Minutes of the August 2, 2017 Meeting of the Trustees of the Free Public Library of the City of Newark Held in the 2nd Floor Board Room

Call to Order: Dr. Crist called the meeting to order at 5:13 p.m. and read the Open Public Meeting Act Statement.

Roll Call and Attendance: Dr. Crist called the roll. Dr. Anasa Maat, Ms. Trish Morris-Yamba, and Dr. Rosemary Steinbaum were present. Mr. Jeffrey Trzeciak, Director of the Newark Public Library, was present.

Ms. Sandra King arrived at 5:14 p.m., establishing a quorum.

Mr. Charles Auffant arrived at 5:21 p.m.

The following Board Members were excused: Mr. De'Shawn Wright, Mr. Thomas Alrutz, and Mr. Jeremy Johnson.

Approval of the Public Session Minutes: Dr. Crist asked for comments or corrections to the minutes of the May 23, 2017 meeting. None were offered. On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Dr. Maat, the public minutes of the May 23, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved.

Correspondence: Two pieces of correspondence were discussed:

- 1. Mr. Trzeciak presented an email invitation from Mr. Angel Vargas of the Essex County Latino-American Chamber of Commerce, inviting the Library leadership to participate in the annual gala of the Essex County Latino-American Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Trzeciak extended the invitation to all the Board Members present.
- 2. Mr. Trzeciak presented a brief email of commendation he received from Michael Bright, President and CEO of the Newark YMCA. Mr. Bright praised the Library's e-newsletters and its efforts to keep the public aware of the many Library events. Dr. Crist remarked that the e-newsletters (sent via e-mail) are effective and well-designed.

Director's Verbal Report: Mr. Trzeciak stated he would be brief in order to save time for a presentation by DeEtta Jones and Gary Wasdin of DJA Consulting about the Library's strategic planning process.

Mr. Trzeciak indicated that written reports from the Library Leadership Team were available in the meeting binders.

Mr. Trzeciak presented a list of partnerships to the Board, noting that partnerships play a role in many if not the majority of Library events and activities. He requested that the Board provide input in the partnerships and new partnerships going forward. He noted that the strategic plan would play a role in shaping partnerships moving forward, especially the by defining criteria for progress evaluation as well as goal-setting for each partnership. Dr. Steinbaum thanked Mr.

Trzeciak for the helpful list. Mr. Trzeciak noted the amount of staff effort that went into each partnership. He also reminded that the list was not comprehensive. Dr. Crist also praised the list as a helpful summary, and highlighted that the partnerships provide an opportunity for staff development. Dr. Steinbaum advised that the list of partnerships would benefit from noting the dates for which each partnership was active, so as to specify and refine the list and management of such extensive partnerships. Ms. Morris-Yamba asked about the division of roles and responsibilities for each partnership.

Mr. Trzeciak introduced his initiative to create a diversity committee at the Library. He noted the goals of the committee as:

- staff training and development programs;
- policies and procedures related to recruitment, retention and advancement;
- identification of opportunities internally to celebrate diversity and inclusion;
- revision of the Library's personnel manual; and
- development of a staff recognition and rewards program.

Statistical Report: Mr. Trzeciak reported increases in number of events, patron visits, and inhouse use of the Library. He noted a decline in questions asked and answered.

Mr. Trzeciak repeated his concern that the data collection methods currently used at the Library were inaccurate. He stated he would like to revisit said practices after more progress on the strategic plan was made.

President's Report: Dr. Crist welcomed Ms. DeEtta Jones and Mr. Gary Wasdin to the meeting.

He reported positively about the previous week's Clement A. Price Lecture at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C., and thanked those who attended the event.

Dr. Crist noted that updates on the Carnegie grant project would be given at the two subsequent Board Meetings: Digitization at the September 2017 meeting, and curriculum development at the November 2017 meeting.

Dr. Crist applauded a program at the Library that provided free lunches to Newark children throughout the summer. Ms. Heidi Cramer, Assistant Director for Public Services, explained that the food was provided via funds from the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Library provided coolers and space. She reported that the highest number of lunches served at a single branch in one day was 45. The daily average across all branches was about 300 lunches.

