



**Library Board of Trustees Meeting
North County Regional Library
Monday, August 2, 2024, 8:00am – 3:30pm**

Trustees Present

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

Karen Beach
Tasha Bell
Michael Boger
Rachel Bradley
David Dillard
Michael Engelbrecht
Jenni Gaisbauer
Krystel Green
Christine Keitt
Mario Lopez

Staff Cont.

Caitlin Moen
Angie Myers
Emily Nanney
Chantez Neymoss
John O'Connor
Emery Ortiz
Danielle Pritchett
Marcellus Turner
Teleia White
Martha Yesowitch

Others Present

Mark Kutny
Leslie Johnson (Deputy County Manager)

Trustees Absent

Ailen Arreaza

Mr. Charles Thomas welcomed everyone to the Board meeting at 8:00am.

Public Comment

No member of the public signed up to speak during this meeting's public comment section.

CEO Performance Review (Closed Session)

At 8:15am Mr. Thomas requested a motion to enter a closed session pursuant to NCGS § 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss the CEO Performance Review. On a motion by Mr. Jon Buchan and seconded by Ms. Peggy Brookhouse, the Trustees entered a closed session.

The Trustees returned to open session at 9:30am.

Relaxer

Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson facilitated a relaxer exercise for Trustees and staff.

Strategic Direction

Strategic Direction Steering Committee

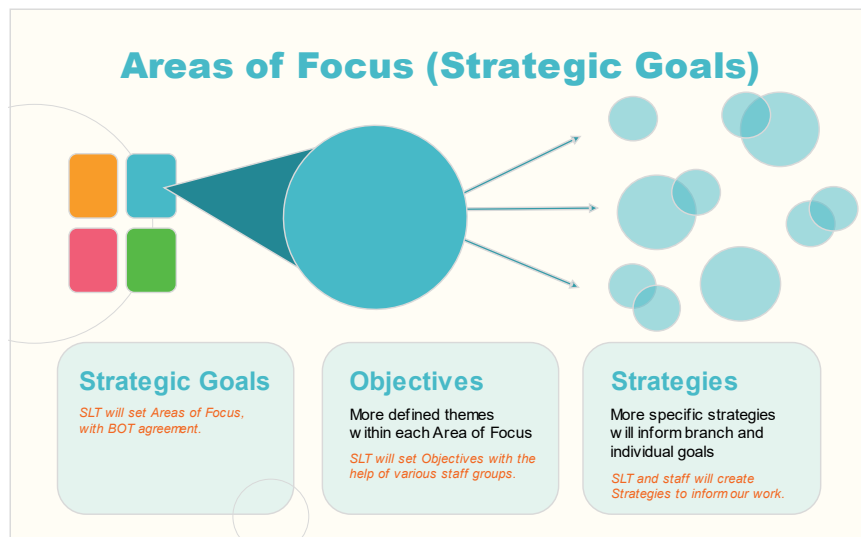
Chantez Neymoss - LAC
Christine Keitt - LAC
De'Trice Holliday - SUG
Everett Blackmon - UC
Leanda Gahegan - UC
Rachel Kubie - SPK
Catherine Haydon - PM
Jasmine McNeil - LAC
Mario Lopez - LAC

How will CML use the FY26-28 Strategic Direction?

- **Funding & Advocacy**
 - Strategic Business Plan (Mecklenburg County)
 - Annual Operating Priorities
 - Annual Budget
- **Operations**
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Employee Training and Evaluation
 - Hiring, Onboarding, Communication and Culture
- **Services**
 - Programs and Collections
 - Reference/ Information
 - Outreach
 - Marketing

