

Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Agenda
March 21, 2023
Main Library
615 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37211
12:00 PM

- I. Call to Order / Roll Call
- 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. Board Chair Comments, *Joyce Searcy*
- IV. Approval of Minutes: February 21, 2023
- V. Interim Library Director Report, *Terri Luke*
- VI. Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker*
- VII. Staff Report
 - a. Nashville Reads Poetry Contest Winners, *Linda Harrison*
 - b. Wishing Chair, *Linda Harrison*
 - c. Overview of Board Statistics, *John McFarland*
- VIII. Adjournment

Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting

April 11, 2023
North Branch
1001 Monroe Street
Nashville, TN 37208

Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
March 21, 2023
Main Library
615 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37211
12:00 PM

Members Present: Joyce Searcy, Robert Oermann, Kate Ezell, Nadine De La Rosa, Charvis Rand, and Katy Varney

Library Staff: Terri Luke, Susan Drye, Lee Boulie, Linda Harrison, Jena Schmid, Shawn Bakker, Sherry Adams, Syreeta Butler, James Staub, Kathryn Gillen, Eddie Patton, Bret Wilson, John McFarland

Others: Madison Moore, Denesha Edwards, Tallen Haag, Stacy Haag, Sandy Hanna, Basem Farag, Mariana Gergis, Derrick Smith, Assistant Metropolitan Attorney at Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

IX. Call to Order / Roll Call

- a. Ms. Joyce Searcy called the meeting to order at 12:02 PM.

X. 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.”

XI. Board Chair Comments, *Joyce Searcy*

- a. Ms. Searcy announced to The Library Board that a search firm had finally been selected, and Ms. Terri Luke added that she signed the papers as soon as she received them. The search firm is Bradbury, Miller & Associates.
 - i. Ms. Searcy explained that until the agreement was signed, she was prohibited to speak to any member of said firm, and recently was able to

speak with Karen Miller, principal and owner of Bradbury, Miller & Associates. Ms. Searcy stated they have a lot of experience with the hiring process for library directors across the country. Ms. Miller projected a five-to-six-month process, considering the breadth and depth of the Nashville Public Library's programs.

- ii. Ms. Searcy stated the next step would be to survey the opinions of the Nashville Public Library's many stakeholders— library patrons, donors, foundations, employees, etc.— to ensure that The Library Board takes these parties' desires into consideration. After gathering feedback from the library's stakeholders, Ms. Searcy said that a draft announcement would be posted to advertise for applicants, and all applications would be sent to the search committee to be parsed through.
- iii. Ms. Kate Ezell asked who was on the search committee and how those individuals were chosen. Ms. Searcy responded that there had been no committee members chosen yet,
- iv. but she ensured that the search committee members would be diverse in aspects of skill, gender, and ethnicity. Ms. Katy Varney added that The Library Board cannot have more than one member serving on the search committee.
- v. Mr. Derek Smith addressed Ms. Varney's statement and added that The Library Board could have more than one member serving on the search committee; however, he advised against this, as not to allude to there being outside conversations between board members that may imply that a decision had already been made towards choosing a viable candidate before the search process had begun. Mr. Smith stated that the search firm would present their process in finding candidates and reviewing applications, and The Library Board would have the opportunity to refine this process by providing parameters for the search firm to follow.
- vi. Mr. Smith recommended that The Library Board avoid any and all outside meetings regarding the search for a new director and added that a sole Library Board member can jeopardize their role on The Library Board by having audiences with candidates or outside parties. Library Board

members were once more advised by Mr. Smith to refrain from any outside conversations concerning this matter, to avoid the appearance of breaking any rules. Mr. Smith invited all board members to contact him with any questions.

- vii. Ms. Searcy stated that she would like for the search committee to be in place by next month's Library Board meeting on April 11th. Ms. Searcy explained that she could not start contacting potential members for the search committee until the search firm was selected and contract was signed. Ms. Searcy asked The Library Board members to let her know of any recommendations they might have in mind to serve on the search committee.

XII. Approval of Minutes: February 21, 2023

- a. Mr. Robert Oermann motioned to approve the minutes from the February 21st board meeting. Mr. Charvis Rand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. Interim Library Director Report, *Terri Luke*