Treasurer's Report: Dr. Crist offered Mr. Alrutz's regrets for not being able to attend. Bill sheet #1264, with the total disbursements of \$1,008,468.42 for May 2017 was presented. On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, the Board unanimously approved Bill Sheet #1264.

Bill sheet #1265, with the total disbursements of \$1,062,024.77, was presented. On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, the Board unanimously approved Bill Sheet #1265.

Development Committee Report: It was noted that Mr. Jeremy Johnson replaced Dr. Steinbaum in her position as Chair of the Development Committee. Dr. Steinbaum delivered the Development report in Mr. Johnson's absence, beginning with some of the grants recently awarded and submitted. (A complete list of grants awarded and submitted at the time of the August 2, 2017 meeting was e-mailed to the Board in advance and is reproduced below for the sake of convenience.)

Awarded:

- o NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, for NJ Libraries Career Connections for Uniform Career Guidance and Job Search Assistance Services, \$151,120
- o New Jersey State Library, Statewide Services, \$58,670
- o NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, for Adult Literacy/ESL Services, \$86,294
- o NJ State Library, Fade To Books Program partnership between NPL and local barbershops, \$750
- o The Hyde and Watson Foundation, for 50 new chairs, \$5,500
- o Victoria Foundation, for High School Academic Support Program (SAT Program), \$10,000
- o Alfred J. Speak Foundation, for High School Academic Support (SAT Program), \$2,920
- o Charles Emil Thenen Foundation, for high school academic support (SAT program), \$2,500
- o Rutgers University-Newark, for Girls Who Code, \$1,000
- o Just announced: NJ Historical Commission, \$54,300

Recently Submitted:

- o Prudential Foundation, capacity building grant for strategic planning process, \$425,000, submitted June 30, 2017
- o Victoria Foundation, for Assistant Teen Librarian and teen programming, \$75,000, submitted July 17, 2017
- o National Endowment for the Humanities: Humanities Collections and Reference Resources, for cataloging and digitizing Special Collections, \$345,172, submitted July 20, 2017
- o NJSL Statewide Services FY18, \$58,670, submitted July 28, 2017

Ms. King inquired about the SAT program and the possibility of expanding the program. Mr. Trzeciak answered that the Newark City of Learning Collaborative (NCLC) and institutions of higher education in Newark were interested in working together to do so and had already partnered on some programs.

Dr. Steinbaum announced that the annual gala would take place on November 30, 2017, 6-9 pm at Nanina's In the Park in Belleville, New Jersey. She stated that the Newark Times would be cohosting the after-party. She went over the honorees, and reported that the Library was off to a very good start with regards to fundraising and had already received a large contribution from

Verizon. Dr. Steinbaum asked the Board to volunteer to sell tickets, and commended them for doing a good job last year.

Dr. Steinbaum reported that the June 2, 2017 event at the Century Association in Manhattan generated increased contact with interested potential donors, and noted that the impact of the event would not be immediately apparent in monetary donations, but she remained hopeful. It was noted that the following Board members attended: Dr. Timothy Crist, Ms. Trish Morris-Yamba, Mr. Jeremy Johnson, Mr. Thomas Alrutz and Dr. Rosemary Steinbaum.

Dr. Steinbaum congratulated Mr. Trzeciak on a job well done with the successful "Hot Cuban Night" on June 28, 2017, held in the Library Courtyard and Lobby. The Library partnered with Pedro from Jimenez Brothers who offered to provide wine and cognac tasting, food, Cuban music and cigar rolling in the courtyard. About 300 people attended, many of whom were new to the Library.

Dr. Steinbaum provided an update on the annual Philip Roth Lecture, scheduled for September 28th, featuring Robert Caro discussing the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Library will also simulcast the Lecture to the 2^{nd} floor reading room and to 5 branches.

Dr. Steinbaum reported that a cultivation event in collaboration with the Newark Museum was taking place on November 16, 6 pm – 8 pm, beginning at the Library and ending at the Museum, for a group of about 80 potential donors. The focus of the event would be John Cotton Dana. Mr. Trzeciak and Dr. Crist would give brief remarks at the Library after a viewing of selections from the Library's Special Collections. The group would then walk to the Museum and be among the first to enter through the Museum's renovated front entrance. Nadine Sergejeff was working with William Peniston from the Museum to coordinate and curate the two mini exhibits for the event.

