Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
December 9, 2025
Edmondson Pike Branch
12:00 PM

Members Present: Joyce Searcy, Katy Varney, Charvis Rand, Keith Simmons, Kate Ezell, Dr. Nadine de la Rosa

Library Staff: Terri Luke, Jena Schmid, Andrea Fanta, Susan Drye, Shawn Bakker, Chantel Clark, Kyle Barber, Noel Rutherford, Jenny Lane, Ashley Walker-Tyler, Forrest Eagle, Kris Cagle, Travis Humbert, Joan Brasher, Wolfgang Bronner, Kyle Cook, Nikki Glassley, and Emily Krieble

Others: Macy Amos, Metropolitan Attorney at Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davison County; Stephen Elliot, Nashville Banner; Annalise Mitchell, Belmont Presidential Fellow

I. Call to Order / Roll Call
   a. Joyce Searcy called the meeting to order at 12:13 p.m.

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. Ms. Searcy introduced Annalise Mitchell, a Belmont University Presidential Fellow. She is shadowing Ms. Searcy for the day. Ms. Mitchell stated she was excited for the opportunity.

    b. Ms. Searcy thanked Liz Coleman for helping set up “An Afternoon with Jim Clyburn,” at the Green Hills Branch Library. Congressman Clyburn spoke about his new book, *The First Eight.* The event was a success, with 73 in attendance.

V. Approval of Minutes: October 21, 2025

    a. **Charvis Rand motioned to approve the minutes. Katy Varney seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Library Director Report, *Terri Luke*

    a. Terri Luke gave an update on the Main Library progress. The restoration company has stamped drawings from the architects. We are now waiting on permits from Metro Codes and the Fire Marshal, but both entities have been very responsive, and Ms. Luke anticipates having the permits soon.
    b. Ms. Luke met with Diana Alarcon of NDOT to discuss the parking garage, but there is still no update. Going forward, Ms. Luke and Ms. Alarcon will meet every other week to discuss updates. Ms. Luke acknowledged that this process was frustrating for both staff and customers, but the library wants to ensure everyone can return safely.
    c. Ms. Luke thanked library staff across the system for sharing workspaces and continuing to serve the public during this time. She reported that Main staff have seen some of their regular customers in the branches.
        i. Kate Ezell asked for clarity on the parking garage. Ms. Luke explained that NDOT has had three separate structural engineers assess the garage. Right now, the options are to either keep the first few floors for use or tear down the entire structure. NDOT knows the library is anxious to use the parking, if possible, but they are still assessing the structure.

VII. Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker*

    a. Shawn Bakker stated that the Gala weekend was a success. The Public Lecture at Martin Luther King Jr High School was almost filled to the 1,000 seat capacity. The Saturday night event yielded the highest attendance for a Gala yet. Guests were appreciative of the space at Montgomery Bell Academy but still missed being at the library.
    b. End of the year campaign is happening but NPLF does not make a big push during this time since Library Week is around the corner. The focus will be on getting more sustaining donors. Ms. Bakker shared a few quotes from folks who gave:
        i. "Everyone deserves the chance to open their world through reading."

ii. "The Nashville Public Library system is such a phenomenal and multi-faceted resource and one of the richest and most rewarding in our community. We are so lucky!"

iii. "I am continually impressed by the breadth of services NPL offers our community. Not only is there a wealth of books and media, but also education and support of so many groups in Nashville. Bravo and thank you!"

c. Keith Simmons asked about getting feedback from the authors and noted that the weekend is long for a visiting author. The group discussed the flow of the weekend.

VIII. New Business

a. Vote on Revised Out of Service Area, *Terri Luke*

i. At the last meeting, Ms. Luke had Noel Rutherford and Jenny Lane present regarding changing our service area. This vote would be to decrease the out of service area and make it so that only Davidson Country patrons can check out our eMedia items. Ms. Rutherford added that the 13 counties surrounding Davidson County will still have access to physical materials at NPL. Instead, these patrons can sign up for TN Reads, an eMedia program set up by the state of Tennessee that is unavailable to Davidson County residents.

1. Dr. Nadine de la Rosa asked about the timeline for this change. Ms. Rutherford explained that if this is approved, the change will start on January 20th, but it will take a full year to complete.
2. Mr. Simmons asked if those no longer in our service area can be reminded about the TN Reads program? Ms. Rutherford said this can be added to the website and given to staff as a talking point.
3. Ms. Varney asked how the 13 counties still within the service area were chosen. Ms. Rutherford explained that these counties account for 90% of our out-of-county use.

