



Library Board of Trustees

Library Board of Trustees Meeting

North County Regional Library, 16500 Holly Crest Lane, Huntersville, NC 28078

Monday, May 12, 2023, 4:00pm – 6:30pm

Trustees Present

Ailen Arreaza
Peggy Brookhouse
Dr. Stacey Brown
Jon Buchan
Joe Helweg, Chair
Dr. Kimmerly Martin
Tracy Montross
Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson
Preethi Srinivasan
Charles Thomas

Absent

Dr. Ricky Woods

Staff Present

Karen Beach
Shelley Book
Amanda Corbett
David Dillard
Annie Eastwood
Michael Engelbrecht
Harold Escalante
Jenni Gaisbauer
Krystal Green
Alesha Lackey
Ann Mavian
Caitlin Moen
Angie Myers
Emily Nanney
Emery Ortiz
Keisha Portis
LaJuan Pringle
Kim Sykes-Joseph
Marcellus Turner
Teleia White
Martha Yesowitch

Others Present

Mark Kutny
Starla Tanner, Intergovernmental
Affairs Manager, Mecklenburg County
Anne Klinefelter, Adjunct Professor at
the UNC School of Information and
Library Science
Caroleen Burroughs, Library
Foundation Board
Gene Cochrane, Library Foundation
Board

Joe Helweg opened and welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting at 4:00pm. Mr. Helweg introduced branch manager, Amanda Corbett and Ms. Corbett gave the Trustees an overview of the North County Regional Branch and its offerings.

Absence with Cause

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve absence with cause for Dr. Ricky Woods. On a motion by Charles Thomas and seconded by Ailen Arreaza, the Trustees unanimously approved the absence with cause.

Minutes

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on April 17, 2023, and on a motion by Charles Thomas and seconded by Ailen Arreaza, the Trustees unanimously approved the April 17, 2023, meeting minutes.

Chair Update

Mr. Helweg provided the following updates:

- August 11 will be our Retreat
- We will take the month of July off and resume work at the retreat

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Michael Boger presented the following Budget Update:

FY 2023 – County Manager’s Recommended Budget (Reminder)

Priority	Item	Amount	Funded/Not Funded
	<i>Employee Salary/Benefits (Annual Pay Increases & \$20/hour minimum wage)</i>	\$1.7M	Funded
	<i>Contractual Increases (Real Estate/IT)</i>	\$144k	Partially Funded (\$121k)
1	Pineville Branch	\$2.1M	Partially Funded (\$1.8M)
2	Chief Equity & Inclusion Officer	\$128k	Not Funded
3a	HR Specialist	\$61k	Not Funded
3b	Marketing & Communications Director	\$93k	Not Funded
3c	Library Business Analyst	\$80k	Not Funded
3d	Project Manager	\$80k	Not Funded
4	Bilingual Pay	\$84k	Funded

FY 2024 – County Manager’s Recommended Budget

Priority	Item	Amount	Funded/Not Funded
	<i>Employee Salary/Benefits (Compression Study & Annual Pay Increases)</i>	\$2.3M	Funded
	<i>Contractual Increases (Real Estate/IT)</i>	\$243k	Partially Funded (\$213k)
1	HR Coordinator	\$70k	Funded
2	Chief Equity & Inclusion Officer	\$132k	Funded
3	Marketing & Communications Assistant	\$70k	Not Funded
4	(2) Outreach Specialists	\$139k	Not Funded
5	Programming (Including Meck Pre-K/Active Reading)	\$250k	Partially Funded (\$199k)
6	Library Business Analyst	\$76k	Funded
7	Community Programs Coordinator	\$70k	Not Funded
8	Library Collections*	\$1.7M	Funded (One-Time)

County Recommended Budget: \$47,145,138 (11.6% increase from FY 2023)

*FY 2019 last increase in system-wide Library Collections

Next Steps – Key Dates

5/22/23 - County Detailed Budget Overview

5/25/23 - Budget Public Hearing

6/1/23 - Straw Vote

6/6/23 - BOCC Budget Adoption (Operating and CIP)

6/9/23 - Distribution & Posting of Consolidated Library Budget

6/12/23 - Discussion of Consolidated Library Recommended Budget

6/28/23 - Board of Trustees - Adoption of Library Recommended Budget

FY 2022 Audit Recommendation – Update

Cherry Bekaert Recommended:

To formalize the review process of contributions and pledges receivable and improve upon the reconciliation process of the Foundations investments and pledges receivable.