Dr. Steinbaum reported that the Friends of the Newark Public Library are developing advocacy plans for the State Library construction bond question on the November ballot. She added that the Friends of the James Brown African American Room had several meetings and events, including a screening with the filmmaker of Born in the Struggle.

Dr. Maat stated she was impressed with the outcome of the *Born in the Struggle* screening, which she noted was co-sponsored with the library. She also mentioned a genealogy workshop that occurred at the library in June 2017. She stated that the Friends of the James Brown African American Room were looking forward to doing another workshop regarding wills and trusts, inspired by a similar event at the Schomburg. She also stated the continuing interest in starting a Lorraine Hansberry lecture.

Dr. Steinbaum mentioned that the Friends of the Hispanic Research and Information Center were hosting the opening reception for the Newark Public Library's 2017 Latino Celebration exhibit and program series on September 14, 2017 from 6 – 8 PM in the Centennial Hall.

Dr. Crist mentioned a grant involving Barbershops. Ms. Aaliyah Bowen, Library employee at Springfield Branch, described that the program included canvassing community barbershops

located near branches. She noted that a bilingual barbershop was involved, and said it was important to get men involved in promoting literacy.

Mr. Trzeciak introduced the recent announcement of the Leadership and Laura Bush grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and said that the Library would be applying for at least one (if not more) of these grants. He noted that he has received commitments from several head librarians throughout the City of Newark (including: NJIT, John Cotton Dana Library, Institute for Jazz Studies) to collaborate on a grant application that would propose to recruit Master's of Library Science students from underrepresented backgrounds. These student would receive stipends to pay for their tuition as well as internships at the participating Libraries.

Dr. Crist noted that the \$125 million Library Construction Bond will be on the November ballot. If passed by the voters, local libraries could apply for matching funds for capital projects. He stated the possibility that if the Library were to receive a \$5 million gift, the Act might provide a match of \$5 million. Mr. Auffant inquired about the efforts (if any) of the State library to make voters aware of the Act. Mr. Trzeciak stated that he was keeping a list of questions to ask State Librarian Mary Chute, and requested that the Board forward any questions to him as they think of them.

Operations Committee Report: Dr. Crist provided the report in the absence of Mr. Alrutz. He noted that the City had been providing funds in a timely manner; he also indicated that the committee is looking closely at facility expense budget lines because of increased costs from keeping the Library open for more evening events.

Mr. Trzeciak stated that the Library's allocation in the recently delivered City budget was "flat" (i.e., identical to the previous year's allocation). Since the Library's budget had assumed a 2% increase, he has slowed expenditures in "Books and Materials", the largest variable expense line in the budget.

Mr. Trzeciak stated that he had confirmed the existence and allocation of the \$3.21 million capital budget, confirmed in writing by Mr. Jack Kelly, Budget Administrator for the City of Newark.

Human Resources Committee Report: The Human Resources Committee deferred to the executive session.

Unfinished Business: There was no unfinished business to discuss.

New Business: Dr. Crist invited Ms. DeEtta Jones and Mr. Gary Wasdin to present the progress of the strategic planning process so far. He summarized the events with the consultants up until that point.

Ms. Jones thanked the Board for hosting them, and stated that the past few days had been very busy. She praised the fantastic turnout of the staff sessions on the previous day, and thanked staff members present for their participation in the previous day's forums.

Ms. Jones started with a brief description of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC), composed of staff members, Board members, and chaired by Director Trzeciak.

She recounted the June 22 meeting of the SPSC, where time was spent thinking about the process of working together and efforts were made to survey the current field of work in libraries. She described the strategic planning process as a participatory learning process instead of a compartmentalized "hand-off".

She outlined the SPSC's biweekly meeting schedule and stated that the current stage of work was to complete peer surveys of institutions which mirror NPL in numbers and characteristics. She also stated that the SPSC was looking at peer-aspirant institutions, which are examples of public libraries that NPL aspire to emulate.

