

**THE NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
5 WASHINGTON STREET
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2021, 5:00 P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS:

Lauren Wells	President/Chair
Domingo Morel	Vice-President
Timothy Crist	Treasurer
Anasa Maat	Trustee
Hassan Abdus-Sabur	Trustee
Miguel Rodriguez	Trustee
Nicole Johnson	Trustee

STAFF:

Joslyn Bowling Dixon	Leadership Team
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ABSENT:

Antoinette Richardson	Trustee
Rosemary Steinbaum	Trustee

Minutes prepared by Cassidy Civiero from Minutes Solutions Inc. from an audio recording.

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, and the Trustees having been given adequate and proper notice of the meeting, L. Wells called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

On a motion made by D. Morel, seconded by T. Crist, it was resolved to approve the Public Session minutes dated September 22, 2021, as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

L. Wells provided the President's Report. The Heritage Month Event closed with a fantastic reading of *I and You* in Centennial Hall. A friend of Jay Barr had an event on women's reproductive health rights. The Philip Roth Series was held two weeks ago. The NPL continues to expand in-person presence while navigating the reality of virtual proceedings. There is a new budget to discuss, and further consideration must be made for the Clinton branch.

L. Wells thanked Trustees for attending events held by the NPL. She requested a calendar so that Trustees are made aware of events to achieve a collective presence.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

J. Dixon provided the Director's Report. Going forward, the Bridge Plan will be followed in the presentation of reports. There was a visit to the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library in New York to gain strategies for the NPL, including signage and wayfinding. A new vehicle is joining the fleet next week for deliveries, a Dodge Ram, and the NPL logo will be added. Office furniture has been donated to the NPL. Policies on COVID-19 have been updated to include proof of vaccination and photo identification.

There is a grant from IMLS for virtual training on how to serve all library members, including the homeless population. It has a mandatory completion deadline of April 2022. 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten is a program whereby kids receive prizes for every 100 books they read before they are five years old. There was a kickoff event for the program with the mayor.

The NPL presented the proposed budget on September 30, 2021. Unfortunately, the NPL did not receive any increases, and the budget remains at roughly \$10,500,000. A 20-hour per week staff member will be hired for digital literacy skills; a Spoke grant covers it.

J. Dixon presented statistics for the NPL for September 2021 and October 2021.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

T. Crist stated that there were two cash activity reports to review and approve:

Bill Sheet 1316, September 2021

The below invoices for books, binding, incidentals, and payroll, were certified as correct by the Library Director and presented for examination and approval:

Gross Payroll Activity	
September 3 rd	\$ 237,256.82
September 17 th	\$ 242,059.14
Disbursement Activity	
Operating Account	\$ 307,782.44
Grant Account	\$ 44,415.19
Endowment Account	\$ 37,951.82
Capital Account	\$ 86,008.00
Total Disbursement for July 2021	\$ 955,473.41

Bill Sheet 1317, October 2021

The following invoices for books, binding, incidentals, and payroll, were certified as correct by the Library Director and presented for examination and approval:

Gross Payroll Activity	
October 1 st	\$ 324,785.82
October 15 th	\$ 251,481.19
October 29 th	\$ 250,050.73
Disbursement Activity	

Operating Account	\$ 295,413.07
Grant Account	\$ 29,179.01
Endowment Account	\$ 14,210.82
Capital Account	\$ 107,485.00
Total Disbursement for April 2021	\$ 1,272,605.64

On a motion made by T. Crist, seconded by D. Morel, it was resolved to approve Bill Sheets 1316 and 1317 for September and October 2021, respectively. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Development Committee: L. Wells presented the update. The Development Committee met on October 28, 2021, and discussed several issues related to projects, funding, and partnerships.

There was a discussion on the federal ARPA money available through the state. These funds focus on multi-functional capital projects that advance digital connectivity, and the Clinton branch seems like an appropriate place to use funding of that size. The NPL is hoping for around \$20 million of ARPA.

The Committee had discussed the Audible murals and noted that the progress is visible. The Ambassador's program was launched in September 2021, and there are several engaged Ambassadors. A table will be set up at the gala to invite additional attendees to become Ambassadors. The NPL has raised approximately \$150,000 for the gala and has selected honorees. The gala will require proof of vaccination or a negative PCR test.