Result:

New Library and Foundation Process Narrative

General

- Raiser’s Edge is a Customer Relationship Management system provided by Blackbaud, Inc., and is used by Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation (Foundation) staff to track and manage donor activity.
- The Foundation for the Carolinas (FFTC) oversees Foundation funds and investments and provides regular financial reporting.

Initiation

- On a monthly basis, Library Finance (Finance) accesses Foundation bank statement records showing financial activity in the prior month.
- Bank statement activity is exported to a Microsoft Excel document with tabs for check deposit activity, credit card payments, and other payment activity.

Authorization

- The document is sent to Foundation staff to identify donors and the appropriate fund(s) the payments should be applied. Once completed, this information is returned to Finance.

Recording

- Once the file is received from the Foundation, Finance submits the reconciled statements to FFTC with instructions on how the contributions should be applied to each fund.
- FFTC applies the contributions to the specified funds.

Processing and Reporting

- At year-end, the Foundation provides Finance with a schedule of outstanding pledges in future years. This includes original pledge amount, current balance, expected payments in future years, and the donor’s gift ID. Data is pulled by the Foundation from Raiser’s Edge and then reviewed for accuracy and adjustments.
- Finance reviews outstanding pledges against fiscal year payment activity. Any issues or variances identified are communicated to Foundation for review. Step added in FY2023
- Once the pledge schedule has been validated by Foundation and Finance, a net present value of outstanding pledges is calculated by Finance.
- The net present value of outstanding pledges is provided to FFTC so the amount can be entered as a pledge receivable on Foundation financial statements.

- Once the pledge receivable is entered, FFTC provides Finance with an annual and semi-annual statement of fund activity, performance and balances for the prior fiscal year for audit reconciliation.

Reconciliation

- Throughout the year on a monthly basis, Finance reconciles contributions listed on Foundation bank statements with additional donor information from Raiser's Edge. Monthly tracking includes donor name, donor ID number, spouse name (if applicable), fund where the gift is recorded, date of gift, and method of payment. Step added in FY2023
- This reconciliation is compared to year-end financial statements from FFTC to ensure contributions are recorded in the appropriate fund. The document is also used to track payments towards pledges during the fiscal year to confirm pledges outstanding.

After some discussion around the proposed budget, Dr. Kimmerly Martin suggested we consider hosting the BoCC and County Leadership again at a social and educational event like we did several years ago at Community Matters Café.

Preview of BoCC Talking Points

- Show appreciation and gratitude for the County Managers proposed budget
- Show how the recommended funds build a stronger community
- Pay homage to last year's budget and how it allowed us to open a new Pineville Branch
- Express how the County Manager's recommendation supports the community

Real Estate Committee

Peter Jareo provided the following information:

Seeking authorization and approval of a single source contract to be negotiated with Lyngsoe Systems and authorize the Library CEO to execute the contract for a library automated equipment handling system.

Staff Contact: David Dillard, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Real Estate Leader, Shannon Crane, Mecklenburg County AFM Project Manager

Background and Rationale:

In 2015, the Library engaged a consultant and issued an RFP for library automated material handling equipment. The four major manufacturers responded (Lyngsoe Systems, Tech Logic, Bibliotheca, and Envisionware) and were evaluated. A single source, multi-year contract with Lyngsoe Systems was executed to provide for systems at SouthPark Regional, North County Regional, South County Regional, and the Library Administration Center.

That contract has expired and CML needs to provide AMH equipment for University City Regional, Main, and the projects that we anticipate being approved in the 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Plan.

Lyngsoe Systems Inc. designs, manufactures, installs, and services custom, turn-key Automated Material Handling systems specifically for public libraries. Due to the exclusive nature of this equipment and the customized hardware that is manufactured in-house with proprietary components and associated software, it is imperative that all hardware and software be provided directly by Lyngsoe Systems. To maintain a consistent experience for both patrons and staff throughout the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library and to ensure the equipment is delivered and installed within the given construction time frame for the University City Regional Library, all equipment must be provided by Lyngsoe Systems Inc.

Lyngsoe Systems equipment has become the library standard for its materials handling for management of collections across the system. It is compatible with CML's Integrated Library Operating systems. The Library also has an active, on-going maintenance contract with Lyngsoe, for which there is an economically beneficial volume discount that will increase with additional equipment. Also, maintenance contracts with multiple vendors would be cumbersome to manage. Staff, including Library IT, are specifically trained to use this equipment and cross-training on multiple material handling system types would create higher costs and cause adverse operational impacts to the Library.

