

CHATTANOOGA PUBLIC LIBRARY
1001 BROAD STREET
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

MINUTES
BOARD MEETING-OCTOBER 18, 2022
12:00 p.m.

The Board of Directors of the Chattanooga Public Library met on October 18, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. with Board Chair, William Sundquist, presiding.

Ms. Sara McManus called the roll. The following members were present:

Erik Broeren
Kim Gavin
Sara McManus
Sushma Shantha
William Sundquist
Anna Taylor

Also present: Richard Beeland, Deputy Executive Director; Jason Sullivan, Chief Administrative Officer; Sheldon Owens, Operations Manager; Richard Groves, Assistant Director of Technology; Natalie Phillips, Finance Manager; Christina Sacco, Public Relations Coordinator; Aamna Khan, Fiscal Technician; Melinda Foster, City Attorney; and Karen Brown, Executive Assistant.

Mr. William Sundquist, Board Chair; called the meeting to order.

Mr. William Sundquist announced that the library board received a resignation notice from the Executive Director, Corinne Hill. There has been discussion in the past few months for the direction moving forward for the library and Ms. Hill has been with the library for ten years, bringing the library from what it was to what it is today. Mr. Sundquist stated that Ms. Hill felt like it was time for the next phase in her life and Mr. Sundquist accepted her resignation notice this morning. Mr. Sundquist thanked Ms. Hill for everything she has done for the City of Chattanooga.

Ms. Sara McManus and Mr. Erik Broeren asked if Ms. Hill's resignation is effective immediately to which Mr. Sundquist stated that it is. Ms. McManus asked if there will be an interim director at which point Mr. Sundquist requested that Mr. Richard Beeland, Deputy Executive Director, leave the meeting room. Mr. Sundquist stated that he and Ms. Corinne Hill believe that Mr. Richard Beeland would be an excellent candidate for Ms. Hill's successor during the transition based on everything Mr. Beeland has done for the City. Mr. Beeland knows the library system and has been intimately involved with the strategic planning process. Mr. Sundquist asked for a motion for the Board to appoint Mr. Richard Beeland, as per section 2.8 of the Chattanooga Public Library by-laws, as acting Library Administrator until a new Library Administrator can be appointed. Ms. Melinda Foster, City Attorney, added that the board does have a provision under section 2.8 by-laws that in the absence or illness of the library administrator that the board shall designate the position on a temporary basis and that the board has the authority to do so.

Mr. Sundquist clarified that in all fairness, he had asked Mr. Beeland to leave the meeting room to allow for discussion. Ms. Anna Taylor asked if Ms. Hill's resignation was something that was just found out or if it had been previously discussed, and also if Mr. Beeland is aware of the proposed transition. Mr. Sundquist responded that Ms. Hill's resignation has been a process and that Mr. Beeland is aware and willing to step in as acting administrator. Ms. McManus asked for a brief overview of Mr. Beeland's experience and credentials. Mr. Sundquist responded that Mr. Beeland has been with the City for about thirty years and has worked for multiple mayors. Mr. Beeland came to the library when the library underwent an audit and adopted City policy. Furthermore, Mr. Beeland has been Deputy Administrator of Economic Development, working with Human Resources, Public Relations for Mayor Littlefield, and has had a short stint with the Home Builders Association. Mr. Sundquist stated that Mr. Beeland knows the City very well but most importantly, Mr. Beeland has been very involved with the library strategic plan and getting it approved.

Mr. Sundquist made mention that throughout her leadership, Ms. Hill has always had a pipeline of stable leaders ready to go and that this organization is stocked with wonderful talent. Ms. McManus asked if there will be discussion about how the search for a new administrator works. Mr. Sunquist stated that ultimately the Library Director works for the Library Board but that the Board will work closely with the City in every way possible in the process. Mr. Sundquist stated that an Ad-Hoc committee will follow soon. Mr. Sundquist then asked if someone could ask Mr. Richard Beeland to return to the meeting room.

Mr. Erik Broeren made a motion that the Board appoint Mr. Richard Beeland, as per section 2.8 of the Chattanooga Public Library by-laws, as acting Library Administrator until a new Library Administrator can be appointed. Ms. Sara McManus seconded the motion. The motion was approved and carried.

Mr. Sundquist stated that the by-laws do allow for the chair to form a Ad-Hoc Committee and that he has reached out to Ms. Dionne Jenkins, Board Vice Chair, and Mr. Ken Jones, Mayor Kelly Board Appointee, to lead the search process for a new library administrator, and both Ms. Jenkins and Mr. Jones have accepted as Chair and Co-Chair of the committee.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2022 REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

Ms. Sara McManus made a motion that the minutes of the September 20, 2022 Regular Board of Directors' meeting be approved. Mr. Erik Broeren seconded the motion. The motion was approved and carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Ms. Natalie Phillips, Finance Manager, reported:

RECEIPTS: 75% remaining of the operating budget to be received for the fiscal year 2022-2023

EXPENDITURES: 80% remaining of the operating budget to be expended for the fiscal year 2022-2023

FOUNDATION REPORT:

Mr. Beeland reported that Mr. Michael Watson is unexpectedly absent due to illness, therefore the report is not presented but will be made part of the minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORT:

Finance Committee

Natalie will send this

Mr. Sundquist added that due to the dramatic shift in the economic climate for varying reasons over the past few years, the board will most likely request a meeting with the investment portfolio manager for an update at the upcoming annual meeting.

