Call to Order:
Dr. Crist called the meeting to order at 5:15pm. In accordance with the open public meetings act, a notice of the meeting was advertised in the Star-Ledger, and a schedule was sent to the City Clerks’ office and posted on the Newark Library’s public announcement board. Dr. Griffin called the roll.

Board Members Present:
Timothy J. Crist, Trish Morris-Yamba, Gayle W. Griffin, Clement A. Price, Sandra King, Claudia P. Granados. Samuel A. Delgado (excused)

Others Present:
Wilma Grey, Director, Assistant Directors Joseph Casale and George Williams, Jared Ash, members of library staff and the Newark community.

Minutes:
Dr. Crist requested comments or corrections to the minutes of January 25, 2012. On a motion from Dr. Griffin, seconded by Mrs. Yamba, (107036 N.S.), the minutes were accepted by unanimous vote.

Correspondence:
Dr. Crist noted that several pieces of correspondence were received in the board packets.

Director’s Report:
Ms. Grey’s opening remarks detailed the progress and growth of the New Jersey Hispanic Resource and Information Center (NJHRIC). She then asked Supervising Library, Ingrid Betancourt, who heads Hispanic Services at the Library to provide a short overview of the services and activities of the NJHRIC.

Ms. Betancourt reported that the City of Newark is home to the largest Latino population in the state of NJ, with approximately 94,000 residents or officially 34% of Newark’s residents; approximately 1.5 million Hispanics live in New Jersey representing 20 different Latino heritages. She said that for the last 30 years the Library has endeavored to identify and respond to the diverse needs of the Hispanic community. Spanish speaking librarians were hired to create specific outreach programs, expand the Spanish language collections and services and create La Sala Hispanoamericana, the designated service point for new Latino immigrants in the city. In addition, the Library has a long tradition of partnering with local Latino organizations to present cultural programming,
exhibitions, outreach services, workshops and professional services. Because of its steadfast commitment to the local and the state-wide Latino communities, in 2001 the Library positioned itself to become the first and only Latino archive in the state with the creation of the NJHRIC

Ingrid then asked staff archivist, Yesenia Lopez, to talk about the activities of the NJHRIC. Yesenia explained that the NJHRIC responds to the needs of a growing Latino community in the city and state by providing a comprehensive range of services. There are three components: La Sala Hispanoamericana; the Hispanic reference collection; and the Puerto Rican archives. Yesenia said that the Hispanic Reference Collection is made up of Spanish and English resources. In 2006, the HRC was awarded a grant by the State Legislature to develop community profiles of the Cubans, Columbians and Ecuadorians. These profiles comprise a series being published by the Newark Public Library. The first book, *Cubans in New Jersey*, is expected to be published this year. Local Latino papers are being preserved and a growing Latino oral history collection currently comprises 100 histories. The Puerto Rican Community Archives (PRCA) is the only resource that is currently documenting the contributions of this under-documented community of 20th century migrants in NJ. PRCA is looking to create a new model for organizing and evaluating collections, working with La Casa de Don Pedro. The Center for Hispanic Policy at New Jersey Department of State provides summer interns to help with the project. The NJHRIC has been enthusiastically supported by the Latino community since its inception in 2001, by a committee headed by Dr. Olga Waggenheim. This committee (now the Friends of the HRIC) has raised more than $600,000.

Ms. Grey thanked Ingrid and Yesenia. She asked the Board if this type of presentation was helpful and said that there would be presentations from other divisions at future meetings. Dr. Crist characterized the service as a model for how the Library can continue to engage the community and place the Library ahead of the curve on topical issues and trends of the day. He closed his remarks by mentioning a letter received from Dr. Gail Malmgreen, Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives New York University in which she praised the work and commitment of Ms. Lopez.

