Minutes of WFPL Board of Governance Special Board Meeting Monday, October 20, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. CST Pensacola Library, 239 N. Spring St., Pensacola, FL 32502

Board Members Present

- Kenneth "Blaine" Wall, Library Board of Governance, Chair
- John Bullock, Library Board of Governance, Vice Chair
- Joyce Hopson, Library Board of Governance, Member
- Liza Campbell, Library Board of Governance, Member
- Lori NeSmith, Library Board of Governance, Member

Board Members Absent

None

Administration Present

Christal Bell-Rivera, Interim Director, Library Services

Call to Order

- Mr. Wall called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
- Proof of Publication was received.
- Quorum is present.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Wall led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Approval of Agenda

 Ms. NeSmith made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Hopson seconded the motion.

Public Forum

No members of the public spoke during public forum.

Open Board Discussion

The Library Board of Governance (BOG) convened a special meeting to discuss the hiring process for the upcoming Library Services Director after the departure of Director Todd J. Humble, who remains on the payroll until mid-November 2025.

Main Topic: Hiring Process for New Library Services Director

County's Role vs. BOG Authority

Mr. Wall's Update:

- Met with County leadership; was informed the County would lead hiring, but BOG could give input.
- Emphasized the Board's past role and importance in the process.
- Confirmed there are no Tallahassee-level political hurdles.
- Warned of potential resistance from County officials to move forward with the board's proposed timeline.
- Urged BOG members to contact their appointing authorities for support.
 He has already reached out to the City Council.

Board Member Feedback

Ms. NeSmith and Ms. Campbell:

- Advocated for immediate action due to expiring terms.
- o Ms. Campbell proposed a timeline:
 - Job announcement: End of November 2025
 - Application review/interviews: January 2026
 - Hire: February 2026

Mr. Bullock:

- Questioned whether immediate action was necessary since operations are stable.
- Ultimately supported the proposed timeline.

Public Input

• Mr. David Bryant (former BOG Member):

- Stated BOG led the 2015 hiring process in full (job description, advertising, and interviews) and made a recommendation for hire.
- Cautioned about potential political pressures and advised outreach to city leaders.
- Urged BOG to retain control and be prepared for pushback.

Documentation and Job Description Review

Ms. NeSmith:

- Shared public records and job descriptions; noted the absence of June 1 & 15, 2015 meeting minutes.
- o Requested that the Director's position remain a recurring agenda item.

Discussions:

- Noted discrepancies between the current bylaws and the job description
- Interim Director Bell-Rivera asked for the BOG's intended budget for job advertising.
- BOG will draft a new job description and begin early advertisement.
- Application period to extend through December; review to begin January 2026.

Board Actions & Meeting Schedule

- Board Decisions:
 - Proceed with drafting job description and advertisement plan.
 - Special meetings scheduled to support the hiring process.

Meeting Schedule:

- Nov 10, 2025: Special Meeting
- Nov 17, 2025: Regular Meeting
- **Dec 8, 2025:** Special Meeting
- Dec 15, 2025: Regular Meeting
- Jan 13, 2026: Special (Application Review)
- Jan 26, 2026: Regular Meeting
- **Feb 2–3**, **2026**: Special (Interviews)
- Feb 20, 2026: Special (Final Interviews & Potential Hire)
- Feb 23, 2026: Regular Meeting

Additional Discussion Points

- Mr. Bryant cautioned against human resources filtering candidates and recommended that the board review the applicant pool.
- The board discussed a hypothetical scenario where HR presents only one candidate. The consensus was that BOG wants access to the whole applicant list
- Ms. Campbell will provide a scoring rubric and compensation chart to be forwarded to all board members.
- Mr. Wall will obtain the current job description and benefits package from County HR.
- Board affirmed County Administration's due diligence in filling the position, but emphasized the board's involvement.
- The board referenced the City as a key stakeholder in the hiring process.
- Interim Bell-Rivera raised concerns about library system operations; the board acknowledged current challenges.
- Interim Bell-Rivera will provide the missing 2015 meeting minutes to Ms. NeSmith.

Next Meeting

- Monday, October 27, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. at the Tryon Library, 1200 Langley Ave, Pensacola, FL 32504.
- Meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.