

Nashville Public Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2024
Bellevue Branch Library
720 Baugh Road
Nashville, TN 37221
12:00 PM

Members Present: Joyce Searcy, Keith Simmons, Charvis Rand, Kate Ezell, Katy Varney, Nadine De La Rosa

Library Staff: Terri Luke, Lee Boulie, Shawn Bakker, Kyle Barber, Jena Schmid, Susan Drye, Kyle Cook, Chi Amaefula, Noel Rutherford, Annie Herlocker, James Staub, Bret Wilson, Pete Carden, Noel Williams, Evelyn O’Neal, Brian Waltman, David Torres Fuentess, Galen Fott

Others: Matthew Garth, Assistant Metropolitan Attorney at Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Brian Hull, Mary Tanner

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

- a. The meeting was called to order at 12:00 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. Ms. Searcy thanked everyone who attended the last Carnegie Society book event.
- b. Ms. Searcy reminded that Councilmember Brenda Gadd would be reading a resolution to recognize NPL inside the courthouse on April 16th.

V. Approval of Minutes: March 19, 2024

- a. Mr. Charvis Rand made a motion to approve the March 19th minutes. Ms. Katy Varney seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Library Board Elections, *Joyce Searcy*

- a. The Library Board elections were moved up on the agenda due to board member time constraints.
- b. Ms. Varney facilitated the election for Library Board Chair. Mr. Rand nominated Ms. Searcy to remain The Library Board Chair. Ms. Kate Ezell seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and Ms. Searcy was re-elected Chair.
- c. Ms. Ezell nominated Ms. Varney as The Library Board Vice Chair. Mr. Rand seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and Ms. Varney was re-elected Vice Chair.
- d. Ms. Varney nominated Mr. Rand as The Library Board Secretary. Ms. Ezell seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and Mr. Rand was elected Secretary.

VII. Interim Library Director Report, *Terri Luke*

- a. Ms. Terri Luke informed The Library Board that a representative from SEIU would be speaking on pay status later in the meeting and provided context for the difference between Open range and Step salary structures. Ms. Luke explained that when funding is available, Open range provides employees a 3% pay increase at the beginning of every fiscal year, while Step pay classified employees receive a pay increase every year for the first five years of employment, and then every two years for the next five years.
- b. Ms. Luke introduced Ms. Annie Herlocker, the new Bellevue branch manager. Ms. Herlocker gave an overview of the Bellevue branch:
 - i. Ms. Herlocker shared that on January 8th the Bellevue branch was flooded due to a burst pipe in the women's public bathroom. Ms. Herlocker

explained that the emergency plan involved reassigning all Bellevue staff immediately to other branches after assessing the needs within branches. Ms. Herlocker met with Jennifer Fournier, Shared Systems, Angela Brady, Jena Schmid, and MarCom to establish next steps and check-ins with Metro General Services. The focus was to maintain customer service and communication with patrons, establish long-term staff reassignments based on staffing needs in the system, and maintain branch services during the closure.

- ii. Ms. Herlocker shared that during the 3-Month closure they were able to hold 78 library outreach events with 3,181 in attendance, and 5 new outreach connections were made: YMCA, Fifty Forward, Bellevue Community Center, Bellevue Middle School, and YPlay. Many regular adult programming events continued, and middle schoolers were able to maintain their connection with Teen Programming staff.
- iii. Jennifer Fournier worked with Bellevue staff for input into revising circulation, Teen, Adult, and Children's spaces. Staff were able to create improvements in the browsability of all branch collections and within the branch floorplans. Staff had a chance to network with other teams and help other branches.

Ms. Herlocker estimated that 64,000 items were on the shelves on the day of the flood, and 985 patron holds were moved to Green Hills directly after the flood. These holds represented items ready for pickup for roughly 529 Bellevue patrons.

- iv. Ms. Herlocker also shared the following numbers:

9,000 Bellevue-owned collection items were returned to different branches during the closure. These items were processed by Donelson staff and held in the Donelson basement until early March.

4,047 items were checked out to 814 patrons during the 3-week curbside run.

- v. Ms. Herlocker added that additional improvements included a new circulation desk, the Teen collection on full display in the branch public area with more seating in the Teen area, additional holds, Adult AV, and Adult Fiction shelving, new LED lights, four additional work desks in the circulation workroom, new Teen and Children's service desks, and changes to the staff workroom to create more workspaces. Ms. Herlocker stated that none of the book items were damaged in the flood.