She then handed the floor to Mr. Gary Wasdin.

Mr. Wasdin stated that the peer and peer-aspirant surveying process had identified 10 other libraries to investigate. SPSC primarily used the websites of these examples to gather data. SPSC members had been assigned to write reports on a given peer or peer aspirant library. The Committee would then analyze the reports together.

Mr. Wasdin showed a few snapshots of data that were applicable to the library:

- 1. Birmingham, AL. Their Free Public Library is similar to NPL.
- 2. Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh: Very different library system. Some characteristics: Tremendous volunteers. Lots of public service hours. Diverse income sources/streams. Photo rich website of staff and books. Very busy and heavily used. 2.9 million visits in 2015, 3 million items borrowed.

Mr. Wasdin planned to prepare an environmental scan report that would compile the data to help NPL better learn from its peers. He related this to the goal of instilling in staff members the ability to continually scan their environment for ways to improve.

Dr. Crist asked Mr. Trzeciak to send the list of peer libraries to the Board of Trustees for them to see the comparisons in detail.

Ms. King (Board member and member of the SPSC) informed that the annual reports and Facebook pages of peer libraries were invaluable sources of data when preparing the peer reports.

Mr. Wasdin introduced Ms. Aaliyah Bowen who reported about the community forums on input into the strategic plan. Ms. Aaliyah Bowen introduced herself to the Board and stated that there were seven forums, some of which included the presence of a Spanish translator, and the total number of attendees was over 100. There were no forums conducted in Portuguese. She noted the differences in demographics at different branches. This included the observation that the Van Buren branch was attended by many retirees who would benefit from a painting class. She also

reminded that her branch benefitted from the presence of yoga and exercise classes that were especially popular among single mothers and families.

Ms. King asked about the nutrition classes. Ms. Bowen answered that the Weequahic Branch was involved in nutrition classes in collaboration with Beth Israel Hospital Health and Community Wellness Center, represented by Karen Basedow. She stated that the sun up [??] program was also a great success with an average of 150 children receiving lunches every day.

Ms. Bowen also stated that transportation was a big issue for some community members. She stated that she and Ms. Sandra Jones, Springfield Branch Manager, sometimes walked in the community to disseminate information.

Ms. Bowen thanked Mr. Trzeciak for his leadership in the creation of a Children's Librarians Committee and for the opportunity to think about new ideas on how to best engage the community and youth and foster a culture of reading.

Ms. King inquired about the usefulness of a book mobile for the purposes of the children's librarians committee. Ms. Bowen answered that a book mobile would be very useful for the purpose of engaging community areas and members for whom accessibility and geography is an issue.

Mr. Wasdin stated that the book mobile idea came up in both community and staff forums. He reiterated his pleasure at the total number of 106 participants in the strategic planning community forums. He said those community members who participated were very happy to have been asked. He noted that staff members had attended some of the community forums, but that their input was separated in the data. Mr. Trzeciak stated he attended the community forums for the entire length of each session.

Mr. Wasdin noted that the positive aspects of the library were much more reported than the negative aspects or challenges present at the library. He feared that there might be a hesitance to "air out dirty linen," but added that the children who attended were very vocal. He questioned whether or not the presence of children affected the dynamics of what adult patrons were comfortable with sharing as far as negative aspects were concerned.

Mr. Wasdin noted the presence of some distinct trends that emerged during the process of surveying the community. He stated that the online survey received 112 respondents, which he praised as a really positive number based on his experience and the population of Newark. He added that the responses were very thoughtfully written.

Ms. King asked what was done to elicit the responses and expressed concerns that the responses received would be insufficient.

Mr. Wasdin listed some common themes from survey responses, including: pride in Newark, pride in specific communities in Newark, the major need for increased and improved social services, including but not limited to: early childhood literacy, nutrition, healthcare, care for senior citizens. Mr. Wasdin also cited a fear of growth, gentrification and displacement among survey respondents. A need for enhanced visibility and outreach to communities underserved by the Library was also acknowledged. Many attendees to the forums complained about the lowvisibility of the Library and its branches. Problems included poor signage and the perception of limited information about the Library.

