

New Orleans Public Library
Board of Trustees
January 30, 2024

Board Meeting Packet

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New Orleans Public Library
Board Meeting
Main Library, 3rd Floor Conference Room
Tuesday, January 30, 2024
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.

NOTE: DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS AND THE TRANSFER OF THE MEETING TO A NEW LOCATION, THE ZOOM OPTION MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE

PUBLIC COMMENT IS LIMITED TO TWO MINUTES PER INDIVIDUAL

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order** — (Board Chair, Dana Henry, 1 minute)
- II. **Roll Call** — (Executive Assistant Tammy Hanson, 1 minute)
- III. **Public Comments** — (Dana Henry, 2 minutes)
- IV. **Action Item: Approval of Consent Agendas** — (Dana Henry, 2 minutes)
 - A. Approve November 14, 2023 board meeting minutes
 - B. Review Executive Committee January 9, 2024 meeting minutes
- V. **Information Items**
 - A. NOPL Foundation Report – (Demetric Mercadel, 5 minutes)
 - B. Friends of NOPL – (Shannan Cvitanovic, 2 minutes)
 - C. State of the Library - (Emily Painton, 5 minutes)
- VI. **Discussion Items**
 - A. Executive Director Evaluation --- (Andrea Neighbours, 5 minutes)

B. Board Cultivation – (Kathleen Coverick, 4 minutes)

VII. **Attachments**

A. Board Packet

VIII. **Adjournment**

Join Zoom Meeting

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New Orleans Public Library
Regular Board Meeting
MAIN 3RD Floor Conference Room
Tuesday, November 14, 2023
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**
 - A. Board Chair, Dana Henry, called the November 14, 2023 regular board meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

- II. **Roll Call — (4:33 p.m.)**

Board Members Present: Vonda Flentroy-Rice, Dana Henry, Andrea Neighbours, Kathleen Coverick
Absent: Phala Kimbrough-Mire, Raquel Dufauchard, Alexis Parent-Ferrouillet
NOPL Staff Present: Emily Painton, Michel Thompson, Jane LeGros, Heather Riley, Tammy Hanson, Emilie Staat, April Martin, Katy Hepner
Others Present: Shannan Cvitanovic

- III. **Public Comments — (4:34 p.m.)**
 - A. Mr. Henry thanked the NOPL staff for their work on the 2024 budget and also thanked the public for their continued support. He also clarified that public comments on action items will be acknowledged prior to a vote.
 - B. Ms. Scott made an in support of the library moving forward \$9.5 million to move forward with facilities repairs to allow greater access and ease of access to our libraries. This includes ADA accessible buildings.
 - C. Ms. Washington commented on the condition and safety of the library. She also feels that the security guards exude an environment of hostility. She feels the public needs better access to computers and the public patio should also be accessible. Ms. Washington commented on the ENO enterprise zone and when it

will be completed for utilization by a small business. Ms. Painton responded that the space is complete and will be occupied by the We Play Center.

- D. Ms. Kinlaw attempted to return books to the Nix library and seen a notification regarding a sewer line being collapsed. She would like to know if we have been in contact with that department. Ms. Painton responded that it is on our property, and we need to initiate the repairs.

IV. **Action Item: Move of Agenda Items (4:43 p.m.)**

- A. Ms Coverick made a motion to transpose agenda discussion items VI and VII while there is a quorum. Motion seconded by Ms. Flentroy-Rice. Motion passed unanimously. Ms. Flentroy-Rice seconded, and approved unanimously.

V. **Approval of Consent Agendas — (4:44 p.m.)**

- A. Approve November 7th Executive meeting minutes Regular Board Meeting minutes
- B. Approval of September 12th regular board meeting minutes
 - 1. A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Ms. Coverick and seconded by Ms. Neighbours. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. **Action Item: Reconsideration Policy – (4:54 p.m.)**