Strategic Direction Timeline

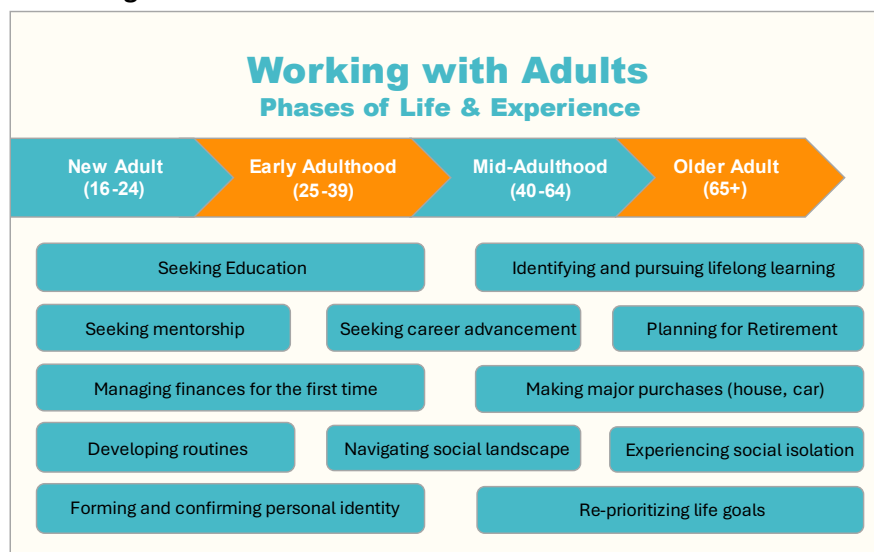
1. Hired a consultant
Board of Trustees Engagement
Planned for Feedback Phase
2. Staff Survey completed
Public Survey completed
Public Feedback Sessions held
3. Data Analysis and sharing with Staff
SLT and BOT identify Areas of Focus/Strategic Focus
4. Staff Day rollout of Overview (Areas of Focus & Goals)
Staff Focus Groups to assist with objectives
Alignment with FY26 Projects and Processes
5. Alignment with FY26 Budget and Strategic Business Plan
Public Rollout
Full Implementation begins July 1, 2025



FY26-28 Areas of Focus

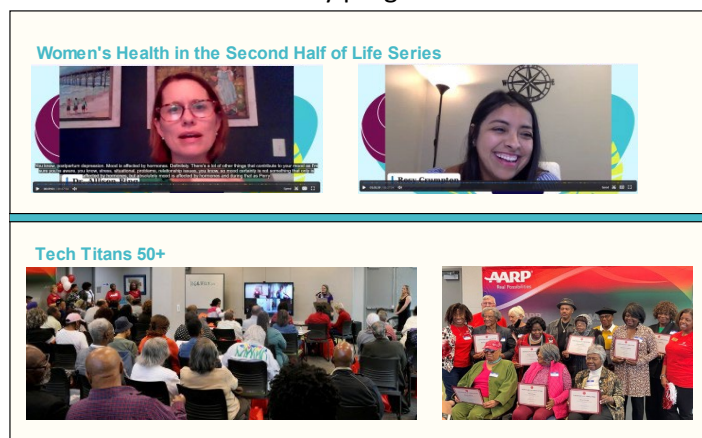
- **New Main Library**
 - Deliver Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's flagship library as a public commons in Uptown Charlotte, a destination for local, regional, and national engagement.
- **Prepare & Excel**
 - Strengthen internal resources and capacity to support planned growth and ensure the sustainable impact of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.
- **Access & Welcome**
 - Ensure the Library provides a welcoming environment and access to all it has to offer every member of the community.
- **Learn & Engage**
 - Create opportunities for engagement and growth, learning new skills and pursuing passions to build a stronger and more connected community.

