

**South Plainfield Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes October 14, 2025**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Outcome/To Do</b>
Call to Order	The meeting was called to order by President Cheryl Nagel-Smiley at 6:00 pm. President Nagel-Smiley announced that the meeting was held in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act and as such, proper notice of the meeting was published in the official newspapers, The Observer, The Courier-News and The Home News Tribune.	
Roll Call	Trustees Present: Cheryl Nagel-Smiley, President; Melissa Katsingris, Vice President/Secretary; Annemarie Stoeckel, Treasurer; Ray Rusnak, Mayor's Rep; Carol Christatos; Janine Kupcho; Stephanie Wolak Excused Absent: Bill Seesselberg, School Rep; Robert A. Bengivenga	
Approval of Minutes	Cheryl called for a motion. Annemarie motioned to accept the minutes from the previous meeting. Stephanie seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously with Melissa and Janine abstaining.
Payment of Vouchers	Cheryl reviewed the vouchers (checks #16441 - #16500 totaling \$87,668.52) and called for a motion. Melissa motioned to accept the voucher payments. Ray seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Discussion of Holiday Lights	<p>Cheryl asked without objection that this discussion occur earlier in the meeting to give everyone time to weigh the options.</p> <p>Ray stated that he originally thought that the holiday lights might be cost prohibitive. After sharing this with the holiday lighting company, they offered a substantial 10% discount. Ray said he also found out that the electricity for the 6 week holiday light timeframe was not as costly as he thought it would be. Ray added that reducing the hours the lights are lit could also defray a small amount of the holiday lighting cost.</p> <p>Ray presented four holiday lights options and noted that the lighting company would only do the indoor tree if an additional service was ordered.</p> <p>Cheryl shared that she learned that evenings and weekends are non peak hours and cost less than peak weekday hours.</p> <p>Melissa shared that she sees the holiday lights as a beautiful give back to the town and we have the money for it. She also stated that reducing the hours the lights are lit could be a good option to reduce the cost.</p> <p>Stephanie shared that she could see some people in town might think that it is a lot of money to spend on holiday lights when the money could be better spent elsewhere on something material.</p> <p>Melissa stated that she enjoys the money the town spends on mums and other efforts and sees these efforts as an improvement to make the town beautiful.</p>	To be voted on during New Business

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Discussion of Holiday Lights, continued	<p>Cheryl reviewed some of the things the town is slated to spend money on and noted the opposing opinions on each topic on social media.</p> <p>Janine shared that she had a magical moment with the lights last year.</p> <p>Annemarie stated that the holiday lights help maintain that small town feeling and beauty that keeps people coming back to South Plainfield to raise their families after growing up here.</p> <p>Carol stated that reducing the hours the lights are lit could be a good compromise.</p>	
Expense Report Review	Cheryl called for a motion. Janine motioned to accept the report. Carol seconded the motion. Cheryl asked if there was an extra pay period this month, and Linda replied yes.	Motion carried unanimously.
Cash Receipts Report Review	Cheryl called for a motion. Annemarie motioned to accept the report. Melissa seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Statistical Report Review	Cheryl called for a motion. Melissa motioned to accept the report. Janine seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Director's Report	Linda reviewed her report. Cheryl called for a motion. Melissa motioned to accept the report. Carol seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Finance and Budget/ Treasurer's Report	Annemarie presented the bank statement.	The bank statement was accepted.
Policy Report	Janine reviewed the proposed Library Board of Trustees Gift Giving Policy Upon Death and noted that the laws are vague on this topic. Gifts would be given for the death of a current Board member or staff or the death of an immediate family member. A memorial brick would be donated for a former Board member or staff. Immediate family is spouse/partner or child. Janine said a \$20 - \$50 gift value range is considered reasonable and that cash gifts and gift cards should be avoided.	
Personnel Committee Report	Cheryl noted that the committee needs to meet to discuss salaries. We have one Spanish speaking staff member, and she has indicated that she will not be returning from maternity leave, so Linda is advertising for a bilingual librarian or library assistant so we can continue to serve our Spanish speaking patrons.	
Technology Committee Report	Annemarie reviewed the Technology Committee Report and stated that the committee recommends going with the JD Cloud Consulting quote.	

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Capital Projects Committee	<p>Ray stated that he had no updates.</p> <p>Cheryl and Linda shared the details they learned about the Charlie Cart that show it is not a feasible choice for the library and suggested taking a more piecemeal approach. Linda noted that she needs to share the piecemeal plan with the fire department to get their input.</p>	
Community Relations Committee	<p>Stephanie noted that set up for Fall Festival was a lot of work and asked if a future Capital Project could create curb cuts so carts could be easily wheeled for event set ups.</p> <p>Stephanie asked if the library could close early on Nov. 30th when the town's holiday lights will be turned on. Linda noted that the library is closed that day for Thanksgiving weekend.</p> <p>Stephanie requested the library bathrooms be made available during Trunk or Treat.</p>	
Mayor's Alternate Report	<p>Ray stated that there are no updates at this time.</p>	
Schools Report	<p>Cheryl stated that Bill had not sent her any updates for today's meeting.</p> <p>Cheryl recognized the teachers who helped at the Hispanic Heritage event.</p>	
Board President's Report	<p>Cheryl stated that she wants everyone to feel free to express their opinions on New Business items during the meeting.</p> <p>Cheryl shared that she attended the Wood Flower workshop, the Mentalist (with Carol), the Meal Prep event (with Stephanie and Melissa) and enjoyed all these good events.</p>	
Old Business	<p>There was no Old Business to discuss.</p>	
Public Comments	<p>Cheryl called for a motion. Melissa motioned to open Public Comment. Janine seconded the motion.</p> <p>Ken shared the Historical Society is planning to create small video segments on South Plainfield history on a variety of subjects. Ken stated they welcomed suggestions for the segments.</p>	<p>Motion carried unanimously.</p>

