

Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
February 18, 2020
Looby Branch Library
2301 Rosa L Parks Blvd
Nashville, TN 37228
Meeting Room– 12:00 noon

Members Present: Adrianna Bialoztsky, Lucy Haynes, Joyce Searcy, Keith Simmons

Members Absent: Robert Oermann, Charvis Rand, Katy Varney

NPL Staff Present: Kent Oliver, Lee Boulie, Elyse Adler, Susan Drye, Jena Schmid, Bryan Jones, Kara Youngblood, Lindsey Patrick-Wright, Jessica Piper, Forrest Eagle, Corey Frederick, Shawn Bakker

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Keith Simmons called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

II. Metro Ordinance required to be announced at all Board Meetings

- 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. Approval of Minutes: December 10, 2019

- a. Joyce Searcy moved for approval of the minutes from the December meeting; the motion was seconded by Lucy Haynes and passed unanimously.

IV. Library Director Report – *Kent Oliver, Library Director*

- a. Kent Oliver spoke about advocacy efforts being taken by NPL and Nashville Public Library Foundation (NPLF). David Esquivel, NPLF Board Chair, will address the Metro Council at its meeting on February 18 at 6:30 p.m. At this meeting, all councilmembers will receive personalized information about NPL. Mr. Oliver encouraged Library Board members to attend the meeting.
- b. Mr. Oliver updated the board on a special committee of Metro Council dealing with afterschool education and crime concerns. NPL’s NAZA program has been in this committee’s recent discussions, and one recommendation has been to create a separate commission to support programs like NAZA. If this takes place, this could take NAZA out of NPL’s organizational and funding structure.
- c. Elyse Adler commented on this development concerning NAZA and provided background information about the program’s leadership. The program currently serves around 1400 children per year, but it could serve thousands more upon program

expansion. The goal of NAZA would be to make the program available to 100% of middle school children. Ms. Adler explained how MNPS has been involved with this development and the possibility of developing a licensure program in youth work through Nashville State Community College.

- d. Mr. Oliver spoke about the ALA Midwinter conference and the e-Book situation with Macmillan. There has been no change with the publishing company's practices concerning distributing e-Books. However, there is a growing fear among libraries that Amazon will set distribution standards for publishers, especially since the company does not currently sell e-Books to public libraries.
- e. The Metro Council Women's Caucus event at the Main Library on February 5 was a success. A group of 18 caucus members toured the new Votes for Women space and signed a Council Resolution that recognized the contributions of African American Women toward the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

V. Staff Reports

a. Budget Update, *Kent Oliver*

- i. The Governor has included \$3 million in funding for Tennessee urban libraries in his budget for the upcoming fiscal year. If passed by the Tennessee General Assembly, it is believed that the money will be distributed based upon population.
- ii. The Metropolitan Government has granted an additional \$1.1 million for collections and \$900,000 for facility repairs from Metro's 4% funds. Total allocation for this fiscal year from these Metro funds is \$3.1 million.
- iii. Susan Drye noted that the monies allocated for facility repairs will be used to correct ongoing problems, such as replacing the roof at the Bordeaux Branch as well as the HVAC unit at the Green Hills Branch and addressing plumbing issues at East, Edgehill, Hadley Park, and Thompson Lane branches.
- iv. Mr. Oliver will provide the board with budget information from previous fiscal years.

b. Advocacy Update, *Kent Oliver*

- i. In addition to addressing the Metro Council, efforts have been made to invite each council member to tour the library closest to their district. Out of 41 council members, 11 have agreed to tour a library. Mr. Oliver explained that some council members are very familiar with their libraries and it is likely that they will pass on the tour. Tours will be led by a member of NPL's administration or the library's cluster manager. Mr. Oliver encouraged board members, if available, to participate in the tours; he will send tour information, library needs, and library statistics to board members.

c. Foundation Update, *Shawn Bakker*

- i. Shawn Bakker discussed advocacy efforts undertaken by NPL and NPLF. NPL has led awareness efforts, while NPLF will take the lead when efforts intersect with library funding.
- ii. Library 101 tours are conducted monthly as a way to introduce people to NPL and to show them what the library does. Ms. Bakker requested for board members to pass along names of individuals who may be interested in touring the library.

