

RUTHERFORD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF MEETING

Monday, July 21, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Allison Belt
Beth Duffield
Benjamin Groce
Sam Huddleston
Dina Piazza
Susan Quesenberry
Darrell Thomas
Cody York

MEMBER/S ABSENT:

Lisa Brewer

One (1) seat on the board is currently vacant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mindy Barrett, RCLS Interim Director
Cassandra Taylor, Smyrna Branch Manager
Kathleen Tyree, TEC Branch Manager
Samantha Mitchem, MGL Branch Supervisor
Leslie Collum, FOLL President
Cynthia Matthews, SRRL Asst. Director
Elsa Britt, Recorder

PUBLIC (who signed in):

Frank Lambert	Angela Frederick
Tatiana Silvas	Jason Vance
Lindsay Schultz	Barbara Wiencek
Jeff Wiencek	

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rutherford County Library System was called to order by Mr. Cody York, Chair, on Monday, July 21, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. at the Main Chamber of the Rutherford County Courthouse, 1 Public Square, Murfreesboro, TN.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER/S:

- Beth Duffield – a Rutherford County representative
- Allison Belt – a Rutherford County representative
- Darrell Thomas – a City of Murfreesboro representative

PUBLIC COMMENTS (action items on the agenda): Collectively, the speakers urged the board to preserve access to the book, *Being You*, to support diverse community needs and parental autonomy.

1. Lindsay Schultz
2. Kelly Hill
3. Orion Tarpley

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING:

The Minutes of Meeting held on the following dates were presented for consideration:

- June 2, 2025
- June 7, 2025

Ms. Quesenberry made a motion to approve all the Minutes of Meeting as presented. Mr. Huddleston seconded. Those who were present voted “aye.” Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: None.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

Budget and Finance: Ms. Brewer was absent. Ms. Barrett presented the financial reports ending June 30, 2025. Ms. Quesenberry made a motion to approve the financial reports as presented. Mr. Thomas seconded. Those who were present voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Budget for FY2025-26 (Final). The budget was presented again because the funding bodies (Rutherford County and the City of Murfreesboro) approved level funding rather than the requested increase, necessitating revisions to reflect the actual funding allocated. The key items not included in the approved budget by the funding bodies were:

- Hoopla Digital Service - \$189,000.00. Ms. Barrett stated that the decision to cut Hoopla was made by herself along with managerial staff and the collection development coordinator as the RCLS had to find areas to reduce spending. Essential expenses like utilities and insurance could not be cut, leaving discretionary services like Hoopla vulnerable. The RCLS used its reserves to fund Hoopla last fiscal year.
- Security personnel for Linebaugh Library – 57 hours/week at \$25.95/hour, approximately \$77,000 - \$89,000 annually.
- Conversion of a part time to a full time position at the TEC (a difference of \$10,000 - \$27,000 depending on insurance).

To address the security cut at Linebaugh, Ms. Quesenberry made a motion to approve up to \$89,000.00 to be taken out of the fund balance to keep the security personnel for 57 hours/week at \$25.95/hour. Ms. Piazza seconded. Those who were present voted “aye.” Motion carried.

The restoration was motivated by the board’s recognition of security’s critical role in maintaining a safe environment at Linebaugh Library. Ms. Barrett highlighted that security staff (one full-time and one part-time) patrol stairwells, and maintain order, significantly reducing intense interactions and relieving staff from additional responsibilities. The board deemed security “non-negotiable” due to its impact on safety, justifying the use of the fund balance to cover the cost for the fiscal year.

Mr. York committed to discussing alternative funding solutions with county and city mayors to avoid relying on the fund balance in future budgets.

Ms. Belt made a motion to approve the request to convert a part time to a full time position at the TEC by adding not to exceed \$27,000.00 for this line item, to be taken out of the fund balance. Mr. Thomas seconded. Those who were present voted “aye.” Motion carried.

The motivation for restoration centered on addressing high turnover and ensuring operational stability at the TEC. The board viewed this as a critical investment in staff stability, justifying the use of the fund balance to cover the cost for the fiscal year.

Mr. Huddleston made a motion to approve the FY2025-26 as amended. Ms. Quesenberry seconded. Mr. York called for a roll call vote.

Ms. Belt – Aye
Ms. Duffield – Aye
Mr. Groce – Aye
Mr. Huddleston – Aye
Ms. Piazza – Aye
Ms. Quesenberry – Aye
Mr. Thomas – Aye
Mr. York – Aye

Motion approved.

Reallocation of funds in 2024-2025 budget. Mr. Huddleston made a motion to reallocate funds to balance the FY2024-2025 budget as required by the auditor. Mr. Thomas seconded. Mr. York called for a roll call vote:

Ms. Belt – Aye
Ms. Duffield – Aye
Mr. Groce – Aye
Mr. Huddleston – Aye
Ms. Piazza – Aye
Ms. Quesenberry – Aye
Mr. Thomas – Aye
Mr. York – Aye

Motion approved.

