

Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
October 15, 2024
Looby Branch
2301 Rosa L. Parks Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37228
12:00 PM

Members Present: Joyce Searcy, Dr. Nadine De La Rosa, Keith Simmons, Charvis Rand, and Rosalyn Carpenter

Library Staff: Kyle Barber, Jennifer Schmid, Susan Drye, Shawn Baker, Maria West, Emily Kriebel, Chinedu Amaefula, John McFarland, Erin Piper

I. Call to Order/ Roll Call

- a. The meeting was called to order at 12:07 PM.

II. Metro Ordinance required to be announced at all Board Meetings – *Chair, Joyce Searcy*

- a. “Pursuant to the provisions of § 2.68.030 of the Metropolitan Code of Laws, please take notice that decisions of the Nashville Public Library Board may be appealed to the Chancery Court of Davidson County for review under a common law writ of certiorari. Any appeal must be filed within sixty days after entry of a final decision by the Board. Any person or other entity considering an appeal should consult with an attorney to ensure that time and procedural requirements are met.”

III. Public Comments

- a. “Pursuant to T. C. A. § 8-44-12, time is reserved at the beginning of Library Board meetings for which there is an actionable item on the agenda for public comment germane to items on the agenda. Up to five people will be allowed up to three minutes each to speak. Speakers must register within one half hour prior to the beginning of the meeting by signing their name on a physical sign-up sheet available at the entrance, and identifying any agenda item on which they intend to comment.”

IV. Board Chair Comments, *Joyce Searcy*

- a. Mr. Charvis Rand made a motion to approve the September 17th board meeting minutes. Mr. Keith Simmons seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Interim Library Director Report, *Kyle Barber*

- a. Mr. Barber stated, “I am Kyle Barber, and I am the Interim Assistant Director for the Main Library. I have the honor of giving Terri’s Interim Director Board Report.”
- b. Mr. Barber stated, “First we have a new Library Board website. We want to give a special thanks to the Shared Systems team for creating this new website. If you have not seen it, we will send you the URL after the meeting”.
- c. Mr. Barber stated, “On page 42 in your board packet today we have a special report from our Interlibrary Loan department. Our Interlibrary Loan department assists patrons who cannot find a book in the NPL collection. This happens most often when it is an older title, something that is no longer in print, or academic in nature. If we do not have that book in our collection, Interlibrary Loan is a partnership we have with other public libraries and academic libraries where we will find the book, it is sent to us, and then we send it back. It is a free service for our patrons.”
- d. Mr. Barber stated, “It’s Library Card Sign-Up month. On September 17th Mayor O’Connell and nearly half of the Metro Council members joined NPL for a pop-up photo booth to celebrate the power of a library card and elevate NPL in the community. NPL also earned some endorsements from Kate DiCamillo who was NPL’s 2023 Literary Award Honoree, Andrew Maraniss, the author of “Strong Inside,” and Lindsay Lynch, author of “Do Tell.” We were also happy to read Maragret Wrinkle’s piece in the New York Times dealing with censorship and public libraries which opened with NPL’s “I Read Banned Books” library card. Thank you to Andrea Fanta and the MarCom team for their contributions.
- e. Mr. Barber stated, “Let me congratulate the NPL team for having a wonderful presence at the ‘Celebrate Nashville Cultural Festival’ on October 5th. The NECAT staff as well as the Production Services staff lead by Larry Jirik did a wonderful job participating in ‘Celebrate Nashville.’ Linda Harrison served as a wonderful host for the event. She interviewed the festival’s performing artists. Several staff from Main were also at the festival to register patrons for library cards and promote library services.”
- f. Mr. Barber stated, “Nearly two hundred library staff took the Continuous Improvement Plan survey to have a voice in how NPL can improve customer service in 2025. Staff were asked to share feedback using the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. A special task force is working to organize and summarize all those survey responses. The CIP survey was designed to get feedback and ideas from staff on how to improve customer service. We are planning a separate staff engagement survey.”
- g. Mr. Barber stated, “Facility work at the Main Library continues. During this closure, staff that work at Main have gone out into the community for programming. They have also assisted at library branches. Our timeline for opening is October 26th.”
- h. Mr. Barber stated, “Additionally extensive roof repairs are ongoing at the Pruitt Branch. The tentative date to reopen is October 22nd.”
- i. Mr. Rand asked, “Are there any updates on the old Donelson Library building?”
- j. Ms. Drye responded, “Metro knows that we would like to keep the building; we just don’t know if NECAT will be there or if we will repurpose it.”