- iii. Carnegie Society Book Club will take place on April 13th. The discussion at the event will be based on *How to Catch a Mole: And Find Yourself in Nature* by Marc Hamer. To be a part of the group, individuals must donate \$1500 per year to NPLF. Ms. Bakker asked the board to pass along names of people who may be interested in joining the group.
- iv. Ms. Bakker recognized Mr. Simmons's efforts in helping organize the Founder's Dinner, a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Main Library's construction. The event, which will take place in late March, will reunite a small group of individuals who heavily influenced the construction of the Main Library as well as five branch libraries.
- v. Picnic with the Library will take place on April 26th. Sponsorship packages for families range from \$250 - \$2500. If any additional information is needed, please contact Ms. Bakker.
- vi. Ms. Bakker spoke about NPLF's planned giving initiative, where individuals can put NPLF into their will.

d. Customer Service Initiative, *Terri Luke, Jessica Piper, Lindsey Patrick-Wright*

- i. Jessica Piper, Regional Manager for the Madison Cluster and chair of NPL's Customer Service Committee, introduced the new customer service training that was developed by the library's Customer Service Committee.
- ii. Regional Manager for the Southeast Cluster and fellow committee member Lindsey Patrick-Wright explained the need to update NPL's customer service philosophy. Building upon this philosophy, the committee created a training for personal interactions between front-line staff and the public.
- iii. The three-hour training will be mandatory for all front-line staff, since everyone is evaluated annually on customer service. The trainings will take place in April. All managers will be trained first and all other staff will attend trainings at either the Main Library or regional branches. The training will also be archived in a webinar format for future use and offered twice annually for new staff.
- iv. Mr. Simmons expressed how impressed he was with this initiative and NPL staff in general.
- v. Ms. Patrick-Wright noted that she or Ms. Piper will lead all training sessions to deliver consistent messaging to staff members. She also commented on the effectiveness of the committee and the entire committee's contributions to creating the training's content.
- vi. Adriana Bialostozky asked about how the training will be evaluated and how it will address staff burnout.
- vii. Ms. Patrick-Wright explained that the committee had discussed creating a staff survey that will follow the training. Mr. Oliver noted that Metro routinely surveys the public about customer service satisfaction across all departments.
- viii. Ms. Patrick-Wright added that there is staff burnout, but most managers can commiserate, given that many of them started their careers in a different position. She called attention to the training's section on self-care.

Customer Service Handouts

[Page One]

Customer Service Philosophy

Every library customer and staff person has a story. The library's story is one of service and it is up to staff to share that story in the most effective, compassionate, and respectful way. We do not always know what the customer's story is before they enter the library but we can write the story of our shared experience while they are in the library.

All stories have a beginning, middle and end.

S: Start with a SMILE and a greeting

T: TREAT every question like it's the first time you have heard it

O: OWN the issue at hand

R: Refer to RESOURCES

Y: Provide the service YOU want to receive

[Page Two]

S: Start with a SMILE and a greeting

- Be aware of customers, initiate contact, and greet every customer
- Practice open body language, make eye contact, and show interest
- Customer interactions should take precedence

T: TREAT every question like it's the first time you have heard it

- Practice active listening and allow customers to state their question in their own words
- Express empathy with the customer
- Take your time to answer the question

O: OWN the issue at hand

- Take ownership of addressing the issue
- You can still own the issue if you don't know the answer
- Ownership is getting the customer to the resource to have the issue addressed

R: Refer to RESOURCES

- Be familiar with library services, technology, activities, and programs, especially at your location
- Learn library rules, policies, and procedures
- Avoid library jargon

Y: Provide the service YOU want to receive

- Practice courtesy and respect throughout the interaction. Use positive language and look for ways to say "yes"
- Express gratitude and give each customer a reason to come back
- Set boundaries, stay safe, and practice self-care

VI. New Business

a. Recognition Plaque Votes for Women, *Jena Schmid*

- i. Jena Schmid discussed dedication plaques for the Votes for Women space at the Main Library. She distributed two documents containing different design concepts for the dedication of the space. Instead of choosing either of these designs, she proposed another design that will include wording about the purpose of the room; thanks to all involved with Nashville’s role in ratifying the 19th Amendment; inspiration for future generations; and dedication to Margaret Behm, Juli Mosley, and Jeanie Nelson. This dedication plaque would more closely align with those currently in place at the Main Library, and it would be located on the wall to the right of the room’s entrance. Names of other individuals involved in the creation of the space will be included in the opening day program and in a more limited way on the Votes for Women Website.
- ii. Mr. Simmons expressed agreement that the plaque should specifically identify Behm, Mosely, and Nelson; he also approved of the design proposed by Ms. Schmid.
- iii. Ms. Bakker remarked that there will actually be a second plaque in the space that will list donors, who made the creation of the space possible. By having two plaques, donors could be recognized apart from the historical contents of the space.
- iv. Ms. Haynes moved for approval of the two-plaque design as proposed by Ms. Schmid and Ms. Bakker; the motion was seconded by Joyce Searcy and passed unanimously.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:19 p.m.

Next Board of Trustees Meeting

March 17, 2020
Main Library – Board Room
615 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37219