

**Minutes of WFPL Board of Governance Regular Board Meeting
Monday, June 24, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. CST
Pensacola Library, 239 N. Spring St., Pensacola, FL 32502**

Board Members Present

- Lori NeSmith, Library Board of Governance, Chair
- Kenneth “Blaine” Wall, Library Board of Governance, Vice Chair
- John Bullock, Library Board of Governance, Member
- Robin Reshard, Library Board of Governance, Member
- Liza Campbell, Library Board of Governance, Member

Board Members Absent

- None

Administration Present

- Todd J. Humble, Director, Library Services
- Christal Bell-Rivera, Deputy Director, Library Services
- Tricia Sheridan, Director’s Aide, Library Services

Call to Order

- Ms. NeSmith called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.
- Proof of Publication was received.
- The quorum is present.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Ms. NeSmith led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Public Forum

Donna Waters
Gloria Gonzalez
Ashely Gallagher
Devin Cole
Harper Cummings
Megan Gunter
Shelly Rose
Dashaun McKenzie
Girasol Alfonso
Alicia Pierce
Honor Bellton
Sarah Brummet
Linda Fussell
Charlie Dyell
Julie Patton
Heidi Robinson
Dolly Bertheld
Nathan Schweigert
Maya Larson

Erica Zink
Susan Martin
Nancy Hagman

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

- Dr. Wall made a motion to approve the May 6, 2024, minutes. Mr. Bullock seconded the motion. The May minutes were approved with changes to the spelling of “patron” and a correction that Mr. Bullock asked for a ballot to be in the library during the voting process.

Appeal

- Caitlyn Bradley was not present. Chair declined to make decision on the appeal.

Chairman’s Report

- Shared the summer reading challenge program is in full swing and encouraged everyone to participate.
- Appreciated receiving the new weekly library services report. The report helps the Board feel more in touch with what is going on in the library.
- Shared the Friends of the Library is having their three-day sale in July. Asked for donations and expressed appreciation for the work the Friends do to support the library.
- Thanked the Director’s Aide for providing the board with thorough minutes and follow-up information to board requests.

Library Director’s Report

- The summer feeding program [Feeding the Gulf Coast] is underway. Molino is feeding 40% more than any other branch. Over 5,500 meals were served system wide this month.
- We continue to purchase items to serve those with disabilities and visual limitations from a large estate donation (tracked in 113-110550). We have reached out to the Independence for the Blind for recommendations on what types of equipment to purchase to better serve the visually impaired population.
- Shared cooperative eBooks and eAudiobooks use statistics from the Panhandle Library Access Network (PLAN) for awareness purposes. We have circulated over 46,600 e-Books and over 77,000 e-Audiobooks from October 2023 to now.
- Fiscal report discussion. We are further behind in collection development book expenditures than he would like to see.

- Brownsville Library is now ahead of schedule. Structural termite damage was found so the building has changed to steel which is faster to build. Completion by October 2024 instead of Spring 2025 is highly likely.
- Encouraged everyone to visit the reorganized Westside Library. STEM resources are being relocated to this branch to create a dedicated maker/creative space. Quilting, sewing, embroidery, screen printing, and other Fiber art tech has already been relocated to this branch.
- Ms. NeSmith asked for updates on the south wall of the Pensacola Library. Director Humble explained the MTSU and how the City of Pensacola is responsible for repairs to the building. He further detailed the damage from Hurricane Sally and there is no timeline for completion. The county's facilities director and risk management department is leaning on the city, and it has gone as high as the Mayor. Ms. NeSmith asked if the library has received a schedule for completing projects. Director Humble responded that we have asked for it from the city and have not received anything. Director Humble has put the Pensacola Library as top priority on the itemized/prioritized list of repair issues provided to the city.

New Business

- Lost and Found Policy review discussion. Mr. Bullock made a motion to amend the current policy to conform with the proposed policy. Ms. Campbell seconded the motion. Lost and Found Policy was approved with corrections. Dr. Wall added a comma correction. Director Humble corrected the policy and stated it should read "on the next business day".
- Rights and Responsibilities policy was placed on the June agenda after a request was made by the board for further review during the May board meeting. Discussion was regarding the bag policy, eating in the library and use of emergency doors. Ms. Reshard asked if the policy needs to be approved by the county attorney and Director Humble affirmed. Ms. Reshard made a motion to approve the Rights and Responsibilities policy as presented in the admin draft. Mr. Bullock seconded the motion. Motion passed.
 - The Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Policy discussion was placed on the June agenda after a request was made by the board for further review during the May board meeting. Director Humble clarified the age limits on ILL requests and how patron fees are assessed. No other issues were raised regarding the ILL policy. Ms. NeSmith called for a motion to approve the ILL policy. Ms. Reshard made the first motion. Ms. Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business

- Director evaluation discussion. Ms. NeSmith feels the process can be improved and that they are being asked questions on the evaluation form that they don't know the answers to.
- Ms. Campbell felt that the West Florida Library Board of Governance is insular and have no input from the staff so can't answer evaluation questions. She wants staff to be

included in the evaluation process. Comments by staff to be anonymized to encourage truthfulness without fear of retribution. It is not necessarily on how the director is acting, but more like asking, "how is the library doing"? It should not be a form for complaints, but rather give ideas for improvement.