- k. Ms. Searcy stated, “We have board members with so many skills and where they have skills, they must separate their board hat with their volunteer hat. We all bring professional skills for this continuous improvement plan.”
- l. Dr. Delarosa stated, “I am proud of everyone’s work, and I recognize that getting feedback from the number of constituents that currently work within the system is sometimes difficult to get everyone’s buy in. So, knowing that we are all trying to service our patrons the best we can but also understanding there is another layer of the staff experience. There is another survey coming to help meet the needs of staff members”.
- m. Mr. Simmons asked, “What is the percentage of staff that took the survey?”
- n. Ms. Drye answered, “It’s over half.”
- o. Dr. De La Rosa stated, “Statistically speaking, that is very good. Anything over 20 plus percent is good.”

VI. Foundation Report- *Shawn Bakker*

- a. Ms. Bakker stated, “We are getting ready for the Gala, which is just around the corner. The building will be open, and you should have all received an invitation. I will pass them around in case you would like to invite someone else. We have sixty seats left. The Public Lecture is at MLK which has over eight hundred people registered. Please pass along information about the Public Lecture.”
- b. Ms. Bakker stated, “The Library 101 tours will resume with Main opening back up in a couple of weeks. Usually, they are done at 9:15 in the morning, but the November 6th tour will be at 4:30 in the afternoon. The December 17th tour is in the afternoon but will then go back to the morning tours.”
- c. Ms. Bakker stated, “In the mail today, you should receive an invitation for our Begin Bright Leadership Event which is focused on fundraising. We would like the Library Board and Foundation Board to be our guests at this event.” The Leadership Event will be at Geodis Park on Tuesday, November 19th at 5:30 P.M. Ms. Bakker will let the Board know what has been donated so far during the campaign.

VII. Old Business

a. Special Collections Gift Form

- i. Mr. Amaefula stated, “This is in relation to the Special Collections Division Special Collections Book Donation Form. After much deliberation and back and forth we decided to add more inclusive language to the donation form. The part that needs your focus is the second paragraph reading, *‘For Special Collections that require additional consideration the Special Collections division and the Director may bring a prospective donation to the Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees to receive their input before the donation is accepted. The final evaluation and determination will be made by the Special Collections Division and the Director for the Nashville Public Library.’*”

- ii. Mr. Simmons motioned to approve the updated form. Mr. Rand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Staff Reports

a. Looby Branch Overview, *John McFarland*

- i. Mx. McFarland stated, “This is my 100th day in this role. What that means is that we have done a lot of transitioning. One of the things that we made sure we did was improve our level of access. Erin Piper had the idea of making our computer classroom a reusable space. Before we only had the meeting room which has a capacity of forty. And our small conference/teen room which has the capacity of five.”
- ii. Mx. McFarland stated, “We have three centers right now and are working on a fourth for outreach.”
- iii. Mr. Simmons stated, “Where are the centers you go to?”
- iv. Ms. Strahan stated, “I go to a couple of local neighborhood daycares as well as preschools.”
- v. Dr. De la Rosa asked, “How are the centers selected?”
- vi. Ms. Strahan answered, “I usually cold call, send an email, show up, and knock on doors. Usually, I start with schools that Metro is not already serving.”
- vii. Mx. McFarland stated, “We added a Notary, which is me, and the hours have now been extended. We have also expanded how we market our programs, such as expanding our social media reach and coming up with new flyers and flyer formats.”
- viii. Mx. McFarland stated, “Matthew has been doing a lot of training to increase the reach of the senior programming which has included Digital Inclusion. We have also already seen some of these initial investments pay off, and on September 27th we had our Senior Bingo Program.”
- ix. Ms. Searcy stated, “Compared to your 2023 visits, the 2024 have gone up.”
- x. Mx. McFarland stated, “I think in almost every aspect, we have gone up in numbers and that is a testament to the work Erin did.”

b. Cyber Seniors, *Marian Christmon*

- i. Ms. Christmon stated, “We started out doing Digital Literacy Classes with families with school aged children. We did that for a year with different projects here in Nashville but then we decided we would try this with seniors. This started out with Tech Fairs with Seniors. For about eight

years now we have solely focused on seniors. What we do is try to help seniors learn to use technology to improve their lives. To do that we provide five different trainings for them.”