- a. Ms. Terri Luke shared that on March 4th, Ms. Hillary Clinton visited Nashville for the Clinton Global Initiative meeting and asked to tour the Votes for Women room. Ms. Rebecca Price gave the tour, where Ms. Clinton spent 40 minutes in very engaged discussion. Ms. Clinton wanted to look through the space because she planned to design a similar exhibit in the Clinton Presidential Library.
- b. Ms. Luke congratulated Ms. Marian Christmon and Ms. Lee Boulie for being awarded a \$200,000 grant to work on bridging the digital divide in Nashville. The grant was awarded via the Affordable Connectivity Program and would provide information to qualifying low-income households regarding discounts on broadband services and connected devices. Ms. Luke added that this grant would also fund three positions. Ms. Ezell asked how long the positions would be funded. Ms. Lee Boulie responded that the grant period would be for two years, and Ms. Luke added that the three positions would be contract employee positions.
- c. Ms. Luke thanked those who attended the *Moments from the Movement* event to honor Deputy Mayor Brenda Haywood, and congratulated Ms. Andrea Fanta and her team for planning and organizing the event and the exhibit on the 2nd Floor at

the Main Library. Ms. Luke stated that the photos displayed in the exhibit were taken by Mr. Eddie Patton, and the event was a huge success due to a collaborative effort from the Marketing and Communications staff, Special Collections, Production Services, and Ms. Karen Piper.

- d. On March 20th, the Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of Metro event was held, which coincided with Women's History Month. The event featured five female trailblazers who made history in Metro Nashville government.
- e. Ms. Luke gave a shoutout to the Core Administrative team for outlining a short-term plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the coming months. Ms. Luke stated that the Core Administration team would go through nine modules regarding micro-aggressions, LGBTQ+, neurodivergent, and other topics where learning efforts could improve. Ms. Luke continued that the staff would be given ninety days to complete modules and participate in discussions surrounding what they learned.
- f. Ms. Ezell added the Nashville Public Library was featured in the *This Is Nashville* podcast.

XIV. Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker*,

- a. Ms. Shawn Bakker informed The Library Board that all library divisions were on schedule to submit their budget requests to The Foundation by the April 1st deadline.
- b. Ms. Bakker stated that on March 20th, the Core Administration team reviewed all submitted budgets collectively and found that the initial requests for Fiscal Year 23/24 were for a total of \$2.7 million, compared to \$2.3 million approved by The Foundation for the current Fiscal Year. Ms. Bakker explained that the purpose of the budget changes would be to encourage more conversation and collaboration between The Library and The Foundation, and to promote more flexibility for The Library to make decisions for some funds to be unrestricted. Ms. Bakker stated she was confident that The Foundation could raise restricted funds for about \$2 million worth of the requests for the upcoming Fiscal Year. Ms. Bakker added that based on The Foundation's fundraising strategy and what has been raised in the past, The Foundation believes they would be able to give The Library about \$330,000 of unrestricted support. Ms. Bakker and the Core Administration team

had an in-depth conversation regarding where funds would be allocated, and Ms. Bakker stated she does believe the \$2.7 million ask would be met for the upcoming Fiscal Year, and if The Foundation raised more restricted funds, this would allow for more flexibility with planning as well.

- c. Ms. Varney asked when the budget items would be shared. Ms. Bakker answered that the finance committee would review the final budget in April and the budget items would be shared with the full Foundation Board in May. Ms. Bakker projected the budget would be finalized and sent for review to the finance committee earlier because of the effective collaboration between The Foundation and The Nashville Public Library.
- d. Ms. Searcy asked how the investor funds received by The Foundations factor in. Ms. Bakker stated The Foundation considers the rolling three-year average funds received. Ms. Bakker informed The Library Board that investments are in a current down trend, but because fundraising trends show increases and The Foundation has reserves, the finance committee concluded that The Library funding would not need to be cut. Ms. Bakker added that The Foundation will continue to push fundraising efforts.
- e. Ms. Searcy suggested Ms. Bakker schedule time to meet with the board members to explain the process of funding from The Foundation and why these changes are taking place. Ms. Bakker invited The Board to attend the next Foundation Board orientation in August.
- f. Ms. Bakker announced the Carnegie Society book club event and encouraged The Board to recommend anyone who might be interested in joining, as The Foundation is looking to diversify their membership.

XV. Staff Report

- a. Nashville Reads Poetry Contest Winners, *Linda Harrison*
 - i. Ms. Linda Harrison introduced the 2023 Nashville Reads Poetry Contest Winners. The 2023 theme was “Celebrate FREEDOM: Freedom to Read.” Ms. Harrison also gave a special thank you to Ms. Syreeta Butler— the manager of Limitless Libraries— for gathering and communicating with contestants and assisting with managing the contest.

