Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
May 19, 2026
Hermitage Branch Library
12:00 PM

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

Library Staff: Terri Luke, Susan Drye, Sherry Adams, Annie Herlocker, Jena Schmid, Chantel Clark, Andrea Fanta, Syreeta Butler, Anna Harutyunyan, Forrest Eagle, Hannah Gerst, Travis Humbert, Cameron McCasland, Eric Lowy, Joan Brasher, Ashley Monk, Sade Johnson, and Emily Krieble

Others: Shawn Bakker, President of NPLF; Macy Amos and Kelli Woodard, Metropolitan Attorneys at Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davison County; Tom Boyd, Thom Meek, and Jason Baxter

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

   a. Joyce Searcy called the meeting to order at 12:04 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 attended the library's budget hearing last week. Terri Luke and Susan Drye did a great job presenting and representing NPL. The council members had good questions as well as general comments of support for the library.

V. Approval of Minutes: April 21, 2026

   a. **Katy Varney motioned to approve the minutes. Kate Ezell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Library Director Report, *Terri Luke*

   a. Chantel Clark and her team are planning for a Main Library reopening celebration on June 13th. There will be special activities and programs throughout the day. Ms. Luke will share more information as the planning progresses.
   b. Ms. Luke was able to attend the Urban Libraries Council CEO Roundtable in Chicago, IL. The conference was one of the best that Ms. Luke has ever attended, and she returned to Nashville thankful for a supportive library board, an active Foundation, and outstanding staff members who provide vital services to the community. While in Chicago, she was able to visit several of the mixed-use library facilities and speak to Commissioner Brown about his experience building and managing these kinds of libraries. She was also able to preview the Obama Presidential Library before it officially opens on June 19th.
   c. Ms. Luke and Ms. Drye completed the budget presentation to council. She noted that library administration will be meeting to talk about the 1.5% budget reduction that Mayor O'Connell has requested from all departments. Fortunately, the library has two large renovations during the next two years, so staff from those locations will be able to help cover and allow the admin team to carefully assess vacancies as they arise.
   d. The board discussed how the library has built strong relationships with council members and the success of the presentation. Ms. Searcy added that council seems to better understand the rising cost of eMedia.

VII. Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker*

   a. The NPLF board meets this week to hopefully approve the library budget. Once this is approved, the budget will come to this board for approval before going before council for final approval. This will now take place on a yearly basis, so Ms. Bakker and her team will work with library staff to streamline this process.
   b. The Foundation received a $550,000 grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation. Ms. Bakker stated she was grateful for this ongoing relationship and thanked everyone involved.
   c. The Picnic at the Library in April was a success! For many participants, it was their first time back in the building, and they were impressed with how beautiful it looked.
   d. Library 101 tours have restarted. Ms. Bakker asked the board to recommend people to attend these. The next one will be on June 13th during the reopening celebration.
   e. Ms. Searcy asked about parking for the reopening event. Ms. Drye explained that the library is working with the McKendree garage to request rates for extended hours.

f. Ms. Varney suggested working with WeGo to get bus passes to allow people to ride to the celebration for free. Ms. Luke will reach out to WeGo's director.

VIII. Old Business

a. Presentation of the Plans for the Main Library Courtyard, *Tom Boyd and Thom Meek*
   i. Ms. Drye outlined the history of the courtyard project which started about five years ago when a leak was discovered in the garage. The renovation process started in earnest two years ago with the understanding that the courtyard needed to be completely redesigned in a way that was beautiful, sustainable, and would not cause further damage to the garage below.
   ii. Ms. Drye introduced the presenters: Matt Wilson and Rip DeLeone of Immersive Material Office; Thom Meek of GHP, Inc; and Tom Boyd of LT Design Studio.
   iii. Mr. Wilson presented the art installation piece which is titled "Endless Canopy." Their focus was to maintain the canopy that the trees provided without the damaging root systems. The sculpture mimics the look of a tree canopy and flowing book pages without being a literal interpretation of either. His team worked to include botanical and natural elements in the sculpture and ensure that there was enough space for customers to sit and enjoy the space.
   iv. Mr. Boyd discussed the landscaping aspect. He and his team were aware of both how beloved the trees were in the space and how much damage was caused by the roots. The new landscaping will be in elevated beds and will consist of grasses and flowing shrubs that are easy to maintain and look beautiful year-round. He focused on native and hybrid plants that will tolerate the Nashville heat and aimed to provide a vibrant and varied landscape look.
      1. Ms. Ezell asked how Mr. Boyd would account for the changing seasons with the landscaping. Mr. Boyd explained that the ground cover used will be evergreen and many of the plants used will stay intact as temperatures drop. However, there will still be visual interest from the plants who lose foliage during the winter.
      2. Nadine de la Rosa asked about the upkeep needed to maintain the landscaping. Mr. Boyd stated that an irrigation system would be installed which should help with maintenance. Many of the plants will only need a yearly trim and the irrigation system can be automated.
      3. Ms. Searcy asked about the Japanese maple that is still in the courtyard. Mr. Boyd explained that while those roots do extend into a deeper soil bed, it is a much smaller tree with a smaller root system so it can remain.
      4. Ms. Luke asked about the sustainability of the materials used for the canopy. Mr. Wilson stated that their goal was low maintenance and

high durability The goal is to sustain it with minimal maintenance for at least 20-30 years.

