

## Statement from the Pequannock Township Public Library Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the Pequannock Township Public Library is issuing this statement in response to certain misinformation that has circulated. The Board of Trustees did not divert any funds away from Library programs and services, from the 2023 or 2024 budgets. The only known year the Library Board transferred funds to the Township was from the 2022 budget surplus, which was approved by a prior Board of Trustees. Two of the current appointed Board members were not on the Board at the time of that vote. The current Board did not transfer any surplus funds to the Township.

The transfer of 2022 budget surplus funds was done in accordance with State law (N.J.S.A. 40:54-15), which requires that public libraries prepare an annual report and, after excluding funds restricted for capital projects and grants, and any devise, bequest, or donation made to the library, if funds for that year remain that exceed the prior year's audited operating expenses plus 20%, then the Library Board **must** pass a resolution transferring those surplus funds to the Township. Before any funds can be transferred, other requirements must be met and then State Librarian must approve the Board's resolution. If the State Librarian did not approve, the funds would not have been sent in 2022, and if the funds in 2022 had been allocated to programming or services, they would not have been surplus and would not have been sent to the Town.

Once the Library Board transferred the surplus funds, it had no control over how the Township used the surplus funds, however, under municipal finance law, any funds a municipality receives from the municipal library as surplus funds "shall be used solely and exclusively by the municipality for the purposes of reducing the amount the municipality is required to raise by local property tax levy for municipal purposes." (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-25.1.) The Director of the Division of Local Government Services is responsible for enforcing this requirement. Regardless, the current Board has not approved any transfer of excess funds to the Township.

The Library Board does not rubber stamp anything from the Township or otherwise, and makes all decisions based on the specific facts. This Library Board is committed to serving the best interests of the Pequannock Township Public Library.

The Board just hired a highly qualified Interim Director, while we search for a full-time Director.