



BERGENFIELD LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Conducted virtually via Zoom

Minutes
October 9, 2025

Present

Thomas Neats, President
Laurie Phipps
Marcela Deauna
Sorah Shaffren (joined at 7:43 pm and left at 9:38 pm)
Natalie Rivas
Fanny Cruz-Betesh
Christopher Langschultz, Alternate for Superintendent of Schools
Allison Ballo, Director
Darlene Swistock, Interim Recorder of Minutes

President Neats called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm.

Notification of Public Meeting

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

Minutes

Motion by Ms. Deauna to accept the June 12, 2025 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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Absent at time of vote
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Bills

Motion by Ms. Phipps to approve the July, August and September 2025 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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Absent at time of vote
Mr. Langschultz – Yes



The motion carried.

**Motion by Ms. Deauna to approve the October 9, 2025 bill list.
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

Ms. Phipps – Yes

Ms. Rivas – Yes

Ms. Shaffren – Absent at time of vote

Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Public Portion

Mr. Ray Gehring asked the Board to consider hosting drag queen story time for 3-8 year olds and recommended Harmonica Sunbeam. He was advised to submit a formal written proposal with the name of the presenter, age range of the intended audience, facilities needed, why it will benefit the community and the cost to the Director. The Board will review the proposal and vote at the next meeting.

Correspondence

Ms. Ballo received a letter from a location scout asking to film at the library so a private company could test its own scanners and 360 cameras, in a public place. The library would need to be closed to the public for 10 hours, potentially including overnight, and the library would be compensated. The board was concerned about safety and privacy issues, and did not feel the request fit into the library's mission, but Ms. Ballo will request feedback from the Borough for future reference.

President's Report

President Neats reported that the Lucille Tendler Community Service Award was presented. He, along with board members Ms. Deauna, Ms. Phipps, Mr. Lodato, and the mayor and council attended. The family was very happy with the program and the participation. The library held a ribbon cutting ceremony for its YA Room. Board members President Neats, Ms. Shaffren, Ms. Phipps, Mr. Langschultz, Mr. Tully and Mr. Lodato were in attendance. The mayor and council attended and made a presentation to the library. In addition, there was support from the community. The borough also held a ribbon cutting ceremony which was attended by President Neats and Ms. Deauna. Four library staffers attended as well.

Committee Reports

BCCLS and Friends

The BCCLS Friends Brunch is on October 21. The Friends garage sale raised about \$1,500.

Building & Grounds

The lease with ProCopy for the copier was recently renewed and the lease with ProCopy for the desktop printers needs to be renewed this month. The cost is \$245/month.

**Motion by Ms. Shaffren to approve the 5-year lease with ProCopy for 2025-2030 at \$245/month.
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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Yes
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Finance Committee

The financial summary was distributed and discussed.

Personnel

Ms. Ballo advised that she is updating the Personnel Manual and will review it with the Personnel Committee.

Policy

None

Director's Report

Ms. Ballo reported that the audit was distributed in the meeting packet and the board needs to approve it. There were no recommendations from the auditor. She also mentioned the pods will be coming later this month. President Neats asked about the social work intern program as part of the grant for the YA Room was to be used for that program. He noted that the library's 1/3 mill increased as the assessed value for properties in the borough increased.

Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to approve the December 31, 2024 audit by Garbarini & Co. PC CPA.

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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Yes
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Trustee Education

The BCCLS Friends Brunch is on October 21. President Neats noted that the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) no longer requires newspaper publication for meeting notices; they must now be posted online. In addition to the online notice, President Neats asked about having signage in the library; Ms. Ballo will place the meeting notice in a sign holder in the library.

Old Business

None



New Business

Strategic Planning

Ms. Ballo advised that the current strategic plan expired last year and she has not had the time to write a new strategic plan. She is recommending that it be outsourced to a consultant at a cost of \$13,000. The Friends are offering to cover 50% of the cost. The consultant will conduct focus groups, create surveys and analyze the data. Discussion followed and Ms. Ballo will contact the consultant to see if there is room for negotiating the contract. The discussion will be tabled until the next meeting.

Approval of 2026 Library Closings and Holidays

The proposed schedule was included in the meeting packet. Ms. Cruz-Betesh asked if the September meeting could be changed to September 3 to avoid the conflict with back-to-school events. This will be tabled until the school meeting schedule has been confirmed.

Approval of 2026 Board of Trustees Meetings

The proposed schedule was included in the meeting packet.

Motion by Ms. Phipps to approve the proposed Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule for 2026.

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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Yes
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Resolution 2025-20 – Authorizing the Cancellation of Outstanding Checks from Various Accounts

Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to authorize the cancellation of checks #1183 and #1248 which have been outstanding since 2021.

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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Yes
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Resolution 2025-21 – Authorizing the Appointment of a Professional Service Contract – IT Support

Motion by Ms. Phipps to authorize the appointment of Gem Teq LLC at a cost not to exceed \$20,000 and RAAD Technology Solutions LLC at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.

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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Yes
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Resolution 2025-22 – Authorizing 5th Payment to BGD Contracting
Motion by Ms. Phipps to authorize the 5th and final payment to BGD Contracting after amending the Resolution to read Final Payment.

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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Yes
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Closed Session – Personnel Matters

Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to move to Closed Session at 8:49 pm.

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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Yes
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Closed Session – Personnel Matters

Motion by Ms. Deauna to return to Open Session at 9:52 pm.

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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Absent at time of vote
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Phipps to adjourn the meeting.
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
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Ms. Shaffren – Absent at time of vote
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sorah Shaffren

Darlene Swistock, Interim Recorder for
Sorah Shaffren, Recording Secretary