Adult Programs



Current Adult Programs

- Programs geared for general audiences
- Topic-based approach
- Emphasis on digital equity
- Smaller community programs



Tapping into Existing Community Interest

Free RPG Day at
7th Street Market



Charlotte Author Conversation



Future Opportunities

- General growth to adult audiences under 65
 - Working Adults
 - Earlier-Career Adults (25-39)
 - Mid-Career Adults (40-64)
 - Emerging Adults (16-24)
- Targeted programs by identity of shared experience
- Large-scale events & festivals

Main Library Programming

- Partner-led Programming
 - AARP
 - Center for Humanities
 - Goodwill Industries
 - PNC
 - Clayworks
- Signature Programming and Events
 - Library programs with strong support from CMLF
 - *Strong emphasis on life-long learning*
 - *Will be delivered with and without partners*
 - *Strong private support*
 - *Through Gambrell Foundation 5-year grant support, we will hire a programming leader (Library employee)*
- Traditional
 - Digital literacy
 - College and career readiness
 - Job help center
 - Welcome CLT
 - Programming in the Newcomer Center

Signature Programming Inspiration

- Author, writing, music, and movie series, debates, classes, and other programs that explore relevant and critical issues in our region and beyond.
 - Munk Debates
 - 92nd Street Y
 - Brooklyn Public Library

Archives and Special Collections

- Strength: Genealogy Programming
 - Average ~ 2 programs per week
 - All in branches or in the community
 - Highest average attendance for adult programs in the system
 - Community Impact: Genealogy at Novant Cancer Institute
- Opportunity: Collection Diversity
 - Recent Work
 - La Noticia archive
 - Diverse purchasing

- Genealogy
 - Conscious metadata creation
- Future Opportunities
 - Acknowledging changing populations
 - Building relationships in marginalized communities
 - Prioritizing diverse materials for digitization
- Opportunity: Digitization
 - Recent work
 - Equity imperative
 - Space allocation
 - Culture of standards
 - Future Opportunities
 - Hiring to support a program
 - Volunteer coordination
 - Prioritization
 - Private funding unlocking digitization at scale

Strategic Direction for FY2026-2028

- Playing to our strengths
- Capitalizing on opportunity
- Serving Mecklenburg County
- Leading libraries across the country

Staffing Needs Overview

Understanding the Library's Operating Model

- Libraries are Retail Service Points to the Community
- Libraries and retail stores both:
 - Serve the public
 - Have a physical footprint
 - Have different types of service points within that footprint
 - Have days of the week they are open
 - Have hours of operation (Shifts)
 - Serve different needs in various communities
 - "Sell" different types and amounts of items
 - Have infrastructure to move inventory around, offer services digitally, maintain inventory, and manage operations
- Libraries are also Service Providers
 - Libraries also:
 - Design and offer programming for all ages
 - Provide 1 on 1 help for technology assistance, job help, literacy development, and more
 - Provide proctoring services
 - Provide and manage spaces (study rooms, open seating, community rooms) for people to work, study, or meet
 - Work with partners (Novant, 311) to offer their services in library locations
 - Maintaining safe environments
- Libraries Operate Outside of Libraries

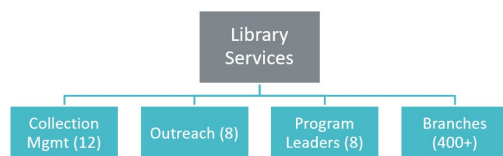
- In the Community
 - Design and offer programs in community locations – parks, schools, shelters
 - Maintain mobile units to deliver materials and services into underserved communities and library deserts
 - Partner with schools to bring library services in, provide professional development for teachers, and connect students to the public library
 - Lead and partner on major initiatives for the community – Summer Break, Meck Pre-K
- Online
 - Design and offer programs online
 - Maintain robust digital collection of materials
 - Offer deep well of online resources
 - Equip students and community members to utilize resources

Day to Day Work for Branch Staff

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Service Points | • Updating Signage |
| • Programs | • Outreach |
| • Shelving | • Driving |
| • Pulling Holds | • Counting Cash Drawers |
| • Telephone Shifts | • Collection Management |
| • Checking in Delivery | • Helping Customers |
| • Emptying Book Drops | • Managing Security Issues |
| • Program Planning | • Cleaning up |
| • Meetings | • Managing Staff |
| • Designing Displays | • Creating Schedules |

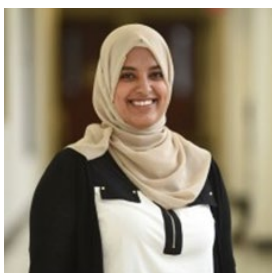
Who Accomplishes All of This?

