

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
August 19, 2025

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah (left 8:05 pm)	Karen Parry, Library Director
Wayne Christie (arr. 7:12 pm)	Maria Carmelo, Executive Administrative Assistant
Dr. Kenneth Freedman	Zainab Jaorawala, Teen Representative
Lisa Gurevich	Robin Rushfield, Friends of the Library Treasurer
Joseph Palombit	
Patricia Palumbo	
Ashish Verma (arr. 7:07 pm)	

Ms. Palumbo called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Ms. Palumbo stated that the meeting was advertised and the Open Public Meetings Act requirements were met.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of June 17, 2025:

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2025 meeting. Mr. Amankwah seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich and Mr. Palombit. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Ms. Palumbo.

Public Participation:

Zainab Jaorawala presented the July Teen Report. The teens welcomed 19 new volunteers at their July Meeting. The 82 existing volunteers wrote articles and helped with various tasks around the library. 77 teens completed this year's Summer Reading program. Teen & Tween Tai Chi with Tai Chi USA and many other fun programs took place in July.

Ms. Rushfield presented the Friends Report. Dine to Donate was wildly successful with \$776.00 from EB Chinese and \$296.00 from Smash Burger. Smash Burger will host a Dine to Donate again on August 27th to make up for a glitch in their checkout system. The Friends raised \$171.00 at their Hawaiian themed Bunco on July 25th at the VFW. Upcoming programs include a Karate Self Defense classes for women on August 25th and Stop Bullying for Kids classes on August 28th with Brill's Karate, Clothing Drive on September 7th, the Friend's 50th annual Book Sale the week of October 19th, to be held in the library building and the Friend's Handmade Craft Fair on Sunday, November 9th.

Ms. Talbot was unable to attend tonight's meeting but did share an update via email. Mayor Cohen has been having Town Hall meetings at various locations and offered to have one for the Library Board of Trustees if they would like one.

There was no School District Report.

There were no Public Comments.

Financial Report:

Ms. Parry presented the Financial Report. The library is 60% expended to date, which is very tight for this point in the year. Ms. Parry will be inquiring with the Township for suggestions on controlling spending. The library will not be filling all jobs as staff resign or retire and plans to slim down on the number of staff members by hiring more full time librarians as vacancies occur to allow for more flexibility, which is not possible with so many part time staff with multiple jobs. The HVAC system upgrade is expected to occur in February or March of 2026. Although the library building will be closed for the duration of the project, we will have a pop-up location at the Community Arts Center.

Mr. Palombit made a motion to approve the August 20, 2025 Bill List. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

There were no reports of standing or special committee reports.

Director's Report:

Ms. Parry presented the June & July 2025 Director's Reports. The Youth Services staff did a phenomenal job with this summer's "Color Our World" summer reading program. The library had a table at Crystal Springs for the township's "Pride at the Pool" event. The library displayed a LGBTQIA+ & Disability Pride Heath Table during the week of July 25th. A patron extended their thanks to the library for establishing a safe place for the LGBTQ+ community. Ms. Parry released a newsletter to the community on the library's website and social media. The library worked in collaboration with the Indian Cultural Society for a week-long "Colors of India" series of programs during Journey Through India: A Cultural Immersion Week, which included mandala art, quilling, theatre for neurodivergent children with NAMI and concluded with India Day on Saturday, August 2nd. Accessibility Librarian Karen Geist will be launching a monthly Social Hour program for adults with disabilities to get together to talk, have fun and do crafts. Musicians and presenters will also be in attendance, so check out the library's calendar of events for more details. Epoxy flooring was installed in the library's public and staff bathrooms. An HVAC company has been selected for the HVAC upgrade and the project will be overseen by the township.

Ms. Parry advised the board that Staff Development Day has been rescheduled to Monday October 13th.

Mr. Christie made a motion to close the library on Monday, October 13th, 2025 for Staff Development Day. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Ms. Parry asked for permission to close an hour early on Friday, October 24th for the second Teen Stress-Less Night and Friday, November 14th for the first Tween Stress-Less Night in partnership with the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force.

Mr. Christie made a motion to close the library an hour early for Teen Stress-Less Night on Friday, October 24th and Tween Stress-Less Night on Friday, November 14th. Ms. Palumbo seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the June & July 2025 Director's Reports. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

Mr. Palombit made a motion to approve the Library's 2026 Schedule of Days Closed. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Resolution #10,888

Sidebar Agreement between the East Brunswick Library and CWA Local 1031

WHEREAS, the East Brunswick Library ("Library") and CWA Local 1031 ("Union") are parties to a collective negotiations agreement for the period of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2027 (the "Agreement"); and

WHEREAS, the Library and the Union have negotiated and agreed to a Sidebar Agreement, which is attached hereto as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, the Sidebar Agreement provides modifications to the salaries of three (3) library custodians under the Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Sidebar Agreement has been ratified and executed by the Union' and;

WHEREAS, the Library is desirous of ratifying and executing the agreed-upon Sidebar Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the East Brunswick Library Board of Trustees that the Sidebar Agreement attached hereto as Exhibit A is hereby ratified.

This Resolution will take effect immediately.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve Resolution #10,888 – Sidebar Agreement between the East Brunswick Library and CWA Local 1031. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Resolution #10,889

Adopt the 2024 Library Budget

WHEREAS, as approved by the City Council on May 30, 2024, the 2024 East Brunswick Township municipal appropriation for the East Brunswick Public Library is \$4,250,000, and

WHEREAS, additional revenues include a total of \$340,000.00;

WHEREAS, \$14,813.91 from prior year fund balances will also be allocated to the 2024 budget, and

WHEREAS, additional State Aid in the amount of \$25,600.00 will be allocated to the 2024 budget,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Public Library Board of Trustees adopts the 2024 Library Budget in the amount of \$4,630,413.91

Mr. Verma made a motion to approve Resolution #10,889 – Adopt the 2024 Library Budget. Dr. Freedman seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

The Library Board of Trustees revisited the library’s Cultural and Community Celebrations Policy originally presented at the May 20, 2025 board meeting and had some questions regarding insurance requirements for co-sponsors. The trustees agreed to table approval of the policy upon attorney review of insurance requirements.

Dr. Freedman made a motion to table the approval of the Cultural and Community Celebrations Policy. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Information Items:

There were no information items.

Closed Session:

Ms. Palumbo made a motion to enter Closed Session at 8:34 pm. Mr. Palombit seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Christie, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo, Ms. Talbot and Mr. Verma. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

The Board returned to open session at 8:52 pm.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Ms. Palumbo made a motion to adjourn at 8:53 pm. Ms. Gurevich seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Wayne Christie, Secretary