Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
September 15, 2026
Madison Branch Library
12:00 PM

Members Present: Joyce Searcy, Katy Varney, Charvis Rand, and Keith Simmons

Library Staff: Terri Luke, Chantel Clark, Susan Drye, Andrea Fanta, Annie Herlocker, Jena Schmid, Dr. Anna Harutyunyan, Rachael Krohn, Pat Bashir, Jessica Piper, Mark Crowder, Forrest Eagle, Hannah Gerst, Travis Humbert, Cameron McCasland, Eric Lowy, Joan Brasher, Lisa Bubert, Kyle Cook, 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; Kenya Canady, Jon Boghozian, NDOT; Brenden Tierney, Channel 4 News

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

   a. Meeting was called to order at 12:06 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. Joyce Searcy was grateful to be back after not meeting last month.

V. Approval of Minutes: July 21, 2026

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

VI. Library Director Report, *Terri Luke*

a. Terri Luke reminded the group that the October board meeting will take place at the Main Library in order to unveil the Tom Tichnor historical marker.
b. Ms. Searcy and her husband Walter have a documentary coming out. Ms. Searcy explained that Belmont students have been working to identify Civil Rights leaders in Nashville. This semester, they wanted to learn how to make a documentary, and they chose the Searcy's as the subject. The film has been accepted for the Nashville Film Festival as well as the International Black Film Festival.
c. As of September 16th, 3,524 people have taken the Customer Experience Survey. This is very exciting as the consultants said NPL would need 800 surveys to consider it statistically relevant. Ms. Luke thanked the entire team for their hard work in getting this survey ready. Chantel Clark worked with staff to create the questions. Annie Herlocker and her team translated the survey and prepped the website. This is one of the largest marketing campaigns the library has ever done thanks to Andrea Fanta and her team. And the campaign's success is due to the frontline staff promoting the survey at service desks, during programs, and out in the community. Once the survey is complete, INPOWER will work to create customized dashboards for each location. Ms. Luke expects the analysis of the data and any implementation to take six months to a year.
    i. Ms. Varney applauded Windy Mitchell at the Madison branch for promoting the survey when she visited for story time last week.
d. Susan Drye, Chantel Clark, Jena Schmid, Calvin Thomas, and Jennifer Fournier are working with Maureen Ardnt to update the Master Facilities Plan. A survey will go out to staff soon. This process will take about a year to complete.
e. Ms. Luke presented the Capital Spending Plan on August 3rd. She is waiting to hear what the Mayor's Office will recommend.
f. Mayor O'Connell hosted his weekly media roundtable at the library on the Friday after the death of Dolly Parton. Ms. Parton's impact on NPL was substantial, from working to create a limited-edition Imagination Library card to donating to the Begin Bright initiative. To celebrate her life and legacy, NPL will be handing out the special Imagination Library cards on 9-to-5 day, September 25th.
g. Several weeks ago, Ms. Luke received a letter and an overdue book in the mail. The book was checked out from the Green Hills Branch in 1975. The person who wrote the letter was the brother-in-law of a teacher from Brentwood Academy. Mr. Kinnard said he was not sure if she checked out the book or one of her students. He is overseeing her estate and found the book in a box. "By all appearances the book is overdue. And as we were taught by our parents, it is never too late to do the right thing," he wrote. "In appreciation of your kind consideration, I am enclosing my personal donation to the Nashville Public Library. My family has long used and

supported the valuable services of public libraries." Mr. Kinnard enclosed a check to the Library Foundation for $400.00 and mailed the book from Illinois.

VII. Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker*

a. Literary Award Weekend is November 6-7. The public lecture is the morning of November 6th, and the Gala is in the evening. Ocean Vuong will be the Literary Award Honoree for 2026. For more information, please visit https://nplf.org/Gala/.
b. Katy Varney has been selected as Board Member of the Year finalist at the Center for Nonprofit Management's Salute to Excellence on October 27th.
c. On October 19th at 6pm there will be a special event for donors that have given to NPLF for the past ten years or volunteers that have served for over ten years. It will be a panel conversation with Governor Bredesen, Donna Nicely and Keith Simmons led by Byron Trauger to hear the stories that built Nashville Public Library.

VIII. New Business

a. Update on the Parking Garage, *Jon Boghozian, NDOT*
    i. Ms. Luke thanked Jon Boghozian for his work on the library garage and for his communication with NPL.
    ii. Mr. Boghozian gave a brief overview of the library garage, walking through the previous renovations and additions before outlining the June 10th fire.
    iii. The ramp between levels 4 and 5 collapsed during the fire, and NDOT has worked to assess the structure. They began shoring up the garage in December 2025, and in January 2026, a causation investigation began. The investigation concluded in April, and the garage was released back to Metro. Since June, NDOT has been working with a structural engineer to come up with an interim solution. In September, they submitted plans for repair to Codes and the Fire Marshal. If approved, NDOT's interim plan will be to reopen the lower levels of the garage.
    iv. The garage typically has 1,300 parking spaces. During the interim, Mr. Boghozian anticipates having 450 parking spaces available. NDOT is working to figure out the ratio of contracted spots to spots open for the public.
    v. Currently, there is no date set for the interim reopening.
        1. Keith Simmons asked if the repair plans were only for the south side of the structure. Mr. Boghozian confirmed that the plans were only for the south side closest to Commerce Street.
    vi. Mr. Boghozian briefly explained the upcoming change coming to the front of the Main Library. Church Street at Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd will be made into a raised crossing. NDOT will keep the library informed and coordinate the road closures necessary for this construction.