By-Laws & Policies: Ms. Piazza proposed and made a motion amending PM 204 – Rules of Conduct by adding the following verbiage to sections (a) and section (b) 12, to wit:

a. RCLS welcomes visitors and encourages them to use its resources. The Board also acknowledges the necessity to maintain an environment in which patrons and staff can be free from harassment, intimidation, threats to their safety and well-being, and an environment which protects library resources and facilities from damage. To provide safeguards against such behavior and damage to property, RCLS has adopted the

following Rules of Conduct, which specifies the type of activities or behavior that is not permitted on library premises. All patrons are expected to comply with verbal and written directives issued by library staff. Failure to follow staff instructions—especially those related to safety, behavior, or policy enforcement—may result in removal from the premises or further disciplinary action as outlined in the code of conduct. These Rules of Conduct and related policies and procedures incorporate federal, state, and local laws which govern illegal behavior, the Library Bill of Rights (PM-103), the ALA Code of Ethics (PM-104), and the ALA's guidelines for the development of policies and procedures regarding user behavior and library usage (PM-107). The Rules of Conduct are to be courteously and firmly enforced.

b.12 Leaving children 12 years of age and under unsupervised or ignoring their disruptive behaviors. Adults must remain in the same area of the youth services department as their child/children. Areas are defined as program areas, computer stations, easy books, juvenile fiction collections, young adult collections, etc. Outside of the youth services department, children should always be within six (6) feet of the parent/legal guardian.

Mr. Thomas seconded. Those who were present voted “aye.” Motion approved.

The necessity to update the policy stemmed from an incident at Linebaugh Library that escalated to a patron being asked to leave and subsequently banned, with the ban later appealed. The appeals board recommended clarifying the policy to address ambiguities, particularly around the unattended children policy.

Development & Acquisitions: Vacant. Nothing to report

Facility Maintenance: Vacant. Ms. Taylor reported ongoing leaks at Smyrna Library requiring repair or replacement. The quotes she received from three (3) companies are as follows: \$150,000, \$100,000 and \$4,800. However, no funds are currently budgeted for this repair, and the lease agreement’s responsibility for maintenance (library versus Town of Smyrna) remains unclear. Mr. York will discuss the issue with Town of Smyrna officials to clarify responsibility and explore funding options. He will report at the next meeting.

Nominating: Mr. York proposed restructuring the standing committee selections due to its lack of functionality under current state laws. The existing committee structure, established years ago, included standing committees (e.g., bylaws, facilities maintenance) that were meant to handle specific tasks through informal meetings, like phone calls or lunches. However, changes in Tennessee’s Open Meetings Act now require these committee meetings to be publicly noticed, open to the public, and include public comment periods, making them impractical as they rarely meet. Mr. York noted that the board, being small, already debates most issues as a whole, rendering standing committees redundant. Instead, Mr. York suggested operating as a "committee of the whole" for most decisions, eliminating standing committees, and using ad hoc committees or liaisons for specific tasks (e.g., facilities issues or strategic planning) as needed, or having a “working session” once a month. For example, an ad hoc committee was proposed for reviewing bylaws comprehensively, and another for exploring new branch locations.

The board was amenable to this proposal, with no objections raised. Mr. York planned to present updated bylaws reflecting the removal of standing committees at the next meeting. This restructuring aims to align the board's practices with legal requirements and streamline operations by focusing on full board discussions or targeted ad hoc groups.

Personnel Committee: Vacant. Ms. Barrett reported the following:

- Ms. Luanne James will start on July 28, 2025
- Introduced Samantha Mitchem as the new branch supervisor at MGL Library
- Recognized Kathleen Tyree for her 15 years of service with RCLS.

Strategic Planning: Vacant.

Ad Hoc Committee:

REPORTS FROM LIBRARIES & SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS (as needed):

Linebaugh Library: Reports were submitted in the packet.

MGL Library: Reports were submitted in the packet.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Eagleville Library: Reports were submitted in the board packet.

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS (non-agenda items):

1. Tatiana Silvas: Raised concerns about a possible conflict of interest among certain board members due to their professional relationship. Encouraged the board to consider policies for transparency and recusal to support ethical decision-making and maintain community confidence in the board's operations.
2. Hannah Stromgren: Emphasized parents' rights to choose reading materials for their children and advocating for libraries to focus on encouraging reading and empathy rather than censorship.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Request for Reconsideration: *Being You* by Megan Madison, Jessica Ralli & Anne/Andy Passchier.

Staff recommendation: Move to JUV/NF

The board discussed the book's themes, circulation, and placement with some questioning the appropriateness of its current section.

Ms. Duffield made a motion to approve staff recommendation moving the *Being You* from boardbooks to JUV/NF section. Mr. Groce seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote.

- In Favor: minority of members
- Opposed: majority of members

Motion failed.

Ms. Quesenberry made a motion to remove *Being You* from the shelf. Mr. Thomas seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote.

- In favor: majority of members
- Opposed: minority of members

Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Approved by:

Susan Quesenberry
Secretary
RCLS Board

/eab