution 2025-31 and enter into closed session to discuss personnel matters; Ms. Smith-Carrington seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

The board met in closed session to discuss personnel matters. No action was taken as a result of the closed session. At 7:25 p.m., Mr. Ginsberg motioned to return to open session; Ms. Oster seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Mr. Ginsberg motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Tuzun seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.