Action Item presented to the Real Estate Committee on April 11, 2023.

After some discussion, and on a motion by the Real Estate Committee the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the single source contract to be negotiated with Lyngsoe Systems and authorize the Library CEO to execute the contract.

Second Uptown Location

- Lease has been finalized with First Presbyterian Church
- We will be moving in and upfitting the space over the next few weeks
- Working with Mecklenburg County on security for the site
- The plan is to provide computer service in this location until new Main Library opens

Customer and Community Impact Committee

Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson provided the following update:

- Our committee is focused on human resources issues
- Glad to see the increase to the HR staff to 3 full time staff but we need 7
- Manager training is taking place now and has been well received
- Will be bringing some HR policy changes to the full board for approval soon based on Mecklenburg County's HR changes

CEO Update

MT provided the following updates:

- Caitlin Moen is attending the budget public policy workshop to take any questions related to our budget
- Would like to recognize Angie Myers and Michael Boger and the entire finance team for the hard work they put into creating this budget
- The last MeckTech distribution will be held Saturday, June 3rd
- 83% participation rate was achieved on this years Employee Climate Survey which we are very proud of. This is up 6% points from last year.
- Caitlin Moen and I just returned from Helsinki and Denmark where we attended the NEXT Library Conference, and we will update you later on lessons learned

Library Director Update

Emily Nanney provided the following update on Summer Break:

- Summer Break 2023: Read, Learn Explore is the largest program the library offers
- Our sponsors this year are Charlotte Football Club and Wendy's

Why Summer Reading Matters?

- Children gain skills needed to start kindergarten
- Research shows that reading 20 minutes a day over the summer helps prevent summer learning loss

Why Summer Learning?

- People learn in different ways and many different activities can be educational for all ages.
- Our challenges offer flexibility in how customers participate.
- Learning how to set and meet goals is one of the many ways summer learning helps teens develop into healthy, productive adults.
- Adult brains benefit from regular learning activities, like reading.
- Community engagement with library partners.

Dates to remember

- Pre-registration begins Monday, May 15th
- Challenge Dates: Wednesday, June 1st – Monday, July 31st
- Start logging reading & activities: June 1st
- Last day for prize pick-up: August 19th (officially) & August 26th (unofficially)

Challenge Goals

- Increase registration by 3% - last year we had 12,873 people register.
- Increase completion rate by 3%- last year we had 3,375 people complete the program.
- Community Challenge– 10 million minutes

Group Goals

- Increase registration by 3% - last year we had 81 groups registered.
- Have 85% of groups registered be active

Account Types

- Individual Account = 1 user
 - One person will track and log their own reading time and activities
- Family Account = 2+ users
 - *Only the Family Account Creator can enter reading time and activities.*
- *Family and Individual Accounts require ages and a unique email address.*
- Group Account = 2+ users not in the same household
 - Examples: summer camps, daycares, assisted living facilities.
 - Group Leader will sign up and log activities for the whole group.
- Offline Account = A reader without a Beanstack account
 - Reader participates without logging their own time.
 - Examples: Wee Read ages 0-4; people with technology barriers

Reading Time

- Users can enter any time they spend reading during the summer & everything counts - books, magazines, audiobooks, etc.

- Read at least 10 hours (equal to 600 points) to finish.
 - *10 hours is just the minimum, you can always read more!*
 - *For children ages 0-4, the requirement is 5 hours of reading (300 points).*
- Participants can retroactively log any reading they have done within the challenge dates

Activities

- Activity categories include Write, Create, Play, Explore, Give, and Queen Charlotte!
- Each activity is worth 20 points.
 - To earn an activity badge 3 activities from the category must be completed.
 - Activities are not required to complete the challenge

Completing the Challenge

- For ages 5 and up:
 - Earn 1200 points total, *at least* 600 points must come from reading time (10 hours).
 - Example:
 - 800 points from reading and 400 points from activities = completion
 - 550 points from reading and 1200 points from activities = no completion
 - No activities are required to complete
- For Wee Read (ages 0-4):
 - Participants will complete a Bingo board of activities and 5 hours of reading time to complete.