- The Library Services Team



- Admin & Support (Finance, IT, Logistics, Facilities, HR, Data), Marketing & Communications, Innovation & Diversity, Foundation & Partnerships

Library Staff Examples



Abrar is a Librarian for Teens at Mountain Island. She also does...

- Workforce Development Team (Team Lead and Marketing & Communications Sub-Team Lead)
- Welcome CLT Team (Team Member and Branch Point Person)
- College and Career Connection (Team Member)
- Community Events Team (Team Member)



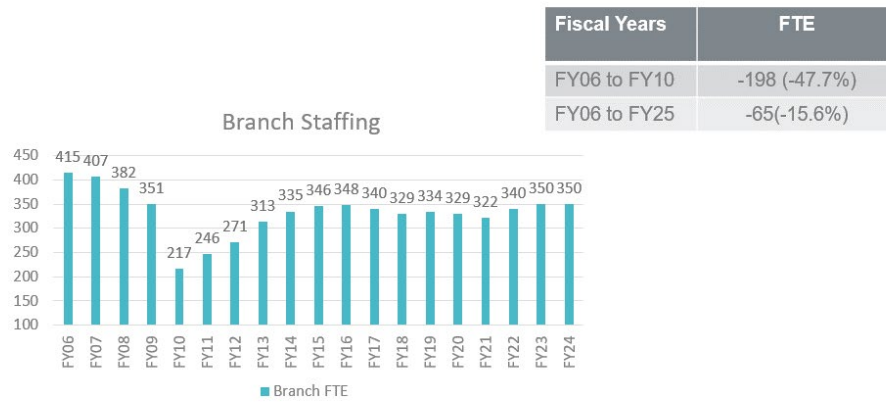
Becca is a Librarian for Children at ImagineOn. She also does...

- Frontline Puppeteers Team (Team Lead)
- Theatrical Training Team (Team Lead)
- Frontline Storytellers (Team Member)
- ImagineOn Shared Programming Team (Point Person)
- Freedom to Read Week Team (Team Lead)
- PuppetPalooza Lead

CML Staffing Study Overview

- Objective:
 - Optimize staffing levels across CML branches.
 - Identify under- and overstaffing.
 - Provide actionable recommendations.
- Methodology:
 - Staff surveys and focus groups.
 - Benchmarking against libraries and state standards.
 - Optimization modeling with operational data.

Reductions in Headcount



#cmlibrary | cmlibrary.org | 14

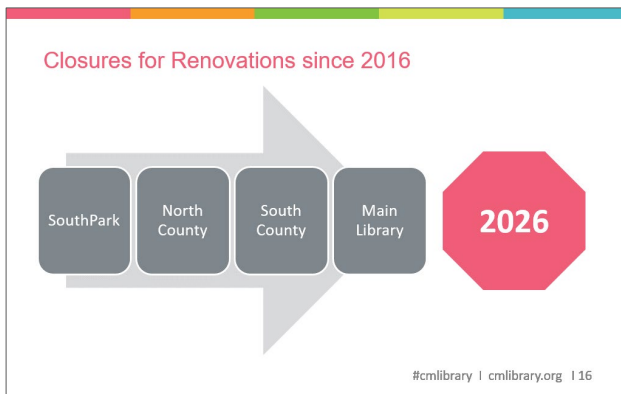
Progression of Hours and Locations

Coping with an Economic Recession (2009 – 2011)

- **Pre-Recession**
 - 24 Locations
 - 1,564 Service hours per week
 - Hours to 9:00pm
- **Recession**
 - 20 Locations
 - 722 Service hours per week
 - Reduced daily and weekend hours

