

**Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees**  
**Agenda**  
**July 19, 2022**  
**Main Library – Conference Room 1 A/B**  
**615 Church St, Nashville TN 37219**  
**11:00am**

**Members Present:** Joyce Searcy, Kate Ezell, Robert Oermann, Charvis Rand, Katy Varney, Adriana Bialostozky and Keith Simmons

**Library Staff:** Kent Oliver, Susan Drye, Linda Harrison, Jena Schmid, Lee Boulie, Sherry Adams, Libby Cain, Terri Luke, Forrest Eagle, Andrea Fanta

**Others:** Derrick Smith, Assistant Metropolitan Attorney at Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Mayor John Cooper, Kathy Bugg, Mayor’s Office of Neighborhoods.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

a. Chair Joyce Searcy called the meeting to order at 11:07am.

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. Mayor John Cooper Comments

- a. Ms. Searcy introduced the Mayor upon his arrival, and thanked him for his support for the library.
- b. Mr. Cooper praised Ms. Searcy for continuing to work while going through such a tumultuous time during her injury.
- c. Mr. Cooper also praised Mr. Oliver for his work with Digital Inclusion, Banned Books, and the success of Church St. Park. NPL and the board have taken on more than their fair share of challenges for that space. He thanked the library Board for a great summer and thank you in general for all the Board does.

- d. Mr. Oliver presented the mayor with his own Banned Books library card. He has been supportive over the years and the library appreciates his support throughout the library and specifically the intellectual freedom campaign.

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

- a. Ms. Searcy commented on the “fabulous” morning that was held for Mr. Oliver. It was so creative and displayed leadership and teamwork within NPL. “The talent in the system is extraordinary.”
- b. New Director Search Process Update
  - i. Ms. Searcy spoke to Derrick Smith, Metro Legal, to figure out how to select the search firm. Mr. Smith will get back with Ms. Searcy but so far she had not heard anything.
  - ii. Ms. Drye stated that no progress has been made with the RFP since the last Board meeting. It is still assigned a buyer and is in the pipeline with no definitive timeline.
  - iii. Mr. Oliver followed up with calls to search firms after Ms. Drye sent emails. One firm stated that they do not want to be part of the process because becoming a Metro vendor is too cumbersome.
  - iv. Ms. Drye reiterated that there is no hard or fast deadline as to when the search firms need to become a Metro vendor. They simply need to become a vendor before the selection process.

V. Approval of Minutes

- a. **Kate Ezell moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Katy Varney and passed unanimously.**

VI. Library Director Report, *Kent Oliver*

- a. Data in Monthly Board Report
  - i. Mr. Oliver let the board know that he was happy with the numbers for the previous fiscal year.
  - ii. Mr. Simmons stated that he is worried about the Main library and their change in statistics for the future.
  - iii. Mr. Oliver stated that NPL has begun to work with downtown partnerships to help downtown residents realize that the Main library is their “branch”.

- iv. There will be more pressure on the garage due to the court building next door, and the top two levels have been increasing in traffic as compared to the pandemic.
- b. Miscellaneous Director Updates
  - i. Mr. Oliver attended a virtual presentation with the EBSCO advisory board. Corey Frederick and Chad L'Eplattenier presented their program NPL Means Business which went very well.
  - ii. Mr. Oliver also met with Kristin Wilson and Terri Luke. They spoke with Ms. Wilson about the capital budget and unfortunately NPL will not be able to add new branches or renovate old branches without more money in the capital budget.
  - iii. Mr. Oliver stated that there are talks about a pilot with a tour group and the implementation of the new policy.
  - iv. Courtyard update – Ms. Drye has been trying to get someone in for a structural analysis for the damage the courtyard is doing to the garage. NPL needs to know structurally what is going on to know what we will do once the existing design is gone. The trees are not sustainable, and the library needs to find a way to implement sustainable shade when they are removed. The fountain will not need to be removed but will need to be resurfaced inside to be functional.
- c. Budget Update
  - i. NPL ended up with several positions and support positions, including security, as well as NAZA receiving an increase. The library did take a hit because of the state funding for schools that was not expected. NPL was asked to remove \$500,000 from the budget, which ended up being curbside service positions, and therefore curbside service itself will be suspended.