1. Mr. Simmons asked how this change would make it safer. Mr. Boghozian explained that a raised crossing signals that pedestrians have as much right to be there as cars do. It will also mean that cars must slow down in front of the library.

vii. Mr. Simmons asked for updates on several library projects, including the Main Library Courtyard, the Green Hills branch, and the Richland Park branch.
   1. Ms. Drye explained that figuring out logistics for the Courtyard is what is stalling this project. The goal is to start in late October.
   2. She also stated that the Green Hills branch project began in June due to budget issues but is on track for January 2027 opening.
   3. NPL is working with General Services and several other entities on the placement of the Richland Park branch.

b. Vote to Approve the Oasis College Connection Grant, *Rachael Krohn*
   i. This yearly grant provides the Oasis Center with funding for college aid and ACT prep courses. These courses take place at various libraries, schools, and the Oasis Center.
      1. Mr. Rand asked for statistics related to this program. Ms. Drye explained that the library receives year-end reports but did not have them on hand.
      2. Mr. Simmons asked how long the grant has been given under the library. Ms. Drye stated that this grant began with Mayor Dean and was moved over to NPL after he left.
      3. Ms. Searcy noted that she would like for the Oasis Center to come to a board meeting and present on this grant.
   ii. Ms. Varney motioned to approve the grant. Mr. Simmonds seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Vote to Approve the Meeting Room Policy, *Jena Schmid*
   i. Jena Schmid worked with several managers to update the Branch Meeting Room Policy. It is now called the Reservable Spaces Policy to cover both meeting rooms, study rooms, and a few other unique spaces.
   ii. Changes to the policy include:
      1. Protecting the library from commercial misuse of space. Previously, room access was generally allowed for non-profit organizations. However, some commercial enterprises were using non-profits to access the meeting room and then attempted to sell services to meeting attendees. The new policy adds language to avoid this.
      2. Defining “campaigning” to avoid call to action meetings that only demonstrate one viewpoint.

3. Providing definitions for meeting rooms, conference rooms, and study rooms.
4. Updating what is considered a "local organization."

iii. Ms. Varney asked for clarification about the campaigning description. Ms. Schmid explained that if the library has a program, then both sides of the issue must be addressed, and the program should be for educational purposes.

iv. Mr. Simmons asked if Metro Legal had signed off on the updates. Macy Amos stated that Legal had approved the changes and that the document is only slightly tweaked from what was previously in place.

v. Mr. Rand motioned to approve the updated Meeting Room Policy. Mr. Simmons seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Vote to Amend the Existing Contract with AYES to reduce their budget by $67,750 and reduce afterschool slots to 50 from 100, *Dr. Anna Harutyunyan*

i. Aspiring Youth Enrichment Services (AYES) has undergone several organizational changes and temporary challenges. In order to set them up for success, Dr. Anna Harutyunyan requested that their budget be reduced.

ii. Mr. Rand asked about the nature of these changes. Dr. Harutyunyan explained that several key positions are vacant and that the director has requested an extended leave period. She anticipates the organization being fully staffed again for summer.

iii. Mr. Simmons motioned to approve the amendment. Mr. Rand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Staff Reports

a. Family Place, *Pat Bashir*

i. The Family Place Library program provides a developmental framework and comprehensive model for family-centered library service. It also creates an environment within the library that supports families and children beginning at birth. By creating this space, the library becomes an educational hub for families.

ii. The Family Place focuses on six principles: respect, collaborate, provide, facilitate, build, and partner.

iii. The Main Children's department staff will be trained to offer parent-child workshops and there will be a designated room for this program in the Children's section.

b. Madison Library Branch Report, *Jessica Piper*

i. Jessica Piper has been with NPL for 19 years and the last 11 have been at the Madison branch. In 2018, the branch underwent a remodel that has held up very well. In FY26, they had 218,000 visitors. They have several special collections, including art lending, vinyl, and board games.

ii. They have strong Children's Services programming, with four weekly story times, one to two school age programs each week, and a weekly parent-child craft.
iii. In teen services, they provide four days of after school programming with various outreach and special events.
iv. They provide adults with services like notary, tech help, and job search help.
    1. Mr. Simmons noted the decline in reading among young people and asked what Ms. Piper had observed. Ms. Piper explained that many of the kids who come to Madison are interested in reading. Often times, public librarians will not see the full scope of what kids are reading as many items are being sent to schools via Limitless Libraries.

X. Adjournment

a. The meeting adjourned at 1:36 PM.

<u>Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting</u>
October 20, 2026
Main Library
Board Room
615 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37219
12:00 PM