

EAST ORANGE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
MAIN LIBRARY

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the East Orange Public Library Board of Trustees held at the Main Library, 21 South Arlington Avenue, East Orange, New Jersey on September 11, 2025 in the East Orange Room.

PRESENT: Hon. Jimmy Small
Hon. Jacquelyn Davis
Gloria Holt
Joylyn Perez
Terry Corallo
Councilman Sammed Monk

ABSENT: Hon. Mumtaz Bari-Brown (Excused)
Laudaine Simeon
Lynella George

STAFF: JP Porcaro
Pamela V. Holmes
Jenny Tong
Nancy Barrantes-Lei

The President, Hon. Jimmy Small, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. Sunshine Law

The President read the Statement re: Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, known as the Sunshine Law at the Opening of the meeting.

The President welcomed two new members to the Board: Terry Corallo (Superintendent Designee) and Joylyn Perez (Mayor Designee).

2. Minutes: June 18, 2025

Motioned by Hon. Jacquelyn Davis to accept the June 18, 2025 Minutes as presented. Seconded by Gloria Holt. Approved by the Board.

3. Financial Reports

August

Total Expenses Paid thru August 2025	\$2,105,304
Percentage Spent thru August 2025	57.31%
Total Resources Received thru August 2025	\$2,117,469
Percentage Received thru August 2025	57.64%
(Monies Received less Expenses Paid)	\$ 12,165

July

Total Expenses Paid thru July 2025	\$1,882,469
Percentage Spent thru July 2025	51.24%
Total Resources Received thru July 2025	\$1,850,194
Percentage Received thru July 2025	50.36%
(Monies Received less Expenses Paid)	\$ 32,275

June

Total Expenses Paid thru June 2025	\$1,523,271
Percentage Spent thru June 2025	41.46%
Total Resources Received thru June 2025	\$1,547,282
Percentage Received thru June 2025	42.12%
(Monies Received less Expenses Paid)	\$ 24,011

- **Approved Payments: June, July, August 2025**

Motioned by Hon. Jacquelyn Davis to approve the Approved Payments for June, July, August 2025. Seconded by Gloria Holt. Approved by the Board.

- **Proposed Payments: July, August, September 2025**

Motioned by Gloria Holt to approve the Proposed Payments for July, August, September 2025. Seconded by Hon. Jacquelyn Davis. Approved by the Board.

4. Public Participation

Brother Lamar spoke about his love for the library and passion for East Orange and African-American history.

5. Director's Report

The Director gave the report. Full report attached to Minutes.

The Library's 2024 audit has been completed in draft form. The Director will schedule a meeting with Hon. Jacquelyn Davis, Audit & Finance Chair, to review the draft. It should be ready for Board approval at the next meeting.

6. Trustee Concerns/Comments

- **Hon. Jacquelyn Davis**

The Library prepared a Strategic Plan 12-15 years ago. It's time for the Board to update the Strategic Plan. The community has grown since then and is more diversified. The Library needs to find out the community needs/interests. Previously, the Director indicated that he would start the Strategic Plan process. Tonight, Hon. Jacquelyn Davis asked for an update. The Director indicated that a survey was created. However, there is a problem with the Constant Contact Software which will be used to send out the survey via email to patrons with email addresses. He will contact the software company for assistance.

- **Hon. Jimmy Small**

Hon. Jimmy Small is happy to see that the 1st grade students from the School District will visit the Library for a tour, library cards and story time.

7. Committee Reports

- Hon. Jimmy Small gave the Technology Report.

To prepare for the East Orange school visits in September, Jenny Tong worked with Dasher Printing Services, Inc. to order additional library cards. The Director

redesigned the graphic of the cards. The new cards are eye-catching and aesthetically pleasing. It incorporates the library's logo and color and is a consistent part of the library's brand identity. The new cards will be ready by mid-September.

Circulation of digital materials continued to increase. Patrons checked out 730 digital materials from eLibraryNJ and borrowed 560 items from Hoopla and Kanopy.

Over 1,000 patrons used the computers at the library. In addition, many patrons enjoyed the free Wi-Fi and quiet study space.

The printing demand continued to be very high in August. Patrons printed close to 9,000 pages using the library's SAM print system. Staff printed about 7,500 pages for patrons who sent print jobs to print@eopl.org at the Circulation Desk. Patrons printed about 3,000 pages using Wi-Fi printing service and most patrons used electronic payment for their printing jobs. A large portion of printing demand came from East Orange Embark Apartments applicants to whom the Library provided a seamless and fully supported printing solution.

Exigent Technologies engineers worked on the Group Policy project to resolve the policy conflicts and improve current and future troubleshooting effectiveness. They will further investigate the DNS/networking issue in the PC Center specifically.

The library purchased 20 new Dell PCs to get ready for Windows 11 upgrade project.

- Other

Hon. Jimmy Small will meet with Councilman Sammed Monk to create a fundraising committee. The committee will be responsible for developing fundraising activities on behalf of the Library.

No other Committees reporting at this time.

8. Old Business

There was no Old Business to discuss.

9. New Business

There was no New Business to discuss.

Jacquelyn Davis motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Gloria Holt. The public portion of the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

10. Executive Session

Executive Session commenced at 7:44pm.

Board discussed litigation and personnel matters.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Jacqueline Davis, second by Terry Corallo, approved by Board at 8:15pm.

