

East Brunswick Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 17, 2026

Attendees:

Otu Amankwah (arr. 7:32 pm)	Karen Parry, Library Director
Dr. Joyce Boley	Maria Carmelo, Executive Administrative Assistant
Dr. Kenneth Freedman	Muyassarkhan Abdurasulova, Teen Representative
Lisa Gurevich	
Joseph Palombit	
Patricia Palumbo	
Dr. Bernard Rosenthal	

Ms. Palumbo called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. A roll call was made and a quorum was present. Ms. Palumbo stated that the meeting was advertised and the Open Public Meetings Act requirements were met.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of February 24, 2026:

Dr. Freedman made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2026 meeting. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Dr. Boley, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Ms. Palumbo and Dr. Rosenthal. Voting no: None. Abstaining: Mr. Palombit.

Public Participation:

Muya Abdurasulova presented the February Teen Report. 71 teens completed 77 volunteer hours in February. This includes helping pull duplicate books to make space on the shelves and helping with programs like “Make a Pal-entine”. The new teen furniture was delivered and set up, giving teens more sitting space and modular tables that they can move and separate to fit their needs. The teen remodel is nearing its end, with just a few finishing touches like some new display shelves and wall mounted shelves coming soon. Local therapist and library patron Vicky Laszlo hosted a mental health program for tweens and teens called “Camp Half Blood”, a coping skills workshop that used the theme of Percy Jackson to teach kids how to cope during stressful situations.

The Friends of the Library were unable to attend tonight’s meeting and sent their monthly update via email. The Friends will be hosting Bingo on March 27th at the library. It is for cash prizes, they will also have a fifty-fifty, wine raffle, big prize raffle, small TV and beats headphones. \$30.00 to enter and 10 games will be played. The Friends will be selling tickets for their 2nd Calendar Raffle in April. It is \$15.00 per ticket and there are multiple chances to win all month

in May. All prizes are gift cards that were donated by various businesses. Please support the Friends!

There was no Township Report.

Dr. Boley presented the school district report. Earlier this month, the HUES Willy Wonka musical performance was outstanding! Parent teacher conferences were held last week to support the home-school connection. Students and 10-month staff will have the day off on March 20th in observance of Eid al-Fitr. The Churchill Junior High Theatre Program presents Legally Blonde Jr. on March 15th, 16th and 27th at 7:00 pm. It promises to be a great show! It is budget season and our new Superintendent has issued invitations to apply for the School Funding Advocacy Stakeholder Group. Applications are available on the district website. Parent University sessions for the year are now listed on the district website. Spring Recess is scheduled for April 1st – 3rd.

There were no Public Comments.

Financial Report:

Ms. Parry presented the Financial Report. The library has had a substantial budget cut of \$300,000.00. We are planning various projects such as the camera system which will cost around \$46,000.00 and new firewall with a \$45,000.00 upfront cost. The library's options are cutting service hours, which would result in cutting resources or cutting staff and it is not in the best interest of the taxpayers to cut service hours or resources. We are not filling positions as staff resign which means full timers will be putting more hours in at the desks.

Mr. Amankwah made a motion to approve the March 18, 2026 Bill List. Dr. Boley seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Dr. Rosenthal. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

Director's Report:

There are exciting things going on at the East Brunswick Library! We have purchased a magic table, which will be delivered in the coming weeks. The magic table will be a great resource for children and adults with intellectual disabilities and dementia. The projector mounts to the ceiling and projects to a white table. One unit will be fixed in meeting room #2 and the second unit is a mobile table which can be moved to different areas of the library. We will have general hours of use and appointment-based training with Accessibility Librarian Karen Geist. The magic table cost \$15,000.00 and was purchased by the Friends of the Library. Big thank you to the Friends! Consumer Health Librarian Lycett Thiel signed an agreement with Online Cooking Club Green Apron Kitchen. The Mayor's Mental Health Taskforce is holding their third Stress Less event on Saturday, April 11th from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm. This big community event is for people of all ages and will have crafts designed to be calming, as well as coloring tables, sound yoga, a Bollywood dance along and a nature walk with therapy dogs, alpacas and a miniature horse. The rain date is April 18th.

Dr. Boley made a motion to approve the February 2026 Director's Report. Ms. Gurevich seconded. Voting yes: Mr. Amankwah, Dr. Boley, Dr. Freedman, Ms. Gurevich, Mr. Palombit, Ms. Palumbo and Dr. Rosenthal. Voting no: None. Abstaining: None.

New Business:

Staff Appreciation Day will be held during National Library Week on Thursday, April 23rd from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm. Lunch will be provided to staff as well as ice cream sundaes from Scoop to my Lou to thank them for all their hard work and dedication.

Closed Session:

The Board did not go into executive session.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Dr. Boley made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 pm. Dr. Rosenthal seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Ms. Lisa Gurevich, Secretary