Supporting and Engaging

- Register and complete the challenge
- Sharing posts and updates on social media
- Attending kickoff events and other Summer Break programs
- Promoting Summer Break with your networks and encourage participation from individuals and groups

Story of Impact

"I appreciate my library very much. I have always enjoyed going to the library as a kid. As an adult I enjoy checking out books for school, book clubs and personal time. It beats having to pay for all my books, especially during these times. The library has always been a great resource for me for school and work. Currently, I have found people that love books just as much as me on Instagram. They have opened my eyes to different types of books. I am very appreciative of the library, librarians and staff." Submitted by a customer, Kessa

Foundation Update

Jenni Gaisbauer is seeking the approval of the Board of Trustees to add the following people to the Library Foundation's Board of Directors:

Stephanie Alger

Stephanie is a forward-thinking finance executive with 17+ years proven success transforming, building, and growing multi-billion-dollar global businesses. She solves complex challenges and uses analytics to optimize decisions while being a disciplined and inclusive leader across diverse organizations.

Stephanie currently leads Strategy, Risk, and Analytics and is on the management team at Vista Credit Partners, the credit arm of Vista Equity Partners, with over \$6.5Bn of assets under management. Prior to Vista, Stephanie spent 16 years at

Bank of America most recently as a Managing Director and Global Head of the Derivatives, Prime Brokerage, and Swap Platforms where she led a global team across four regions responsible for a platform generating \$4.5Bn in annual revenue.

Stephanie is National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) Directorship Certified, the nation's premier certification for board directors and currently serves on committees with the Charlotte Sports Foundation and American Heart Association.

Stephanie and her husband James Woodlock reside in Charlotte with their three children.

Patricia Johnson (PJ)

Patricia Aguilar Johnson has been navigating corporate life for 20 years. She lives in the intersection of the customer journey and the sales process to deliver commercial excellence.

Patricia is a sales and marketing executive with experience with a focus in the technology industry. She is currently the Global Director of Sales Enablement with Ciena Corporation and previously served in several marketing, tech analyst relations and partner marketing industry posts. Ms. Johnson studied communications studies at Montclair State University.

Patricia currently serves on the grant review committee of Smart Start, has held many non-profit leadership posts including Hadassah National Fellows, regional Advocacy Chair, and has Co-Chaired Breast Cancer Research charities. Johnson loves to learn languages she is fluent in Spanish, has a conversational knowledge of Italian and is currently learning Portuguese.

Patricia and her husband, Teddy Johnson are part owners of Middle C Jazz, have two grown children and live in Indian Land, SC.

Kellie Lofton

Kellie is a Senior Lead Audit Manager and Vice President in the Strategy & Operations Group within Wells Fargo & Company's Internal Audit department. She currently sits on the Diversity Council for Wells Fargo's Audit department. While at Wells Fargo, she has served as President of the Greater Charlotte Region Wells Fargo Volunteer Chapter, helping to connect over 5,000 Chapter members to various volunteer opportunities with nonprofits across the Charlotte region.

Prior to her roles at Wells Fargo, she worked at EY providing assurance and advisory services throughout the Southeast Region for various industries, including non-profit organizations.

Kellie served as the 2021-2022 President of the Junior League of Charlotte, an organization aimed at promoting volunteerism, developing women, and impacting the community through the effective action and leadership of its trained volunteers.

Kellie has also served on the Board of Directors for Charlotte Ballet. During her tenure, she worked to develop a pipeline of talent by helping establish a scholarship for diverse students who have professional level talent and promise but need financial support in order to receive professional level training to maximize their

potential. She also served as a founding Board of Advisors member of the Arts Empowerment Project, an organization that provides high-quality arts programming, enrichment experiences, and social emotional development for children in need of access to light, hope, equity, and opportunity as a path to resilience.

Kellie and her husband, Brandon live in Charlotte with their two children.

On a motion by Tracy Montross and seconded by Charles Thomas the board unanimously approved the addition of Stephanie Alger, Patricia Johnson and Kellie Lofton to the Library Foundation Board of Directors.

Board Topic

Intellectual Freedom

Marcellus Turner, Caitlin Moen, Harold Escalante, Mark Kutny, Starla Tanner and Anne Klinefelter provided the following information:

- Objective:
Build board understanding of the principles and value of Intellectual Freedom as a component of the Library User's Basic Bill of Rights and the CML Program of Service, and awareness of the threats to this core library principle.
- Introduction to Intellectual Freedom
 - What do we mean by Intellectual Freedom?
 - Library professionals have developed respect for the foundational idea that individuals should be able to seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction
 - What is so great about Intellectual Freedom?
 - Many benefits are associated with exposure to ideas that cross time, geography, and other barriers
 - Innovation, problem solving, economic growth
 - Understanding of others' ideas and experiences, both those with different and shared points of view
 - Informed electorate to support democracy
 - Support for the search for truth
 - Receiving information as a form of freedom of speech
 - Mental engagement to promote good health
 - Relaxation, encouragement, astonishment, amusement, joy
 - Why is Intellectual Freedom in a public library important?
 - Public libraries have the broadest mission of all libraries
 - They serve lifelong learning
 - They are the only source many people have for access to a lot of information – many published books and journal articles are not available even if a person has Internet access
 - The public library offers services to help community members find and use the information they seek
 - First Amendment freedoms are advanced through access to information through a public library
 - What strategies need attention to support Intellectual Freedom in a public library?
 - To offer meaningful access to as much information as resources allow, public libraries need to
 - Discourage censorship
 - Build privacy protections

- Include the full community's interests in the collection and in programming
- What is Censorship?
 - Censorship and Book Banning are efforts to restrict access to particular ideas and even categories of people.
 - Selectivity of content in a public library is inevitable, so a mission statement, collection and programming policies, and procedures for addressing concerns are important tools.
 - Development of and adherence to policies and procedures can be an important support for the library if retention or removal of content were to become the subject of a First Amendment court challenge.
 - The American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom documented 1,269 challenges to library books and resources in 2022, the highest number since records were begun twenty years ago and double the number from 2021.
- Public Libraries are seeing more book challenges
 - Where do challenges take place?
 - 48% Public Libraries
 - 41% School Libraries
 - 10% Schools
 - 1% College Libraries/Other Public Institutions
- How is Privacy related to Intellectual Freedom?
 - Being observed, tracked, and/or profiled for reading can create a chilling effect that discourages reading and limits the benefits of Intellectual Freedom for individuals and for society
 - Useful to note that reading does not indicate endorsement of the views in what is being read. Privacy prevents mistaken assumptions about readers.
 - States have passed legislation protecting the confidentiality of library use, often as exemptions from public records laws.
- How are Privacy challenges changing?
 - Libraries have some ways to limit access to reading habits of individuals. For example, circulation records might be disentangled from individuals after books are returned on time. But libraries have difficulties controlling some of the data profiling conducted by Internet tracking tools and by some subscription database providers and constantly evolving tech.
- What are the challenges of community inclusivity and collections with different viewpoints?
 - Many practical barriers can limit true inclusivity, such as output of publishers and limitations of library resources.
 - Majority views should be balanced with minority views.
 - Ideas represented in the collection are likely to be varied, and the content and viewpoints are not offered as evidence of endorsement by the library.
 - Challenges of age-appropriate access to content are handled in different ways in different libraries. Many difficulties arise when stakeholders seek restrictions on content for other library users.
- Some final points about Intellectual Freedom and the public library
 - Friction between intellectual freedom and other interests are not new.
 - Challenges come from all parts of the political spectrum.
 - However, challenges are still on the rise with organized petitions for restrictions on particular content, legislative actions, and lawsuits.

- In addition to development of policies and procedures, a public library can manage these issues by making sure staff are trained on background and implementation, staying on top of professional organization guidance, and offering gratitude for a library board who can help with engagement to address concerns.

Current Trends in Intellectual Freedom Challenges (Caitlin Moen)

- Books and Materials Limitations
 - May target overall collection development policies or specific types of materials
 - Includes proposals for labeling, separating, or otherwise preventing access to materials based on age and/or content
- Criminalizing Librarianship
 - Removes longstanding defense from prosecution exemptions for libraries, schools and museums
- Bureaucratic and Funding Controls
 - Changes to responsibility for appointment and/or selection of library leaders (state librarians, directors, etc.)
 - Appointments of opposed individuals to library boards
 - Funds being withheld or denied based on books, materials, policies, programs, etc.
 - Decision making moved away from libraries to citizen groups, political entities, etc.
- How Challenges are Coming
 - Library
 - Book challenges
 - Protests and disruptions
 - Community
 - Misinformation campaigns
 - Petitions
 - System/Structure
 - Board takeovers
 - Legislation
 - Policy change
- Who is Submitting Challenges?
 - As individuals they are:
 - Passionate
 - Committed
 - Often well-meaning
 - Local
 - Library Lovers
 - As groups they are:
 - Organized
 - Far-reaching- beyond local library base
 - Systematic in their approach
 - Zealous
 - Well-funded
- Book or Material Challenges Nationally
 - 2003- 458
 - 2012- 464

