



**Library Board of Trustees**

**Library Board of Trustees Meeting**

**South Boulevard Library,**

**4429 South Boulevard, Charlotte**

**Monday, October 23, 2023, 4:00pm – 6:30pm**

**Trustees Present**

Ailen Arreaza  
Peggy Brookhouse  
Dr. Stacey Brown  
Jon Buchan  
Joe Helweg  
Dr. Kimmerly Martin  
Tracy Montross  
Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson  
Preethi Srinivasan  
Charles Thomas, Chair  
Dr. Ricky Woods

**Staff Present**

Darrell Anderson  
Rachel Bradley  
David Dillard  
Harold Escalante  
Jenni Gaisbauer  
Krystel Green  
Beatriz Guevara  
John O'Connor  
Caitlin Moen  
Angie Myers  
Emery Ortiz  
Tracy Pizzi  
Amy Richard  
Sandy Stratton  
Marcellus Turner

**Others Present**

Gene Cochrane, Foundation Board Chair

Charles Thomas opened and welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting at 4:00pm. Mr. Thomas introduced Beatriz Guevara, the South Boulevard Library Branch Manager, who gave a brief overview of the branch and her time with Charlotte Mecklenburg Library system. Ms. Guevara has been working with CML since 2000 and has been the Branch Manager at South Boulevard since 2015.

**Absence with Cause**

Mr. Thomas stated that every board member was in attendance and there was no need for a motion to approve the absence with cause.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Thomas requested a motion to approve the Minutes from September 18<sup>th</sup>. On a motion by Peggy Brookhouse and seconded by Jon Buchan, the Trustees unanimously approved the minutes.

**Chair Update**

Mr. Thomas provided the following updates:

- Mr. Thomas provided an update regarding the Strategic Direction consultant. Mr. Thomas informed the Board that there was a nice pool of applicants for the consultant position and those will be narrowed down to about three and

then the Executive Committee will conduct interviews. The goal is to have the consultant hired by November and for them to begin working in December.

- Mr. Thomas informed the Board that the February and March Board of Trustees meetings will be moved up to better align with the County's FY2025 budget process. Moving the meetings allows for the Board and the Library team that presents to the County to be better prepared and ahead in the process.
- Mr. Thomas explained the desire to have a half-day Board retreat in January. If schedules do not allow for a January retreat, the regular January Board of Trustees meeting will have a deep dive to accommodate the topics that would have been covered at a retreat.

### **Ad Hoc Intellectual Freedom Committee**

Dr. Hawn Nelson gave the following updates on the intellectual freedom statement:

- Dr. Hawn Nelson read the statement and informed the board of the feedback she received since the September Board of Trustees meeting.
  - Library's Intellectual Freedom Statement  
*The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is committed to protecting the First Amendment's guarantee of free and open access to information and ideas – a principle vital to our democracy and to each individual's search for knowledge. We seek to provide our diverse community a comprehensive collection of material and programs providing a wide range of fact-based knowledge and points of view.*

**Mr. Thomas requested a motion to approve the Library's Intellectual Freedom Statement. On a motion by Dr. Hawn Nelson and seconded by Stacey Brown, the Trustees unanimously approved the Library's Intellectual Freedom Statement.**

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Finance Committee**

Angie Myers and Preethi Srinivasan presented the following updates:

- Ms. Srinivasan stated that the Finance Committee discussed the first quarter results at the last committee meeting.
- Angie Myers explained that the Library has about a \$54 million budget and has spent roughly a quarter of the budget at the end of the first quarter of FY 2024.
- Projection data is based on 3 months (25% of the year) of activity. While internal revenue generation continues recovery from COVID 19, revenue from the Library's interest-bearing bank accounts is expected to bring in approximately \$450k in the first full year of implementation.
- Federal revenue is expected to be under collected as the budget includes \$738k in ARPA funds that are anticipated to be spent in FY2025. A corresponding amount will be underspent in various expense lines such as Library Collections (\$497k) and Salaries and Benefits (\$117k).
- Mecklenburg County budget methodology changes were implemented in FY2023 to reduce underspending County-wide in the salaries budgets. Due to the Library's low vacancy rate, position costs exceeded the FY2023 Adopted Budget and last year the County approved a budget adjustment of \$500k. County Budget and Library will continue to monitor FY2024 expenses and reconcile prior to year-end, proposing adjustments if need be.
- The FY2023 Audit is in the final review phase and a full update will be provided in November.