**President’s Report**

Dr. Crist began with an update of a meeting that he and Ms. Granados had with Mayor Booker, which Ms. Granados had arranged. At the meeting, he told the Mayor of the Library’s engagement with literacy, with job and career assistance for Newark citizens, and with ongoing development of its heritage and special collections. Dr. Crist observed that the mayor responded with considerable interest. He then asked Ms. Granados for her comments. She characterized the Mayor as being thrilled with the meeting and excited about the programmatic direction of the Library. She said that the Mayor acknowledged the Library’s ongoing economic challenges and remains committed to helping the Library. Ms. Granados described the Mayor’s interest and support as an open door policy to the Library. Dr. Crist reported that it was a candid dialogue, conveying to the Mayor the difficulties experienced as a result of funding cuts of 33% over the last three years. He said that staffing cuts of 39% caused additional stress. Dr. Crist thanked Ms. Granados for arranging the meeting and promised that the Library will look for ways to build on that experience.
Dr. Crist commented on a letter received from Patricia Bender, extolling the quality and level of service she received from James Lewis and Tom Ankner during a recent visit.

“First rate” were the words Dr. Crist used to describe the new brochure explaining, “How to Get a Library Card” that he discovered at the registration desk when checking out a book. The brochure is available in both Spanish and English.

The discussion then moved to the reduced staffing and funding levels and the impact they are having on current initiatives and future projects. Ms. Grey reminded all that new funding will have to come from sources other than the City and we will need to do things differently. Dr. Crist mentioned that grants remain a source of viable project funding, adding that the challenge for any and all grants pursued, must include a staffing element. Commenting on his recent meeting with Jeremy Johnson, Dr. Crist said that he was excited about the offer to set up a presentation about the Library to a group of funders when we are ready.

In his closing comments, Dr. Crist, reminded all that October 2012 is the one-hundred twenty fifth anniversary of the vote to establish the Newark Public Library. Two Thousand Fourteen is the one-hundred twenty fifth anniversary of its opening. We should begin to think and plan for the occasion of this remarkable event to emphasize the cultural imperative the Library is for the Newark community and its citizens. To the question of the Library’s involvement with the eightieth birthday of Philip Roth, Dr. Crist confirmed that the Library is fully established in preparation of that event and that Mr. Roth is pleased to have the Library a part of this celebration.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Dr. Price presented January 2012 Bill Sheet #1200 in the amount of $828,885.23 and February 2012 Bill Sheet #1201 in the amount of $903,384.41, seconded by Dr. Griffin, (107037 N.S.), the board voted to approve the Bill Sheets. Dr. Crist added that the Library has been conservative in its spending, particularly in the face of a projected budget cut of $700,000 which may grow into a million. Dr. Crist asked Ms. Granados on the status of the budget. She reported that City Council received it in early February but has yet to introduce it. Once introduced, there will be opportunities for amendments.

**Board Resolution**

Dr. Crist reported on a standard resolution before the Board to engage Watson Rice, LLP, CPA, to audit the financial statements of the Newark Public Library for the year ending December 31, 2011 for a fee not to exceed $28,500. Dr. Griffin moved to amend the resolution, requesting Watson Rice do the audit pro bono which was seconded by Dr. Price (107038 N.S.). The vote in favor of including in the resolution the request for pro bono services passed with one abstention. A second vote to accept the amended resolution was moved by Dr. Griffin, and seconded by Dr. Price, (107039 N.S.). The motion was carried unanimously.

Dr. Crist moved the discussion to the matter of reducing energy costs. Dr. Crist reported meeting with Ms.Grey, George Williams and Frank Del Gaudio from the Essex County energy program. Mr. Williams was invited to summarize the report. He began by introducing Joel Sonkin, director of the City’s Division of Environmental and Energy Services and invited him to comment on the mission of his Division. Mr. Sonkin said that the division is tasked to assess city operations and find ways to make them more affordable by implementing energy efficiency upgrades and reducing costs. Mr. Williams
spoke of Mr. Sonkin’s assistance with the Environmental Defense Fund, which launched the Climates Corps free environmental assessment, conducted by a group of experts. This free environmental assessment of the Library’s energy needs and use will take place in the summer of 2012. He then referred to the resolution presented to the Board for its approval to participate in a county-wide energy consortium, which will reduce the cost, the Library pays for electricity. The agreement is binding in our commitment to participate. However, once the bids are open the Library retains the right to reject any offer and request other bid solicitations or refuse to participate. Dr. Crist echoed Mr. Williams comments, emphasizing the overall economic benefit gained from participating in a consortium and the benefit of collaborating with the City. Dr. Griffin moved to accept the resolution as presented, seconded by Ms. Granados, (107040 N.S.). The motion carried unanimously.

