



New Orleans Public Library
Regular Board Meeting
MAIN 3RD Floor Conference Room
Tuesday, September 13, 2022
4:30 p.m.

NOTE REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENT:

The legal purpose of open meetings is to allow individuals to observe and participate in the deliberations of public bodies. Meetings of public bodies must be open to the public unless closed pursuant to a statutory exception, such as set forth in R.S. 42:16 – 42:18, which authorizes closed executive sessions. Public bodies must provide an opportunity for public comment prior to action on the agenda item upon which a vote is to be taken. The governing body may adopt reasonable rules and restrictions regarding the comment period. R.S. 42:14, requires each public body, except school boards, conducting a meeting that is subject to the notice requirement of R.S. 42:19(A), to allow a public comment period prior to action on an agenda item upon which a vote is to be taken.

Due to time constraints, public comment will be limited to 2 minutes per individual

MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. Board Chair, Vonda Flentroy-Rice called the September 13, 2022 board meeting to order at 4:42 p.m.
- III. **Roll Call – (4:42 p.m.)**
Present: Chair, Vonda Flentroy-Rice; Treasurer, Kathleen Coverick; Secretary, Andrea Neighbours; Rocky Dufauchard; Alexis Parent- Ferrouillet; Justin Ross-Hilliard
Members Absent: Board Vice-Chair, Dana Henry (joined remotely); Phala Kimbrough-Mire
NOPL Staff Present: Emily Painton; Tammy Hanson, Michel Thompson, Laura Bevins, Katy Hepner, Jane LeGros
- IV. **Public Comments — (4:43 p.m.)**
There were no public comments
- V. **Approval of Consent Agendas — (4:43 p.m.)**
 - A. July 5th Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
 - B. Approval of May 10th minutes
 1. Ms. Flentroy-Rice moved to approve the consent agendas and Ms. Neighbours seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- VI. **Information Items – (4:44 p.m.)**
 - A. Friends of NOPL Update

1. The Friends are currently soliciting proposals from library departments for inclusion in their 2023 budget for programs that may need sustained grant funding.
 2. The Friends are pursuing two Louisiana endowment for humanities grants for the library. One is a primetime literacy grant and the other is “who gets to vote,” which is a discussion on voting rights. They have also received \$5000 from the GPOA for the 2023 Summer Fun Reading Program.
 3. There will be a huge book sale on November 12 at the Latter branch. Invitations are forthcoming.
 4. The Friends participated in the Nix ribbon cutting, but they are disappointed to learn that the purchase of a new facility in the ninth ward has been delayed, as this area has long-needed a library facility with dedicated hours. The Friends trusts that the board will ensure the staffing issues will be addressed so that a new facility in the Lower Ninth Ward will soon become reality.
 5. Ms. Neighbours asked if the youth bus passes the Friends donated were effective in more kids using the libraries. Ms. Cvitanovic responded that the grant we received through the United Way and the Baptist Ministries made putting the passes in kids hands was challenging. RTA was creative in getting adult passes at a youth price. Kids at the MLK branch used the passes to stay at the library when they would have normally needed to take the school bus home. It is unsure if the United Way will continue to fund this program in the future. Ms. Neighbours asked if family members and/or caregivers might be included in this program in future years. Friends is currently collecting the data from branches that received the passes.
- B. NOPL Foundation Update
1. Ms. Neighbours asked if those board members who serve on the Foundation board could give updates when Ms. Mercadel is unable to attend. Ms. Flentroy-Rice responded that she will work with Ms. Mercadel to see what information can be provided at future meetings.
 2. The Foundation board met last week. The Foundation will potentially hold a fundraiser in 2023 to auction off the reclaimed trumpet and put funds toward library activities and programs.
 3. The Foundation is trying to bring in additional members that can help with fundraising, improve the Foundation’s image, and ensure the public is aware the new members have the library’s best interests as a priority.
- C. State of the Library
1. Ms. Painton emailed the board a draft of our operational plan. In November, Ms. Painton plans to provide a draft of the Strategic Planning quarterly report.
 2. The ribbon cutting at Nix was a success with positive press.
 3. The Clubhouse Network conference is taking place and Ms. Painton provided the welcome speech. Twenty different countries are participating, meaning that the children who are signed up at our Best Buy Teen Tech Center get to interact internationally. A second Center that allows adults will possibly open at another branch.
 4. All branches are currently open. We are still awaiting second floor repairs at Mid-City.

