

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

**Minutes**  
**January 8, 2026**

**Present**

Thomas Neats, President  
Laurie Phipps  
Fanny Cruz-Betesh  
Marcela Deauna  
Sorah Shaffren (joined 8:14 pm)  
Natalie Rivas  
Jamie Orlando  
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 7:30 pm.

**Notification of Public Meeting**

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

**Oath of Office**

President Neats administered the Oath of Office to Ms. Laurie Phipps who was reappointed as Trustee of the Bergenfield Public Library.

**Reorganization - Election of 2026 Officers:**

**Motion by Ms. Deauna, nominating Mr. Tom Neats as President, Ms. Laurie Phipps as Vice President, Mr. Jamie Orlando as Treasurer and Ms. Sorah Shaffren as Recording Secretary for 2026.**

**Ms. Cruz-Betesh seconded the motion.**

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

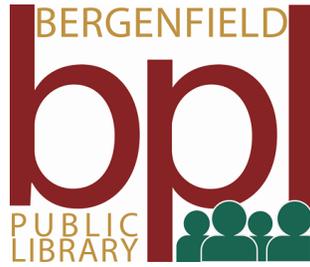
Ms. Cruz-Betesh - Yes  
Ms. Deauna - Yes  
Mr. Neats - Yes  
Mr. Orlando - Yes  
Ms. Phipps – Yes  
Ms. Rivas – Yes  
Ms. Shaffren – Absent at time of vote  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

**Minutes**

**Motion by Ms. Deauna to accept the December 11, 2025 meeting minutes.**

**Ms. 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 – Absent at time of vote  
Councilman Lodato – Abstain  
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

### **Bills**

**Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to approve the December 31, 2025 bill list.  
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 – Absent at time of vote  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

### **Public Portion**

No public comments.

### **Correspondence**

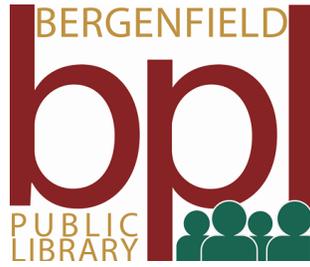
President Neats shared a thank you card from Trustee Jamie Orlando. President Neats also shared correspondence from Mr. George Armbruster related to his ongoing efforts to support the Friends of the Library.

A room request was received from Frank Delgado to continue using the Friends room to for his bi-monthly ADHD support group for 2026. Discussion followed.

**Motion by Ms. Rivas to Mr. Delgado’s request for his “Let’s ADHD” support group to continue meeting bi-monthly in the Friends room through 2026.  
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 – Absent at time of vote  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

The room rental application from Mrs. Devie Fernandez of Bergenfield was revisited from last month with the additional information that had been requested. Discussion followed.

**Motion by Ms. Phipps to approve the request by Ms. Fernandez to utilize the conference room for instructional tutoring for her son.**

**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 – Absent at time of vote  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

### **President's Report**

President Neats reported that he and other members of the board attended the volunteer dinner hosted by the Mayor and Council and relayed the thanks the Library received for their contributions to the community. President Neats reported that he attended the staff development session at the Library in December where he shared the Board's appreciation for their efforts over the past year.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **BCCLS and Friends**

No report from the Friends.

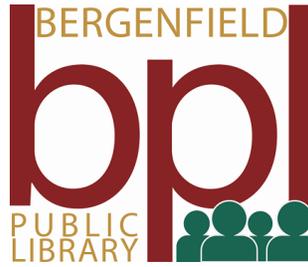
Ms. Ballo discussed the usage numbers provided by BCCLS and reminded the Board our 2025 numbers are a little skewed due to the increase we experienced during the Teaneck closure.

#### **Building & Ground**

Ms. Ballo reported the locks for the modular rooms are on order and will hopefully be installed in early February. Ms. Ballo shared we are still running into issues with the lighting in the YA room and is in constant communication with the vendors to address the problem. Discussion followed.

#### **Finance Committee**

The financial summary was distributed and discussed.



### **Personnel**

No report

### **Policy**

President Neats shared the proposed Passport Policy which was included in the board packet. Discussion followed.

### **Motion by Ms. Phipps to approve the Passport Policy. 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 – Absent at time of vote

Councilman Lodato – Yes

Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

### **Director's Report**

Ms. Ballo discussed the Annual Report which was included in the Board packet and which was shared by the Mayor on his social media accounts. Ms. Ballo will be meeting with representatives from Library Crossroads Consulting in person so they can see the building and begin discussions for the strategic plan. Ms. Ballo discussed the resolution to allow the Library to begin processing some ACH payments due to ongoing issues with mailed checks not being received. Ms. Phipps inquired about the Junior Library Council and Ms. Ballo shared projects they have been working on.

### **Trustee Education**

No Report

### **Old Business**

Information regarding the 2025 Lucille Tendler Community Service Award was shared. Discussion followed.

### **New Business**

In accordance with New Jersey Public Contracts Law, the following resolutions were presented:

- Resolution 2026-01 – Award of Contracts to Purchase Periodicals
- Resolution 2026-02 – Award of Contracts to Purchase Books and Publications
- Resolution 2026-03 – Award of Contracts to Purchase Audiovisual Items
- Resolution 2026-04 – Resolution for Library Depository
- Resolution 2026-05 – Authorization of Purchasing Agent to Award Contracts
- Resolution 2026-06 – Authorization to make payment of bills in the event there is no Board Meeting for reasons such as recess or lack of quorum
- Resolution 2026-07 – Resolution to enter into Cooperative Pricing Agreement
- Resolution 2026-08 – Resolution establishing Policy and Procedure for Automated Clearing House (ACH) and Wire Transfer Payments



**Motion by Ms. Rivas to approve Resolution #2026-01, Resolution #2026-02 and Resolution #2026-03.  
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 – Abstain  
Councilman Lodato – Yes  
Mr. Langschultz – Yes

The motion carried.

**Motion by Mr. Orlando to approve Resolution #2026-04 authorizing NVE Bank, Columbia Bank and New Jersey Cash Management Fund as the designated depositories for the Library  
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

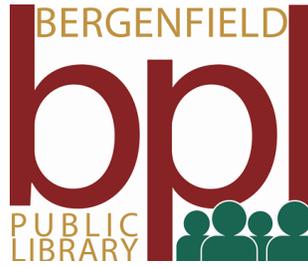
The motion carried.

**Motion by Ms. Cruz-Betesh to approve Resolution 2026-05 authorizing purchasing agent; Resolution #2026-06 for payment of bills in the event there is no Board meeting and Resolution 2026-07 to enter cooperative pricing agreement.  
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.



**Motion by Ms. Phipps to approve Resolution 2026-08 establishing policy and procedure for Automated Clearing House (ACH) and Wire Transfer Payments  
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 Councilman Lodato recommending President Neats sign the Certificate of Compliance which certifies that the Bergenfield Library is in compliance with BCCLS membership requirements.  
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

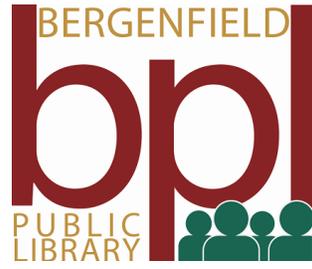
The motion carried.

### **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 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sorah Shaffren*

Jennifer Murray, Recorder for  
Sorah Shaffren, Recording Secretary