5. Ms. Varney noted that the Foundation has an endowment in place to help with the upkeep of the courtyard and the art installation. She added that Margaret Ann Robinson's children were also involved in the process to ensure the design was in the same spirit as the original courtyard.
6. Ms. Searcy asked if the library would need to coordinate with NDOT for this process. Ms. Drye stated that NPL is working with NDOT and this will be a difficult renovation logistically because the garage won't be available. A general contractor has been selected, and once that has been finalized, work will begin.
7. Ms. Luke thanked Ms. Drye for her work on this project, as well as the artists and designers. The courtyard is a well-loved space by both customers and staff and there was pressure to get this design right. Mr. Wilson and Mr. DeLeone were wonderful to work with and open to suggestions. Mr. Meek added that the process was incredibly collaborative and everyone is looking forward to seeing the result.

IX. New Business

a. Vote on NAZA contracts listed below, *Anna Harutyunyan*
    i. An Array of Charms Camps for Youth Development for $205,530
    ii. Aspiring Youth Enrichment Services for $497,300
    iii. Backfield in Motion, Inc. for $508,889.50
    iv. Beech Creek Ministries, Inc. for $84,455
    v. Bethlehem Centers of Nashville for $107,126.80
    vi. Black Lemonade for $295,875
    vii. Boys & Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee for $115,740
    viii. Carnegie Writers for $116, 525
    ix. Counter Punch Youth Academy for $24,390
    x. DYMON In The Rough for $114,643.50
    xi. Girls Write Nashville for $61,975
    xii. Martha O'Bryan Center for $319,575
    xiii. Metro Parks for $411,481.50
    xiv. Moves & Grooves, INC. for $112,543.75
    xv. Nashville International Center for Empowerment for $103,965
    xvi. Nations Ministry Center for $244,355
    xvii. Rocklife Nashville for $349,286.75
    xviii. Salama Urban Ministries for $46,144
    xix. Why We Can't Wait, Inc. for $380,350
    xx. YMCA of Middle Tennessee for $201,150
    xxi. Youth Encouragement Services, Inc. for $76,822.50

1. NAZA is requesting approval for this year's contracts which total $4,378,123.30. Anna Harutyunyan read off the contracts and their amounts. Eleven of the organizations serve people in public housing, and these 21 organizations will offer programming at 62 sites across Davidson County.
2. **Ms. Ezell motioned to approve the grant contracts. Ms. Varney seconded.**
3. Ms. Searcy asked if there was a certain amount provided per student. Ms. Harutyunyan explained that these vary depending on if someone is offering after school programming versus summer programming. These grants subsidize programming for these organizations, so to receive a grant their program must be free and offer some kind of food to participants. The grants do not fully fund these programs, but the smaller organizations rely heavily on this funding.
4. Keith Simmons asked how many staff there are on the NAZA team. Ms. Harutyunyan explained that NAZA has 8 people in total who oversee procurement, contracts and partnerships, help provide training, and evaluate data collected.
5. **The motion passed unanimously.**

b. Vote on Amendment to add $22,400 additional funding to Water Walkers for summer programming, *Anna Harutyunyan*

   i. Ms. Harutyunyan explained that this would be to add funding to their summer programming. They were under an audit for the FY27 grant submission, so they could not receive funding for next year. However, their paperwork was now in order for this amendment.

   ii. Ms. Varney motioned to approve the amendment. Ms. Ezell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Vote on Limitless Libraries MOU, *Linda Harrison and Syreeta Butler*

   i. Ms. Luke stated that NPL has an incredible relationship with MNPS, and Syreeta Bulter has been working hard to update the new MOU.

   ii. Ms. Butler highlighted some of the updates to the MOU, including:

1. Updated FERPA and SOPA requirements which pertain to student data and privacy.
2. Data security features to ensure MNPS is protected in the event of a data breach.
3. Language to give to parents about their ability to opt out of the program.
4. Updates regarding the TN Public Records Act to ensure that information can be shared.
5. Updated numbers on how many items are purchased by Limitless. Limitless will cover 7.5 items per student, meaning that MNPS will have 18 items per student.

6. Interlibrary loan for legal review purposes to ensure that NPL does not send banned items to schools where the item is banned.
7. Wording to allow NPL to use MNPS Power BI account for data analytics.

iii. **Ms. Varney motioned to approve the MOU. Ms. Ezell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

1. Dr. de la Rosa asked if the API of a book needs to be rewritten when it is no longer part of a curriculum. Ms. Butler explained that MNPS and NPL are separate entities, so if they need to pull an item, they can do so without affecting NPL's collection.
2. Mr. Simmons asked about data security and how we can comply. Ms. Butler stated that our Shared Systems department works to make sure we are complying. A data load happens each day to ensure that information is stored correctly.
3. The board thanked Ms. Butler for her efforts and for her excellent presentation. Ms. Luke added that Linda Harrison has reached out to Dr. Adrienne Battle about having Ms. Butler attend principal meetings to advocate for more library time in schools.

X. Adjournment

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

<u>Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting</u>
June 16, 2026
Bordeaux Branch Library
Meeting Room
4000 Clarksville Pike
Nashville, TN 37218
12:00 PM