



**BERGENFIELD LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
Conducted virtually via Zoom

**Minutes**  
**December 12, 2024**

**Present**

Thomas Neats, President  
Laurie Phipps, Vice President  
Sarah Shaffren, Recording Secretary  
Marcela Deauna, Treasurer  
Fanny Cruz-Betesh  
Jamie Orlando  
Natalie Rivas  
Christopher Langschultz, Alternate for Superintendent of Schools  
Thomas Lodato, Council Liaison  
Allison Ballo, Director  
Jennifer Murray, Administrative Assistant

President Neats called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

**Notification of Public Meeting**

President Neats read the report on public notification of this meeting.

**Minutes**

**Motion by Ms. Phipps to accept the November 14, 2024 meeting minutes.**  
**Ms. Cruz-Betesh seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes  
Ms. Deauna – Yes  
Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Absent at time of vote  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Absent at time of vote  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

**Bills**

**Motion by Mr. Orlando to accept the December 12, 2024 bill list.**  
**Mr. Langschultz seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes



Ms. Deauna – Yes  
Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Absent at time of vote  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Absent at time of vote  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

### **Public Portion**

No public comments.

### **Correspondence**

The Stigma Free Committee of Bergenfield is requesting use of the Friends Room the first Wednesday of every month, from 7 to 8:30 pm, for calendar year 2025.

**Motion by Ms. Deauna to approve the request by the Stigma Free Committee to use our meeting space the first Wednesday of every month.**

**Ms. Shaffren seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes  
Ms. Deauna – Yes  
Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Absent at time of vote  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Absent at time of vote  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

### **President's Report**

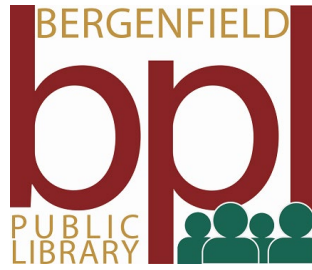
President Neats shared that both he and Ms. Deauna attended the Volunteer dinner where the Library was recognized by the Mayor for their efforts which benefit the community. President Neats and Ms. Phipps attended the bid opening handled by Arcari + Iovino for the upcoming YA renovations. President Neats thanked the Library staff who participated in Holiday on the Pond and shared they did an excellent job and the books and crafts they distributed were well received.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **BCCLS and Friends**

Ms. Ballo reported that the train panels for the Children's Room desk have been ordered and will be delivered by mid-January.

No report from BCCLS.



### **Building & Grounds**

Ms. Ballo shared we received the lease renewal from ProCopy for our photocopiers with a price increase of \$30 per month and it is a 5-year lease. This renewal includes upgrading a 10-year-old copier.

**Motion by Ms. Shaffren to approve the lease renewal for ProCopy for the copiers in the building at a rate of \$309 per month for 60 months.**

**Ms. Phipps seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes

Ms. Deauna – Yes

Mr. Neats – Yes

Mr. Orlando - Yes

Ms. Phipps – Yes

Ms. Rivas – Absent at time of vote

Ms. Shaffren – Yes

Councilman Lodato – Absent at time of vote

Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

### **Finance Committee**

The financial summary was distributed and discussed.

### **Personnel**

To be discussed in closed session.

### **Policy**

No report.

### **Director's Report**

The Director's report was circulated by mail earlier this week. Ms. Ballo reminded the Board about the staff development session on December 18<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Ballo shared that she included her goals for 2025 in the packet for the Board's review. Ms. Ballo requested the authority from the Board to close the library, only if absolutely needed, to prepare the building for the upcoming construction next year. Discussion followed.

**Motion by Ms. Phipps to pre-authorize Ms. Ballo to close the building during business hours if needed to prepare for construction, advising the public with as much notice as possible.**

**Ms. Shaffren seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes

Ms. Deauna – Yes

Mr. Neats – Yes

Mr. Orlando - Yes

Ms. Phipps – Yes

Ms. Rivas – Yes

Ms. Shaffren – Yes

Councilman Lodato – Yes

Mr. Langschultz - Yes



The motion carried.

Ms. Ballo discussed revising a portion of Borough Ordinance 194-1b as it relates to legal proceedings for patrons who do not return items. Discussion followed.

**Motion by Ms. Phipps to raise the threshold of Borough Ordinance 194-1B from \$50 to \$500 as it relates to legal proceedings.**

**Ms. Shaffren seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes  
Ms. Deauna – Yes  
Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Yes  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

### **Trustee Education**

Ms. Phipps shared information gained from attending a Trustee zoom meeting regarding fine free libraries.

### **Old Business**

The Board revisited the discussion regarding the NJ Cash Management Depository as an option per our auditor's recommendation. Discussion followed.

**Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to enroll in the NJ Cash Management Fund. The fund will serve as the depository for \$15,000 from the Special Gifts Account.**

**Ms. Rivas seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes  
Ms. Deauna – Yes  
Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Yes  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

Resolution #2024-18 in support of protecting library materials, resources and services was reintroduced with the modifications requested during the November meeting. Discussion followed.



**Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to approve Resolution #2024-18 in support of protecting Library materials, resources and services.**

**Ms. Deauna seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes

Ms. Deauna – Yes

Mr. Neats – Yes

Mr. Orlando - Yes

Ms. Phipps – Abstained

Ms. Rivas – Yes

Ms. Shaffren – No

Councilman Lodato – Yes

Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

### **New Business**

President Neats introduced Resolution #2024-19 authorizing a construction contract for the Bergenfield Public Library – Young Adult Room project and Resolution #2024-20 authorizing the purchase of furniture for the Young Adult Room project. Discussion followed.

**Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to approve Resolution #2024-19 authorizing a construction contract for the Bergenfield Public Library – Young Adult Room project to BGD Contracting.**

**Ms. Deauna seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes

Ms. Deauna – Yes

Mr. Neats – Yes

Mr. Orlando - Yes

Ms. Phipps – Yes

Ms. Rivas – Yes

Ms. Shaffren – Yes

Councilman Lodato – Yes

Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

**Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to approve Resolution #2024-20 authorizing the purchase of furniture for the Young Adult Room project.**

**Mr. Langschultz seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes

Ms. Deauna – Yes



Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Yes  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

**Motion by Ms. Phipps to go into closed session to discuss personnel matters.  
Mr. Orlando seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes  
Ms. Deauna – Yes  
Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Yes  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried. The Board went to closed session at 8:56 pm.

The Board returned to open session at 9:02 pm.

**Motion by Ms. Deauna to promote Mini Pavithran to Librarian I effective January 1, 2025 with a salary of \$53,500 as a result of obtaining their graduate degree.  
Ms. Cruz-Betesh seconded the motion.**

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes  
Ms. Deauna – Yes  
Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Yes  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

**Motion by Ms. Deauna to adjourn the meeting.  
Ms. Phipps seconded the motion.**



On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes  
Ms. Deauna – Yes  
Mr. Neats – Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Yes  
Ms. Shaffren – Yes  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sorah Shaffren*

Jennifer Murray, Recorder for  
Sorah Shaffren, Recording Secretary