EOPL Director's Report for September 2025's Meeting:

Since our last board meeting, I have attended all City Council meetings (June 16, 30, July 14, and August 11). I also attended the July 8th Mayor's directors meeting and a Departmental Hearing Process Training with the city's legal department, which our legal counsel Douglas Zucker also attended. There were also multiple CWA contract negotiations which I either personally attended or was represented at by the city's legal department.

The Mayor met with the Superintendent of Schools and they decided they wanted to have all 1st grade students in the district have a class visit to EOPL. This comes at a considerable cost to the school district because they do not have in-house bus drivers so they are paying the bus company to bring the students in. Once that decision was made, myself and librarian Nancy Tinney had multiple planning meetings with district Director of Teaching & Learning Paulette Salomon. The school district will be giving in-class library lessons ahead of each visit. The students will all be provided library card applications that will be filled out and sent to me ahead of each visit. Our staff will then input the cards and cross-reference the current card holders with the new applications so each student will get a library card on their school visit. There will be a total of 14 class visits over the course of September and October, with the possibility of more based on the needs of the district. Due to some Junior staff being out on FMLA leave, these visits will be performed by myself and Nancy Tinney. I thank her for her help in the planning process and her eagerness to make this a success. Also due to the staff who are out, Ms. Holmes has been handling some of our school outreach programs; EOPL generally likes to attend every back-to-school night for each school in the district. One of my initial goals was to increase EOPL's reach into the school district, and while I wasn't included in the initial decision-making process for these visits, I am very happy that our reach *is* increasing and I hope to continue the positive progress in regards to the schools. Ms. Tinney and myself have also talked about the possibility of doing similar outreach programs with private schools in the city. At some point in the school year, Paulette Salomon will also have me meet with the principals in the district to talk about increasing EOPL's services to the teachers and student body.

EOPL has been open all summer as a cooling center and has only had one day where the chillers were down. That issue was resolved by DPW quickly. I had one meeting with city stakeholders regarding a July heatwave and we were able to respond to their needs.

Our security access cards and readers (the card "keys" that open our doors) have been replaced. This system was from the early 90s and was long overdue for a replacement. Now that the system has been replaced, we will be able to install new readers on every new door that was installed during our construction. I was hoping that installation would have been done by this meeting, but it should be completed by next

board meeting. We also are installing new card readers on any door that already existed but did not have a reader, so every door in the building will have a card reader for access. The software for the card reader allows for each individual card to open specific doors, so each staff member will have different access to doors depending on the library's needs; for instance, only 'confidential' staff members' cards will be able to open the door to the room with staff records. The need for this upgrade was initially suggested to me when I started since our construction project would be installing so many new doors, and I am happy to finally have had the project started.

These new card readers are necessary for us to launch our Small Business Center, since the cards needed to access the center would need specific settings so the center would only be accessible at the set times the center would be open. The center will be ready to launch as soon as we tie up a few details after the readers are installed. We will have a grand opening event for the center and the board will be invited.

In June, Omari Edwards of Technology for Youth and I met with the City's grant writing consulting company Millenium regarding available grant funding for our anticipated technology classes, but we still have yet to have Millenium find us a grant to apply for.

In the ongoing issue with Verizon over-charging us, a new issue was caught and corrected. On-Tech, our vendor that handles eRate funding, caught that Verizon's refund check to us was over-paid. Jenny Tong was able to figure out how Verizon over-calculated, and she worked with Nancy Barantes and On-tech to correct the error so we would not be charged for their error in the future.

Our 2024 audit has been completed and is in draft form now. We can have a meeting of the board's finance committee and can approve the audit's finalization after that.

EOPL's portion of the state construction grant paperwork has all been submitted to the state library, with the exception of the audit, which NJSL is aware of; many libraries didn't have their audit completed so we aren't the only library whose audit submission is pending. I have no other updates on the status of the completion of the construction. Councilman Monk has been asking for updates from the city BA as well, and has not been provided any updates that I am aware of.

Over the course of the summer, Jenny Tong and I did searches to replace two vacant positions. We received over 100 applications for the two positions (Cataloging Librarian and Library Assistant). After a lengthy interview process, we completed the search and hired Errol Logal as Cataloging Library (start date Sep 8) and Adriana Sanchez as bi-lingual Library Assistant (start date Sep 22).

East Orange put out a request for bids to replace their current public building cleaning company, who cleans East Orange properties at night, including the main library. I was included in the city's needs assessment process. East Orange accepted bids from two companies who were to split building duties but after the first week, one of

the companies pulled out and the remaining company took over the cleaning of all buildings. In the interim when the old company's contract ended and the new company took over, DPW paid overtime to some of our maintenance crew to clean our building. The new company has started.

On August 27, Darryl Jeffries and Mayor Bowser's son David brought a small truck to the building to donate some of the former Mayor's items to the library. This was facilitated by librarian rashond Smith and I briefly met with Historical Society president Merolyn Kelly the day prior to work out logistics of the collection. We are hoping to do an exhibit and program on East Orange history and Mayor Bowser in the future, and we plan on having a meeting with some EOPL staff and the Historical Society to plan the future of the library's historical collection. In my spare time I like to make occasional Wikipedia edits and after this meeting, I authored a small article on Mayor Bowser. If you look up his Wikipedia page, I put it up and it was (surprisingly) quickly made live after community review. I envision us making more East Orange historical documents available online to the public in the future.

Submitted for the September 11, 2025 meeting.
JP Porcaro, Director