

HOBOKEN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

MEETING OF MARCH 24, 2026

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HOBOKEN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY, HELD AT 500 PARK AVENUE IN HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY ON TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026 AT 6:30 PM.

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

1. Call to Order

Board President Jason Freeman called the meeting to order at 6:32 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excused
Ms. Amanda R. Blaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Jordan Hernandez	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excused
Ms. Raakhee Mirchandani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ms. Leslie Norwood, School Superintendent Designee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excused

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

*Present via remote connection

3. Acceptance of Minutes

—Mr. Freeman: Asked if the Trustees had any corrections or comments regarding the minutes of the Board meeting of February 24, 2026. 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 attended ALA's first National Legislation Day in Washington DC. She led the New Jersey delegation and visited the offices of various state representatives and senators, including Rep. Menendez, Senator Booker, and Senator Kim. Jennie also met with Senator Hirono and her legislative and communications staff on library-related issues. Ms. Pu participated in various interviews about ebook legislation, which has become a state and national priority. She noted that, in order to meet public demand, a sizable amount of the Library's budget is dedicated to ebooks and audiobooks and that this legislation will be especially impactful to the Library when it undergoes renovation.

—Ms. Murcko: Asked about the bill's status.

—Ms. Pu: Stated that the bill has been introduced to the senate but has not gone to committee yet. There is still an amendment waiting for review.

—Ms. Murcko: Asked what ALA's intention is with National Legislation Day.

—Ms. Pu: Responded that there is an emphasis on getting IMLS reauthorized for 2027 and meeting with state offices to talk about local district issues.

—Ms. Murcko: Asked about Senator Kim's involvement in these issues.

—Ms. Pu: Replied that Senator Kim is aware of the issues, but that ALA's priority at the moment is to defend intellectual freedom.

—Ms. Mucko: Asked Ms. Pu to please elaborate on what EBSCO is for those who might not know.

—Ms. Pu: Explained that EBSCO is a database provider. Ms. Pu attended EBSCO's Public Library Leaders Advisory Board to meet other library leaders and talk about issues in the field.

—Ms. Pu: Continued highlighting items of note. The new social worker, Stefanie Jackowitz-Robinson, has started working at the Library. There is also one social work intern and another scheduled to start in May. The Library debuted its new Red Bulls limited-edition library card. REDD the Red Bulls mascot visited the Library to read to the kids and will return for more story times. The Library hosted a successful book talk for author Maria Pepe’s new book, *The Girl Who Changed Little League*.

6. Executive Session

—Ms. Murcko: Motioned to move to executive session for purposes related to attorney-client privilege.

—Ms. Blaney: Seconded.

—Adopted by vote as follows: YEAS: 5 NAYS: 0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The Board voted to enter executive session at 6:41pm and returned to the public session at 7:16pm.

—Mr. Freeman: Summarized the session: The session was called for purposes related to attorney-client privilege. No votes or Board actions were taken.

7. Committee Reports, Including Finance Committee and Payment of Bills

—Ms. Pu: Reported on behalf of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. There were no updates this month.

—Mr. Thoens: Reported for the Finance Committee: Mr. Thoens described the financial matters before the Board for approval: 1) in Part A, to pay 2026 library operating expenses with checks no. 13275-13331 totaling \$457,437.49; to pay via PayPal \$119.99 to Brother Artspira, \$175.00 to Faronics, \$1,275 to LOTE4Kids, and \$99.00 to Wordpress; 2) in Part B, to pay 2026 library operating expenses with checks no. 13332-13338 totaling \$20,791.27. Also before the Board is a resolution to void checks #13237 and #13153. Mr. Thoens asked if there were any questions concerning the bills to be paid or the resolution. There being no questions, approval of the Part A bills and the resolution to void checks were added to the consent agenda.

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

—Mr. Freeman: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 4 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. Freeman	<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"/>
Mr. Thoens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Personnel and Policy Committee

—Ms. Murcko: Reported on behalf of the Personnel and Policy Committee. Ms. Pu went over the 2026 staffing plan with the Personnel and Policy Committee. A copy of the organization chart is included in this month’s board packet. Items of note include replacing the vacancy for a social worker, adding a maintenance worker, and adding part-time assistants in several departments. Also included in the packet is a copy of Ms. Pu’s 2026 Director’s Goals. Her goals focus on prioritizing keeping service disruptions to a minimum and supporting staff by not piling on new programs or goals during renovation. Ms. Murcko informed the Board that next month, Trustees will receive a notice from the City Clerk to file their annual Financial Disclosure Report with the state and that filing the report is mandatory.

9. President’s Report

—There was no President’s report.

10. Friends & Foundation

—There was no Friends & Foundation report.

11. Old Business

—Called for any old business. There was none.

12. New Business

—Called for any new business. There was none.

13. Consent Agenda

- a. Excuse the absence of Ms. Mirchandani, Mr. DeBenedetto, and Ms. Norwood.
- b. Approve the minutes of the February 24, 2026 Board meeting
- c. Approve payment of part A bills
- d. Approve the resolution to void checks

e. Approve the 2026 Director’s Goals

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

—Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 5 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. 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. Murcko	<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"/>

—Ms. Blaney: Moved to approve Resolution 2026-4 to reserve funds for capital improvements

—Ms. Blaney: Seconded

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 5 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. 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. Murcko	<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"/>

—Ms. Murcko: Moved to approve Resolution 2026-7 to reserve funds for capital improvements

—Ms. Hernandez: Seconded

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 5 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. 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. Murcko	<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"/>

—Ms. Murcko: Moved to approve the Resolution of Memorialization for Approval of the updated 2026 Hoboken Public Library Capital Master Plan and Appendix

—Ms. Hernandez: Seconded

—Adopted by roll call vote as follows: YEAS: 5 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. 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. Murcko	<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. Hernandez: Moved to adjourn.

—Ms. Murcko: Seconded.

—Adopted by voice vote as follows: YEAS: 5 NAYS:0 RECUSED: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:31pm