ii. Ms. Ezell motioned to approve the updated service area. Mr. Simmons seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Vote to Approve Grant Contracts from the Nashville Public Library Foundation to the Nashville Public Library for FY26, *Terri Luke*

i. The group agreed to combine the following grants together and vote on all of them at once: Nashville Public Library Program Enhancement and Improvements Grant, Nashville Public Library In-Kind Program Enhancement and Improvements Grant, Studio NPL Outreach Coordinator Grant, Education and Literacy Grant, and Public Library Wishing Chair Productions Grant

ii. Ms. Luke explained that this is a new process. In years past, the NPLF board has approved the NPL Foundation budget. However, Metro boards cannot approve expenditures. Going forward, this will need to also be approved by Metro Council to be in compliance with Metro Code. Ms. Luke will bring the grants to the board at the start of each fiscal year to be approved for the entire year.

iii. **Mr. Rand motioned to approve the contracts and the new procedure. Dr. de la Rosa seconded.**
    1. Ms. Ezell asked what would happen if Metro Council does not approve the grants. Macy Amos explained that in order to legally spend the grants, it must go to Metro Council. She believes council will approve all the grants. If they are not approved, they cannot be spent.
    2. Ms. Searcy noted that it might be good for council to see how much extra funding is needed to continue to run our programs.

iv. **The motion passed unanimously.**

c. Materials Budget Discussion, *Terri Luke*
    i. Ms. Luke stated that NPL is hoping to move its materials budget from the 4% fund to the operating budget. She does not know of any other library system that has its materials budget outside of the operating budget. Over the past 12 years, NPL received an average of $2.7 million each year for materials. We depend on this funding, but it is inconsistent and NPL competes with other essential services for funding.
    ii. Ms. Luke acknowledged that there is a downside to having materials in the operating budget if a reduction needs to be made. However, should a reduction need to be made, it will be the library's decision on how to reduce the budget.
    iii. Because of the cost of eMedia materials, our physical collections are suffering. Ms. Rutherford has researched other materials budgets, and a library of our size needs at least $7 million to comfortably operate. Ms. Luke will be requesting $5 million for collections in the operating budget for FY26-27, and she will meet with Mayor O'Connell to discuss a plan for NPLF to help fill in the funding gap until Metro can fund $7 million for materials in the operating budget.
        1. Ms. Varney acknowledged the logic of this change and is in favor of the Foundation broadening their scope to help support collections. However, she believes this is a risky change, as we cannot guarantee that the operating budget will be untouched. Ms. Luke agreed it could be risky but noted both funding sources come with their own risks. Moving the materials budget to the operating budget will keep the funding consistent. Ms. Rutherford added that since the materials budget is in the 4% fund, she has had her entire

budget reduced some years. It is very difficult to plan or enter contracts with this variance.

2. Mr. Simmons applauded Susan Drye and Ms. Luke for attempting to fix the funding issue for collections but agreed that it would be risky. Ms. Drye explained that the request will be made in both the operating and 4% funds for next year to ensure there will be funding.
3. Ms. Searcy asked if the Foundation had considered Metro relying on them to help fund collections. Ms. Bakker explained that the Foundation wants to be thoughtful in how they support collections and ensure that Metro knows this is a stop gap and not a long-term commitment. She and Ms. Luke will be speaking with Mayor O'Connell about this.

d. Materials Display Policy Discussion, *Jena Schmid*

i. Jena Schmid went over the new Materials Display Policy. This policy outlines how NPL plans, outlines, and markets our materials in our locations. It also outlines how we address feedback and establishes a proper procedure. Managers will have final approval of all displays, and staff will aim to create displays that equitably reflect our community. When addressing customer feedback, this policy aligns with the Request for Reconsideration policy. Ms. Schmid noted that if a material met our collection development guidelines, then it can also be displayed in our libraries.

1. Ms. Ezell asked if this extended to lists of book recommendations. Ms. Schmid stated that this policy does cover those lists.

e. Vote on Materials Display Policy, *Jena Schmid*

i. Ms. Ezell motioned to approve the new policy. Mr. Rand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Staff Report

a. Edmondson Pike Library Report, *Ashley Walker-Tyler*

i. Ms. Luke stated that NPL is fortunate to have Ashley Walker-Tyler. She has been in the system for a long time, and she has wonderful ideas that have been incorporated throughout the library system.

ii. Ms. Walker-Tyler explained that Edmondson Pike serves a very diverse population, and the team reflects the community. The staff was recently highlighted in the Nashville Scene. Ms. Walker-Tyler gave a brief overview of some of the programs and outreach. She also shared that EP recently celebrated their 25th birthday.

b. SEIU, *Kyle Cook*

i. Kyle Cook introduced Nikki Glassley, who is a co-lead in the Union. Ms. Glassley spoke about the Secretary of State letter that other counties received. She asked the board to stay conscious of this issue. Ms. Luke added that Library Administration has prepared in case NPL does receive a letter.

ii. Mr. Cook spoke about the library parking garage and asked the board to help advocate for a faster restoration.

X. Adjournment

a. Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

<u>Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting</u>
January 20, 2026
Bellevue Branch Library
720 Baugh Road
Nashville, TN 37221
Meeting Room
12:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Emily Krieble