



BERGENFIELD LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Conducted virtually via Zoom

Minutes
March 12, 2026

Present

Thomas Neats, President
Laurie Phipps, Vice President
Jamie Orlando, Treasurer
Marcela Deauna
Natalie Rivas (arrived 7:43 pm)
Christopher Langschultz, Alternate for Superintendent of Schools (arrived 8:24 pm)
Allison Ballo, Director
Jennifer Murray, Administrative Assistant

President Neats called the meeting to order at 7:38 pm.

Notification of Public Meeting

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

Minutes

Motion by Ms. Phipps to accept the February 12, 2026 meeting minutes with an amendment by President Neats under the Directors Report to include himself as a member of the Strategic Planning committee with Ms. Rivas, Ms. Shaffren and Mr. Orlando. Mr. Orlando seconded the motion.

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

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

The motion carried.

Bills

Motion by Mr. Orlando to approve the March 12, 2026 bill list. Ms. Phipps seconded the motion.

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

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



The motion carried.

Public Portion

No public comments

Correspondence

No report

President's Report

President Neats reported on several drop in visits to the Library as well as attending Story hour with former children's room Librarian, Ms. Louise. President Neats shared he attended a Personnel Committee meeting and spoke to Denise Lester, Head of Children's, to compliment the students from her Junior Library Council program that attended the last Board meeting. President Neats reported that the snow has melted but was concerned with loose gravel in the Arlington Street parking spots. Ms. Ballo will contact the Borough to see if the street sweeper can come through.

Committee Reports

BCCLS and Friends

Ms. Ballo shared a flyer from BCCLS regarding an upcoming workshop with the Board.

The Friends will be hosting a jewelry sale at the Library from April 23rd through the 25th.

Building & Grounds

Country Green Landscaping submitted a contract for snow removal for 2026/2027. The prices remained the same as the previous year and Ms. Ballo recommended renewing this contract.

Motion by Ms. Phipps to contract with current vendor Country Green Landscaping for snow removal.

Mr. Orlando seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Deauna - Yes

Mr. Neats – Yes

Mr. Orlando - Yes

Ms. Phipps – Yes

Ms. Rivas - Yes

The motion carried.

Finance Committee

The financial summary was distributed and discussed.

Personnel

No report.

Policy

No report.



Director's Report

Ms. Ballo shared the State Report was included in the packets delivered to the Board for their review. The furniture for the pods has been delayed until mid-April but we have put temporary furniture in to allow the public to start reserving this new space. Ms. Ballo advised that the Library was approached by a documentary crew to film in the library. The documentary involves a Bergenfield resident who served in the Vietnam War and reconnected with the family of a Vietnamese soldier whose journal he found. Ms. Ballo discussed the current status of the strategic plan.

Trustee Education

President Neats referenced the BCCLS flyer Ms. Ballo had included in the packet. Ms. Ballo discussed pending legislation regarding updated staff and trustee continuing education requirements. More information will be shared when it is available.

Old Business

No report.

New Business

Nominations for the 2025 Lucille Tendler Community Service Award were discussed at length. The Board decided to table to the decision until the April 16th meeting to give all Trustees ample to time to evaluate the prospective candidates.

The April 16th meeting was discussed and it is to be held in person at the Library.

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Phipps to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Langschultz seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Deauna - Yes

Mr. Neats – Yes

Mr. Orlando - Yes

Ms. Phipps – Yes

Ms. Rivas - Yes

Mr. Langschultz - Yes

The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sorah Shaffren

Jennifer Murray, Recorder for
Sorah Shaffren, Recording Secretary