On January 8, 2022, the Unity and Expansion Brunch, a collaborative brunch presented by all the Friends groups, will be held. Attendees are encouraged to bring friends who could become donors or ambassadors. The Foundation will pay for invited guests and library staff, and others will pay either \$50 or \$200 to attend.

Facilities Committee: H. Abdus-Sabur presented the update. The City's capital bond was approved, with \$4.5 million for the NPL. J. Dixon is in talks with the BA for the City. Z. Meri handled a boiler crisis and has been taking care of the Roseville branch. There are three murals ongoing. The main library's façade repair is ongoing, and a masonry contractor was selected for the roof. On October 6, 2021, the Committee Director met with the mayor to discuss the Clinton branch, and the mayor seemed open to a mixed-use space.

Finance Committee: D. Morel presented the update. The Finance Committee met on October 19, 2021, and November 16, 2021. A general operating summary from the Committee was submitted with this meeting's package. Expenditures related to change in weather were unexpected, and the Committee discussed budgeting more accurately for such expenditures going forward.

The Committee discussed the PPP. The NPL has been fortunate to have two rounds of PPP in the last year and a half. PPP has been contributing positively to the NPL's financial situation. It is hoped a rescue like PPP will not be needed going forward.

T. Mitchell is a consultant helping the NPL with the audit, and the Committee met with her on October 19, 2021. The 2017 audit is hoped to be ready in January 2022.

The Committee discussed the budget appropriation. In the appropriation staying level, it has technically gone down as the library keeps growing. If the library is to meet the community's needs, the level of funding is insufficient. The Board has to communicate this to the City.

L. Wells suggested that many projection scenarios be developed for five to 10 years out if the budget is held constant, including staffing, programming, and inflation rate.

Personnel and Policy Committee: N. Johnson presented the update. The Personnel and Policy Committee met on November 12, 2021. There are many career opportunities at the library, including internal positions, which the Committee is filling. In addition, there are various training opportunities for staff as discussed by J. Dixon earlier in the meeting. The vaccine requirements for largescale programs were implemented on November 1, 2021.

7. NEW BUSINESS

2022 Library Board Meeting Dates: J. Dixon presented the 2022 library board meeting dates and Holidays. The March 2022 meeting is one week later as J. Dixon must attend an event as an AOA officer.

On a motion made by N. Johnson, seconded by M. Rodriguez, it was resolved to accept the 2022 Library Board of Trustees meeting dates, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

2022 Holidays: J. Dixon presented the holiday closures for 2022. The days after Thanksgiving and Christmas are always difficult for staff, and these were added as holidays. T. Crist noted that holidays are being added without removing other holidays, and staff is getting three extra paid non-workdays. J. Dixon noted that extra holidays help with retention, but there could be extra give-back requested from staff, and these holidays could be removed next year. A. Maat noted that once a holiday such as this is established, it is difficult to remove.

T. Crist suggested that a policy could be implemented whereby the holiday is observed the following day when Christmas or New Years fall on a day where the library is typically closed. D. Morel asked about the policy for Christmas for 2021. J. Dixon responded that the policy would remain the same as previous years because it was approved in November 2020.

L. Wells spoke in support of adding a day following Thanksgiving and Christmas.

T. Crist proposed that Columbus Day be renamed Indigenous Peoples Day on the calendar, which is what the City of Newark calls the holiday.

On a motion made by M. Rodriguez, seconded by N. Johnson, it was resolved to approve the NPL holiday closures, which will be revisited with a more formal policy by the Personnel and Policy Committee, and include a change from Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day. Motion carried unanimously.

Nomination of Library Board of Trustees Officers: L. Wells asked A. Maat to Chair the Nominating Committee, with T. Crist to act as co-Chair.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

9. MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion made by M. Rodriguez, seconded by A. Maat, it was resolved that The Newark Public Library Board of Trustees move into Executive Session at 6:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

10. PASSAGE OF RESOLUTIONS DISCUSSED DURING EXECUTIVE SESSION

Personnel Resolutions

Per the By-laws, Article VII, Section 1, J. Dixon recommended ratification of the following appointments and personnel actions:

Nicole Marconi	Resignation	November 9, 2021
Dejahne Rogers	Resignation	November 27, 2021

On a motion made by A. Maat, seconded by N. Johnson, it was resolved to approve the Personnel Resolutions for November 17, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

11. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by N. Johnson, seconded by D. Morel, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting of the Board of Trustees. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Lauren Wells, President

Joslyn Bowling Dixon, Director

Date

Date