

RUTHERFORD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF MEETING
Monday, April 21, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lisa Brewer
Benjamin Groce
Rollie Holden Jr.
Sam Huddleston
Phil King
Dina Piazza
Susan Quesenberry
Kory Wells
Marzee Woodward
Cody York

MEMBER/S ABSENT:

One (1) seat on the board is currently vacant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Cassandra Taylor, Smyrna Branch Manager
Kathleen Tyree, TEC Branch Manager
Leslie Collum, FOLL President
Kate Huddleston, SRRL Director
Elsa Britt, Recorder

OTHERS ABSENT:

Mindy Barrett, RCLS Interim Director
Kristen Birckholtz, MGL Branch Supervisor

PUBLIC (who signed in):

Jessica Robertson	Ellen Myrick
Heather Ahmie	Joshua Valler
W.D. Woodward	Tiffany Fee
Indie Pereira	Frank Lambert
Eugene McKibben	Scott Broden
Gayle McGill	Elyjah Wortham
Samantha Mitchem	Sarah Morris
Noda O'Brien	Julie Ivie
Vince O'Brien	Lori Lewis
Tatiana Silvas	Mike Cleaves
Hannah Stromgren	
Rebekah Lovett	
Amy Curtis	

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rutherford County Library System was called to order by Mr. Phil King, Chair, on Monday, April 21, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. at the Smyrna Public Library.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER/S: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (action items on the agenda): None

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING:

The Minutes of Meeting held on March 17, 2025, were presented for consideration. Ms. Woodward made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. There being no corrections, amendments, revisions, or changes, Mr. Groce seconded. Those who were present voted “aye.” Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: None.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

Budget and Finance: Ms. Brewer presented the financial reports ending March 31, 2025. Mr. York made a motion to approve the financial reports as presented. Ms. Woodward seconded. Those who were present voted “aye.” Motion carried.

By-Laws & Policies: Ms. Piazza had nothing to report at this time.

Development & Acquisitions: Mr. Holden announced that Murfreesboro City Schools (MCS) has offered to donate a 2004 Ford E450 minibus to the RCLS. The bus requires repairs but could potentially serve as a bookmobile for 5-10 more years if restored. The acquisition and conversion would be at no cost to the library, but funded through grants and donations. Potential parking locations for the bus have been identified, and staffing is sufficient with existing staff and staff hours.

Mr. Holden made a motion to allow staff to receive from the MCS a 2004 Ford E450 bus donated at no cost for the purpose of converting it to a bookmobile. This donation is being received with the understanding that the conversion will be dependent upon library staff acquiring the necessary funds through grants and donations. Mr. York seconded. Those who were present voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Facility Maintenance: Mr. Holden had nothing to report at this time.

Nominating: Mr. Groce reported the following:

- Board members whose terms are expiring on June 30, 2025:
 - Kory Wells (Rutherford County)
 - Marzee Woodward (Rutherford County)
 - Rollie Holden (City of Murfreesboro)
 - Sam Huddleston (City of Murfreesboro)

- Slate of Officers 2025-2026.
 - The board discussed the timing of officer elections traditionally held in June to align with terms starting July 1, though the bylaws indicate elections should be held in May. (Note: there is no board meeting in May.)
 - The bylaws limit the officers to three (3) consecutive terms (one year for each term), except the treasurer, who can serve five (5).
 - Mr. York and Mr. Groce expressed interest in serving as chair or vice-chair, with Mr. Groce's eligibility pending resolution of a potential employment conflict.

