



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

March 18, 2026

In Attendance

Trustees: Holley Barreto, Robert Ginsberg, Mayor Mark Freda, Jeffrey Liao, Stephanie Oster, Priya Peyman, Keisha Smith-Carrington, Sebnem Tuzun

Library Staff: Erica Bess, Laura Bishop, Janie Hermann, JiHae Ju, Jennifer Podolsky, Karen Rackley

Teen Rep: Lilly Ludewig

Others: Raz Godelnik (member of the public)

At 6:01 p.m. Ms. Tuzun 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. 6, 2026. 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; Mr. Liao seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Mr. Freda and Ms. Smith-Carrington were not present for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

- Feb. 18, 2026 Meeting Minutes
- Final February Bills
- Preliminary March Bills

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

Public Comment: After Ms. Tuzun noted the guidelines for providing public comment, Mr. Raz Godelnik wished to comment publicly. He noted that he was a resident of Princeton and loves the library. He expressed disappointment regarding the reduction of library opening hours and the perceived lack of transparency/public input in the decision-making process. Mr. Godelnik noted that despite rising taxes, library access is decreasing.

Ms. Tuzun thanked Mr. Godelnik for providing his feedback and recommended that he connect with the executive director at a separate time to discuss the process and data behind the decision.

President's Report: Mr. Van Buren was unable to attend the meeting. There was no president's report.

Teen Representatives: Lilly Ludewig noted that the Teen Advisory Board hosted several recent events: Open Mic Night which is a student-run event by TAB and the Princeton Student Board and featured skits,

songs and jokes, and the K-Pop Dance Party which included the high school K-pop dance team as well as the University's K-pop dance team with about 70 attendees.

Ms. Ludewig noted the upcoming events for TAB - Book Launch, Teen Talk, Spark Lab / VRcade, Teen Writing Showcase and "I Read This Book." She noted that TAB is working on developing a teen-led second language conversation program.

Executive Committee: Ms. Barreto noted the committee met to discuss the upcoming budget.

Finance Committee Report: Mr. Liao noted the committee met and discussed the budget.

Personnel Committee Report: The committee did not meet. There is no report.

Policy Committee Report: Ms. Oster noted the committee met and reviewed the Bylaws and noted the committee is waiting on feedback to determine if revisions are required.

Fundraising Report: Ms. Barreto noted that the first Beyond Words event of 2026 will feature Colm Tóibín on March 26, and an upcoming Around Town event is on May 12 with Ellen Burstyn. Ms. Barreto noted the development office will launch their Spring appeal in April, focusing on community support, hoping for 250 donors by April 30. She noted that the development director will schedule fundraising for those trustees that have not been able to attend. Ms. Barreto noted that during National Library Week, there will be an opportunity to honor staff with a book dedication.

Director's Report: Ms. Podolsky noted that per state aid regulations, trustees will now be required to each complete two hours of training per year. Ms. Podolsky referred the trustees to and highlighted several things on the BoardBUZZ that is located on the trustees' website. She mentioned the new Digitization Station that converts VHS and DVD media into modern MP4 formats, National Library Week with the theme of Find Your Joy with a community-led reading of Winnie-the-Pooh and many activities during the week including a Teddy Bear Picnic and Earth Day Trashion Show. She highlighted the Phyllis Marchand lecture series, FrancophoneFest, women-led author events that can be found on the library's YouTube channel and Take Your Child To Work Day on April 23.

Sustainable Collections Budgeting Presentation: Ms. Ju, head of Access Services, presented to the trustees. She noted that the library is facing several challenges including sustaining its collections, the incredible growth in digital readership and unfavorable pricing and metered access terms by major publishing houses. She noted that digital demand has doubled (now accounting for 40% of checkouts), while the materials budget has remained flat and in order to fund the digital demand, print book purchases fell 7% last year and continue to decline. She noted that average waits for digital content has increased by 55%, with popular titles often reaching 6+ months. Ms. Ju explained how publisher pricing models have shifted from perpetual ownership to time limited licenses at dramatically higher costs and without a strategic budget adjustment, the library faces a choice between reducing access or eliminating services (such as Kanopy which was eliminated earlier this year). Ms. Ju noted that to ensure long-term access, the library must secure sustainable funding that reflects modern reading habits, protects the print budget and educates the community on the rising costs of digital content.

Correspondence: There was no correspondence.

Strategic Plan Update - 2025 Q4 Accomplishments: Ms. Podolsky referred the trustees to the document that was included in their board packet. She highlighted several accomplishments from the 2025 Q4 Accomplishments compiled by Ms. Bess.

Board Comment: Mr. Ginsberg asked if there has been an increase to the donor base as a result of the new multiple-event fundraising model and whether the same people are attending each of the events.

Ms. Barreto commented she was delighted that the library, having moved away from the single-day children's event, offers events all year long for kids of all ages.

Ms. Smith-Carrington emphasized that the library and the schools are partners in literacy development for the community and she noted that the journaling program she attends at the library underscores the library's unique ability to bring people together from disparate places.

Proposed Agenda Items: There were no proposed agenda items.

Adjournment: Mr. Ginsberg motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Smith-Carrington seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2026.