



C. Zabriskie reported that Audible will be sponsoring the Library to create four custom library cards to celebrate Women's History month, and the cards will be designed by women muralists. He reported that discussions are ongoing with potential partners to host Anti-Prom, an event that offers the full prom experience to LGBTQ+ teens. C. Zabriskie is working in collaboration with the Board of Education to prepare material for the Read Across America program. He provided a brief overview of the 2024 ALA conference, and noted its focus on Indigenous voices and stories.

C. Zabriskie thanked the Board for its participation in the NPL 21C program, and requested ongoing help with organizing community discussions with stakeholders and educators. These discussions will be documented in the form of reports to provide feedback and identify recurring community trends. The session will be held on a once-per-month basis to start, with the goal of organizing two per month after a six-month stabilization period. L. Wells noted that the document currently being used to report strategic planning was originally formulated for a six-month plan, and will need to be revisited and updated.

C. Zabriskie reminded the Board of the field trip to the Sunset Park library scheduled for February 26, 2024, to tour the branch and meet with its leadership. All members of the Board were invited to participate in the event.

## 6. TREASURER'S REPORT

**On a motion made by J. Ballard, seconded by D. Morel, it was resolved to approve bill sheets 1342 for November of 2023, in the amount of \$1,387,760.44, and 1343 for December, 2023, in the amount of \$1,368,486.66. Motion carried.**

J. Ballard presented the Treasurer's Report for the periods of November and December, 2023, and reported no abnormalities or extraordinary activities for both periods. He noted that the balances of both periods take into account catch-up disbursements from the city of Newark to reflect the newly-approved budget increase of \$369,000 in total cash allotment.

## 7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Development Committee:** R. Steinbaum reported that the Development Committee met on December 14, 2023. The focus of the meeting was the Library Gala held on December 6, 2023, which raised a net total of \$95,000. The Committee examined the profitability of the auction and other logistical concerns, and further discussions will be forthcoming.

The Committee also discussed a development plan for 2024 with the new committee director, the details of which will be presented at the next Board meeting.

- b. **Facilities Committee:** C. Zabriskie reported that the Library received a \$1.3 million grant from the State Library of New Jersey to renovate and revitalize the Springfield Library. The grant will be used solely for capital improvements, such as the creation of a family incubator.

C. Zabriskie reviewed the library facilities and assets document, and noted that a copper pipe leak is affecting the HVAC systems in both the Philip Roth room and Centennial Hall. The location of the leak is yet unidentified following diagnostic and pressure tests, but the issue is expected to be resolved by March of 2024. The Board highlighted the need take precautions in the future with regard to such systems. On this note, C. Zabriskie reported that a specialized HVAC system was not included in the budget for the Hispanic Research and Information Center project, but discussions were ongoing with the vendor and third parties to provide separate HVAC coverage.

- c. **Finance Committee:** D. Morel reported that the Finance Committee met with interim controller Ronnie Little on January 18, 2024, to review the operating results from November and December of 2023. The library over-performed on expected revenues largely due to the fourth quarter catch-up allocation from the City of Newark in the amount of \$369,000, and miscellaneous revenue related to filming, for \$183,000. Expense variances include salary-related restatement, unexpected data expenses from 2021 and 2022 billings, and 22 new staff hired in 2023.

D. Morel noted that 2024 is projected to be a challenging year due to the now recalibrated salary related expenses, a 20% increase in staffing, and the full-year impact of PPP loan payback.

D. Morel reported that internal work for the 2019 analysis has been completed, and a draft report has been received for review by the controller and treasurer. 2020 schedules are largely complete, and 2021 schedules and reconciliations are ongoing. The audits for 2021, and 2022, and 2023 are all expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

- d. **Personnel and Policy Committee Report:**

**On a motion made by A. Richardson, seconded by R. Steinbaum, it was resolved to approve the Personnel and Policy Committee's draft policy for the Newark Public Library Patron Code of Conduct, the Newark Public Library Consequences for Violations of Code of Conduct, the Everyone is Welcome Here form, and the Service Animal Policy. Motion carried.**

A. Richardson reported that the Personnel and Policy Committee met on January 18, 2024, to discuss the service animal policy, the collection development policy, the materials challenge form, the library as a book sanctuary policy, as well as major donations to the library. The Committee met for a second time on January 25, 2024, to discuss the library code of conduct; the consequences for violations of code of conduct, and the everyone is welcome here form, and to finalize the Committee's policy recommendations for these items. The remaining draft items will be further discussed and reviewed by the Committee, to be brought to the Board for voting at the next Board meeting.