- **Current**

- 21 Locations
- 1,260 Service hours per week
- Increased hours with additional County funding
 - Daily Hours of Operation for Branches
 - **Monday** 9:00 am-8:00 pm
 - **Tuesday** 9:00 am-8:00 pm
 - **Wednesday** 9:00 am-8:00 pm
 - **Thursday** 9:00 am-8:00 pm
 - **Friday** 9:00 am-5:00 pm
 - **Saturday** 9:00 am-5:00 pm
 - Neighborhood Branches – Closed on **Sunday**
 - Regional Branches & ImaginOn - 1:00 pm-5:00 pm on **Sunday**



Employees During Extended Closures



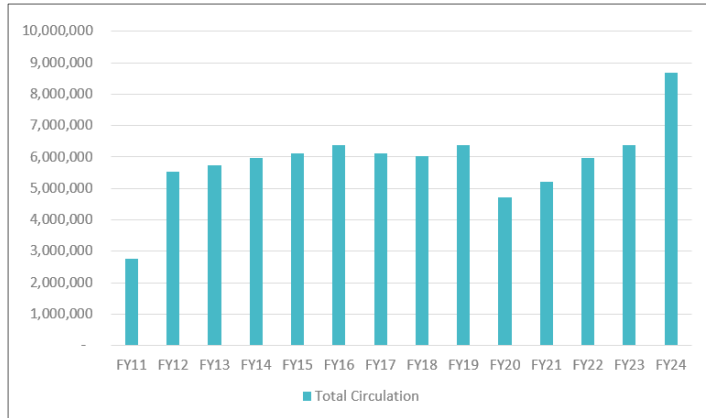
Upcoming CIP Projects

- New Buildings
 - University City
 - Sugar Creek
 - West Boulevard

- Nations Ford Road
- Prosperity Village
- Renovations
 - ImaginOn
 - Independence

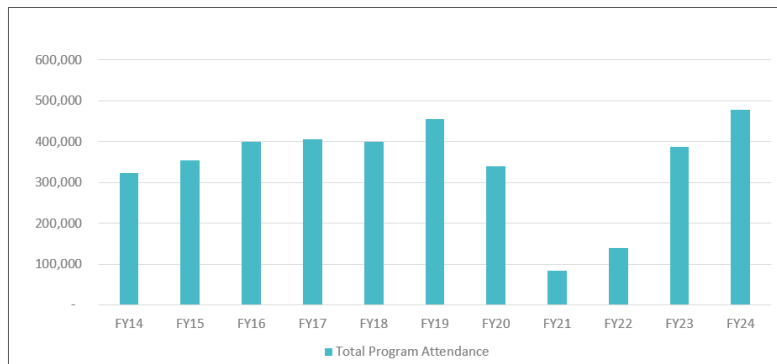
Growth in Circulation

- These have been significant growth in circulation. In FY23, the Library reached pre-Covid levels of circulation and in FY24, circulation grew to nearly 9,000,000.



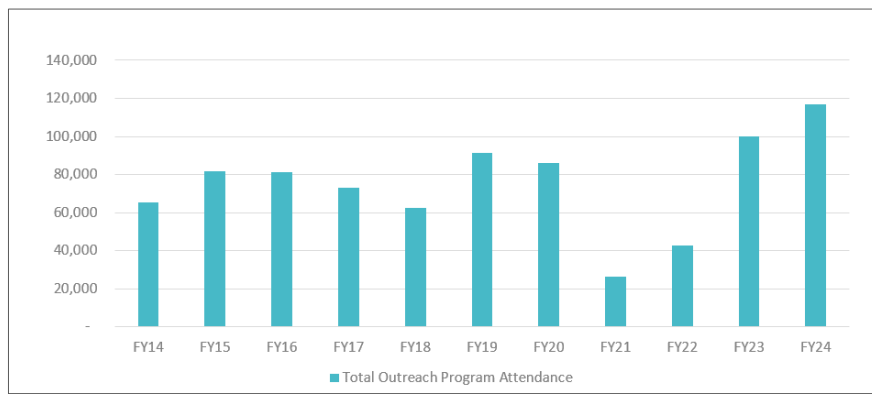
Growth in Program Attendance

- Program attendance was increasing prior to Covid but did decrease significantly during the pandemic. However, the Library has rebounded and continues to see an increase in program attendance.
- Currently, the most impactful programming that the Library offers are one-on-one programs. These do not typically correlate to program attendance; however, the Library is looking at creating more large-scale events with higher attendance in the future.