1. *Digital Literacy Training.*
 2. *Low-cost home Internet.*
 3. *Devices that meet their needs.*
 4. *Technical Support.*
 5. *Relevant applications and online content.*
- ii. Ms. Christmon stated, “Outcomes reported include:”
1. *99% report feeling more knowledgeable about using digital resources.*
 2. *99% report feeling more confident when using digital resources.*
 3. *96% report increase knowledge of Internet Safety.*
 4. *99% report that they intend to apply what they have learned.*
 5. *97% report that they are more aware of digital resources and services provided by NPL.*
- iii. Ms. Christmon stated, “These are the impact areas that come from the survey that Seniors say they will use their new skills.”
1. *76% Health Information and Services*
 2. *63% Education*
 3. *56% Entertainment*
 4. *38% Government Services*
 5. *28% Employment*
 6. *56% News and Current Affairs.*
 7. *49% Finance and Shopping*
 8. *64% Communication with friends and family.*
- iv. Ms. Christmon stated, “We do five different programs with the Cyber Seniors. Cyber Seniors is one that we adapted for us. Cyber Seniors is a non-profit organization whose goal is to bridge the digital divide and connect generations through technology. The first part of the program the teens learn about is what to expect when working with seniors. We try and prepare them for some of the obstacles seniors have while learning technology.”
- v. Ms. Drye asked, “Where do the teens come from?”
- vi. Ms. Christmon answered, “The teens come from Metro schools. Every year I send an announcement out to the schools about the job opening and they apply.”
- vii. Dr. De la Rosa asked, “What is your greatest need?”
- viii. Ms. Christmon answered, “We are always in need of money, which helps pay for the senior devices and also helps pay for the instructors.”

c. SEIU Update, *Kyle Cook*

- i. Mr. Cook stated, “Currently over half of the library staff are union members (190). Because of our size and membership engagement, we have now been able to elect our own leadership team. Kyle Cook (Lead Steward), Katy Searcy (Assistant Lead Steward), Andrew Palmer (Steward), Sade Johnson (Steward), Lauren Hampton (Steward), and Alfreda Miguel (Steward).”
- ii. Mr. Cook stated, “We have quarterly labor management meetings between the stewards and the administration and in this discussion the expectation is to talk with us as equal stakeholders in the workplace.”
- iii. Mr. Cook stated, “We helped advocate for our 4% cost of living adjustment and \$20 minimum wage.”
- iv. Mr. Cook stated, “I’m happy to report a resolution to the pay inequity I brought up in April. At the library associate level, we are pleased to say that library associates and program specialists are now one position which helps resolve the disparity that came out of last year’s pay plan.”
- v. Mr. Cook stated, “Going forward, our primary objectives are advocating for a more equitable workplace, especially protecting the labor rights for employees who are LGBTQIA or BIPOC, have physical disabilities, identify as neurodivergent, have been incarcerated, or are experiencing poverty.”
- vi. Mr. Cook stated, “In closing, we believe our request to share and broadcast these board meetings have empowered our staff. They hear decisions directly made about their organization and we thank you for giving the Union a chance to report to the Board.”
- vii. Mr. Simmons asked, “Do you confront hate? How much are you seeing this from patrons?”
- viii. Mr. Cook replied, “I don’t know if I can quantify it. More than I would like to see. I am glad our staff is comfortable talking to our union stewards when they do have those encounters.”
- ix. Mr. Rand asked, “How is your relationship with the HR department?”
- x. Mr. Cook answered, “We have a standing quarterly meeting with HR and Administration. If we have any individual issues, staff can request the Union come to any HR meeting with a staff member.”
- xi. Dr. De la Rosa asked, “How do you capture the state of their experiences? Is there a survey you send out?”
- xii. Mr. Cook answered, “We have surveys we send out and we do have seven union stewards which has made it a lot easier to access us.”
- xiii. Ms. Searcy asked, “How much does discrimination do to the staff experience with patrons?”

- xiv. Mr. Cook answered, “A fair amount. Most of these incidents go to the managers.”

IX. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 PM.

Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting

December 10, 2024

Main Library, 2nd Floor Board Room

615 Church Street

Nashville, TN 37219

12:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Mariya West

