

Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
March 17, 2026
Edgehill Branch Library
12:00 PM

Members Present: Joyce Searcy, Charvis Rand, Katy Varney, Dr. Nadine de la Rosa, Kate Ezell, and Rosalyn Carpenter

Library Staff: Terri Luke, Susan Drye, Linda Harrison, Andrea Fanta, Jena Schmid, Corey Frederick, Jahan Mahdi, Larry Jirik, Forrest Eagle, Hannah Gerst, Travis Humbert, Cameron McCasland, Eric Lowey, Mark Crowder, and Emily Krieble

Others: Shawn Bakker, President of NPLF; Macy Amos and Kelli Woodward, Metropolitan Attorneys at Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davison County

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

- a. Joyce Searcy called the meeting to order at 12:02 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. Ms. Searcy wished everyone a happy St. Patrick’s Day and welcomed the group to Edgehill, which is her home branch.

V. Approval of Minutes: February 17, 2026

- a. **Charvis Rand motioned to approve the minutes. Kate Ezell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- b. Mr. Rand noted that while the data showed a drop in visits, it was unfair to compare the numbers to last year when two of the busiest locations are currently closed. The library is still serving almost 200,000 Nashvillians. Library staff are going above and beyond to ensure that services continue.

VI. Library Director Report, *Terri Luke*

- a. Yesterday, March 16th, Main Library staff re-entered the building to begin resetting the library. After 9 months away, it was exciting to be back. The NPL Foundation graciously provided funding for a Welcome Back breakfast. The library passed the final inspection, so the Main Library will reopen to the public on March 30th.
- b. Terri Luke and her team continue to work on parking options for patrons. The McKendree lot on 6th Avenue has agreed to offer a reduced parking rate to library users. Susan Drye is finalizing the details of the agreement, so more information is coming soon. Parking for staff has been secured, and the shuttle is now up and running.
- c. Ms. Luke thanked staff for their hard work during the closure. It has been a difficult time, but staff have continued to provide programming and services to patrons. The outreach numbers have increased during this time.
- d. Library Administration held two Q&A sessions with staff to prepare everyone for their return.
 - i. Ms. Ezell asked about how the capacity of the McKendree lot compares to the library garage. Ms. Drye explained that the Main library typically has 350 parkers each day, and during the negotiations, McKendree lot stated they could accommodate that amount. The library garage had about 250 designated parking spaces for library patrons.
 - ii. Dr. Nadine de la Rosa asked if library administration would survey returning patrons on their experience during the closure. Ms. Luke thanked Dr. de la Rosa for the suggestion and added that she would work with Emily Kriebel and Andrea Fanta to create a simple survey.
 - iii. Ms. Ezell asked if there were any updates on the library parking garage. Ms. Luke stated that NDOT has been very communicative. Their first goal will be to reopen the nested parking spots for the library before moving toward a partial reopening of the garage.
- e. Ms. Luke congratulated Mr. Rand as he was unanimously reappointed to the board! He will be reconfirmed by Council this evening.
- f. At tonight's council meeting, Ms. Luke hopes that the second 4% funding allocation will be approved. This allocation would provide \$2 million for collections and \$467,000 for the Green Hills renovation. Metro Finance

anticipates a third 4% allocation this fiscal year in June. This allocation would include \$2 million for collections, \$1.2 million for maintenance, and \$227,000 for Green Hills furniture, fixtures, and equipment. This would mean a total of \$5.8 million for collections. It would be the largest collections budget NPL has received.