Personnel Committee: Ms. Woodward gave an update on the library director search:

- The committee received 50 résumés, and is narrowing these down to 7 or 8.
- These 7 or 8 candidates will be interviewed by zoom in two groups on Monday, May 5, and Tuesday, May 6, at 4:00 pm. Ms. Barrett will arrange a secure Zoom link as well as a room at the TEC for board members. The public is welcome to attend.
- The Zoom interviews are subject to the Sunshine Law, so there will be a public notice of meeting, and the Zoom link will be provided to the public as well.
- The final two candidates will be interviewed in person on Saturday, June 7 (one in the morning at 9:00 am and the other in the afternoon, time to be determined).
- Ms. Woodward will prepare questions and protocols for the board. She also requested inputs from SRRL Director, Kate Huddleston.
- An informal reception will be arranged for the final two on Friday, June 6, to be attended by the Foundation Board, Library Board, interested funding body officials, and friends of the libraries. This will be a good opportunity for the board to observe the candidates and how they interact with our various constituents.
- Ms. Britt will arrange logistics for the final two candidates. Ms. Woodward requested a budget for these expenses, hotel accommodations from June 6-8, 2025, plane tickets (if needed), per diem, reception, etc. Mr. York made a motion allotting an amount not to exceed \$9,000.00 to bring in the two candidates for their final interview. Mr. Huddleston seconded. Those who were present voted "aye". Motion carried.

Strategic Planning: Ms. Wells had nothing to report at this time.

Ad Hoc Committee: Mr. King had nothing to report at this time.

REPORTS FROM LIBRARIES & SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS (as needed):

Linebaugh Library: Reports submitted in the packet.

MGL Library: Reports submitted in the packet.

Technology Engagement Center (TEC): Reports submitted in the board packet.

Bookmobile (BKM): Reports submitted in the board packet.

Historical Research Center (HRC): Reports submitted in the board packet.

Friends of Linebaugh Library (FOLL): Reports submitted in the board packet.

Smyrna Public Library (SPL): Reports submitted in the board packet.

Friends of Smyrna Library (FOSL): Reports submitted in the board packet.

Eagleville Library: Reports were submitted in the board packet.

Rutherford County Library System (RCLS): Reports submitted in the board packet.

Stones River Regional Library (SRRL): Reports submitted in the board packet.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (non-agenda items): All speakers at the meeting opposed the board's March 17, 2025, resolution to remove transgender books, urging its repeal. They argued that the decision risks costly legal challenges and is overly broad, emphasizing that a library serves as a repository of knowledge, not a collection of government-sanctioned ideas. They stressed that the Rutherford County Library System (RCLS) exists to serve all residents, regardless of differing viewpoints or choices.

1. Elyjah Wortham
2. Vincent O'Brien
3. Hannah Stromgren
4. Josh Walker

OTHER BUSINESS:

In the interest of informing the community present, Ms. Wells mentioned that the Board has met with legal counsel vis-à-vis the March 17, 2025 resolution. At that meeting, the board understood that any vote to rescind, following Robert's Rules of Order, would require a motion from a board member on the prevailing side of the original vote. Mr. York stated that he had researched this, and any board member could make the motion. A simple majority is needed if it is announced on the Agenda, otherwise, a two-thirds majority vote is required. Ms. Wells proceeded to make a motion to rescind the March 17, 2025, resolution, citing concerns about the resolution's broad application to all library materials potentially violating free speech rights. Mr. Holden seconded.

Ms. Wells also mentioned that someone from the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) reached out and offered free legal services to help the board reconsider the resolution's language.

Mr. York suggested that this item be put on the agenda for the June 2 meeting to allow public comments, consultations with ACLJ, and further legal advice, ensuring a deliberate and informed decision. Impassioned discussion followed.

Mr. York moved to table the motion. Ms. Quesenberry seconded.

Mr. King called for a roll call vote to table Ms. Wells' motion to rescind the March 17, 2025, resolution, seconded by Mr. Holden.

York, Cody – Aye

Quesenberry, Susan - Aye

Wells, Kory – Nay

Holden, Rollie Jr. – Nay

Woodward, Marzee – Aye

Groce, Ben – Nay

Piazza, Dina – Aye

Huddleston, Sam – Aye

Brewer, Lisa – Nay

King, Phil - Aye

Total: Ayes = 6 Nays = 4

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Approved by:

Kory Wells
Secretary
RCLS Board