Development Committee
Dr. Crist reported that with the support of a Prudential Foundation’s Capacity Grant the Library is working with a consulting group called “Library Strategies” to develop case statements and key initiatives that will be helpful in the development of future proposals and will provide a basis for establishing a Library foundation.

New Business
Ms. Grey reported on a request to post the Board minutes on the Library website. Dr. Griffin made a motion to post the minutes on the website, seconded by Ms. King, (107041 N.S.). Dr. Griffin commented that putting the minutes on the website offers greater transparency.

Public Comments:
Dr. Crist opened the meeting for public comments and asked respondents to maintain the three-minute rule.

Jared Ash said that the Library has launched several library wide staff surveys since 2008. He said that it is certain that the findings of this most current survey will no doubt concur with similar findings identified in earlier surveys. In the absence of any demonstrable response or action to the previous findings, it is disappointing to learn the library is spending more for a similar outcome. Ms. Grey pointed out that this survey is a continuum in the process, adding that an assessment is different from a plan. This new activity will result in a plan and the next stage in the process is implementation of that plan. Dr. Crist added that the assessment currently underway is part two of the most recent survey conducted by John Brothers from the Center for Non-Profits. The Library opted to work on part two with a group that has certifiable experience with libraries.

Jared Ash suggested that, in addition to other partnerships, it would be interesting if the Library could be included in the Mayor’s Library at Home initiative. Mr. Ash inquired about the status of the Library’s participation in the Dodge Foundations Poetry Festival. Ms. Grey answered that representatives from the Foundation had been on site to evaluate Centennial Hall as a possible venue. A follow-up visit by the Foundation is planned.

Dorothea Moore commented on Governor Christie’s letter that complimented the Newark Public Library’s support of the Newark community. She then congratulated Ms. Betancourt and her staff for their hard work in developing the NJHRIC. She also observed that the Library has work to do to bring the James Brown African American room back to its “splendor”, beginning with the hiring of a professional librarian.
A Rutgers student asked about Library internships. A conversation followed, with Board members strongly encouraging the Library to seek opportunities to utilize interns to help the staffing situation.

**Executive Session:**
The Board, on the motion from Ms. Morris-Yamba, seconded by Ms. Granados, (107042 N.S.), and passed by unanimous vote, moved into executive session.

**Return to Public Session:**
At 7:42, a motion to return to public session was made by Dr. Crist and seconded by Ms. Granados, (107043 N.S.).

**Personnel Resolutions:**
The following personnel resolution was presented.

In accordance with the By-laws Article V. Section 1, the Director recommends ratification of the following:

On motion of Dr. Crist and seconded by Ms. Granados, (107044 N.S.), that WHEREAS, Maureen Ritter has completed 33 years of services as an employee of the Library, has reached the age of 58 and is now eligible for retirement as a member of the Public Employees’ Retirement System of the New Jersey, now THEREFORE, the Board of Library Trustees approves Ms. Ritter’s retirement from the Library staff effective May 1, 2012. The motions passed unanimously.

**Next Meeting:**
The next meeting was scheduled for 5:00 p.m., May 23, 2012 in the fourth floor auditorium

**Super Executive Session:**
The public session ended at 7:45 and Ms. Grey was excused.

The Trustees then entered into *Super Executive Session* to discuss the Director’s Evaluation.