5. The REACH Center lease is complete and space layouts are being evaluated.
 6. Interviews for the Assistant Director position took place last week and two top candidates have been selected.
 7. We are beginning to discuss plans for a 2023 all staff day.
 8. Ms. Flentroy-Rice asked how many students were enrolled in the BBTTTC. Ms. LeGros responded that she thinks membership is between 25-50 teens. Ms. Painton added that teens need to get parental permission which may be a detractor for sign-ups. Ms. Flentroy-Rice asked if area schools are aware of our BBTTTC. Ms. Painton responded that we do outreach but COVID was problematic in getting more attendance.
 9. Mr. Henry asked if the operational plan could include one more level to provide tasks that support each project to give a detailed roadmap for all the tasks that need to be completed. Ms. Painton responded that this information will be added in future reports as well as who is responsible for each task.
 10. Ms. Coverick suggested that the Foundation partner with schools that need assistance with bussing costs. Ms. Painton added that NOPL and the Children's Museum are planning a field trip to the Main library and the Children's Museum. NOPL will cover the costs of busses as well as a workbook and book to each student. Mr. Henry asked if it would be simpler to reimburse the school system for the bussing costs. Ms. Painton agrees that this is a possibility.
 11. The applicants for open positions are steady. Filling the positions in the children's department remains a priority. Newly implemented, city-wide raises will help attract qualified candidates. This will help us compete with Jefferson Parish Library who offers staff yearly merit raises.
 12. During the public comments at the Mayor's meetings, Mayor Cantrell was asked when the library branches plan on returning to the pre-pandemic hours. Ms. Painton responded that we currently do not have enough staff to sustain longer hours. We continue to think of creative ways that would allow some branches to extend their hours, particularly those with large meeting rooms.
- D. Quarter 2 Performance Update
1. As requested, the 2019 statistics are shown to compare current numbers to pre-pandemic numbers. In-person visits continue to increase, but numbers remain below 2019 levels due to various branch closures.
 2. Digital circulations are still above 2019. We will market our digital resources more now that we have an E-resources Librarian on staff.
 3. The HOOPLA Campaign has been a success and will be included in the Quarter 3 report.
 4. Programming numbers remain low compared to 2019, mainly because we have redefined what constitutes a program. We used to include things we no longer consider programs such as printing of coloring sheets, etc.
 5. We are planning marketing campaigns to get patrons to branches and are giving prizes to new cardholders.
 6. Ms. Dufauchard asked if the library was fully operational in 2021. Ms. LeGros responded that it was not. Ms. Dufauchard suggested eliminating that column altogether since the numbers are not relevant or have an asterisk that denotes that 2021 was not a fully operational year. Ms. Painton added that we want the

numbers to be meaningful and not inflated to make it look like our programming is higher than it actually is. We want to focus on things that make a larger community impact.

E. Budget Department Update

1. The dedicated millage for 2023 is \$19 million with \$4 million taken from the reserve fund to support strategic planning initiatives.
2. Proposed personnel costs for 2023 are \$16 million with an additional \$2 million from operations to support additional titles for strategic planning support and the living wage pay increases.
3. Operating expenditures for 2023 are \$7.13 million to support an increase in electronic holdings; purchase of book vending machines and study/meeting pods; building improvements, maintenance, and signage; purchasing vehicles; and, hiring a consultant. We have two contracts for landscaping and maintenance that are close to completion.
4. Total proposed expenditures for the 2023 budget is \$23.13 million.
5. Members discussed whether the library signage will be visible when the RTA moves the bus stop to Loyola and Gallier Avenues with the possibility of advertising on the new transit spots.