- A. Ms. Painton iterated the importance of having this policy in place by the deadline of January 1, 2024. There have been no updates since the previous board meeting. Mr. Henry added that this is pursuant to state mandates and not board-initiated.
- B. A comment was made regarding the comparison of other libraries' policies in comparison to NOPL and asked for clarification as to how much freedom in accessing books there will be. Ms. Painton responded that we have conferred with the state library. The Reconsideration Policy states that if a patron finds an item sexually explicit, the board will decide. There is a second component to the policy that needs to be in place by June 2024 regarding parental access to what their children read. Mr. Henry added that the board does not plan to take steps beyond parent or patron concerns. Ms. Painton noted that concerns cannot come from outside parishes.
- C. Ms. Staat asked for clarification on whether staff members handle complaints. Ms. Painton responded that there will be a paper form and an online form that staff should direct patrons to. Patrons are required to submit the form by mail or online.
- D. Ms. Neighbours moved to approve the Reconsideration Policy. Motion seconded by Ms. Flentroy-Rice. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. **Action Item: Approval of 2024 Closures (4:54 p.m.)**

- A. Ms. Painton noted that our closures are based on City Hal's holiday closures.
- B. There is a modification of the All Staff Day.
- C. A motion was made by Ms. Flentroy-Rice to approve the 2024 Holiday closure list with the amendment and second by Ms. Coverick. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. **Information Items (4:55 p.m.)**

- A. Friends of NOPL Update
 - 1. Fiends had three consecutive successful book sales; one at the Latter branch and another at Algiers. The goal is to add ENO in the spring.

2. Friends has outstanding grants with the Louisiana Primetime Preschool and Primetime Family, and notification of approval should happen soon.
 3. Friends is getting funding from the Jazz and Heritage Foundation for Summer Fun 2024.
 4. Friends is continuing with its strategic planning process and meeting with branch managers to get input.
 5. Friends is contacting city council members to reintroduce them to the program and express concerns about facilities issues.
- B. NOPL Foundation Update – (Demetric Mercadel)
1. Ms. Coverick stated that the NPL Foundation will meet in December. Ms. Neighbours asked if meetings are in-person and when the previous meeting was held. Ms. Coverick responded that meetings are held via Google and the last meeting was in March.
- C. State of the Library – (Emily Painton)
1. Nix closed unexpectedly due to a collapsed sewer line. There is no information on a definite reopening. There are currently three bids.
 2. Central City is closed due to mold remediation work. The process is further complicated being inside of a city-owned building. Plans for pop-ups outside of the Allie Mae Center are forthcoming. Holds are not a major component.
 3. ServicePRO will be conducting work under a state contract to include remediating books. Mr., Henry inquired on who is responsible for the city contract. Ms. Painton responded that it is the Property Management Department.
 4. Keller library has heat, but a specialist was hired to gauge the scope of repairs.
 5. The boiler replacements for the Main library are out for bid. We are working with Capital Projects to replace cooling towers, fans, and chillers. Once the feasible study is completed and the 2024 budget is approved by City Council, we can move forward in 2024. The engineering and architectural teams will need to design the components. Then we will need to hire a general contractor.
 6. Mr. Henry asked the difference between Capital Project and Property Management's role in this discussion. Ms. Painton replied that Property Management manages the properties. Capital Projects oversees major building projects. Typically we do not work with Property Management as they do not manage library properties, but they manage city properties in which the Allie Mae Center is part. There are timelines for construction projects that we have no control over, but we are moving forward and the timeline is shared with us as well as updates. Ms. Thompson added that we need a recommendation from Capital Projects for the architecture firm to create the timeline. Then once the companies bid, they can agree to or adjust the timeline as needed. There are penalties for not adhering to the agreed schedule.
 7. Ms. Neighbours inquired if we hired a contractor that was already approved by the City if the timeline could be shortened. Ms. Thompson responded that it is a possibility but depends on several factors.
 8. Mr. Henry asked if there is anything the NOPL Board can do to expedite the process of remediating the mold at the Allie Mae Center. Ms. Painton responded that we have procured what we need for now. Once the paperwork

is in place the company can give us a timeline. Ms. Flentroy-Rice asked if a manager is assigned to this project. Mr., Henry is planning to call the council person in that district.

9. Board Chair, Dana Henry left the meeting at 5:15 p.m.
10. Two of the buildings we were interested in moving MLK library to are no longer available. Administration met with Dr. Hicks at MLK and came to an understanding about cohesive policies.
11. In the process of obtaining a P.O. There is a building located on N. Carrollton we are considering. If there is a city-owned building we can occupy, we will consider that as well. Ms. Neighbours asked why it takes 3 months to get an appraiser. Ms. Thomas responded that it is dependent on the documentation.
12. REACH started pop-ups last month and is now open. A grand opening is planned for January.

