

# HOBOKEN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

MEETING OF JANUARY 27, 2026

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HOBOKEN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY, HELD AT MILES SQUARE THEATER, 1400 CLINTON STREET, IN HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2026 AT 6:30 PM.**

-----Meeting Excerpt-----

**1. Call to Order**

Board President Jason Freeman called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm and certified that pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act, notice of the meeting had been given in the annual meeting notice, which was adopted at the July 22, 2025 meeting of the Library Board and such notice was provided in the Star Ledger and Bergen Record, was posted to the Library website, and filed with the Hoboken City Clerk.

**2. Roll Call**

Attendance	Present	Absent	Notes
Mr. Jason Freeman, President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Susan Murcko, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Kurt Thoens, Treasurer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mr. Damian De Benedetto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Amanda R. Blaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Jordan Hernandez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Raakhee Mirchandani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Leslie Norwood, School Superintendent Designee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Also in attendance were: Library Director Jennie Pu, Interim Assistant Library Director James Cox, Recording Secretary Karla Aybar Reyes, Library Council Douglas S. Zucker, Esq., and members of the Library staff.

### **3. Acceptance of Minutes**

—Mr. Freeman: Asked if the Trustees had any corrections or comments regarding the minutes of the Board meeting of December 16, 2025. There being none, the minutes were added to the consent agenda.

### **4. Public Comments**

—Mr. Freeman: Invited comments from the public. There were none.

### **5. Director's Report**

—Ms. Pu: Highlighted items of note: Ms. Pu was invited to represent the Library at Mayor Emily Jabour's inauguration on January 15, 2026 and at Governor Mikie Sherrill's inauguration on January 20, 2026. The Library hosted the Hoboken Mayoral Inauguration Ceremony live stream in the Large Program Room. A copy of the 2025 Annual Report and the 2026 Budget are included in this month's Board packet.

### **6. Committee Reports, Including Finance Committee and Payment of Bills**

—Ms. Pu: Reported on behalf of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. The City has approved the lift variance and we hope to go out to bid soon.

—Ms. Norwood: A monthly Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting has been scheduled.

—Mr. Thoens: Reported for the Finance Committee: Mr. Thoens described the financial matters before the Board for approval: 1) in Part A, to pay 2025 library operating expenses with checks no. 13126-13152 totaling \$57,440.19; to pay 2026 library operating expenses with checks 13153-13200 totaling \$121,931.50; and to pay via PayPal \$10,918.32 to Adobe Inc, \$83.40 to Doodle AG, \$1,560.00 to FitOn Health/Peerfit Inc., and \$799.50 to Zoom Communications Inc.; 2) in Part B, to pay 2025 library operating expenses with check no.13201-13207 totaling \$27,439.13. Also before the Board is a resolution to void check #13012. Mr. Thoens asked if there were any questions concerning the bills to be paid or the resolution.

—Ms. Murkco: Noted that the overtime paid in 2025 was higher than what was budgeted for and that the number budgeted for 2026 remains the same as it was in 2025.

—Ms. Pu: Explained that there were events that we did not plan for, like the Let's Get Civic! series, and that we do not anticipate exceeding the budgeted number in 2026.

There being no further questions, approval of the Part A bills and the resolution to void checks were added to the consent agenda.

—Ms. Mirchandani: Moved the Board to approve payment of the Part B bills for library materials.

—Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 7 NAYS:0 RECUSED: 1 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. DeBenedetto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Freeman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Hernandez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Mirchandani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Murcko	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Norwood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Thoens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### **7. Personnel and Policy Committee**

—Ms. Murcko: Reported on behalf of the Personnel and Policy Committee. There is a revised Code of Conduct included in the packet. The document has been amended to include bag and accessory size restrictions in order to prevent customers from bringing strollers, carts, and unreasonably large items into the Library. Ms. Murcko noted that the number of incident reports within the Library decreased in 2025, likely due to having a clear code of conduct and posting it within the Library.

—Mr. Freeman: Stated that Ms. Pu’s 2025 review will be completed by the end of Q1.

—Ms. Murcko: Added that Ms. Pu is working on her 2026 goals and that they will be shared with the Personnel and Policy Committee in advance of their February meeting.

### **8. President’s Report**

—Mr. Freeman: Noted Ms. Stoll is no longer on the Board and that Mayor Jabbour will be appointing a new designee to the Board.

### **9. Friends & Foundation**

—There was no Friends & Foundation report.

### **10. Old Business**

—Called for any old business. There was none.

### **11. Executive Session**

—Ms.Murcko: Motioned to move to executive session for purposes related to contract negotiations.

—Mr. DeBenedetto: Seconded.

—Adopted by vote as follows: YEAS: 8 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The Board voted to enter executive session at 6:49pm and returned to the public session at 7:19pm.

—Mr. Freeman: Summarized the session: The session was called for purposes related to contract negotiations. No votes or Board actions were taken.

### **12. New Business**

—Mr. Freeman: Mr. Zucker has switched firms; there is a resolution with a contract for the new law firm.

—Mr. Zucker: Stated that he has more support at this new firm and will be able to provide better service.

### **13. Consent Agenda**

- a. Approve the minutes of the December 16, 2025 Board meeting
- b. Approve payment of part A bills
- c. Approve the resolution to void checks
- d. Approve the 2026 budget
- e. Approve the updated Library Code of Conduct
- f. Approve the resolution appointing Library Attorney to the Hoboken Public Library

—Ms.Mirchandani: Moved the Board to approve the consent agenda.

—Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 8 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. DeBenedetto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Freeman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Hernandez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Mirchandani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Murcko	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Norwood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Thoens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

—Mr. Freeman: Moved to approve resolution 2026-2 Appointing Library Attorney to the Hoboken Public Library

—Ms. Blaney: Seconded

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 8 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

Trustee	Yes	No	Recused	Abstain
Ms. Blaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. DeBenedetto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Freeman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Hernandez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Mirchandani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Murcko	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Norwood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Thoens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **12. Trustee Comments**

—Mr. Freeman: Invited any comments by the Trustees. There were none.

—Ms. Norwood: Moved to adjourn.

—Ms. Blaney: Seconded.

—Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 8 NAYS:0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:22pm