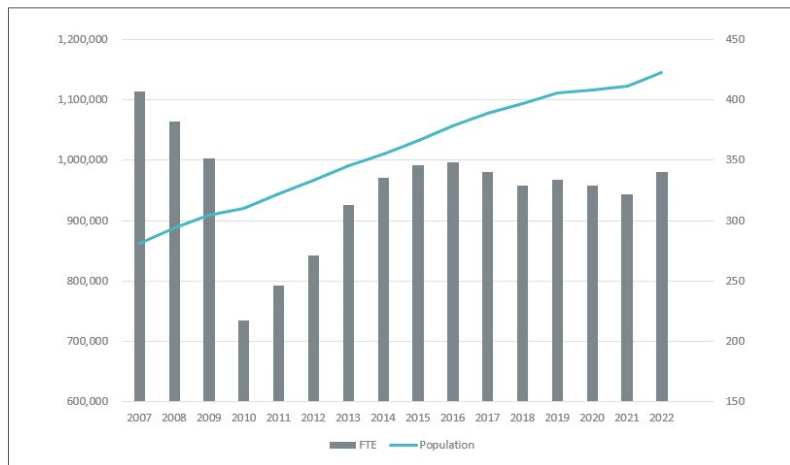
Growth in Outreach

- Outreach is critically imperative for the Library since there will always be library deserts and community members who are unaware or unable to access library services.
- Branch staff visit nursing homes, preschools, and community fairs to inform and interact with the community.
- The Library staff that manage MoLi are able to reach more individuals in the county because the Mobile Library allows them to access and assist parts of the community that cannot travel to a library branch.



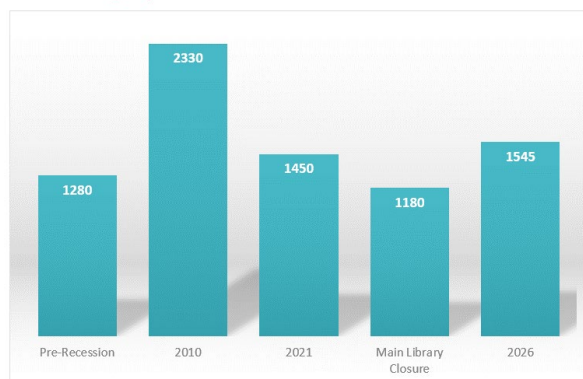
Population Growth in Mecklenburg County

- The blue line represents Mecklenburg County's population growth from 2007 – 2022. The population has increased along with the Library's growth.
- In the past, the Library had a higher proportion of staff to the number of people in the community. After the drastic dip during the recession, the Library has worked to build staff numbers back up, but Mecklenburg County's population continues to grow.



Square Footage per Branch FTE

- Staffing can also be measured by the retail standard, comparing the square footage of the branches to the number of staff. The typical range is 700 – 1200sq. feet per staff member. The Library has only been within this range since Main Library was closed for renovations and staff were redistributed as needed to other branches and departments.



North Carolina State Standards

- North Carolina released State Standards for what libraries need to do in order to meet the three levels below.
 - **Exemplary:** This level recognizes public libraries for being state and national leaders
 - **Enhanced:** This level recognizes that some aspects of library service stand out compared to their peers
 - **Essential:** The basic level of library collections, programs, services, etc., to adequately meet community needs
 - Charlotte Mecklenburg Library as an entity meets the Essential standard. However, the staffing study reviewed each branch individually, utilizing zip code data, and determined that 10 branches are not meeting the essential standard.