- ii. Ms. Harrison introduced the winners of the 2023 Nashville Reads Poetry Contest (found on pages 44-47, March Board Packet):

“The Death of a New Generation” by Madison Moore

“A Mourning of Books” by Tallen Haag

“The Light My Candle Burns” by Sandy Hanna

(In absentia, Lillie Cate Allen, “Missing Words”)

- iii. The 2023 Nashville Reads Poem Contest winners and their respective poems were shared on the Nashville Reads webpage and all library branch websites and social media accounts.

b. Wishing Chair, *Linda Harrison*

- i. Ms. Harrison introduced Mr. Bret Wilson, the new Program Manager of Wishing Chair Productions.
- ii. Mr. Wilson thanked The Library Board for all the hard work they have done and for the opportunity to address them regarding the plans for Wishing Chair Productions under new leadership.
- iii. Mr. Wilson informed The Library Board that while The Puppet Truck Program Supervisor position is still vacant, the staff and shows are still running smoothly in this time of transition.
- iv. Mr. Wilson shared Wishing Chair Productions’ new mission statement and vision statement:

“Wishing Chair Productions’ is dedicated to the preservation and cultivation of the puppetry arts within the Nashville Public Library and the community we serve. Wishing Chair Productions’ vision is to ignite the imagination of the young and the young at heart.”
- v. Mr. Wilson stated that he and his team are planning the entire calendar year to be displayed on a newly redesigned webpage so that Nashville tourists can plan their trips to the city with Nashville Public Library and Wishing Chair Productions in mind.
- vi. Mr. Wilson informed The Library Board that the 10:30 AM performance times have an average of 220 patrons in attendance, and the 11:30 AM performance times average 153 patrons in attendance. Mr. Wilson added that there are QR codes posted throughout The Library and The Children’s

Theatre area for patrons to scan, which gives them access to newsletter updates and schedules for various puppet shows in both Nashville Public Library and the community at large.

- vii. Mr. Wilson shared his plan to update the Wishing Chair Webpage. The webpage would be streamlined to one page where patrons could gain access to the history of the puppetry arts at Nashville Public Library, Storytime Schedules and Rules, Public Prime Performances for the elderly, and a Jotform Request Page for registering to attend specific performances.
- viii. Mr. Wilson shared that String City's 10 Year Anniversary showing will have a special upgrade, including new musical artists, a new Nashville Skyline, and sleeker design to elevate the production value of the show.
- ix. Mr. Wilson worked with Ms. Bakker on asking for an additional \$25,000 from Amazon over the course of five years, dedicated to the creation of new projects and presentations that would rotate between The Puppet Truck and The Main Library's Children's Theatre.
- x. Wishing Chair Productions was asked to transform the children's book *La La La: A Story of Hope* by Kate DiCamillo into a puppet show production for the 2023 Foundation Gala in November.
- xi. Mr. Wilson was asked by WeGo representatives to create a program that exposes the fun, safety, and community of the Nashville public transit system.
- xii. Mr. Wilson shared that he has had multiple conversations with Mr. Clay Bailey— a former member of The Tennessee Historical Commission— to have a historical marker put in place to honor Tom Tichenor's contribution not only to the Nashville Public Library, but to the legacy of the puppetry arts in the city of Nashville. Mr. Wilson added that 2028 will mark 90 years of puppetry at The Library, and he would like to propose an all-day Founder's Day celebration event at The Library, featuring puppet shows, story times, and workshops that demonstrate The Library's love and commitment to the puppetry arts.

xiii. Mr. Rand, Ms. Varney, and Ms. Searcy thanked Mr. Wilson for sharing his vision and plans for Wishing Chair Productions.

c. Overview of Board Statistics, *John McFarland*

i. Ms. Terri Luke introduced Mr. John McFarland— a Librarian 2 at the Southeast branch— who had been tasked over recent years to collect and disperse statistical data for The Library during the Statistical Analyst vacancy.

ii. Mr. McFarland stated the following data concerning the average branch locations in 2022:

Circulation in Items: 152,632

Branch Visits: 93,054

Reference Questions Answered: 8,395

Computer Usage: 31,522

Community Room Attendance: 6,013

Programs Held: 525

Program Attendees: 9,443

Library Card Registration: 899

iii. Mr. McFarland stated that this average data only shows so much about the branch operations.

iv. Mr. McFarland noted that current program attendance numbers are back to the same participation pace as in February, pre-Covid.

v. Mr. McFarland asked The Library Board for insight on how to improve data capture, what data they saw missing from the reports, and how much data they thought might be necessary to report. Upon discussion, Mr. Rand asked what resources were used to track web service data. Mr. McFarland answered that the web service data was tracked via Google Analytics, and checks for the number of sessions that occur in a given month.

vi. Ms. Luke suggested gathering questions from The Library Board to have submitted to Mr. McFarland for him to review, answer, and present again at a later Board Meeting.

vii. Mr. Oermann asked to show raw number breakdowns and percentages that represent those numbers instead of averages.

- viii. Ms. Ezell added that The Library Board needed summarized data points to use when they speak with community members and partners about the goings-on at The Library.
- ix. Ms. Searcy asked The Library Board to compile any questions and requests regarding the statistical data to be sent to Ms. Luke and Mr. McFarland to be discussed later. Mr. McFarland agreed to continue working on the data at The Library Board's request.

XVI. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 PM.

Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting

April 11, 2023
North Branch
1001 Monroe Street
Nashville, TN 37208

Respectfully submitted by Lana Boleyjack.