VII. **Action Item: Vote on NOPL 2023 Budget** – (5:42 p.m.)

- A. Ms. Flentroy-Rice moved to approve the NOPL 2023 budget as submitted. Motion seconded by Ms. Neighbours. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. **Discussion Items** – (5:43 p.m.)

A. NOPL Photography Policy

1. NOPL currently lacks a photography policy and we want to create one that covers what is acceptable practice. The first part of the drafted policy states that we will not allow commercial or professional filming to be held at our library branches. We will allow exterior photography sessions with the branch manager's permission. Photographers will not be allowed to photograph or interfere with patrons without permission and cannot sell the photos they take. Personal, casual pictures/videos will allowed.
2. Library staff who are using pictures/videos for marketing and/or programming purposes are not subject to this policy.
3. This umbrella policy mirrors what other libraries have in place in lieu of requiring individual consent forms. Other libraries typically post their policy on their website as well as have posted signage inside the buildings.
4. The goal is for the board to vote to approve a final policy at the November meeting so that the marketing department can establish signage for each branch.
5. Ms. LeGros is going to send the current draft to the City Attorney's office to ensure the language is appropriate.
6. Ms. Dufauchard added that even though enforcing the policy for photography taking place outside of the library may not be enforceable, taking photographs inside should require prior consent. If the picture taking is deemed disruptive, staff can prohibit it.

B. Changes to the NOPL Meeting Room Policy

1. We have a new system in place for reserving meeting space online. Thus, the wording of the current meeting room policy needs to be adjusted.
2. The new policy requires that the requestor have a valid New Orleans Public Library card and be 18 years of age or older unless the requestor is affiliated with a government agency.
3. Additionally, alcohol will not be permitted in any library branch.
4. Ms. Flentroy-Rice added that she received a telephone call from a patron who had requested to use meeting space and was refused due to the request being outside of the 14-day response time. Ms. Painton stated that the current policy was created by the previous administration and passed quickly after Dr. Morley arrived as Executive Director. Some of the changes we needed to make are due to the new online booking and other changes, because we were unable to reserve meeting spaces for the past two years, we are now realizing that the 24 to 48 hour pre-booking requirement is too short. Two weeks may be too long so we may want to shorten it to one week. Some facets of the policy, once in practice, did not work with the online booking. Even though our meeting spaces are free and open to the public, a group that is reserving the space may require a membership fee. Ms. LeGros noted that is why the 2-week requirement was established so there is enough time to investigate what type of group is meeting and if it complies with our policy.
5. Ms. Dufauchard asked that this subject be tabled until the policy can be vetted by the City Attorney's office. She suggested that the policy be inclusive but also give managers enough agency to refuse requests that could damage the library's reputation. Ms. Dufauchard added that the seven-day requirement may be too rigid for those agencies who need last-minute space. Ms. Painton wants to ensure that managers have enough time to see the request and respond to the agency requesting space. Ms. LeGros added that it takes Communico at least 24 hours to send a booking summary to managers. Ms. Hepner added that even though 14 days seems long, managers often need to email the requestor for additional information and the time to receive that information may take several days.
6. Mr. Henry responded that we may want to word the Communico reservation questions in a way that follow-up inquiries are not needed.

IX. **Action Item: Approve Changes to NOPL Meeting Room Policy – (6:03 p.m.)**

- A. This item was tabled until the policy can be vetted by the city attorney's office.

X. **Action Item: Board of Trustee Officer Elections – (6:10 p.m.)**

- A. Ms. Parent-Ferrouillet moved to approve the new slate of officers. Mr. Ross-Hillard seconded the motion. Vote passed unanimously.

XI. **Action Item: Board Vote on 2023 Holiday Closures – (6:16 p.m.)**

- A. Ms. Flentroy-Rice moved to approve the 2023 Holiday Closure schedule as submitted. Motion seconded by Ms. Dufauchard. Vote passed unanimously.

XII. **Attachments**

- A. Board Packet

XIII. **Adjournment**

- A. Ms. Flentroy-Rice moved to adjourn and Mr. Ross-Hilliard seconded the motion.
The September 13, 2022 board meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.
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