

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

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2025, 5:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS:

Lauren Wells	President/Chair
Domingo Morel	Vice President
Rosemary Steinbaum	Secretary
Jason Ballard	Treasurer (until 7:05 p.m.)
Robert J. Austin II	Trustee (from 5:15 p.m.)
Aisha Cooper	Trustee
Havier Nazario	Trustee
Miguel Rodriguez	Trustee

STAFF:

Christian Zabriskie	Director
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Minutes prepared from a recording by Shazia Ahmad of Minutes Solutions Inc.

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 5:08 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES

On a motion made by J. Ballard, seconded by M. Rodriguez, it was resolved to approve the Public Session Board of Trustees minutes of December 5, 2024. Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

Representatives from Libraries Without Borders were scheduled to give a presentation during the Director's report. The Board could not provide a time for when this item would appear in the amended agenda.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The floor was opened to public comments.

K. Fletcher, representative from Local 2298 at the Newark Public Library, brought to the Board's attention the staff and union contract negotiations. Staff have been without a contract since the end of 2023. Negotiations are ongoing, and K. Fletcher emphasized the importance of having a contract, especially in a time of rising healthcare and living costs. He commended the Library staff for their work.

There were no further public comments.

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

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

6. **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

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

7. **CONSENT AGENDA**

On a motion made by J. Ballard, seconded by H. Nazario, it was resolved to approve all items on the meeting agenda. Motion carried.

8. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

8.1 **Nominating Committee Report**

On a motion made by D. Morel, seconded by J. Ballard, it was resolved to approve the Board of Trustees' slate as recommended by the nominating committee:

- Lauren Wells: Co-President
- Aisha Cooper: Co-President
- Rosemary Steinbaum: Vice President
- Jason Ballard: Treasurer
- Havier Nazario: Secretary

Motion carried.

8.2 **Finance Committee**

The finance committee report was included in the Board package for the meeting.

8.3 **Facilities Committee**

The facilities committee agreed to defer its resolution for the Springfield branch renovation until the bid documents and contract are received.

8.4 **Personnel and Policy Committee Report**

The annual staff holiday party was held on January 17, 2025, and was well attended. On January 7, 2025, the City of Newark hosted an information session for all City employees regarding new medical insurance rates. The rates are expected to come into effect in February, 2025, and staff will receive their cards through the US Postal Service.

Union negotiations are scheduled to be held on January 23, 2025.

9. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

L. Wells thanked D. Morel, the outgoing Vice President, for his service and contributions to the Board. She read a letter from the mayor of Newark thanking D. Morel for his service. D. Morel thanked the Board and President, and all of the Trustees expressed their gratitude.

H. Nazario thanked the staff and C. Zabriskie for facilitating the January 15, 2025, discussion session for the forthcoming creation of the museum for Newark public schools. He recognized the role that the Library staff will play in the creation of this museum.

L. Wells thanked the staff for the Martin Luther King Jr. event held over the January 18, 2025, weekend.

There will be a forthcoming reorganization of committees, and L. Wells will send an email about this to the Board during the week of January 27, 2025.

10. DIRECTOR’S REPORT

ACTION – C. Zabriskie will withhold sharing the final Libraries Without Borders’ report until the Board has read and reviewed it.

Libraries Without Borders is due to complete its research within the next two weeks. The next step is a meeting between the Board and Libraries Without Borders, followed by two meetings with the staff. C. Zabriskie will propose options for meeting dates.

11. TREASURER’S REPORT

On a motion made by D. Morel, seconded by R. Steinbaum, it was resolved to approve bill sheet 1354 for November, 2024, in the amount of \$938,054.93 and bill sheet 1355 for December, 2024, in the amount of \$1,210,687.79. Motion carried unanimously.

There was an increase of \$355,000 for the months of November and December, 2024, for cash appropriations in order to account for the 2024 City of Newark budget. This increase was expected and enabled the Library to provide its cash position for the months in question.

12. HR RESOLUTION

On a motion made by D. Morel, seconded by M. Rodriguez, it was resolved to approve the personnel resolution for the Newark Public Library Board meeting held on January 22, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.

13. NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Board of Trustees meeting is March 26, 2025.

14. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by H. Nazario, seconded by R. Austin, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 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