- Ms. Reshard suggested:
 - Develop the new process and then put it out to the board perhaps a month ahead of the meeting for review.
 - Have the Director's self-evaluation and staff input ahead of the evaluation meeting.
 - Wants a quantitative form for metric analysis to assign a score.
- The Deputy suggested to the Board that the evaluation completion in align with the Bylaws. Article 8: Section 1-12 has the expectation of the library director that should align with an evaluation.
- The current evaluation came from a previous board.
- Director Humble asked for the same forms that the county uses for consistency. When evaluation forms are different than County and Bylaw powers, it becomes difficult to know what expectations one has to meet. Asking the library administration to survey the staff would be inappropriate because staff might feel they need to answer a certain way. Ms. Reshard inquired what he thought was the best way to ascertain staff information. Director Humble suggested emailing staff using their library email addresses.
- Dr. Wall offered that he thought as a staff member one might feel uncomfortable using an email that is public record with their name vs anonymous survey. He explained that his college students evaluate him every semester and while it is public record, it can't be seen who submitted it. That information is used for his annual evaluation.
- Ms. Reshard asked before the next evaluation if the county attorney and HR be consulted so they would have the best information as to how to move forward.
- The Board agreed that their requested staff input form should be one sheet, easy to complete, accessible, available, and anonymous.
- Ms. Reshard asked Ms. Campbell to approach the country attorney and ask what the goals for the evaluation process are.
- Deputy Director Bell-Rivera stated the Board is asking the staff to do an evaluation of the Library Director and that is not in the Bylaws. Dr. Wall clarified that they are not asking for an evaluation, but asking for feedback that will be used in an evaluation.
- Ms. Campbell stated this process could be multi-years in the making and would include a Bylaw change. Ms. NeSmith would like to see a plan of action. The Director stated it would be intimidating to have the survey come from administration and should be from the board. Whatever process is used must be able to meet the State of Florida's 5-year retention policy.

- Mr. Bullock asked if personnel records are exempt from freedom of information laws that would apply to this inquiry of staff. Director Humble referred Mr. Bullock to legal to define what portions of personnel records are exempt.
- The director evaluation procedures will be placed on the next agenda under old business to review any information Ms. Campbell receives from the county attorney and keep improving the process.

Open Board Discussion

- Ms. Reshard offered that she was excited that people remained after the public forum to hear the whole board meeting. Appreciated the comments regarding the freedom to speak at the forum and that the library provides a safe space. She also heard comments about book banning, labeling books and the process of book reviews. She suggested we need to look at the process and making sure it is followed. Director Humble assured her all processes are being followed.
- Ms. Reshard brought up the staff who work on the front lines and thanked them for continuing to be there during this challenging time for taking the phones calls, emails, and face-to-face conversations with the patrons.
- Ms. NeSmith showed the “patron comment on library material” form. Concerned that one must “dig for it” and improved access is important. Director Humble stated that we have asked for it to be turned into an online form. Also, the form has been printed on bright green paper so when staff are feeling stressed during an interaction, they can simply give the patron so that procedure can be followed.
- Clarification by the Deputy regarding the difference between the “patron comment on library material” form and a regular “patron comment” form (complaint and compliment form). Material form is specific to collection development. The patron comment form is for general feedback.
- Mr. Bullock observed the “patron comment of library materials” form calls for a book-by-book procedure vs “all LGBTQ+ books to be reviewed”. Director Humble confirmed the book-by-book procedure and stated there is no policy for reviewing an entire genre.
- Ms. Campbell asked for clarification regarding the process until this point. The process was explained as:
 1. The Board establishes the policy,
 2. Staff are expected to follow the policy and provide a patron, who objects to a book, the “library materials review” form.
 3. A patron submits a library materials review form, and it is submitted to the Director.
 4. The Director has specific staff review the book.
 5. The Director reviews the book and makes a final decision.

6. If patron disagrees with the Director's decision, they can file an appeal to the Board and are informed of such through the Director's response.
 7. If appealed all board members will be sent the library materials comment form, staff comments in reevaluating the library material, the Director's decision, and the item will be placed on the next agenda for Board review.
- Board members asked that future agendas state "library material appeal" to insure clarity of any future decision appeals.
 - Deputy Director Bell-Rivera expressed concern about the potential amount of book challenges to start happening. Ms. Campbell shared that to protect the staff and librarians when a book is challenged at her university, the policy states the library will have the final say and that the review will be completed in a *reasonable amount of time*.
 - Mr. Bullock requested during the next meeting to examine the ways to improve the circulation policy.
 - Library admin will work on the library materials review form and the general patron feedback form changes and website updates and send to each board member prior to the July meeting.
 - Ms. NeSmith requests the library branch manager be present at board meetings. Deputy Bell-Rivera stated that schedule has been arranged.
 - Ms. NeSmith shared that she toured the Friends of West Florida Public Library warehouse with Linda Williams. She invited the Friends of the Public Library to attend the Library Board of Governance meetings. Director Humble stated that they would have to come as a member of the public since they are not connected to county business. Ms. NeSmith shared she has read the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the library and the Friends of West Florida Public Library.
 - Director Humble requested the Bylaws be reviewed by the county attorney to make sure the ability to attend BOG meetings electronically is still valid and properly described.

XI. Next Meeting

- Monday, July 22, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. at the Southwest Library, 12248 Gulf Beach Highway, Pensacola, FL 32507.
- A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Campbell. Ms. Reshard seconded the motion. Ms. NeSmith adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.