



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES EMERGENCY MEETING MINUTES April 17, 2026

### In Attendance

Trustees: Holley Barreto, Jeffrey Liao, Stephanie Oster, Priya Peyman, Keisha Smith-Carrington, Sebnem Tuzun, Chris Van Buren

Library Staff: Erica Bess, William Chong, Shannon Hurley, Jennifer Podolsky, Karen Rackley

Other: Tim Quinn, two other members of the public joined as well by phone.

At 3:31 p.m. Mr. Van Buren called the meeting to order and announced that adequate notice of this meeting was not provided because an emergency exists as defined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-9(b). The urgent matter, a response to the April 15 letter from the municipal finance committee regarding library municipal appropriation, requires immediate action as the decision by the library is required to the municipal finance committee by 1 p.m. on Monday, April 20. The need for this meeting could not have been foreseen in time to provide 48-hour notice. Notice was provided and posted on April 17, 2026 at noon on the library's legal notices webpage and in the library. This meeting is restricted solely to this emergency matter.

**Emergency Declaration:** Mr. Van Buren informed the trustees that two-thirds of the members present must vote affirmatively to proceed with the emergency meeting. Ms. Tuzun motioned to proceed with the emergency meeting, Ms. Smith-Carrington seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:** Mr. Van Buren invited members of the public to comment and gave instructions on how to do so.

Mr. Tim Quinn, 50 Wilton Street, Princeton, asked to make a public comment. He expressed concern over the council's handling of the library budget, arguing that proposed further cuts and reduced parking subsidies threaten the institution. He urged the board to maintain the 20-year parking agreement upheld by elected officials, from both the former borough and former township, and from the consolidated municipality of Princeton, and postpone decisions until public input is allowed. Mr. Quinn noted that he is opposed to reducing the parking subsidy from two hours to one, as the two-hour subsidy was a past promise to keep the location of the library downtown. He noted that to meet the rise in employee healthcare, the library reduced services and hours, including cutting long-awaited extended Sunday hours. He believes those cuts hurt the community. Mr. Quinn urged the board to take no action on the request made by the council.

**Response to April 15 Letter from Municipal Finance Committee Regarding Library Municipal Appropriation** [Please note that the communication from the Municipal Finance Committee was an email, not a letter.]: Mr. Van Buren noted that the trustees and the town council have been engaged in continuing conversations to finalize a library budget that best serves the community and the growing

demand for library services. Increases in nondiscretionary costs, including a state-mandated 36.5% increase in healthcare benefits, rising utility costs and the maintenance needs of a 20-year old building that sees 740,000 visitors in a year, far exceed the general inflation rate increase the library is requesting for the 2026 budget.

Mr. Van Buren noted that on April 15, the board received an email from the municipality's finance committee. He read a portion of that email:

“After much discussion, there are two recommendations we believe that we can make to the full council, which would need to approve any changes. Number one, if the library reduces the number of staff parking permits in use, at any one time from 50 to 40, [which Mr. Van Buren noted, has already been suggested by the board], and if all free parking is eliminated, we would be able to fully fund your request for a 3% increase this year. [Mr. Van Buren noted that the board understands that “free” parking refers to the 90 minutes provided to library patrons, and does not include the up to 30 minutes of free parking provided to all that use the parking garage.] Number two, if the library reduces the number of staff parking permits in use at only at any one time from 50 to 40, and if free parking for non residents is limited, we would be able to fund \$50,000 of your request. On this topic, there is no sitting council member nor anyone who was on the council in the past nine years, who was aware that free parking had been extended to non residents. If neither of these options work for the library, the budget will remain unchanged, consistent with the clear guidance you received prior to your budget submission. Unfortunately, given the state requirements for amending an adopted budget and the required notice provisions, we will need an answer by midday, Monday, no later than 1 p.m.”

Mr. Van Buren noted that the board discussed these options in its meeting on Wednesday, April 15, but did not bring a motion regarding the response.

The Trustees discussed the recommendations made by the municipality's finance committee and expressed concern that accepting the proposed initial cuts could lead to further reductions to the library's budget in the future. They also expressed concern over the rising healthcare costs, this year and expected for next year, and noted that the municipal funding only covers personnel costs and does not cover all costs of the library. They noted that because the library relies on donations to fund collections and services, they were concerned that removing the parking privileges may discourage donors and patrons.

The Trustees agreed that since the municipality controls the parking garage and the budget, the responsibility for eliminating some or all parking privileges should be the municipality's.

The Trustees recognized the value of the library's current and historical partnership with the municipality and that the library's value as a community resource is built on this long-standing relationship.

Mr. Van Buren asked for a motion from the board. Ms. Tuzun motioned that the board provide no formal response to the municipal finance committee. Ms. Oster seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Adjournment:** Ms. Smith-Carrington motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Tuzun seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.