

Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
April 21, 2026
North Branch Library
12:00 PM

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

Library Staff: Terri Luke, Susan Drye, Linda Harrison, Jena Schmid, Chantel Clark, Annie Herlocker, Andrea Fanta, Susan Drye, Marteja Bailey, Bassam Habib, Cloreace Eppenger, Forrest Eagle, Hannah Gerst, Travis Humbert, Cameron McCasland, Eric Lowy, Katy Gillen, Emily Kriebel

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

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

- a. Joyce Searcy called the meeting to order at 12:03 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 stated that she was grateful to have the Main Library open again.
- b. Ms. Searcy attended the Carnegie Society event this past month, and it was wonderful.

V. Approval of Minutes: March 17, 2026

- a. **Kate Ezell motioned to approve the minutes. Charvis Rand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Library Board Elections, *Joyce Searcy*

- a. Ms. Searcy opened the floor for election nominations for the board chair, vice-chair, and secretary positions.
- b. **Mr. Rand nominated Joyce Searcy to continue as board chair. Katy Varney seconded this nomination. The motion passed unanimously. Joyce Searcy will be Board Chair.**
- c. **Kate Ezell nominated Katy Varney to remain as Vice Board Chair. Mr. Rand seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Katy Varney will be Vice Board Chair.**
- d. **Ms. Varney nominated Charvis Rand to continue as Secretary. Ms. Ezell seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Charvis Rand will be Secretary.**

VII. Library Director Report, *Terri Luke*

- a. The Main Library reopened on March 30th, and everyone is excited to be back. Mayor O'Connell hosted a media round up on the Friday before the re-opening, and Ms. Luke thanked Andrea Fanta for her work setting up the event. She also thanked Chantel Clark and the entire library team for their efforts to reset the library before opening.
- b. Customers are happy to be back in the space, particularly in the Children's section. April 7th was the first Wishing Chair Production show in the theater, and 183 customers were in attendance.
- c. Ms. Luke thanked Susan Drye for coordinating parking. She also thanked McKendree lot as well as Nashville Yards for allowing customers to park for reduced rates. On April 1st, the nested parking reopened, allowing NPL to save \$9,000 a month and revert to the original parking pay scale that was proposed prior to the fire.
 - i. Ms. Ezell asked if there were any updates on the library parking garage as a whole. Ms. Luke stated that she did not have an update from NDOT.
- d. Mr. Rand noted that the statistics for the Main Library reopening were looking positive. He reiterated the difference between raw and comparative data, and that if Green Hills and Main numbers are removed, it shows NPL is doing a good job of retaining customers.
- e. Mr. Rand added that the number of security incidents at Madison seemed higher than normal. Ms. Drye explained that some Main guards are assigned to Madison and that an encampment behind the library is causing some trouble.
- f. The board asked for updates on several facility projects:
 - i. The contractor for the Green Hills renovation is in place and NPL is working on the budget. They still hope to make the December reopening date.

- ii. Richland Park completed their community input sessions. Currently, there is no funding to build, but NPL can begin the design phase. Ms. Luke will ask for construction funds for both Richland Park and Hadley Park in this year's CSP presentation.
 - iii. A new Joelton branch is included in the Master Facilities Plan, but there isn't any funding for it at this time.
 - iv. Hadley Park is still on hold as General Services and NPL work to find a suitable location.
 - v. Ms. Drye added that a piece of property on Brick Church Pike will be redeveloped. The community wants to include a library in this project.
- g. Keith Simmons asked about the dip in Limitless Libraries circulation. Ms. Luke explained that schools have changed protocols and principals now determine how often students can go to the library. LL is working with school librarians to advocate for more use. Ms. Varney suggested organizing a presentation and presenting it to the school principals.
- h. Mr. Simmons asked about the status of the bookmobile. Linda Harrison explained that the bookmobile is currently in the shop for both routine maintenance and to fix the awning which was stripped in an accident. She and her team are in the process of interviewing for a new driver, but it is difficult because the bookmobile is such a large vehicle. It is three inches shy of requiring a CDL, so finding a driver has been a challenge. Her team hopes to be back on the road before the end of school. Ms. Luke added that if NPL could rework the bookmobile, they would opt for two smaller vehicles and drill down into the purpose of the program.
- i. Ms. Luke and Ms. Drye will present the FY27 budget to council on May 14th at 6pm.
- j. Also in May, Ms. Luke will attend the ULC CEO conference in Chicago, IL. She plans to visit several mixed-use libraries while in the area.
- k. Ms. Luke congratulated Bassam Habib and the Bordeaux branch staff for their Spring into Wellness health fair. It was incredibly well attended. Ms. Luke also thanked the entire library staff for their wonderful service. Councilmember Gadd will be presenting a resolution on behalf of National Library Workers Day.