Mr. Sundquist provided additional comments in regards to board members receiving phone calls from the public in regards to Ms. Hill's resignation. Mr. Sundquist reminded the board that the board does operate under the Sunshine Law and Open Records Law and to refer any questions and comments to Mr. Beeland. Ms. Melinda Foster also reiterated that per the Sunshine Law- not to deliberate these matters amongst themselves and that comments/questions should be directed to Mr. Beeland.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Beeland, Interim Executive Director, made mention that this report was worked on by Ms. Hill and he will be providing the report on her behalf. Overall, circulation numbers have increased by 14% over the same quarter from last year. The digital branch has outpaced the other branches, including Eastgate and Northgate library, with the exception of the Main Library in terms of growth with the anticipation of it continuing to increase. Mr. Beeland informed the Board that the OverDrive Inc and Midwest Tape Hoopla contract extensions, which are used in our digital branch, are set to be presented to Council for purchasing approvals this evening. Another item being presented for purchase approval before the Council is the Envisionware contract, which is used for maintenance on the library systems.

OverDrive Inc for \$400,000.00

Midwest Tape Hoopla for \$400,000.00

Envisionware for \$65,000.00

Mr. Beeland stated that the Avondale branch has seen a 58% increase which is a small number but they only have a small collection. Avondale has been closed for an extended period of time due to Covid-19 but they are picking up the pace and doing well. There was a program a few weeks ago called “sip and paint” which had a large turn out in senior patrons.

Mr. Beeland brought up the request for a comparison of how other boards meet from the previous board meeting. The Library connected with the City Attorney’s office to compare board meeting frequencies that the City oversees. Out of approximately twenty-four boards, half of them meet monthly; four of them meet quarterly; one meets annually; five meet twice annually; and one meets as needed. The take away from that analysis is that they meet as the boards see fit. We put together a calendar of critical months that the library should meet based on business needs. Starting where we are now, October has Q1 statistics; mid year statistics in January; Q3 statistics in April; annual meetings in June; full year statistics in July. The full proposed schedule will be made part of the minutes.

Mr. Beeland gave a travel report. Sarah Beth Coffman, Library Services Specialist at the Eastgate Library, will be traveling to New Orleans in January to attend the ALA conference where she serves on an award committee for first time authors of young adult literature. This will be paid for by the Chattanooga Public Library.

Mr. Beeland stated that moving forward, Ms. Hill had suggested an idea of providing a continuing education topic for the Board, to dive in deeper to topics that pertain to the Library such as programming- what is being offered, attendance statistics, changes that are happening, etc. Another topic could be a deep dive in budget conversation as we approach budget season. Mr. Sundquist and other members of the board liked this idea.

Mr. Beeland advised that on November 9th, 2022 there are branch tours scheduled for the Board to attend. The tour will start at the Northgate Library at 10:00 AM in personal vehicles to then proceed to the Eastgate branch followed by Avondale location to end at the South Chattanooga location. The branch tour will be a good opportunity to see the spaces and various programs happening in action at a peak time.

Mr. Beeland reminded the Board that the board meeting schedule will change to the third Wednesday of the month beginning in January of 2023. The next board meeting will be on November 15th, 2022.

Ms. Christina Sacco, Public Relations Coordinator, gave the public relations report. The awareness campaign results are in and compared to last year, there was an increase. Ms. Sacco shared a brief look at the annual report that should be ready to send out to the public and stakeholders by the end of the week. Some of the information contained in this report includes branch information, data reporting, foundation highlights, awards, ARPA grant information, programming details and in depth information regarding our strategic plan.

Mr. Beeland pointed out that the Main library just completed some landscaping upgrades along with replacing the irrigation system. The library is also exploring options on patrons being able to sign up for a library card online.

Mr. Sundquist stated that the November board meeting will continue to stay on the schedule, and that he will confirm Ms. Dionne Jenkins' attendance, as he will be traveling on that day. Mr. Sundquist also confirmed that a press release will be issued for the media that has been approved by the Mayor's office with statements from the Mayor and himself in regards to Ms. Hill's resignation. Ms. Sacco stated that after the meeting is adjourned, Ms. Hill will communicate her resignation with all library staff followed by the press release to the media. The Library will field press inquiries to be directed to the Interim Executive Director or to the Board Chair.

Mr. Erik Broeren made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Sara McManus seconded the motion. The motion was approved and carried.

Mr. William Sundquist, Board Chair, adjourned the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

Mr. William Sundquist, Board Chair