- vi. Ms. Luke added that Ms. Herlocker was managing this emergency while transitioning from the Bordeaux branch. Ms. Herlocker thanked the Bellevue branch for their flexibility and their hard work during the transition.
- vii. Ms. Susan Drye and Ms. Luke thanked Metro General Services for their quick work and helpful assistance during the repair and renovation.

VIII. Foundation Report, *Shawn Bakker*

- a. Ms. Shawn Bakker stated there were 732 notes written to the council and mayor on behalf of the Nashville Public Library, and all notes were presented at the council meeting on April 16th. Ms. Bakker thanked Ms. Paige Clancy for presenting the idea for the Thank-A-Thon, and Councilmember Gadd for suggesting the acknowledgement at the council meeting.
- b. Ms. Bakker stated that the previous week was Library Awareness Week, and NPLF hosted a Library Giving Day, where patrons were asked to share their stories of librarians who they loved. Ms. Bakker stated that the NPLF received many letters from patrons sharing their love for NPL.
- c. Ms. Bakker shared that the Picnic with the Library picnic baskets were still available to purchase. The picnic was scheduled to be on April 28th from 4-7 PM at the Main branch and the theme would be The Wizard of Oz.
- d. Ms. Bakker gave an update on the fundraising efforts for the Begin Bright early literacy campaign. Ms. Bakker stated that NPLF and team were prioritizing asks and fundraising was going well. NPLF would be attending the next meeting to present a proposal for naming opportunities since there were already many large gifts from donors. Ms. Varney added that saying thank you to large donors in a visible way would be worth consideration, but the core admin team and The Library Board would also need time to consider this option.

IX. New Business

- a. Collection Development Policy Update; Resolution 2024 – 01, *Lee Boulie*
 - i. The Collection Development Policy Update and the Special Collections Policy Update Resolutions were moved up on the agenda due to board member time constraints.
 - ii. Ms. Lee Boulie instructed The Library Board to turn to page 44 in the April Library Board Packet to review the resolution for the new

Collections Management Policy. Ms. Boulie added that the full policy started on page 46, and the Key Revisions started on page 60.

- iii. Ms. Boulie introduced Ms. Noel Rutherford to go over the revisions on the Collections Management Policy.
- iv. Ms. Rutherford explained that the Collections Management Policy is reviewed by the Materials Management Committee every year, and the policy had been updated many times.
- v. Ms. Rutherford stated that the title of the policy was updated from “Collection Development Policy” to “Collection Development and Management Policy” because the policy itself covers both developing and managing a collection.
- vi. Under Independently Published Materials, Ms. Rutherford explained that some of the publication names were previously included in the policy, but because many of the publications had gone out of business, the Materials Management Committee changed the wording to avoid redundancy and highlight procedure instead.
- vii. Under Gifts and Donations, Ms. Rutherford shared that the wording was changed to make sure that the Collections Department was accepting donations for items that were being actively circulated and added to. Ms. Rutherford added that the change would also ensure that all donated materials were in good condition.
- viii. Ms. Rutherford explained that the Request for Reconsideration Process was updated to clearly delineate who could put in a request, how often, and the process for these requests. Ms. Rutherford stated that responding to requests could take a long time, and to do so in a fair and equitable manner, the Materials Management Committee limited how many requests could be submitted by one organization or one customer at a time.
- ix. Ms. Ezell asked if there had been any changes in the profile of the books that were requested to be reconsidered. Ms. Rutherford confirmed that there were requests regarding LGBTQIA materials.
- x. Ms. Searcy asked where books go when they are being sunsetted. Ms. Rutherford answered that the Collections Department donates well-loved or sunsetted books to Better World Books, a non-profit and literacy organization that sells books to avoid waste. Ms. Rutherford added that NPL receives 25% of the proceeds from sales from books donated by

NPL, and those funds go back into the NPL Ingram Book account. Ms. Rutherford stated that well-worn books were recycled.

- x. Ms. Boulie announced that there was an additional policy revision that was left off the agenda. Ms. Boulie introduced Mr. Chinedu Amaefula to discuss updates made to the Special Collections policy.
- xii. Mr. Amaefula explained that main changes involved how Special Collections were collected and where they were collected from. Mr. Amaefula explained that Special Collections would be more Tennessee-centric and/ or Nashville specific resources, focusing on historic Nashville materials.
- xiii. Mr. Amaefula stated that the Special Collections team implemented a Collections Review Committee for suggested collections that were presented to the department from outside sources.
- xiv. Mr. Amaefula stated that the Special Collections team recently added The Judge Martha Craig Daughtrey Collection (aka the Votes for Women's Collection) located in the Votes for Women Room), The Lasky Collection, and The Weil Collection.
- xv. Mr. Amaefula stated that potential donations were required to be processed via an acquisitions team to determine how the donations would be used. Mr. Amaefula explained that donors would be able to communicate directly with the Special Collections division, the donation(s) would go before the acquisitions team, and the decision would be made on whether the donation should be procured.
- xvi. Ms. Ezell made a motion to accept the updates to the Collection Development and Management Policy and the Collection Development Policy for Special Collections. Ms. Varney seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Wishing Chair Productions Presentation, *Linda Harrison*, and *Bret Wilson*