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Public Comments, continued	<p>Lisa shared a Friends of the Library Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The book sale raised \$3,396.50 from the preview and regular sale and \$500 from the after sale.</li> <li>• The Summer Membership Drive raised \$535.</li> <li>• The Friends have a new logo.</li> <li>• The Friends had voted to provide funds for Fall Festival.</li> <li>• Holiday Lego Raffle options will include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three boxes of 4+ up Lego sets valued at \$118; \$3 raffle tickets</li> <li>• Nightmare Before Christmas Lego set valued at \$200; \$5 raffle tickets</li> <li>• Four boxes of 8+ up Lego sets valued at \$180; \$5 raffle tickets</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Suggestions to share with the Friends: We can promote the Lego Raffles and Friends Membership at Trunk and Treat and at the town's holiday lighting ceremony.</p>	Motion carried unanimously.
New Business: Holiday Lighting (options A, B, C or D)	Prior to the vote, each Board member voiced the option they felt was appropriate for the holiday season. There were 6 votes for option C and one vote for option A. Cheryl called for a motion. Ray motioned to approve option C (as per the Roll Call Vote). Annemarie seconded the motion. Discussion was held earlier in the meeting.	Motion carried unanimously.
New Business: Approving Payment for the Holiday Lighting	Cheryl called for a motion for the Board to provide 50% of payment to the holiday lighting company so we can be placed on the schedule. Annemarie motioned to approve that payment for the holiday lighting. Melissa seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
New Business: Approval to purchase computer equipment	Cheryl called for a motion. Melissa motioned to approve the purchase of computer equipment as per the Technology Committee's recommendation. Janine seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
New Business: Approval of bereavement purchasing policy	Cheryl called for a motion. Annemarie motioned to approve the proposed Library Board of Trustees Gift Giving Policy Upon Death. Stephanie seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
New Business: Approval to digitize newspapers as previously discussed	Cheryl called for a motion. Melissa motioned to approve the digitizing of newspapers. Janine seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.
Public Comments	Cheryl called for a motion. Stephanie motioned to close Public Comment. Janine seconded the motion. There was no discussion.	Motion carried unanimously.

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Trustees Remarks	<p>Melissa shared that this was a good meeting.</p> <p>Janine shared that she enjoyed Fall Festival and the quality people who contribute. She said she also recently enjoyed being a part of Baby Time with her nephew.</p> <p>Stephanie stated that she agrees to disagree.</p> <p>Carol stated that she is learning a lot from the Trustee videos and suggested that some of that info could be shared with others. Carol said she is looking forward to the Sustainability event on Oct. 22 and also the Advocacy event in March 2026. Carol shared that she enjoyed the Fall Festival and is looking forward to Trunk or Treat.</p> <p>Ray stated he is glad that the Trustees can have open conversations and remain friends.</p> <p>Annemarie stated that she is shocked about Baker and Taylor closing. Annemarie shared that she is so glad to hear about the students helping out at events at the library.</p> <p>Cheryl wished everyone a happy Halloween. Cheryl was happy to see the kids participating at Fall Festival. Cheryl thanked everyone for their contributions.</p> <p>Cheryl mentioned what is on this month's Diversity Events Calendar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Month-long Observances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTQIA+ History Month: Honors the history, culture, and contributions of the LGBTQIA+ community</li> <li>• Breast Cancer Awareness Month: Promotes awareness of and the quest to find a cure for breast cancer</li> <li>• Filipino American Heritage Month: Recognizes the contributions of Filipino Americans to American culture</li> <li>• German American Heritage Month: Recognizes the contributions of German Americans to American culture</li> <li>• Italian American Heritage Month: Recognizes the contributions of Italian Americans to American culture</li> <li>• Polish American Heritage Month: Recognizes the contributions of Polish Americans to American culture</li> <li>• National Disability Employment Awareness Month: Promotes the right to have access to good jobs for disabled individuals</li> <li>• Domestic Violence Awareness Month: Raises awareness about domestic violence and its impact on victims, survivors, families, and the community</li> <li>• Bullying Prevention Month: Raises awareness about bullying and promotes kindness, inclusion, and support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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Trustees Remarks, continued	<p>Diversity Events Calendar, continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October 1: International Day for Older Persons - Promotes the rights and well-being of older persons worldwide</li> <li>• October 2: International Day of Nonviolence - Commemorates the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi and reaffirms the values to which he dedicated his life: equality, respect, peace, and justice</li> <li>• October 2: Yom Kippur - Jewish day of atonement</li> <li>• October 10: World Inclusion Day - Encourages inclusive practices and environments for all people</li> <li>• October 10: World Mental Health Day - Raises awareness for mental health issues worldwide</li> <li>• October 11: Yom Kippur - Celebrates the holiest day in Judaism, dedicated to atonement and repentance</li> <li>• October 11: National Coming Out Day - Celebrates members of the LGBTQIA+ community who have decided to reveal their true self</li> <li>• October 15: International Pronouns Day - Raises awareness about using and respecting pronouns in the LGBTQIA+ community</li> <li>• October 20: Diwali - Hindu festival of lights, celebrating the victory of light over darkness</li> <li>• October 22: International Stuttering Awareness Day - Raises awareness and promotes compassion for people who stutter</li> <li>• October 23: Birth of Bahauallah</li> <li>• October 31: All Hallows' Eve (Halloween) - Celebrates the evening before All Saints' Day</li> </ul>	
Adjournment	Cheryl called for a motion. Ray motioned to adjourn. Annemarie seconded the motion.	Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.