- g. A taskforce is working on the Customer Experience Survey. Initially, the group wanted to distribute the survey during National Library Week in April, but with the uncertainty of the Main Library reopening, the survey will now be conducted in September during Library Card Sign-Up Month. The taskforce is working with Vanderbilt graduate students to create the survey, and they will work with Clifton Peay and Councilmember Vo on the focus groups.
- h. The Courtyard will not be open when the library reopens. The project was delayed due to the garage fire, as the garage was intended to be used as a staging area. However, Library Administration has continued to work on the new design of the courtyard. Currently, they are working on a landscaping plan that will be sustainable.
 - i. Ms. Ezell asked if there was a timeline for the project. Ms. Drye explained that there is not a timeline at the moment. Once the general contractor is hired and the design is ready, then she will have a better sense of when the courtyard will reopen.
- i. Ms. Luke served on the Leadership Nashville panel alongside Tom Turner and Monique Odom. She was pleased to talk about how the library helps to create social infrastructure and improve the quality of life in Nashville.
- j. Ms. Drye and Ms. Luke met with General Services to talk about Capital Spending projects, including:
 - i. Purchasing land in the Smith Springs area to build a new library. A parcel of land is for sale across from the Smith Springs Community Center and it would be the perfect spot for a library.
 - ii. Discussing the location options for Hadley Park. The preferred location is on Jefferson Street, but there are two back up spots on the TSU campus that could work as well.
 - iii. Relocating the NECAT studio. NECAT's lease at Nashville State expires in June 2027.
 - 1. Ms. Ezell asked if NECAT would be moving to the old Donelson location. Ms. Luke explained that that was the original plan, but when Metro completed design development for the space, it would take almost \$12 million to update the building. She did advocate to keep the old Donelson location for the Bookmobile service.
- k. The Administrative Team completed a half day of training with Razel Jones, Assistant Director for Metro HR. The team completed the Clifton Strengths Finder prior to the training and learned that the group had a diverse set of strengths.
- l. Ms. Ezell asked about the communication plan for the reopening. Ms. Fanta explained that local TV and radio stations, print sources, and social media outlets

have been providing coverage for the past two weeks. MarCom will send out emails and updates to subscribers to show the progress and create excitement for reopening. March 30th will be a soft opening, and once library staff are settled, there will be a bigger celebration for patrons. During the Q&A sessions for staff, Ms. Fanta received a question about what her team would do differently regarding communicating the closure. She explained that it is still too early to assess. She applauded both the Communications staff as well as library staff for their hard work during this time and stated that any success with messaging is due to the staff.

VII. Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker*

- a. The Carnegie Society Book Club will take place at Harpeth Hall on March 29th to discuss the book *James* by Percival Everett.
- b. Picnic at the Library tickets are on sale. The picnic will be at the Main Library on April 26th. The theme this year will be Charlotte's Web.
- c. Ms. Bakker stated that several advocacy events would be happening later this month. These events will explain library funding and take place at regional branches.
- d. This year's Thank-A-Thon will focus on thanking library staff. Thank you notes can be digital or handwritten and need to be submitted back to the Foundation by April 9th.

VIII. Staff Reports

- a. NPL Means Business, *Corey Frederick*
 - i. NPL Means Business is an initiative designed to assist small business owners and help them find resources and information at the library. Mr. Frederick and his team work to compile these resources.
 - ii. The program first began in 2021, and it was launched in conjunction with a database. Web Services created a special landing page filled with community resources, book recommendations, and a book-a-librarian option.
 - iii. Over the years, the program has added a newsletter and more books to the collection. They have hosted book clubs, workshops, and outreach events.
 - iv. In 2022, Mr. Frederick and his team partnered with East Nashville High School to enter a pitch competition. They were awarded funding to purchase books for a business class at the high school and provide a speaker series.
 - v. In 2023, Mr. Frederick worked with NECAT to create the NPL Means Business show, which has community partners on to talk about what they offer and how small business owners can connect with them.
 - vi. In 2024, NPL Means Business worked with other metropolitan area libraries to create a taskforce. The taskforce is focused on providing resources to smaller libraries around the state.

- vii. Currently, the group works on providing pamphlets and resources, highlighting helpful databases and other community partners.
 - 1. Mr. Rand asked if the group would consider working with other entities. Mr. Frederick welcomed the opportunity and asked Mr. Rand to send him any contacts.
 - 2. Ms. Searcy asked about AI resources. Mr. Frederick explained that there are some resources, but it is still new technology. LinkedIn Learning has some of the better resources and courses for people wanting to utilize AI.
 - 3. Ms. Ezell asked if there were any examples of businesses that began out of this program. Mr. Frederick noted that NPL Means Business provides resources to all kinds of business owners, including people who are considering starting a business up to established owners.
- b. Edgehill Branch Library Report, *Jahan Mahdi*
 - i. Ms. Mahdi thanked her team for their dedication to providing excellent service and making the branch a welcoming space. Edgehill maintains about 6,500 items and is the temporary home of the Green Hills vinyl collection.
 - ii. During the Green Hills closure, staff have noticed an uptick in attendance. Currently, they are prepping for their yearly Easter Eggstravaganza. This is the 3rd year for this community event, and last year over 300 people were in attendance.
 - iii. Edgehill is home to several art pieces, including a new donation the board recently approved of William Edmondson. They are planning to host a reception when that piece is installed.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned 1:21 PM.

Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting

April 21, 2026

North Branch Library

Meeting Room

1001 Monroe Street

Nashville, TN 37208

12:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Emily Kriebel