APPROVED MINUTES
CLIFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
DECEMBER 17, 2025

The monthly meeting of the Trustees of the Clifton Public Library was held on November 19, 2025, at the Main Library, 292 Piaget Avenue, Clifton, NJ. The meeting was called to order at 6:31 P.M. by President Patricia Vasilik. Library Counsel read an announcement which stated that pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of the meeting had been given in the annual meeting notice to the Record, the Herald News, the Clifton Journal, posted on the Clifton Public Library Website and in the Clifton Public Library and filed with the Clifton City Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Present: Thomas Charsky, Rosmunda Kenning, Barbara Polk, Richard Ruggiero, Vivian Semeraro, Suzanne Sia, Tracy Sterni, Karen Sommers, President Patricia Vasilik, Library Director Justine Tomczak, and Library Counsel Michael A. Cerone, Jr. Absent: None. Trustee Sia left the meeting at 7:37 pm after Unfinished Business.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the November 19, 2025 meeting. Trustees offered several corrections. On a motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board on roll call vote approved the minutes of the November 19, 2025 meeting as amended. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Semeraro, Sia, Sommers, Sterni and Vasilik; No: None; Absent: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one addressed the Board. On motion made by Trustee Polk and seconded by Trustee Kenning, the Board, with all present being in favor, closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director supplied a written report to the Trustees in advance of the meeting. Updates and highlights of activities since the November 19 board meeting included the following.

Per the Board's direction at the November meeting, a second quote for chiller winterization was obtained from Garden State Mechanical. They came in higher, so Unitemp was engaged and the system was drained in advance of an expected cold spell. The Main Library's HVAC project is progressing, with ductwork and louvers installed and most major work expected to conclude shortly, after which final testing, balancing, and cleaning will occur before moving staff back in and reopening to the public.

Allwood Library returned to regular hours in December after extended hours in November.

Emergency locksmith work was completed at Main, and two new maintenance vehicles were received.

United Way reached out about using the community room for the VITA tax assistance program, which the library has hosted in the past.

The Clifton Health Department held a two-day Deflection Academy training at Main, covering engagement with at-risk populations, de-escalation, and trauma-informed responses.

Civil Service representatives visited to review procedures and address concerns.

The library newsletter is being updated, and digital teen materials were ordered.

The Children's Department is wrapping up its current programming season with several events, including a jazz music program.

December 10 was an especially challenging day for staff, involving a series of disruptive patron behaviors, including theft, substance use, and safety concerns, which were addressed by staff and security officers.

DONATIONS

Restricted:

$	3,600.00	From the FRIENDS for funding the Museum Pass program, a concert, and Children's programs
$	1,000.00	In Memory of Janine Piela from Adele Piela for books
$	130.00	In Memory of Sue Tereski from the Book Nook Volunteers for books
$	105.00	In Memory of Darlene Olenkewich from the Board of Trustees for books
$	100.00	In Memory of Darlene Olenkewich from Greg & Pat Vasilik for books

Unrestricted:

$	48.51	(PayPal 50.00) In Memory of Andrea Eldridge Williams from Howard Williams
$	48.51	(PayPal 50.00) In Memory of Laura Dunham from The Foley Family

Restricted – DEPARTMENTAL:

$	170.55	Interest earned – EW FUND for Children's programs

CORRESPONDENCE

President Vasilik noted receipt of a letter from the Director addressed to the Board thanking them for their donation to the Library in memory of Darlene Olenkewich.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Trustee Semeraro reported that weather caused the postponement of the December 2 concert to January 7 from 2pm to 3:30 pm. The FRIENDS presented a check in the amount of $3,600 to the Library for the Museum Pass program and adult and children's programming.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Board reviewed the Encumbrance and Claims Lists. On Motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the Encumbrance List dated December 1, 2025, in the amount of $ 67,541.47 and the Claims List dated December 17, 2025, in the amount of $ 72,412.40. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Semeraro, Sia, Sommers, Sterni, and Vasilik; No: None; Absent: None.

The Committee met and reviewed preliminary budget draft for CY 2026 and discussed priorities for general spending and capital projects. The Committee will present the CY 2026 budget at the January meeting.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

On motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Semeraro, the Board, with Trustees Polk and Vasilik abstaining, voted to go into executive session at 6:58 pm to discuss personnel issues.

The Board reconvened at 7:15 pm with the same members present. No action was taken in the executive session.

On motion made by Trustee Kenning and seconded by Trustee Ruggiero, the Board, on roll call vote, authorized a 10% salary increase for Supervising Library Assistant Cheryl Conselyea for calendar year 2026 in lieu of the 3% increase which she would have received pursuant to the CWA contract. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Ruggiero, Semeraro, Sia, Sommers, and Sterni; No: None; Absent: None; Abstain: Polk, Vasilik.

On motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Kenning, the Board, on roll call vote authorized a 3% salary increase for Library Counsel Michael A. Cerone, Jr. for calendar year 2026. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Ruggiero, Semeraro, Sia, Sommers, and Sterni; No: None; Absent: None; Abstain: Polk, Vasilik.

On motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Semararo, the Board, on roll call vote authorized a 3% salary increase for Library Director Justine Tomczak for calendar year 2026. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Ruggiero, Semeraro, Sia, Sommers, and Sterni; No: None; Absent: None; Abstain: Polk, Vasilik.

The Director reported that to deal with the disruption to Library schedules and operations due to the HVAC project, several employees did not take all their vacation time in 2025. She requested that the Board allow those employees to carry over their 2025 unused vacation time into 2026.

On motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Charsky, the Board, on roll call vote Justine Tomczak, Christine Althawabta, Nick Alectoridis and Gloria Abero to carryover unused 2025 vacation time provided that such time is used by April 30, 2026. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Ruggiero, Semeraro, Sia, Sommers, and Sterni; No: None; Absent: None; Abstain: Polk, Vasilik.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The Director reported that she spoke to all of the vendors who provided proposals for the purchase of an interactive touch play table for children. All of them require payment in full upon ordering and all would require the Library to pay for shipping to return a table under warranty. Instead of purchasing this table the Director and her staff will look for alternatives.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board reviewed proposals by Unitemp for HVAC service and BMS controls service. Trustee Ruggiero was concerned that the HVAC work does not fall within the sole source exception under the public contract law. Counsel shared this concern. It was the consensus of the Board that the Director should check with the City to determine how they contract for these services and to report back to the Board.

The Board reviewed the proposal from Generations Services to upgrade the lighting in the parking lot and walkways at the Main Library. Staff noted that Generations Services' pricing is on the Educational Services Community of New Jersey co-op. The Director noted that the Library had $35,117.20 remaining in the lighting upgrades bond from 2019. The balance of the cost will come out of equipment line in the budget. On motion made by Trustee Charsky and seconded by Trustee Semeraro, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the contract with Generations Services for the Exterior Lighting Upgrades at a cost of $75,232.50 in accordance with the proposal dated December 4, 2025. Vote: Yes: Charsky, Kenning, Polk, Ruggiero, Semeraro, Sommers, Sterni, and Vasilik; No: None; Absent: Sia.

The Director provided the Board with the list of dates the Library would be closed for Holidays in 2026.

The Director presented the 2026 Cash Management Plan. On motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Kenning, the Board, on roll call vote, approved the 2026 Cash Management Plan attached to these minutes.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

President Vasilik wished everyone Happy Holidays.

On motion made by Trustee Ruggiero and seconded by Trustee Polk, the Board, with all present being in favor, adjourned the meeting at 8:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Cerone, Jr.

MICHAEL A. CERONE, JR.
Library Counsel