Mr. Wasdin also acknowledged the presence of very specific complaints that surfaced in the forums and online survey. The nature of these complaints ranged from facilities, to public services (including services for underserved populations) and collection materials.

Mr. Wasdin framed these challenges as a leadership opportunity for the Library, stating that "[the Library] can play a big role in the many changes currently taking place and to come.

He gratefully acknowledged the oversized role that Library staff members played in the success of the Library's daily operations and the numerous accolades they received in the forums and survey.

Ms. Dale Colston, Library staff member since 1987 and member of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee took the floor and updated the Board on three takeaways from the staff session held on August 1st, 2017:

- 1) Programs and cultural events. She emphasized that everything happening at the library is new, and that the Library is doing more than just "checking out books." Some of the current programs and classes included: ESL and ASL classes. Ms. King asked about the attendance at the classes. Ms. Colston replied that the attendance was maintained about upwards of 30 people at each session. She also reported that the new courtyard was also attracting more excitement and participation at the library. She reminded that the financial support of such new programs was an essential and critical part of these programs.
- 2) Facilities. Many community members view the library as a safe space, particularly for children. More funds are needed to improve facilities.
- 3) Human Resources staff assist all patrons at all times just in the past month questions have been received from over a dozen different states in the nation. She stated that the library staff was "barebones", but that the staff continued to work hard to help patrons. Staff are heavily involved and visible in the Newark community. They develop lasting and meaningful relationships. Some staff feel underappreciated and unacknowledged. Some staff would like clarification in policies and procedures. She reiterated her hope that changes requiring little in the way of funds would be considered and rapidly made.

Ms. Jones reiterated the uniqueness of the library staff. She said it was typical of libraries at the current moment that libraries are strained and expected to change rapidly – she said it was quite typical that there is tremendously low morale at libraries across the board. She stated that that was not the case at the NPL.

Next steps: she stated that data was gathered, but that analysis and formalization was forthcoming and would be made available to the board.

She stated that over the next two months the SPSC would be working to identify strategic directions and will then hold conversations with leaders in the Newark community, followed by another meeting with the staff to identify organizational values.

She stated that another update would be forthcoming in September.

Ms. Jones solicited questions from the Board.

Dr. Steinbaum expressed concern about the role of the Board in the Strategic Planning process. Mr. Trzeciak answered that the board will have the ability to make final decisions. Dr. Steinbaum stated that it would be helpful to have the ability to have input into the process along the way. Mr. Wasdin stated that the conversation would continue at the next Board meeting on September 26, 2017 and the Board would have an opportunity to provide input at that meeting. Mr. Wasdin urged the board to work and discuss among themselves, relying on the 4 members of the board on the SPSC to provide insight into the minute-by-minute process.

Dr. Maat requested that the Board members sitting on the SPSC keep the rest of the Board informed.

Ms. King asked about what stakeholders had been identified so far and expressed concern that these stakeholders might include non-patrons. She also expressed concern about the number of survey respondents. Mr. Wasdin and Mr. Trzeciak motioned to the partnerships list that was handed out. Ms. Jones answered that there had been 200 patrons with input so far, and that there would ideally be ongoing opportunities for patrons to provide feedback to the library on an ongoing basis.

At the request of Dr. Crist, Mr. George Williams, Assistant Director for Facilities and Capital Planning, gave an update on the energy efficiency audit being conducted at the Library by the engineering firm AKF. The audit will be completed and a service company identified to fund and complete the upgrades. He thanked Ms. Abha Sinho for sending data on the costs associated with the current energy expenditures. He thanked Dr. George Hawley for sending schematics and blueprints to the engineers.

Mr. Trzeciak added that he had met with Terri Seeney from Panasonic, and that she had expressed interest in the opportunity of giving technology to the Library, including an HVAC system (which Panasonic makes). Mr. Trzeciak continued that he had two other things to talk to Panasonic about, including other technology donations, and monetary donations.

Dr. Crist stated that focus should be maintained on the need to repair the roof and the HVAC system. He said he would be very interested in the audit report when finished.

