

Board of Trustees Minutes – MARCH 18, 2025

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, NJ, was held in person and remotely via Zoom on MARCH 18, 2025. Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, President called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. **A quorum was established by roll call.**
2. **ROLL CALL:** Present: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith, and Mr. Christian Veliz. Absent: Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Patrick Mahon. Also present were Eleni Glykis, Alexandria Laudisi and Helen Speros.
3. **Announcement of Compliance with The Sunshine Law:** Ms. Julia Krisanits states we are in compliance.
4. **Welcome to Visitors:** Instructions on when to address the Board. There are no visitors.
5. **Comments from the public:** N/A
6. **NEW BUSINESS-** N/A
7. **READING OF THE MINUTES (FEBRUARY 2025).** It was motioned by Ms. Chynice Roman and seconded by Dr. Dorothy McMullen to accept the February 2025 minutes. AYES: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith. Abstain: Mr. Christian Veliz. Absent: Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Patrick Mahon.

8. **REPORTS OF OFFICERS:**

REPORT OF BOARD PRESIDENT:

- I am pleased to provide this month's President's Report, highlighting key discussions, events, and developments at our library. This month I visited Eport, and was pleased to see the library is being used by many. Read to a dog was taking place which everyone enjoyed. I then visited Elmora and spoke with Usha. And Martha expressing my condolences for the loss of Martha's mom. They have Story-time at the laundromat and sewing & embroidery classes. They request donations of a sewing machine, material, other supplies. Quadaysha Across America activities. I was impressed by the skill, patience, and kindness of all the staff. Author talk and women in history.
- I included a letter from the Trustees in the March newsletter. I hoped it would give us some exposure as I want to start the FOL group. Perhaps someone will see it and would like to help.
- On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to welcome Christian Veliz and Jason Mahon to the Board.

9. **TREASURER'S REPORT (Action Item):**

Mr. Martin Weingast states everything is going ok. He is trying to get the final budget from the city / what they give us annually. Roel re-did the budget last month and the #s reflect best budget improved by the City. made some adjustments and some negative items are now positive. All looks good. Eleni met with CFO- how do they do it and what to expect. They wanted to know if we had excess money we did not spend. They can take back 20% unused funds. Julia concerned federal government cuts may effect library.

It was motioned by Ms. Lorraine Tidd and seconded by Ms. Earnestine Smith to accept the February Treasurer's Report. AYES: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith. Abstain: Mr. Christian Veliz, Absent: Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Patrick Mahon.

PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF BILLS (MARCH 2025) (Action Item):

We received a bill from the City for \$118K for retiree health benefits. While we budget \$5,000 monthly for retiree health benefits paid to the State, this is an additional amount billed by the City for other retired employees. These benefits are paid through the City rather than directly from the Library and appear to be the result of a prior arrangement

The Library purchased 20 computers for staff/public with Win 11.

Literacy NJ and the Library partnered for \$51k Grant. The library receives the grant and pay NJ Lit their portion. They use library facility for HSE, ESL, computer, and other classes. They have their own volunteers and handle everything else.

It was motioned by Dr. Dorothy McMullen to accept the Bills Lists, and seconded by Ms. Lorraine Tidd. AYES: AYES: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith, and Mr. Christian Veliz. Absent: Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Patrick Mahon.

10. REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES: We need to get the committees more active to support the Director.

11. REPORTS OF AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Friends of the Library needs to be established. We need an attorney to set up 501-C3. They can apply for grants the library cannot apply to. They can help pay for children's programs, museum passes, author talk etc. FOL can charge for items/tickets and give % sales of tickets to the library. We can get funds from businesses in the area if we also open up Foundation.

Budget & Finance Committee: Martin Weingast reviews his earlier meeting where he, Earnestine Smith and Eleni Glykis discussed a basic understanding of the budget. Mr Weingast continues working with Eleni on the budget and finance protocols.

12. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR: Consult your packet for the complete report.

A change order of \$8,000 was approved on 3/10/25 for the demolition of the chimney. The cost is covered by the contingency allowance in the budget. Bi-weekly meetings with the architect are ongoing. After the roof work is completed, enveloping work will begin at the Main Library.

In 2024 the Elizabeth Public library had over 350,000 visitors, circulated 138,058 materials and provided 1,750 programs with a total attendance of 24,534. We also facilitated over 18,000 interlibrary loans and maintained a strong digital presence, with over 60,000 public computer sessions and 19,000 wireless sessions.

At the LaCorte Branch, the sidewalk has been redone. Over at the Eport Branch, some issues have arisen with the alarm system and are currently being addressed.

Women's Art Exhibit featured art by the Library's Alice

Martha from the Elmora Branch was nominated as a Library Unsung Hero. Due to a conflict of interest—since the NJLA President is an Elizabeth employee—the nomination couldn't move forward. However, we would still like to acknowledge and commend Martha for her excellence and dedication.

Elizabeth ID employee- Wanda Cohen and Daaiyah Muhsin – printer is down and the program has been placed on hold until it is repaired.

Makers Day – March 22 Saturday

Children's and Teens are lively.

Rolling Thunder Chair dedication will be on the 4th floor at 11 am on Saturday March 29th. National anthem/ taps will be played and the chair will be displayed on the 2nd floor.

Eleni and Helen met with Bill Malone to review the insurance Policies. There is a meeting with Bill and Skyline rep on 4/10/25.

13. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-

Policies procedures review then will go to P&P Committee. Dr. McMullen suggests we ask other libraries for a model policy.

Department Head meeting,

Still managing Teens and Children' Departments: Adopt-a-Plushie, a Free Clothing giveaway, Summer Reading planning, and Makers Day preparations.

It was motioned by Ms. Lorraine Tidd to accept the Director and Assistant Director's report, and seconded by Ms. Lisa Torres. AYES by Acclamation: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith.

14. READING OF THE COMMUNICATIONS: N/A

15. UNFINISHED BUSINESS **Noted:** Change regular meetings to 630pm for the first 4 months was already voted on.

a. BYLAWS Article II 1. C – Change definition of "Quorum" to the majority of appointed Trustees at any time.

b. BYLAWS Article IV 1. A – Director includes pronoun "he" and will be changed to the words "The Director".

It was motioned by Ms. Earnestine Smith and seconded by Ms. Chynice Roman to amend the Bylaws. AYES by Acclamation: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith.

c. Report of the Audit

It was motioned by Ms. Lorraine Tidd to accept the Audit report, and seconded by Ms. Chynice Roman. AYES by Acclamation: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Martin Weingast and Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith.

16. CLOSED MEETING: It was motioned by Ms. Chynice Roman and seconded by Dr. Dorothy McMullen to go into closed session. AYES by Acclamation: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith, and Mr. Christian Veliz. Absent: Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Patrick Mahon

17. OPEN MEETING: It was motioned by Mr. Martin Weingast and seconded by Ms. Lorraine Tidd to go into open session. AYES by Acclamation: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith, and Mr. Christian Veliz. Absent: Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Patrick Mahon

18. ADJOURNMENT: 8:00pm. It was motioned by Dr. Dorothy McMullen and seconded by Ms. Lorraine Tidd to adjourn at 8pm. AYES by Acclamation: AYES by Acclamation: Ms. Julia Krisanits-Lehman, Mr. Martin Weingast, Ms. Lorraine Tidd, Ms. Chynice Roman, Dr. Dorothy McMullen, Ms. Earnestine Smith, and Mr. Christian Veliz. Absent: Ms. Lisa Torres, Mr. Patrick Mahon

Minutes by Helen Speros 3/20/2025.