L. Wells requested that the text accompanying the table of bans due to violations explicitly state "duration of the ban" to clarify the content. She also requested that future e-mails for policies scheduled for voting provide a brief summary of the policies and clearly state the intention to vote.

In response to a question on how the library plans to enforce bans on patrons, C. Zabriskie reported that the library is in the process of implementing a detailed incident report form that also documents personal information, which will be digitized and shared on the library system to allow for a library-wide ban of individuals.

With regard to the rationale for choosing eight as the cutoff age for allowing children inside the library unsupervised, J. Nazario explained that the chosen number corresponds to the third grade, which is the average grade at which children begin to transition from learning to read to reading to learn.

At the invitation of the Committee, the new Assistant Director of Development Janet Mateo, and newly-elected President of Union Local 2298, Beth Zak-Cohen, introduced themselves to the Board and provided brief overviews of their respective positions.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Committee Member Selection:** L. Wells invited A. Cooper to chair the Facilities Committee, and J. Nazario and A. Richardson to remain as standing members. All members accepted.

L. Wells invited D. Morel to chair the Finance Committee, and J. Ballard and R. Steinbaum to remain as standing members. All members accepted.

L. Wells invited A. Richardson to chair the Policy and Personnel Committee, and D. Morel and J. Nazario to remain as standing members. All members accepted.

L. Wells invited R. Steinbaum to chair the Development Committee, and M. Rodriguez and J. Ballard to join the committee as members in addition to herself. All members accepted.

L. Wells requested that committee meetings be recorded, moving forward, to allow absentees to review the meeting thereafter.

**9. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The floor was opened to public comments.

J. Rodriguez, head of IT, presented the difficulties experienced by his department to the Board, and thanked the Board for its consideration.

B. Newby representing the maintenance shop steward, highlighted the importance of his team to the Board and requested that its work be better valued.

**10. RESOLUTION TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**On a motion made by M. Rodriguez, seconded by J. Ballard, it was resolved that the Newark Public Library Board of Trustees move into the Executive Session. Motion carried.**

**11. RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

**On a motion made by D. Morel, seconded by J. Ballard, it was resolved that the Newark Public Library Board of Trustees reconvene in the Public Session. Motion carried.**

**12. HR RESOLUTION**

**On a motion made by M. Rodriguez, seconded by D. Morel, it was resolved to approve the personnel resolutions for the Newark Public Library Board meeting held on January 31, 2024. Motion carried.**

In accordance with the by-laws Art.Sec.1 the Director recommends ratification of the following appointments and personnel actions:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Base Salary</u>	<u>Hire Date</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
<b><u>Civil Service Promotion/ and or Salary Increase</u></b>						
Coats, Anna	Assistant Library Director	Public Service	Appointment	132,121	01/04/2021	11/14/23
<b><u>Promotion/ and or Salary Increase</u></b>						
Grant, Alisha	Library Associate	JBAAR	Salary Increase	54,635	09/17/2018	02/05/24
<b><u>RESIGNATIONS / RETIREMENT</u></b>						
Rivera, Veramay	Data Processing Programmer	VTC	Retirement	51,107	04/01/1992	12/31/2023
Sinho, Abha	System Analyst	ILL	Resignation	97,284	07/05/11	01/05/24
<b><u>FMLA STATUS</u></b>						
Sinho, Abha	System Analyst	ILL	Return FMLA	97,284	07/05/11	01/02/24
Blackwell, Maxine	Principal Library Assistant	Weequahic	Return FMLA	35,478	06/23/23	01/02/24
Lopez, Yesenia	Librarian 4 Provisional	La Sala/HRIC	Return FMLA	85,427	07/31/06	01/09/2024

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Base Salary</u>	<u>Hire Date</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
<b><u>Civil Service Promotion/ and or Salary Increase</u></b>						
Harrison, Rosie	From Sr. Library Assistant to Principal. Library Assistant	Branch Brook	Salary Increase Promotional Appointment	35,224	01/01/2001	02/05/24

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**On a motion made by J. Ballard, second by A. Cooper, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m. Motion carried.**

**DISCLAIMER**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lauren Wells, President

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Christian Zabriskie, Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date