Mr. Williams emphasized the importance of sequencing the expenditure of funds moving forward, since so many different pieces were involved.

Public Comment Period:

Dr. Crist solicited public comments.

Mr. Jorge Rodriguez, Head of Information Technology, stated he attended some of the community forums and complemented the consultants on a job well done. He said the turnout could have been larger. He stated that the community still doesn't have access to the internet at home and that the Library still serves an important function of providing access to the internet to the patrons. He stated that access to wireless internet would be an exciting new area to explore, adding that the Prudential technology consultants would be aiding in the exploration of these ideas/areas. He reiterated his appreciation of the strategic planning process, and the excitement and staff interaction it created.

Ms. King expressed her hopefulness to witness an increase in social services offered at the Library. Many others in the room agreed with her and cited the tremendous need that existed for such services

Executive Session: On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, the Board unanimously resolved to move into Executive Session at 7:00 p.m.

Reconvening into Public Session: At 7:30 p.m., on the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, the Board resolved to return to public session to vote on the personnel resolutions, recommended for ratification by Library Director Jeffrey Trzeciak, in accordance with the by-laws, Article VII, Section 1.

On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, the following personnel actions were unanimously approved:

1. That the following appointments (replacement) in the non- competitive division be approved as of the date indicated:

NameTitleSalaryEffectiveTurner, CamilleLibrary Assistant\$27,933yr.7/5/17

2. That the following resignation be accepted and approved:

Name Title Effective
Olayinka, Lolade Monitor 5/17/17

3. That the following removal be accepted and approved:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	Effective
Wilson, Michael	Building Maintenance Worker	5/30/17

4. That the following transfer appointment in the non-competitive division be approved:

Name Sec.		<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Effective</u>
	Rodriguez, Ranssel	Library Asst. \$27,933yr.	Clerk 1 \$37,611yr	6/26/17
2.	Green, Derrick	Bldg.Maint.Wkr pt \$14.32hr.	Bldg.Maint.Wkr ft \$27,933yr.	7/10/17

5. That the promotional appointments of the following, certification by the Civil Service Commission be approved:

Name Sec.		<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Effective</u>
1.	Betancourt, Ingrid	Supv.Libn. \$79,150	Chief Libn \$96,981	6/26/17
2.	Shearin, Cynthia	Libn 2 \$62,706	Libn 3 \$63,960	7/10/17
3.	Malinowski, Monica	Libn 3 temp. \$69,268yr.	Libn 3 \$69,268yr.	6/26/17
4.	Lopez, Yesenia	Libn 2	Libn 3 \$71,346yr.	6/26/17
5.	Sergejeff, Nadine	\$53,258yr. Libn 3 temp.	Libn 3	6/26/17
6.	Volpe, Paul	\$69,268yr. Libn 2	\$69,268yr. Libn 3	7/10/17
7.	Goodnough, Jonathan	\$54,569yr. Libn 2	\$55,660 Libn 3	7/10/17
8.	Ankner, Thomas	\$53,258yr. Libn 3 temp.	\$54,323 Libn 3	6/26/17
9.	Osborne-Boothe, Natasha	\$69,268yr. Libn 2 \$53,258yr.	\$69,268yr. Libn 3 \$54,323yr.	7/10/17

6. That the following base salary increases be approved effective 5/30/17:

Name	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Sec.		
1. Colson, Leslie	\$65,376yr.	\$100,000yr.
2. Smith, Eric	\$67,347yr.	\$70,714yr.
3. Hicks, Craig	\$46,446yr.	\$48,768yr.

7. That the following leave of absence without pay, requested by the named, be approved for three months:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Yancey, Jacqueline	Library Assistant	6/6/17

8. That the request of the person named, leave of absence is terminated and she is returned to active status as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	Effective
Yancey, Jacqueline	Library Assistant	7/17/17

FOOTNOTES

Termination

Resignation Olayinka, Lolade

Removal

Michael Wilson

Retirement

Disability Retirement

Death

Adjournment: As there was no further business, Dr. Crist announced that the next Board meeting would be on September 26, 2017 at 5 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.