Future Staffing Needs

- Factors to Consider in meeting Community Needs
 - More one-on-one service
 - More diversity to represent customers served
 - Increase in bilingual abilities
 - More types of specializations

Staffing Study Recommendations

- Potential Approaches
 - Increase staffing strategically – various models for consideration
 - Optimize “pod” staffing and operational model
 - Balance full-time/part-time staff ratios and consider reintroducing floating staff
 - Adjust staffing models to redistribute existing positions

Expanding View to Include Organizational Needs

- Library Services
 - Admin & Support (Finance, IT, Logistics, Facilities, HR, Data)
 - Marketing & Communications
 - Innovation & Diversity
 - Foundation & Partnerships

Next Steps

- Leadership will review support needs, historical data, the staffing study, and Main Library & future planning as they create final staffing recommendations to be presented to the Trustees at a future meeting. A staffing update will be provided at the September meeting.

Advocacy Discussion

- **Ad Hoc Advocacy Committee Members:** Tracy Montross, Peggy Brookhouse, Gene Cochrane, Helen Hope Kimbrough, Selena Giovanelli, Kellie Lofton, Lauren Woodruff
- **Staff:** MT, Jenni Gaisbauer, Karen Beach, Krystel Green, Mark Kutny
- The goal of the Ad Hoc Advocacy Committee is to demonstrate the value of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.
- Legal Considerations
 - Per Counsel, both CML and the Foundation can engage in non-partisan grassroots lobbying at the local, state and federal levels if that lobbying is not directed at influencing the outcome of an election, either directly or indirectly. This includes:
 - Development of education and advocacy materials by CML
 - Use of CML-owned channels for promotion of advocacy content and calls to action

- Outreach to cardholders, donors, and elected officials by CML and Foundation, incl. CEO, Boards, and senior staff
- Use of paid lobbyists; participation in legislative lobby days
- Success Metrics
 - More public and private sector investment in CML
 - CML is recognized as community's connection to government and social services
 - Constructive relationships with decision-makers at local, state, and federal levels
 - Engaged customers deployed as advocates
- Key Issues to Address
 - Increase the awareness of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's relevancy and value in the community
 - Defend intellectual freedom
- Proposed Strategies
 - Increase marketing and communications (earned, paid, owned)
 - Leverage volunteers
 - Steward CML relationships with policymakers at federal, state, local levels; assert CML leadership in advocacy
 - Host annual State of the Library event
- Challenges
 - Funding: How do we maximize limited resources for advocacy? Where do we secure financial support for advocacy and legal defense?
 - How do CML and Foundation work together?
 - How do we protect the CML brand when we invite stakeholders into advocacy?
 - How do we encourage the City and Towns to see themselves invested in the Library?
 - How do we protect compliance with tax-exempt status?
- FY25 Calendar Highlights
 - January – Annual State of the Library Event
 - March – Community Read; Raleigh Fly In
 - April – National Library Month
 - May – Mecklenburg County Budget Public Hearings
 - June – ALA's DC Fly-In
 - August – Annual Impact Report released
 - October – Banned Books Week
 - November – Verse and Vino, Epicfest

Foundation Update

Ms. Jenni Gaisbauer provided the following updates:

- FY24 Successes
 - Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation raised more than \$5.3M in FY24
This includes campaign dollars as well as annual support and was our most successful year to date since the campaign started.
 - Secured four new planned giving commitments for our Dewey Circle
 - Top campaign gifts received for the year included:
 - \$1M from the Leon Levine Foundation (2nd)
 - \$850K from Federal Appropriations
 - \$500K from Fidelity Foundation
 - \$500K from Gambrell Foundation (2nd)
 - \$100K from Fifth Third