- i. Ms. Linda Harrison thanked Mr. Brian Hull for his 25 years of service on behalf of the Education and Literacy team, NPL, NPLF, and The Library Board.
- ii. Mr. Bret Wilson thanked Mr. Hull for being an advocate for the library. Mr. Wilson and the members of the Wishing Chair Productions staff presented a puppet made in Mr. Hull's likeness and displayed a video that would be played outside of the Main Children's Theatre in Mr. Hull's

honor. Mr. Wilson shared that both the video and the puppet would be permanent fixtures at the Main Children's Theatre for years to come.

- iii. Mr. Hull thanked Mr. Wilson and Ms. Harrison, as well as the entire Wishing Chair Productions staff, NPL, NPLF, and The Library Board for the honor and for making his time at Nashville Public Library memorable.

c. Library Board Retreat, Date and Location, *Joyce Searcy*

- i. Ms. Searcy suggested sending a virtual poll to determine when The Library Board will meet for the Board Retreat.
- ii. Ms. Searcy informed The Library Board that she asked Ms. Rosalyn Carpenter (in absentia) to assist Ms. Luke in planning the Board Retreat.

d. Information Presented by the SEIU, *Kyle Cook*

- i. Mr. Kyle Cook made the following remarks:

“Madame Chair, Board of Trustees, Library Director. Thank you for this opportunity to address the board.

My name is Kyle Cook. I am one of the stewards representing our library workers. We want to bring up a concern about Library Associate pay. Metro Human Resources is proposing moving the positions of library associate, librarian one, and librarian two to open range status. Open range allows employers to award raises based on subjective performance evaluations, whereas the step plan has a clearly defined pay schedule based on successful years of service. These jobs have always been on the step pay plan.

Our union has historically opposed moving jobs to open range compensation plans. But we are not standing in opposition of this change for one major reason.

Since July 2023, our library associates have been working under a pay disparity imposed upon them by the pay plan designed by Metro HR last fiscal year. In the library there are two job titles that perform the same job duties – library associates and program specialists.

Program specialists do not require a college education and are paid as an open range position. Library associates, on the other hand, do require a bachelor's degree and are paid on the step plan.

Under the current pay plan, program specialists' starting salary is forty-eight thousand seven hundred. The library associates on Step two, with anywhere from five to eight years of experience in the system make forty-seven thousand, eight hundred per year. This is nine hundred dollars less

than the starting pay of our program specialists. There are several locations where a veteran library associate finds themselves working for less pay than the new program specialist, they are helping train. Several times over the course of the past year, we've requested the library make an equity adjustment to correct this pay disparity. But we were told that there was not enough money in the library operating budget to cover it.

Metro HR is proposing moving all professional library positions to open range, which most employees are not comfortable with. But we will not oppose the change, if it leads to correcting this disparity. Metro is not offering any other solution.

Metro HR also touts open range as a way to solve equity issues. In that case, we request the library administration look at making our library associates whole by compensating them at a higher rate in this coming year's pay plan, in order to make up for the previous year of lost wages.”

- ii. Mr. Rand asked if Metro's recommendation would affect staffing head count. Mr. Cook stated it would not affect staffing numbers.
- iii. Ms. Searcy thanked Mr. Cook for coming before The Library Board to inform them on these matters so that they can better advocate for staff in the future.
- iv. Ms. Ezell asked if Metro HR performed the scenario analyses. Ms. Drye answered that Metro HR was responsible for presenting recommendations to the Civil Service Board, while the Civil Service Board was the deciding factor on whether those recommendations passed or not. Ms. Drye continued that Metro's recommendations were largely based on where the money would come from, since all raises from Metro must be classified as permanent fixed raises. Ms. Luke added that there are a number of positions, such as security staff, that could benefit from more equitable pay.
- v. Ms. Ezell asked if there were opportunities for the admin team to advocate to the Civil Service Board on behalf of staff salaries.

X. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 PM.

Next Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting

**May 21, 2024
Main Library
615 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37219
12:00 PM**

Respectfully submitted by Lana Boleyjack.