	FY 2024 - Current Budget	FY 2024 - YTD Actual Results @ 9/30/23 (Pd 3)	% Collected or Spent	FY 2024 - Projection	% Variance: Projection vs. Budget
<b>Revenues</b>					
<b>Revenue</b>					
<b>Intergovernmental:</b>					
Mecklenburg County	\$ 47,145,138	\$ 11,342,940	24%	\$ 46,673,687	99%
State of North Carolina	682,386	159,360	23%	682,386	100%
ABC Board	860,733	0	0%	903,770	105%
Federal	2,897,842	157,439	5%	2,159,427	75%
City of Charlotte	2,500	0	0%	2,500	100%
<b>Total Intergovernmental Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 51,588,599</b>	<b>\$ 11,659,739</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>\$ 50,421,770</b>	<b>98%</b>
Library Fees	\$ 744,000	\$ 194,043	26%	\$ 778,617	105%
Foundation Contributions	1,312,531	0	0%	1,312,531	100%
Other	227,500	40,009	18%	227,500	100%
Fund Balance & Reserves Appropriation*	(80,352)	0	0%	(80,352)	100%
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 53,792,278</b>	<b>\$ 11,893,791</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>\$ 52,660,066</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
<b>Current:</b>					
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 36,346,355	\$ 8,318,011	23%	\$ 35,484,375	98%
Library Collections	8,038,522	2,109,907	26%	7,541,299	94%
Facility Related	3,752,264	1,252,644	33%	3,746,264	100%
Programming	680,651	102,541	15%	674,651	99%
Technology & Equipment	1,610,590	969,417	60%	1,572,190	98%
Professional Services	1,187,278	112,784	9%	1,187,278	100%
Personnel Related Expenses	339,600	66,369	20%	319,600	94%
Misc. General Operating Expenses	1,737,018	141,877	8%	1,707,018	98%
Interfund Transfer	100,000	0	0%	100,000	100%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 53,792,278</b>	<b>\$ 13,073,550</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>\$ 52,332,675</b>	<b>97%</b>
<b>Total</b>					
<b>(Revenue-Expenditures)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ (1,179,759)</b>		<b>\$ 327,391</b>	

\* Includes inter-fund transfer of ABC 100k to CommonSpark Campaign.

## Real Estate Committee

David Dillard gave the following updates:

- Mr. Dillard explained to the Board that the new Main Library project is at the stage where shelving and furniture must be ordered, and the volume is such that the cost reaches over \$4.5 million. This means that the Real Estate Committee brought forth a motion to the Executive Committee to delegate to the CML CEO the authority to award contracts (including pre-negotiated cooperative agreements), reject bids, or readvertise to receive bids on behalf of CML for furniture and steel shelving for new Main. The motion passed, which allows for a smoother and more timely buying process of these items.

## Governance Committee Update

Mrs. Montross and Mr. Thomas provided the following updates:

- Ms. Montross reminded board members to reach out to their assigned County Commissioner and set up a meeting to discuss the Library, advocacy, and to ensure alignment with CML's strategic direction. Ms. Montross asked that after the meeting, the board member submit a summary of the conversation to her for tracking purposes.
- Ms. Montross recognized Ms. Brookhouse who helped work out the next steps regarding working with the Foundation board on advocacy for the Library. At the next board meeting they will bring a more formal list of engagements for the board to help facilitate advocacy and set up the education action plan before the end of the fiscal year.

## **CEO Update**

Marcellus Turner provided the following updates:

- MT introduced Darrell Anderson, who provided the Board with an update on Library Sign-up Month which ran during the month of September. This year the Library gained 8,032 new card holders during Library Sign-up Month. Last year the Library gained 8,169 in September. Mr. Anderson explained that the Marketing and Communications department has a larger, year-long, library card sign-up campaign that they are working on and this should help continue to bring new customers into the Library. Mr. Anderson and Krystal Green also provided the Board with a brief overview of the campaigns and types of social media posts that are engaging and successful in bringing in new customers to the Library.
- MT gave an update on the Board of County Commissioners November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting where Mr. Thomas will give a presentation on the yearly Library Report. The presentation will include a thank you for supporting the Library's projects through the County budget, review of a few celebrations from the previous year, a brief overview of some of the bigger Library projects, and an update on New Main Library. The PowerPoint presentation will be sent out to the Board to review.
- MT spoke to the Board about the group of individuals that came forward last October with an interest in capturing the history of African Americans in Mecklenburg County. This group was also interested in having a space at new Main Library, but unfortunately the request cannot be met at this time since the new Main Library is already programmed. John O'Connor will write up a scope of work plan regarding what the Library can do right now in regards to helping capture African American history in Mecklenburg County and Caitlin Moen will write up a response to their requests. MT also mentioned that Mr. O'Connor would like to work to capture the histories of other communities as well.
- MT provided an update on the open positions at the Library Administration Center which includes the Chief EDI Officer, HR Assistant, and the Data Analyst. The processes are underway, and Interviews have been conducted for the Chief EDI Officer and the HR Assistant. Mrs. Moen gave an update regarding the creation of the Data Analyst position and informed the Board that the ImaginOn Manager interview process is in the final stages and the position should be filled soon. MT explained that interviews have taken place for the Chief EDI Officer, and he is hopeful that the position will be filled soon.

## **Library Director Update**

Mrs. Moen provided the following updates:

- Mrs. Moen provided an update on this year's Summer Break initiative, where customers of all ages can track their reading time to earn rewards. The official number at the close of the initiative was 9.1 million minutes read in the community. Mrs. Moen mentioned that customers continue to track after the program is over and so the actual total for this year's Summer Break is 10,254,000 minutes read. Mrs. Moen then gave a Story of Impact about Janet, an older adult patron who participates in the challenge and read 45,222 minutes during this Summer Break.
- Mrs. Moen provided a brief update on the Student Success Centers which are located currently at six locations, Allegra Westbrooks, Cornelius, West Boulevard, Independence, South Boulevard, University City. Student attendance is low but will hopefully increase as schools send out their first quarter report cards. The plan is to expand to more locations in the Spring and these locations will be shared with the Board as the process for recruiting volunteers begins.
- Mrs. Moen explained the Welcome CLT Challenge, a month-long initiative that is focused on newcomers to the Charlotte area. This year there were 189 participants, 88 targeted programs in the month of September, and 1445 customers served. This challenge and related programs help people who have just moved to the Charlotte area get to know the city, the community, and the resources available to them.

- Mrs. Moen informed the Board about this year's EpicFest. EpicFest is an annual children centered two-day literary festival hosted at ImaginOn that happens the weekend after Verse & Vino. Authors come to speak to students at CMS schools on Friday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, and then participate in author talks and book signings on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. This year there will also be a new, separate teen writing workshop with two young adult authors at SouthPark Library.

### **Foundation Update**

Jenni Gaisbauer provided the following updates:

- Mrs. Gaisbauer provided the Board with a quick reminder of the October 25<sup>th</sup> Board Social held at the LAC. This event is for the Foundation Library Board and for the Library Board of Trustees to get together and get to know each other.
- Mrs. Gaisbauer announced Verse & Vino tables are sold out. This year's event is set to have the biggest crowd out of all other years. Mrs. Gaisbauer informed the Board that Verse & Vino has already raised more money prior to the event than some previous years' total fundraised.
- Mrs. Gaisbauer informed the Board about the \$500,000 PNC grant that was awarded to the Library Foundation. This funding is spread across five years and goes toward programming that is focused on early childhood literacy. Children's kits will be created for new Main Library that provide education and entertainment to children while their parent or caregiver is using the library. Mrs. Gaisbauer expressed appreciation for this grant and for the other events, like Whistle Stops, that help continue to fundraise for the new Main Library.
- Mrs. Gaisbauer informed the Board that the Library Foundation received an email from a foundation that gives anonymously in Boston. This foundation heard about the work CML is doing through The Charlotte Observer and will be flying down in December to meet with the Library Foundation to discuss possibly gifting to the Library.

### **Collections Deep Dive**

Harold Escalante, Tracy Pizzi, Amy Richard, and Sandy Stratton provided the Board with a thorough deep dive into the Library Collections department.

#### **Collection Focus**

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is committed to having a strong popular collection. Our goal is to have a collection that meets the needs of our diverse community by offering titles that are in demand. Our non-fiction physical collection meets the needs of our customers up to the first-year college student. For those that require more advanced materials we offer a rich collection of digital content that aims to satisfy all levels of study.

