

DURHAM COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Main Library

Call to Order

Chair Willis Whichard called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Present: Willis Whichard, Ann McLain, kynita stringer-stanbeck, Tracy Jackson, Leah Josephson, Tal Matalon

Absent: Carl Newman, Aquaris Anderson, Ivan Francis

Friend Liaison: Monika Tillman-DeWitt

Library Staff: Stephanie Fennell, Claudia Aleman, Ciera Williams, Sara Stephens

Public Comments

None

Judge Whichard shared a quote, "Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities." from R. David Lankes. He shared that this is a great library with a great board.

Approval of May Minutes

The May minutes were approved with no changes.

Location Report: Claudia Aleman, Main Library, and Ciera Williams, Business Services

Claudia Aleman gave a report on Main Library.

- Since the implementation of new security screening, they have gotten feedback from the public and from staff, and have tweaked their approach.
 - In response to a later question, these tweaks have resulted in a more relaxed approach, wider dispersal of security staff, and more training and coaching for security staff to be more approachable.
- They have a growing need for a trained social worker in the library, and are actively exploring options.
- Summer reading kicks off on Saturday, June 14, with an event. There is also an after-hours event for adults, also on Saturday.
- The door count for last fiscal year through March was about 70,000.
- They have a new teen librarian and a new business services librarian.
- She thanked the Board and the Foundation for their support.

Discussion about the need for a social worker in the library followed, with questions and offers of support from the Board. The library is looking into an internship with a student from UNC (Board members also suggested NCCU) to be run as a pilot project to gather data to

demonstrate longer-term need. The Board discussed wanting to advocate more strongly for this specific need, especially during budget time, and how the Board can best do this advocacy.

Ciera Williams gave a report on the Small Business Center.

- Headquarters are at Main Library but they work with all locations, and even with people from other counties to help them find resources in their area.
- This year have helped 3,000 people so far.
- Held a series at the Braggtown location on finding employment, including helping get headshots for LinkedIn profiles.
- Upcoming events include some workshops and Adult Study Hall, which allows people to do some work in supportive environment and talk to a life coach; Fund My Business, a free virtual event on navigating business; and Bull City Stories on the film industry, including a documentary screening on the Wilmington Massacre and an event about film soundtracks.

Board Business

Old Business: none at this time.

New Business:

The Board reviewed applications for Board seats. There are four open seats, three currently filled by eligible incumbents who have re-applied. The Board voted on recommending re-appointing incumbents and on who to recommend for the opening. These recommendations will be forwarded to the County Commissioners.

Committee Reports

Advocacy: kynita stringer-stanback

The committee will be meeting after this Board meeting to discuss business. No other updates at this time.

Development: Ann McLain

The committee is working on the strategic plan draft, scheduling more regular meetings. They are almost finished with the first draft of the plan, and will send to the larger Board in July for discussion at the August meeting.

Friends Update: Monika Tillman-DeWitt:

The Friends Board has had its last meeting before the summer. Their big DVD sale grossed about \$2,000 and the in person sale at the store grossed at least \$10,000. They also have 640 new members. Since people who want to donate books keep wanting to drop them off at library locations even though they are not meant to, the Friends are exploring more times and ways for people to donate.

This summer they will be at CenterFest, and will also be part of the summer reading kick-off. They also plan to advertise the scholarship for library students more widely, and are accepting ideas for spending their money. Sponsoring staff professional development was raised as a possibility.

Foundation Report: none

Carl Newman was absent, there is no official update.

Library Report: Stephanie Fennell

The County Commissioners have just voted on the budget at their recent meeting. The Library Director job posting closes next week. At Staff Development Day last month, the safety committee did de-escalation training, and at the next all-staff check-in, they will get feedback from staff on that training.

Policy Committee: Leah Josephson

The committee met, and the Board will discuss the policies at the August meeting.

Action Items:

Send information on nominations to Commissioners: Tracy will email Stephanie the nomination information and the approved meeting minutes.

Review policies before next meeting: all.

Ann McLain gives Judge Willis Whichard the deepest thanks for his excellent leadership as Board Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07.