

February 3, 2026 Bayonne Library Board of Trustees Minutes.

7:02 pm: Vice President Pelote 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, Anthony Kufra, and Caroline Ulivella.

Absent: Ryan Blake (excused) and Jennifer Vecchiarelli.

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

Agenda item: January 2026 minutes. Approval of minutes moved by President Doria, seconded by Vice President Pelote, passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Agenda item: Consideration of January Claims List. Approval of the Claims List was moved by Trustee Kufra, seconded by Trustee Ulivella, passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Agenda item: Director’s Report. Director Scagnelli-Townley provided information about a contract with Ancestry to digitize the Library’s historic yearbooks, directories, and criss-cross directories. She gave details about the upcoming plans with hiring a new Night Maintenance / Boiler Operator. She reminded everyone of the Library’s Presidents’ Day closure and gave updates about the month’s class visit schedule.

The Director provided highlights from the past month’s programs. She also provided information about upcoming programming including a new “semester” of ESL classes, a bimonthly yoga classes for tweens and older, new anime nights for tweens and teens, a bimonthly “new parent” support group for those with kids under 1 year old, a community Holi celebration, and a special “Hygge Hangout” program which includes a “candlelit” Family Yoga, cozy crafts, and free drinks from Sunspire Cafe.

She provided some professional development updates including her participation in the New Jersey Library Association’s new “Construction Working Group”, which is aimed at establishing permanent public library construction funds at a state level and at making adjustments to current PILOTs (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) rules to help reduce the amount of lost funding for publicly funded organizations like public libraries and public school districts. She also detailed the library’s participation as part of the Bayonne Board of Education’s Literacy Initiative for Families and Thriving (LIFT) Communities grant work.

A copy of the Director’s Report for February 2026 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 discussed the

interior demolition of the 2nd floor storage area and the removal of the solar panels & roof gravel. She discussed the updated work schedule, which includes interior work beginning in mid to late February and the roof work & chiller tower replacement beginning in mid-March or early April (depending upon temperatures). She discussed her submission of a monthly expenditure report for December 2025 and the success of a recent in-person grant compliance audit meeting with a third party auditor and the NJ State Library.

Agenda item: Discussion regarding BCCLS membership in 2027. The Trustees discussed the possibility of Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS) membership in 2027. A variety of clarifying questions were asked with Director Scagnelli-Townley and/or Attorney Zucker offering answers and feedback. Trustee Russo requested an additional two weeks to consider this proposition. The Trustees voted to table discussion and hold a Special Meeting on Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 7 pm to consider BCCLS membership and make a final decision regarding membership.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2026-05 “RESOLUTION APPROVING ANNUAL CONTRACT FOR LIBRARY SERVICES WITH BRAINFUSE”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Vice President Pelote seconded by Trustee Ulivella, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2026-06 “RESOLUTION APPROVING RETROACTIVE SALARY ADJUSTMENT FOR RALPH FOGLIA”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Vice President Pelote, seconded by Trustee Ulivella, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2026-07 “RESOLUTION APPROVING ANNUAL CONTRACT FOR LIBRARY SERVICES WITH TIME CLOCK PLUS”. After Director Scagnelli-Townley read the resolution text aloud, Trustee Russo asked if it was possible for the City of Bayonne to also utilize this same time clock service vendor in the same contract as the Bayonne Public Library, which might lead to a better pricing rates. Director Scagnelli-Townley indicated that she could connect Trustee Russo with the TCP representative and that they would schedule a joint meeting with TCP to discuss. The Trustees voted to table this resolution until the March 2026 Trustees meeting in order to give Director Scagnelli-Townley and Trustee Russo time to investigate this possibility.

Agenda item: Date change for April 2026 Trustees meeting. Director Scagnelli-Townley notified the Trustees that the date would need to change for the April 2026 Trustees meeting from April 7th to April 14th due to the conflict with the Bayonne School District’s spring break. Typically, multiple Trustees and Director Scagnelli-Townley are unavailable during district break times. To avoid this conflict, the Trustees agreed to move the April 2026 Trustees meeting back by one week to April 14, 2026.

Agenda item: Public Comments. Bayonne resident Donna Holovach said that she hoped there would be movies for Black History Month and that the Book Binding presentation had been

popular, but that the 2 hours allotted didn't seem to be sufficient time to complete the project.

Agenda item: Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters. The Board moved to executive session at 8:16 pm, moved by Vice President Pelote, seconded by President Doria. During the executive session, Vice President Pelote and the Personnel Committee updated the Board on Director Scagnelli-Townley's annual evaluation results.

Board moved out of executive session at 8:23 pm moved by Vice President Pelote, seconded by President Doria.

Agenda item: Consideration of Resolution 2025-08 "RESOLUTION APPROVING SALARY ADJUSTMENT FOR MELODY SCAGNELLI-TOWNLEY". After Attorney Zucker read the resolution text aloud, resolution approval was moved by Trustee Russo seconded by President Doria, passed by unanimous roll call vote without any discussion. After voting had finished, each Trustee offered their thanks to Director Scagnelli-Townley for her work and praised the progress that has occurred at the Bayonne Public Library since she became Director. Director Scagnelli-Townley offered her sincere thanks and appreciation for their kind words.

Meeting adjournment was moved by Vice President Pelote, seconded by President Doria, passed by unanimous voice vote at 8:33 pm.