

THE NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
5 WASHINGTON STREET
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
SEPTEMBER 25, 2024, 5:00 P.M.

MEMBERS:

Lauren Wells	President/Chair
Domingo Morel	Vice President
Rosemary Steinbaum	Secretary
Jason Ballard	Treasurer
Robert J. Austin II	Trustee
Aisha Cooper	Trustee
Havier Nazario	Trustee

STAFF:

Christian Zabriskie	Director
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ABSENT:

Miguel Rodriguez	Trustee
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Minutes prepared by Shazia Ahmad of Minutes Solutions Inc. from a recording

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

There being a quorum present, and the Trustees having been given adequate and proper notice of the meeting, the meeting was called to order at 5:09 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

On a motion made by H. Nazario, seconded by A. Cooper, it was resolved to amend the agenda by making public comments the first item of the agenda, followed by the Executive Session for the purposes of personnel discussions, and to return to Public Session to discuss all other Trustee business following the Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The floor was opened to public comments. There were no comments.

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

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

5. **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

On a motion duly made, it was resolved that the Newark Public Library Board of Trustees reconvene in the Public Session. Motion carried.

6. **CONSENT AGENDA**

On a motion made by D. Morel, seconded by H. Nazario, it was resolved to approve all items on the meeting agenda, including HR resolutions, with the exclusions of Item 5 "Treasurer's report" and Item 8 "finance committee report". Motion carried unanimously.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

On a motion made by J. Ballard, seconded by D. Morel, it was resolved to approve bill sheet 1350 for July, 2024, in the amount of \$1,331,967.74 and bill sheet 1351 for August, 2024, in the amount of \$1,241,327.91. Motion carried unanimously.

J. Ballard reported that there were extraordinary activities for the treasurer's report for the periods of July and August, 2024, due to an extra payroll cycle, as well as significant investment in facilities expenditures. These expenditures included infrastructure stability, the HVAC system, plumbing, and security systems.

The City of Newark has approved the NPL's capital reimbursement request of \$1.2 million and this is currently being processed. This reimbursement will allow the NPL to replenish capital and general operating costs.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.1 Finance Committee Report

The finance committee met with C. Zabriskie and the interim comptroller on three occasions, August 9, September 18, and September 23, 2024, to discuss the budget to be presented to the City of Newark.

The NPL has requested an increase of \$2.56 million from the City of Newark. The application has been submitted but there is no notification yet on the status of the request. The finance committee is proceeding without taking an increase into account in its budgeting process. Contract negotiations continue with Local 2298 and Local 2268.

The year-to-date consolidated income is below expectations due to a delay in reimbursements from the New Jersey State Library and the City of Newark capital bond. An amount of \$1.5 million in reimbursement requests has been distributed, and \$1.2 million is being processed by the City. This latter amount will be disbursed as follows:

- Funding for the stacks at the Main branch;
- \$99,000 for the Hispanic Research and Information Center (HRIC) project soft costs; and
- \$940,000 in construction costs for VTC.

The HRIC project is scheduled to be completed by December, 2024.

The year-to-date consolidated expenses are slightly lower than anticipated due to a one-month delay in processing PPP loan repayments. Grant-related expenses and endowment funding are well below budget at this time.

There are issues with general operating expenses due to facilities services. There are many urgent infrastructure needs at various branches and higher-than-normal costs are expected in September, 2024, due to boiler repairs. These infrastructure needs are putting pressure on the budget.

The contract discussions resumed with Local 2298 in August, 2024, but there are no updates at this time. The audit is in the process of being finalized.

9. NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Board of Trustees meeting is November 20, 2024.

10. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by J. Ballard, seconded by R. Austin, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m. Motion carried.

DISCLAIMER

The above document 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

Christian Zabriskie, Director

Date

Date