D. Budget Department Update

1. We have received \$21.5 million in millage receipts this year. We had planned for \$20 million. Fees were budgeted at \$130k and we've received \$119k. Total funding for 2023's budget was nearly \$25 million and we have received little over that amount.
2. Year to date personnel costs are \$11 million and currently have \$195k in FTEs. THE FTEs unfulfilled is still being determined. As of October 31st, we have \$4.8 million left in the budget for personnel costs. We hired 10 new associates and 1 new manager.
3. We budgeted \$9 million for operating costs and have paid \$6.2 million from the obligated \$8.6 million. We have \$313k left. We have 20 percent of our budget remaining.
4. Outreach and programming expanded so the budgeted \$90k increased to \$120k.
5. Other operating costs include security, building leases, office supplies, furniture, and employee travel and education costs.
6. We budgeted \$4 million for strategic planning and have \$921k in P.O.s. \$784k has been paid to vendors with \$136k remaining.
7. Ms. Thompson gave the board a breakdown on how budgeted dollars were spent in each of the three pillars of our strategic plan.
8. Ms. Coverick suggested having a civil service staff member attend a board meeting to get information on our staffing issues. Ms. Neighbours asked what our realistic staff FTE should be for 2024.

E. QTR 3 Operational Plan Update

1. The library has begun the Widerstand audit.
2. Summer Fun was a success with 6,545 registered participants; 488k materials circulated and over 1 million minutes read. We has 5,674 program attendees and 473 programs.
3. Fifty new albums were added to Crescent City Sounds. Participants receive a \$250 honorarium as well as promotion through our social media. Next year we are adding 75 albums.
4. We have added the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and the BK Historic House and Gardens to the Culture Pass program.

5. Maria Vatrakis, the head of the Best Buy Teen Tech Center won an achievement award.
 6. Through our partnership with YES, 85 students received diplomas through the Greater New Orleans Adult Education Graduation.
 7. We had over 98k children's books circulated. Marketing diversified their direct family marketing and launched ads with NOLA Families with targeted radio ads.
 8. Keller library was runner up in the Family Favorites contest.
 9. Early Literacy had 3,174 attendees for school-aged youth and 484 attendees.
 10. This summer we collaborated with Audubon Zoo, Congo Square, Preservation Society, the Louisiana Public Laureate came to read to teens, Crescent City Circus, etc. Our Reading Buddies Program has teens coming to the library to read to new readers.
 11. We are working on expanding our partnership with Ride New Orleans so kids have transportation to libraries and will be partnering with WePlay which is as training grounds program around early literacy and education.
 12. In Q3, we had good attendance at teen events and are seeing growth each quarter by meeting them where they are. We also have targeted radio ads geared to teens with a broad-scope approach.
 13. We did a number of BBTTC petting zoos. This is when we take tech out to other branches to show what we have at Main.
 14. We have updated our adult learning and education page, job seeker page, and business and entrepreneur page to highlight current education providers. We are continuing to partner with Job One in 2024 and adding more ESL courses.
 15. One-on-one computer help sessions have increased. We had 24 digital literacy events with 31 attendees.
 16. All NOPL employees will be required to take a Nordstar digital literacy assessment. We had 69 attendees at workforce development programs.
 17. We have updated our Book-a-Librarian page so it is more user friendly. The Adult Education department is transitioning their focus to provide referral information to all staff.
 18. We completed the transition to online room reservations and it has been successful. Our goal is to provide more free spaces in the future.
 19. The number of EBooks have increased. Mobile services decreased due to vehicle issues.
 20. Ms. Cvitanovic asked that an addition be added to the Summer Fun program to explain rescheduling do to heat issues. Staff concurred.
 21. Ms. Neighbours requested that the operational plan be made available to board members.
- F. Discussion was had regarding the vacant board seats and what types of candidates would benefit our goals. Five potential names are being considered.

IX. Adjournment

- A. Ms. Neighbours moved to adjourn the July 18, 2023 regular board meeting at 6:13 p.m. Ms. Coverick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

X. Attachments

- A. Board Packet



New Orleans Public Library
Executive Committee Meeting
3rd Floor Conference Room; Main Library
Tuesday, January 9, 2024
4:30 p.m.