VIII. Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker*

- a. For National Library Workers Day, each location will receive a booklet of thank you notes from the public as well as some goodies. The public is grateful to have the Main Library open again, and donors continue to highlight how important the library is to Nashville.
- b. The Carnegie Society book club had record attendance this past month.
- c. NPLF is focusing on acquiring new monthly donors. Library Giving Day saw the addition of 23 monthly donors as well as 43 new one-time donors.
- d. Picnic is on Sunday, April 26th. Ms. Bakker is thrilled to be able to have this at the Main Library. She thanked the McKendree parking garage for allowing participants to park there for a reduced rate.

IX. New Business

- a. Vote on One Contract Amendment with The Enterprise Center, Inc to increase the grant award amount to \$131,042.22. This funding will cover stipends for trainers, a program monitor, and supplies necessary for providing Basic Digital Literacy classes to participants of the Senior Tech Academy, *Marteja Bailey*
 - i. Ms. Bailey explained that this grant was awarded last year and the previous contract only accounted for the grant. However, this amendment covers the cash match that is part of the funding. The total contract will be \$131,042.22.
 - ii. Mr. Rand asked about the timeline for this program. Ms. Bailey explained it will run through October. Ms. Searcy asked where the program would take place. Ms. Bailey stated that classes will be offered at Bordeaux, Pruitt, and the Hadley Park community center. Right now, the grant has certain census requirements, but the Digital Inclusion team would like to continue this program and expand over time.
 - iii. **Mr. Rand motioned to approve the amendment. Ms. Varney seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

X. Staff Reports

- a. Be Well at NPL, *Bassam Habib*
 - i. Ms. Harrison introduced Mr. Habib, who manages the Be Well at NPL program. He is passionate about health disparity and has worked in the public health sector for over 10 years.
 - ii. Mr. Habib went over the history of the program. Be Well launched in 2017 thanks to a grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield. Since 2022, demand has increased for health programming. Mr. Habib serves on the Mayor's Health Literacy consortium. There is a need in the community for health professionals and correct information. NPL is the first library system in the country to circulate blood pressure cuffs and to offer lactation classes.
 - iii. Be Well partners with several community entities to provide mobile health clinics, new parent classes, yoga classes, mental health resources, nutrition classes, and other services.
 1. Ms. Varney asked about how the program is funded. Ms. Drye explained that Be Well is funded through the Foundation, but if branches want to offer additional health programming, they can use their own Metro funds.
 2. Ms. Ezell asked about the primary age group that is served. Mr. Habib noted that mostly adults benefit from these courses, but there are programs for all ages.
 3. The board applauded Mr. Habib for his work and for focusing on all aspects of health.
- b. North Branch Library Report, *Cloreace Eppenger*

- i. Ms. Eppenger thanked the board for their dedication to the library and for visiting the North branch. North was completed in 1915 and is the oldest branch of NPL. It is one of two Carnegie libraries in the system. During her tenure, staffing levels have increased from two staff to five staff, which has allowed them to open on Fridays.
 - ii. Recently, the library received a grant from the Carnegie Corporation. Ms. Eppenger and her team are still thinking about how best to spend the money.
 - iii. Many programs take place at North, including weekly story times, story nights, and tween Dungeons and Dragons sessions. Her patrons are grateful for the services provided, and the North community is thankful for their library.
- c. Endowment Update, *Shawn Bakker*
- i. Ms. Bakker stated that the Keith and Kay Simmons Endowment for staff training and education is now officially set up. This endowment began as a gift to Keith for his time on the Foundation board. The library is grateful for this support, which will help to grow staff members.

XI. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 1:27 PM.

Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting

May 19, 2026

Goodlettsville Branch Library

Meeting Room

205 Rivergate Parkway

Goodlettsville, TN 37072

12:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Emily Kriebel