

September 2, 2025 Bayonne Library Board of Trustees Minutes.

7:02 pm: President Doria called the meeting to order and read the “Open Public Meetings Act” announcement once a quorum of Trustees was present.

Attendance:

Present: Maribeth Doria, Vincent Pelote, Donna Russo (7:12 pm), Caroline Ulivella (7:09 pm), Ryan Blake, and Anthony Kufta.

Absent: Jennifer Vecchiarelli (excused).

Also Present: Melody Scagnelli-Townley, Library Director and Douglas S. Zucker, Esq., Board Attorney.

Agenda item: June 2025 minutes. Approval of minutes moved by President Doria, seconded by Treasurer Blake, passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Agenda item: Consideration of September Claims List. Approval of the Claims List was moved by Vice President Pelote, seconded by Treasurer Blake, passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-23 “RESOLUTION RATIFYING PRIOR APPROVED, AUTHORIZED, AND PAID PRIORITY INVOICES FOR JULY 2025 AND AUGUST 2025”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Trustee Kufta, seconded by President Doria, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-24 “RESOLUTION APPROVING PAYMENT OF AN INVOICE TO ENVIRONMENTAL LOGIC FOR PREPARATION OF ABATEMENT PLANS”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Treasurer Blake, seconded by Vice President Pelote, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters and litigation. While the Executive Session had been scheduled for the end of the meeting, the session had to be moved up in the agenda to accommodate the schedule of one of the Trustees. Board moved to executive session at 7:13 pm, moved by President Doria, seconded by Trustee Ulivella. During the executive session, Director Scagnelli-Townley and Attorney Zucker updated the Board on a current matter that may evolve into a more formal litigation, but nothing has happened yet. No action items were associated with this discussion.

Board moved out of executive session at 7:42 pm moved by Treasurer Ulivella, seconded by President Doria.

Agenda item: Director’s Report. Director Scagnelli-Townley gave details about the hiring process for a new Library Assistant and the upcoming plans for hiring a new Night Maintenance

/ Boiler Operator. She provided information about the addition of FamilySearch to the "Databases" subpage on the website. She briefly outlined plans for 35 third-grade class visits this fall. She discussed the increase in the number of ESL classes per week from 2 to 8 via collaboration with Bayonne Adult ESL. In this new partnership, the library covers all costs for students so that the classes are freely available to whomever needs to learn English.

She gave updates about the past month's programs. She provided information about upcoming programming for adults including a weekly afternoon movie, a weekly Yarn & Knitting Group, weekly Tech Thursdays classes, the monthly Bayonne Book Club, two tarot card reading classes, a biweekly Dungeons & Dragons campaign, an NAACP meeting, a self help group for the visually impaired meeting, a kidney wellness workshop, and a Red Foxes meeting.

She also reported about upcoming regular weekly programming for children as well as special programming for children including a monthly bilingual storytime called "Little Spanish Scholars", two "Music with Miss Julia" classes each week, a weekly chess club for tweens & teens, a monthly kids bingo night, and monthly childhood vaccination clinics.

She also gave an update about upcoming programming for all ages including a fall themed family yoga, a jigsaw puzzle drop-in event, a book sale, and a monthly flu & COVID vaccination clinic.

She provided some professional development updates including her attendance at the American Library Association (ALA) Conference in June 2025 and her new role as the ALA Council Liaison for the New Jersey Library Association (NJLA). She reported on the conclusion of her role as the NJLA Urban Libraries section President. And she described her new role as a Peer Leader in the Library Worker Support Network (LWSN).

A copy of the Director's Report for September 2025 will be maintained on file with these minutes.

Agenda item: Community Center Digital Connection Grant Update. Director Scagnelli-Townley summarized the progress thus far on the CCDC grant. She described a finalized funding increase of \$206,698 for a final award amount of \$2,372,598. She discussed the contract award detailed in Resolution 2025-25. She raised a potential issue with parking for staff during renovations. She discussed her submission of a monthly expenditure report for May, June, and July 2025 as well as a Q2 quarterly report.

She also discussed the expected timeline for the upcoming work: Work on the roof would begin early October (after chiller season is over) and should be completed by mid-December. The solar panels will be removed in early October. The work in the "wing" roofing areas and above the new second floor areas will be completed between early October and end of November. The interior ceiling removal in the 2nd floor areas will occur in November & December. The existing chiller tower will be dismantled and the new chiller tower and related steel structures will be assembled between February and mid-March 2026. All work is anticipated to be wrapping up in

early April 2026 and the punchlist being completed by the end of April 2026. All work must be finished, per grant agreements, by June 30, 2026.

She discussed the creation of three new federal grant funding policies as required by the NJ State Library and as detailed in Resolution 2025-26.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-25 “RESOLUTION AWARDING A CONTRACT FOR ROOFING AND MECHANICAL SERVICES TO PRAVCO INC”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Trustee Kufra, seconded by Vice President Pelote, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Solar panels discussion for renovations. Director Scagnelli-Townley informed the Trustees that the solar panels on the roof would need to be removed for renovations and that Settembrino and Pravco wanted to know whether the library wanted the panels removed and discarded or re-installed post renovation. She explained that solar panels have an average lifespan of 15 years with a degradation of about 1/2% each year. The library solar panels were installed in 2012, so they are realistically having a 7-10% degradation from their new-state efficiency. She explained that it would be around \$27,000 to reinstall the solar panels. The recommendation from Settembrino, based on the age of the panels and cost to reinstall, was to not reinstall. After brief discussion, the Trustees agreed via voice vote that the solar panels should not be reinstalled. Trustee Blake requested that once the solar panels were uninstalled, the Business Manager should begin tracking electrical costs and compare them to the year before to help determine cost savings from using the solar panels.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-26 “RESOLUTION APPROVING NEW FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS POLICY”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Trustee Ulivella, seconded by Vice President Pelote, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-27 “RESOLUTION APPROVING NJLA CONFERENCE REIMBURSEMENT”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Vice President Pelote, seconded by Treasurer Blake, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-28 “RESOLUTION APPROVING ALA CONFERENCE REIMBURSEMENT”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by President Doria, seconded by Trustee Ulivella passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-29 “RESOLUTION APPROVING SALARY INCREASE FOR NON-BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Trustee Kufra, seconded by President Doria, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-30 “RESOLUTION APPROVING HUDSON COUNTY LIBRARY DIRECTORS’ ASSOCIATION RECIPROCAL BORROWING CONTRACT”.

After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Trustee Ulivella, seconded by Trustee Kufra, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Public Comments. Bayonne resident Donna Holovach praised the success of the cat adoption event and said she hoped that there would be more adoption events in the future. She also appreciated the expansion of the ESL program, but requested in-person classes for English speaking patrons to learn other languages. She also mentioned how great the summer movies had been and requested that the evening movies continue every month.

Meeting adjournment was moved by Vice President Pelote, seconded by President Doria, passed by unanimous voice vote at 8:20 pm.