#### **The Collections staff discussed the following:**

- Evaluation Criteria and Resources Used
- Customer Suggestions for Titles through BiblioSuggest
- Inter-Library Loans
  - Items Borrowed - 1508
  - Items Loaned - 2058
- Hold Ratios
  - For the general collection, the library has a very generous 3:1 holds ratio. This means that for every fourth person that places an item on hold, the library will acquire an additional copy. This ratio varies by collection. Most other library systems have a 5:1 ratio.
- Primary Vendors for Print and Digital Collections
  - Baker & Taylor
  - Ingram Content
  - Midwest Tape

- The Baker & Taylor Lease Program
  - Enables the Library to get in demand hardcover adult titles quickly and shelf ready.
- Digital Collection
  - Most Popular digital resources are Libby (OverDrive), hoopla, and NC Kids.
  - Publishers dictate availability, cost, and the purchasing models for digital content.
  - Digital costs for titles can be up to 3X print costs.
  - A big advantage of digital is it doesn't require shelf space and items are always returned on time and never lost or damaged.
- NC LIVE
  - NC LIVE is North Carolina's statewide library cooperative, supporting 200+ public and academic libraries across North Carolina. Since its founding in 1997, NC LIVE has saved the state millions through innovation and collaborative efforts.
- Online Resources
  - In addition to the digital platforms, we offer customers through NC LIVE, with collection dollars we also subscribe to: LinkedIn, Ancestry Library Edition, Tutor.com, O'Reilly for Public Libraries, Pressreader, Foundation Directory Online by Candid, Craft & Hobby, and Tumble Books.
- World Language Collections
  - The Collections & Access Department continually works on ensuring we have a vibrant collection for our non-native English speakers.
  - Currently our collection includes Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Marathi, Pashto, Portuguese, Russian Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.
- Floating Collection
  - CML has a floating collection which means they go wherever they are needed. Items can be returned and sent to any location. Items returned will stay at that location unless requested by a customer.
- Special Collections
  - Lucky Day Collection (IMG): Spangler Library is home to a unique collection of popular graphic novel and chapter books that cannot be reserved or found in the catalog. This collection is designed for customers to discover. For this to happen books in this collection do not float, do not take holds, and can't be renewed.
  - Carolina Author Collection (MH): CML supports Carolina authors by processing and cataloging their donated work. Most of these books are self-published. Authors are asked to donate book and complete a submission form.
  - We also circulate technology items at no cost to our customers. These include Hotspots, Chromebook Kits, Launchpads, and Podcast Kits.
  - Other unique collections for our system include Book Club Kits, braille books and a script collection (IMG).
- Weeding and Donations
  - Weeding for any library, no matter the type or size, is critical in keeping the materials valuable and accessible for their customers. Weeding must be done regularly and systematically to insure a current, well-used and attractive collection.
  - Items that are removed from the collection due to poor condition are either recycled or sent to a third party for resale. Titles that are part of the B&T Lease program can be send back at any time.
  - The library welcomes donations from customers. In demand titles that are in good condition will be added to our collection. Titles that we cannot add are used to stock book sales at our locations or used for giveaways at outreach events.

- FY2024 Budget and Funding Sources
  - Broke down Collections funding sub-groups: Adult, Teen, Children, Digital & Media, and Other Expenses totaling \$7,431,559.
  - County Funds \$1.7 million one-time funding to be used for Increase Support to MoLi & NCR, refreshing print collections, vendor diversity audit, increase digital spending caps, initial funding for UC ODC, expanding staff professional development collection, refreshing and expanding Book Club kits and Launchpad collections.
  - Multi-Year Additional Funds: The \$1,213,698 ARPA Funds goes toward digital platforms, technology, eBooks, and existing platforms.
  - Collections Count and Circulation Stats from FY18-FY23 in Print and Digital forms.

#### **Upcoming Challenges**

- Continued investment and support of NCR and MoLi collections.
- Continued funding of online resources acquired with ARPA funds.
- Continued support of Wi-Fi collections at no cost to the customer.
- Rising cost of digital content and subscriptions.
- Consistent funding of upcoming opening day collections.
- Support of new technology and formats.
- DEI support for our collection.

**After some Board discussion, Charles Thomas adjourned the board meeting at 6:30pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marcellus Turner  
CEO