

**Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees**  
**Minutes from May 18, 2021**  
**Main Library, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219**  
**Conference Room 1A – 12:00 noon**

**Members Present:** Joyce Searcy, Keith Simmons, Kate Ezell, Charvis Rand

**Library Staff:** Kent Oliver, Stephanie Rodriguez, Terri Luke, Jena Schmid, Susan Drye, Ken Fieth, Lee Boulie, Liz Attack, Forrest Eagle, Kate Collingwood

**Others:** Derrick Smith, Assistant Metropolitan Attorney at Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Shawn Bakker, Nashville Public Library Foundation President

**I. Call to Order / Roll Call**

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***

“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. Board Chair Comments, *Joyce Searcy, Chair***

Joyce Searcy commented that she is honored to be here and thanked Keith [Simmons] for his service and leadership as previous Board Chair. She also praised NPL staff for the work they did during COVID. She mentioned that NPL staff opened lots of virtual and physical doors for patrons and were creative with offerings and services. She thanked all NPL staff and Kent [Oliver] for seeing opportunity and recognizing that the power of the library is amazing.

**IV. Approval of Minutes: April 20, 2021**

Ms. Ezell moved for approval of the minutes from the April meeting; the motion was seconded by Mr. Rand and passed unanimously.

**V. Library Director Report, *Kent Oliver***

- a. Mr. Oliver passed around a thank you note from a Bellevue patron and he mentioned an outpouring of thanks from the community for reopening branches and continuing our services.
- b. NPL has employed McNeely Brockman [Public Relations] as a contractor for Marketing and Communications. They have been with us for about 3 weeks.
- c. Mr. Oliver indicated he planned to wave waive the lost item fee amount of \$39,834 for students using Limitless Libraries if there were no objections. NPL has done this in previous years and considering the tornado and pandemic it is a reasonable amount. The Board concurred proceeding with the waiver.
- d. Masks are no longer required in the libraries, but NPL is encouraging the use of masks for those who are unvaccinated.
- e. Staff have been notified that they will need to return to their assigned office/building at least 2 days a week starting June 1. The NPL Admin team is meeting this Friday to discuss post pandemic service and how our spaces will be impacted by staff returning to the buildings.
- f. The Donelson Branch building project is underway.
- g. Budget Updates: This year's process is baseline and then request improvements, prioritizing requests. Mayor's recommendation highlights:
  - i. Branch Services lost 7 positions due to a software migration glitch and we now have them back.
  - ii. Other recommendations include: additional Children's Services positions, add an NPL Universe Program Specialist, upgrade a librarian position dedicated to the Summer Reading Challenge, add a staff member in Special Collections to digitize materials, and add a position in Equal Access.
  - iii. NAZA has been recommended to move toward internal management totally with contract funds moved to support 6 library staff positions. funded positions. This would essentially be a swap of funding from below the line to above the line, not an increase of funding.
  - iv. Marketing and Communications Manager was lost to the Mayor's office and NPL hopes to have it filled by September at the latest.
  - v. There are 18.5 FTE total in addition to the listed vacancies. Positions include benefit amounts.
  - vi. Curbside service was not approved as part of budget improvements.

- vii. Susan Drye and Kent are presenting to Council this Thursday at 4:30. Kent asks that the Board try and attend but he is not going to ask NPL's Admin team to attend due to the size of Council Chambers.
- h. Mr. Oliver thanked Stephanie Rodriguez for stepping up and working as the Interim Assistant Director for Education and Literacy. Stephanie did a great job and handled everything that arose over the last 6 months.

**VI. Nashville Public Library Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker***

- a. The Votes for Women room hosted donor visits last week. Joyce Searcy mentioned the room will touch a lot of people in the community and it is also another funding opportunity.
- b. Sunday [June 16] was the Picnic with the Library. The event was virtual, and a lot of participants gathered and hosted viewing parties around town. NPLF hopes to do something similar for the Gala this year, possibly reaching people outside of Nashville.
- c. Lee Boulie and Kim Boyer have submitted an ARP grant based on NPL and NPLF's approach to services during COVID and impact.
- d. Last week, Dollar General approved their regular funding and in addition approved funding for a Limitless Libraries bookmobile. The funding will cover the vehicle purchase, outfitting and start-up costs, a dedicated staff member, and the first year of operation. The grant totals \$430,000 and is in addition to their typical funding. The bookmobile will require \$120,000 annually for upkeep and staff salary. Stephanie Rodriguez helped tremendously in gathering information and resources in preparation for the grant. Thank you to Stephanie for her vision.
- e. NPL is Dollar General's greatest recipient of funding to date. Shawn asks the Board to reach out and personally thank Rhonda Taylor and Denine Torr at Dollar General for the funding.
- f. Mr. Oliver mentioned that Stephanie will present more details about the bookmobile at a Board meeting later this summer.

**VII. Staff Reports**

**a. Bringing Books to Life and Vanderbilt Partnership, *Liz Attack***

An opportunity was presented for NPL to partner with Vanderbilt Pediatrics on a research project. NPL has worked with Vanderbilt Pediatrics previously on a study called GROW. This new study is called COACH and is a multi-year study with secured federal funding. The research focus is around dual language learners and NPL will assist with the literacy piece.

100 parent-child partners will be recruited and will meet at library locations during a 12-week, language/literacy focused series, and then they'll receive monthly online support for 2 years following. BBTL is hoping to get more data about turning non library users into users and introducing community members to library branches. The project will target the Edmondson Pike and Southeast communities and it is projected to start this fall. Joyce mentioned she hopes that Vanderbilt will share the resulting data with the participants so they can see the change and impact this work makes and also so the children participating can know they could go into the field of research.

**b. Archives Update, *Ken Fieth***

During the closure, Archives has been able to work on their backlogged projects. Archives has a Vimeo account/channel where some digitized materials are stored. The video heritage part of the work is important, so our history doesn't get lost. There is a process for digitizing and preserving what can be saved. The State requires Archives to save deeds, wills, marriages, etc. Title searches can be done in Archives. NPLF funds the video heritage staff salary. Ken is happy to provide tours of the department for anyone interested.

**VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:18 PM.

**Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting**

12:00 noon – June 15, 2021  
Main Library – Conference Room 1A  
615 Church Street

*Respectfully submitted by Kate Collingwood.*