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AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order** — (4:34 p.m.)

- II. **Roll Call**
Present: Dana Henry, Kathleen Coverick, Andrea Neighbors, Alexis Parent-Ferrouillet (late)
Library Staff present: Emily Painton, Tamyka Miles, Michel Thompson

- III. **Public Comments** — (4:35 p.m.)
 - A. There were no public comments

- IV. **Finance Report** (4:35 p.m.)
 - A. The report will be presented at the regular board meeting

- V. **Executive Director Update** – (4:36 p.m.)
 - A. State of Facilities
 - 1. Central City is our only location currently closed due to mold caused by HVAC, humidity issues. Patrick G McCann with City Property Management is overseeing this project.
 - 2. 12/5: Servpro completed the remediation of the Library space.
 - 3. 2/13: The air quality testing was completed and revealed some elevated levels of mold in the IT closet. Informed that the small a/c unit serving the IT closet has high levels of mold deep within the evaporator coils which cannot be accessed to clean thoroughly enough to remove all of the mold. Recommendation that we remove the unit and have it replaced.

4. 12/15/2023: PM's Head of Engineering, started the paperwork to have the equipment replaced.
 5. 01/02/2024: NOPL Facilities Director reached out to Property Management to see if there were any updates. They let us know that they submitted the quote to their fiscal team so now were just waiting on the PO to be issued and would let us know as soon as they hear from them.
 6. 01/09/2024: NOPL Facilities Director reached out to Property Management to see if there were further updates. Have not heard back yet.
 7. The question from Board members was raised, asking if we might be able to open the branch while the IT closet is still being remediated and the HVAC is removed and replaced. Director Painton mentioned that she was open to thinking out of the box but that she didn't feel it was a good idea to allow staff or patrons back in the library until the remediation project is complete. Board Member Dana Henry suggested that we should only do that if someone would sign off on it being safe first.
 8. Boiler Replacements went out for Bid.
- B. Other Updates:
1. 12/8: We Play Center ribbon cutting at ENO. Emily Emceed, Council Member Oliver Thomas, Lorrie Brigs Deputy Assistant Secretary LA Department of Children's and Family Services; Shaun Men-a LA State Rep District 23; Co-Founder Melanie Richardson.
 2. REACH Center: Planning for a Grand Opening in Feb post Mardi Gras and before Black History Month.
 3. Envisio: Operational Plan consulting in 2024, focus groups, giving staff a chance to participate in a way they hadn't been in the past.
 4. The pro and cons were shared about having Envisio assist with the operational plan. Also there was a discussion of the pros and cons of a 3- year operational plan vs a -1-year plan.
 5. Widerstand Audit. We have seen a first draft but are still debriefing with Widerstand and will share when the final draft and our plans to address any concerns are complete.
 6. Talking to potential Executive Coaches. Had an introductory meeting with an Executive Coach at The Hive Collective. Planning to set up several more on recommendations from other Library Directors.
- C. Board attendance:
1. Valerie with the City says it sounds like there are two people who will be able to join to fill our two open positions. We do give Valerie our attendance information and if anyone isn't attending frequently enough they may be asked to step down.
- D. Library Foundation Updates:
1. Spending: The current chair of the Foundation Board is planning to step down there is also a need for more Library Foundation Board members.

VI. **Discussion Regarding Executive Director Evaluation -- (5:04 p.m.)**

- A. A discussion of considering the need for a consultant to help with creating the Executive Director's evaluation tool and to assist with evaluations. And the possibility of asking the Library Foundation to fund the consultant. It was determined that the evaluation of the director can't happen until 2025 but the goals and the tool should be created and shared with the Director in 2024.

- VII. **Discussion Regarding Potential Board Members -- (5:18 p.m.)**
 - A. Board members shared potential new members. Ms. Neighbors knows an I/T person, Ms. Coverick knows a couple of architects, Mr. Henry knows a person with experience with workforce development.

- VIII. **Regular Board Meeting Agenda Review – (5:28 p.m.)**
 - A. An addition to the discussion section of the agenda: Board Cultivation to be presented by Ms. Coverick.

- IX. **Adjournment**
 - A. The Executive Committee was adjourned at 5:32 p.m.