

BERGENFIELD LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Conducted virtually via Zoom

Minutes
December 11, 2025

Present

Thomas Neats, President
Laurie Phipps, Vice President
Jamie Orlando, Treasurer
Fanny Cruz-Betesh
Natalie Rivas
Christopher Langschultz, Alternate for Superintendent of Schools
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 13, 2025 meeting minutes.
Mr. Orlando seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes
Mr. Neats – Yes
Mr. Orlando - Yes
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

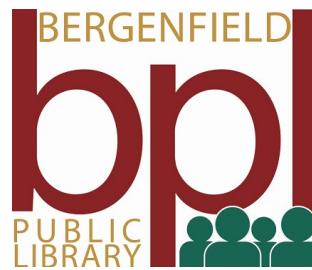
The motion carried.

Bills

Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to accept the December 11, 2025 bill list.
Mr. Langschultz seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes
Mr. Neats – Yes
Mr. Orlando - Yes
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Mr. Langschultz - Yes



The motion carried.

Public Portion

No public comments.

Correspondence

Mrs. Devie Fernandez of Bergenfield is requesting use of the conference room on a recurring basis for instructional tutoring for her son. Discussion followed. The Board approved use for the month of December but is requesting more information from Mrs. Fernandez. This request will be revisited at the January meeting.

President's Report

President Neats has made several visits to the Library as well as an open play time with his granddaughter. 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

Mr. Langschultz discussed his participation as a panelist at an event hosted by BCCLS.

No report from the Friends.

Building & Grounds

Ms. Ballo shared updates regarding the lighting issue in the YA room and the locks for the new Clinton Avenue study rooms.

Finance Committee

The financial summary was distributed and discussed.

Personnel

To be discussed in closed session.

Policy

Ms. Ballo advised a Passport policy is being drafted for review by the Policy committee next year.

Director's Report

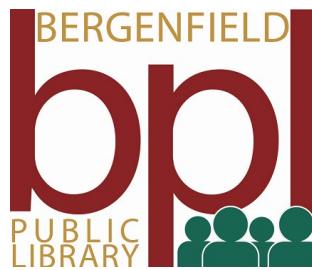
The Director's report was circulated by mail earlier this week. Ms. Ballo reminded the Board about the staff development session on December 18th. Ms. Ballo discussed her introductory call with Library Crossroads for the strategic plan. Ms. Ballo shared the problems we've had this year with vendors not receiving our checks via mail. Ms. Ballo is looking to start using ACH transfers for some of our monthly bills in 2026. Discussion followed. Ms. Ballo will provide a draft resolution at the January meeting. Ms. Ballo shared recurring issues we've had with an HVAC unit and proposed dedicating some of the remaining CPF grant funds to this repair. As this affects our new office space, the New Jersey State Library agreed this was a reasonable use of grant funds. Discussion followed.

Motion by Ms. Phipps to expend \$11,760 of the remaining New Jersey State Library grant funds for repairs submitted by Hutchins HVAC Inc. in their Proposal 08956rl

Mr. Langschultz seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes



Mr. Neats – Yes
Mr. Orlando - Yes
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

Trustee Education

No report.

Old Business

President Neats revisited the revisions to the Personnel Manual. Discussion followed.

Motion by Ms. Phipps to approved the revised Personnel Manual effective January 1, 2026.
Ms. Cruz-Betesh seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes
Mr. Neats – Yes
Mr. Orlando - Yes
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

New Business

Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to go into closed session to discuss personnel matters.
Mr. Langschultz seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes
Mr. Neats – Yes
Mr. Orlando - Yes
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

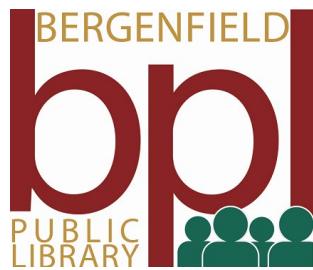
The motion carried. The Board went to closed session at 8:26 pm.

The Board returned to open session at 9:08 pm.

Motion by Mr. Langschultz to adjust the salary of Library Director Allison Ballo to \$110,000 effective January 1, 2026.
Ms. Phipps seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes



Mr. Neats – Yes
Mr. Orlando - Yes
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to adjourn the meeting.
Ms. Rivera seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes
Mr. Neats – Yes
Mr. Orlando - Yes
Ms. Phipps – Yes
Ms. Rivas – Yes
Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sorah Shaffren

Jennifer Murray, Recorder for
Sorah Shaffren, Recording Secretary