- \$100K from State of NC
- Plus, hundreds of others ranging from \$1000 to \$25,000
- Growth in peer-to-peer fundraising (Thomas, Montross, Arreaza, Bennett and Morante, etc.)
- Carnegie Circle is up to 300 members
- Retention rate is 53%, increased 9% over last year
- Email list grew from 15K to 18.2K subscribers and has 2x last two years
- Launched the Flight Fund micro grant program for staff and granted \$25,000
- Recruited three new Foundation board members (Jess Dienna, Sharon Portwood, and George Spencer)

FY2025 Donor Statistics 2018 - 2024

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Contributed	\$ 1,525,076	\$ 1,506,919	\$ 1,337,800	\$1,181,121	\$1,227,638	\$1,361,643	\$1,678,758
Value of funds at FFTC	\$ 7,875,084	\$7,994,728	\$15,292,963†	\$ 22,469,069†	\$28,273,377†	\$36,745,428†	\$45,603,582†
Donors	1543	1598	1546	2224	1690	1641*	2145*
New Donors	390	436	460	884	550	488*	724*
Monthly Donors	24	52	51	55	68	77	94
Donors Recovered (gave, but not previous year)	296	341	292	488	298	373*	547*
Donor Upgrades (from previous year)	253	250	272	259	307	254*	316*
Donor Downgrades	297	180	166	193	230	207*	208*
Retention Rate	51%	53%	50%	55%	38%	44%*	53%*
Online Donations	681	641	697	1326	1206	932*	1374*
Carnegie Circle Members (gave \$1,000+)	198	223	205	196	258	269*	300*
Average Gift Size (excludes endowment)	\$ 988.38	\$ 943.00	\$ 865.33	\$ 531.08	\$ 726.41	\$901.75	\$892.01

Verse and Vino

- The 2023 Verse & Vino – our 10th anniversary – raised the most money of all ten years netting \$348,929.41.
 - Fundraising costs decreased from 46% (2020) to 43%
 - Over 1,307 attendees
- 2024 Verse & Vino will be on November 7th at the Charlotte Convention Center
 - Confirmed Authors:
 - Essie Chambers – *Swift River*
 - Emiko Jean – *The Return of Ellie Black*
 - Edward Lee – *Bourbon Land*
 - Pending Author Invitations:
 - Paula Hawkins – *The Blue Hour*
 - Colm Tóibín– *Long Island*
 - Jessica Shattuck – *Last House*
 - Erik Larson – *The Demon of Unrest*
 - New Additions for 2024
 - Bourbon Cocktail
 - Updated stage design

Foundation for the Carolinas

- Support Org. Transition
 - Created partnership with FFTC when CMLF was founded in 2012
 - CMLF is a support org. of both CML and FFTC

- Created because FFTC's long standing, trusting relationship with donor community
- CMLF has outgrown the partnership and will transition to becoming a non-profit partner of FFTC
- Both parties agree this is not the right fit anymore
- CMLF will continue to serve as sole support org for CML
- Will provide \$\$\$ and time savings on both sides
- CML Trustees will select all of the CMLF's board members beginning FY26
- Transition will be done by end of FY25

The CommonSpark Campaign Progress Report *as of 6/30/2024*

	New Main Library Building	Support Service Center	Technology, Programs & Innovation	Endowment	Annual Support	Total
County Investment	\$72,330,000	\$15,000,000				\$87,330,000
Private Investment	\$65,000,000		\$7,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$78,000,000
Total	\$137,330,000	\$15,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$165,330,000
Raised to Date	\$122,628,355 89%	\$15,000,000 100%	\$3,184,537 45%	\$1,264,654 126%	\$9,533,632 191%	\$151,611,178 92%

Road to \$15M

State and Federal Funding	\$5 – 6 M
Private Foundations	\$8 – 10 M
Corporate	\$3 M
Individual Donors	\$3 M
Total Pipeline	\$22 M

After some Board discussion, Mr. Thomas adjourned the board meeting at 3:10pm.
Respectfully submitted,

Marcellus Turner

CEO