VII. NPLF Updates, *Shawn Bakker*

- a. Ms. Bakker is currently in the process of finding a realtor to help with Congressman Cooper's office space since his term will end in September. NPLF has not signed with a company yet but are in conversation with the company that signed with Copper Branch. Hopefully in the next couple months NPLF will have leads for a tenant so there is not a long vacancy. If the board has ideas about what type of tenants would help represent the library, NPLF would like to know. The lease will end January 2<sup>nd</sup>,

so there is a window of time to decide. The building is estimated at 2200 square feet and currently brings in a little over \$5,000 in revenue per month.

- b. The Mayor has signed on to be an influencer for NPLF's next t-shirt campaign. Next Chapter Society will be offering shirts that have been designed by a local tattoo artist. It will be a very different look, but when the campaign is launched you will see the mayor and other local influencers sporting this shirt. The campaign will start in mid-September.
- c. NPLF met their fundraising goal the last fiscal year and were able to find support for almost 600k dollars for revenue that was not in library budget. They are looking forward to what next year holds. Benefactors are helping outline a fundraising strategy that answers the questions "What is our fundraising capacity as it pertains to major gifts and corporate", and "Where do we have the greatest opportunities and how does it translate to the library?" This strategy will be presented to Foundation Board in September and about the same time Linda Harrison is leading the library through a process to identify three priorities of fundraising for the Foundation to focus. Ms. Ezell asks how benefactors define "capacity". Ms. Bakker states that they look at past data, look at fundraising trends, and Nashville as a whole, then recommendations come from those findings.

## VIII. New Business

- a. Discussion: Security Defense at Nashville Public Library
  - i. Based on the survey done with ULC libraries, it seemed that public libraries are all over the place with how they arm their guards. It also showed that some have outside contracts with local law enforcement. There hasn't seemed to be any best practice as a whole. Mr. Oliver believes that pepper spray is not enough for NPL guards. Mr. Oliver mentioned the Sounds stadium having detectors, armed guards, and stadium security. He strongly suggests arming our guards at MN with either tasers or firearms.
  - ii. As stated by Mr. Oliver and Ms. Drye, it is incredibly expensive to have off duty officers contracted to work at the libraries and is not fiscally feasible at this time.
  - iii. Ms. Searcy asked what other Metro departments are armed. Ms. Drye stated that Water may have G4S guards but no other department except Parks is armed and they have their own codes and regulations.

- iv. Ms. Ezell stated that it might get complicated having a police presence in the building.
  - v. Mr. Simmons mentioned security cameras. Ms. Drye responded that most branches have security cameras and at Main, there are a plethora of cameras. NPL does not monitor them for prevention but use the footage after an event occurs for incident reporting.
  - vi. Ms. Searcy mentioned that she is also interested in the training we would insist upon, who would be in charge and the system of communication that would be in place if the person in charge was not there.
  - vii. Mr. Oliver mentioned that Main plus a few of the branches would be what could potentially be armed, and only select staff. They would also be fully trained. The taser discussion might be a more important discussion because they provide an immediate response to a hostile interaction than spray.
  - viii. Mr. Oermann suggests a special board meeting just for this discussion in the future.
- b. Approval for Interim Director Salary
- i. Ms. Drye stated that the library board sets the salary, and as Ms. Luke serving as the Interim she would be serving as DP2. The Library asks that the board approves Ms. Luke's new salary.
  - ii. **Mr. Oermann moved to approve the new salary. Ms. Ezell seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

IX. Adjournment

- a. Mr. Oliver stated that the board has been phenomenal, and he has been fortunate with the mayors over the years. He also stated that the public library is the most important institution for the public as well as warning the board that they will need to be on their guard in the next legislative session. The Board has done a great job the last 10 years pushing for intellectual freedom. Mr. Oliver will miss those attending the meeting and thanked everyone.
- b. The meeting was adjourned at 12:08pm

**Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting**

12:00 noon – September 20, 2022

North Library

1001 Monroe Street, Nashville TN 37208