- 2020- 156
- 2021- 729
- 2022- 1,269
- Number of unique titles challenged in the U.S. by year
 - 2000- 378
 - 2005- 259
 - 2010- 262
 - 2015- 190
 - 202- 223
 - 2021- 1,858
 - 2022- 2,571
- Book or Material Challenges Locally
 - In February, the President of the Mecklenburg County chapter of Moms for Liberty contacted CMS with concerns about two books in the school libraries at two high schools. The titles, *Sex Plus* and *Let's Talk About It*, were purchased as part of a bundle from a publisher and not individually selected by CMS. The school decided to remove the books from the collection.
 - Along the way, CMS identified that the titles were also available through our Library collection, both digitally and in print. As part of ONE Access, we worked to make digital collections seamlessly available to students through CMS systems. In response to this concern, that seamless connection has been disengaged. Students still have access to library materials through their ONE Access accounts but must navigate through to the library website in order to access them. This makes it more difficult for teachers and instructors using library materials to support curriculum (many had embedded resources within their course systems), but the benefit is some mitigation of risk as the collections become more distinct and clearer in the event of future challenges at CMS.
- Book or Material Challenges at CML (Harold Escalante)
 - Informal Complaints
 - "Contact Library Leadership", "Contact Board of Trustees", Verbal complaints to staff, emails, etc.
 - Answer concerns, educate on why, may escalate to Statement of Concern
 - Formal - Statements of Concern
 - Submitted in branch location
 - Follows written process – CML Statement of Concern Internal Process
 - CML averages two formal statements of concern yearly
 - May result in recategorizing, removing, or retaining material
 - CML has not withdrawn an item in response to an SOC
 - 8 challenged titles
 - 5 LGBT
 - 6 Children Titles
 - 100% kept in collection
- Language Used in Responses
 - "When purchasing materials for the library's collection, selectors consider evaluative criteria that include reviews in professional sources, subject demand, content of the work, and suitability of the subject format and style for the intended audience."
 - "The Library strives to create a collection that represents a wide range of subjects, styles, and commentary. Admittedly, the content of this title will not appeal to all, as is true for many titles added to

the collection. The library is a destination for learning as well as a welcoming place for all people, and we purchase titles for the collection that uphold these values."

- "We realize that not all materials purchased will be appealing to all our Library users and appreciate your desire to choose the books that your child reads. We believe only parents and caregivers have the right and responsibility to restrict access of their children-and only their children-to library resources."
- Complaints and Disruptions
 - Emails and phone calls to staff or leaders
 - Defacing materials
 - Registering for programs to prevent availability to others
 - Check out books on display
 - Protesting outside location or program
 - Intimidating customers coming to program
 - Verbal disruptions during programs
 - Filming staff and customers
- Examples of Disruptions at CML
 - Individual titles or programs
 - Promotion of LGBTQ+ books and programs
 - Morrison- SouthPark renaming
 - Checking out of all Pride books on display so no one can see them
 - Staff find books hidden elsewhere in the library
 - Qur'an defaced in library
 - Pushing into Rainbow Storytime
- Legislation Nationally (Caitlin Moen)
 - Arkansas – SB81 – Passed
 - Opens employees of schools and libraries to criminal prosecution under obscenity laws
 - Texas – 28 Bills (several examples below) – In Committee
 - Opens employees of schools and libraries to criminal prosecution under obscenity laws
 - Restricts materials that depict sex or same-sex relationships
 - Institutes rating systems
 - Tennessee – Passed
 - Criminalizes drag performances in public spaces or for minors
 - Similar legislation introduced in TX, WV, SC, other states
 - Florida – HB 1467 – Passed
 - Requires all classroom texts to be reviewed by a licensed media specialist
 - Stacks on top of previous law that makes it a felony to provide any material that is "sexually explicit" to a minor
 - Resulted in teachers shutting down classroom libraries as shown here
- Legislation in North Carolina (Starla Tanner)
 - I track legislation that is related to libraries in NC
 - Legislation is always changing
 - Several bills related to Education curricula
 - HB 187- prohibits teaching certain concepts (Critical Race Theory)
 - Senate Budget- Prohibition against "Three Cueing" or a curriculum with visual memory as the primary bases for teaching word recognition

- Bills not meeting crossover
 - HB 185- restricts reproductive health and safety programs to after 7th grade
 - HB 619- requires all history courses to include instruction on Asian American and Pacific Islanders and their impact on American history
 - SB 522- requires instruction on informational literacy in schools
 - HB 686- requires comprehensive civil rights education to every student in the State by requiring it to be included in the standard course of study.
- Bills Censoring Discussion of LGBTQ+ Identity and Racial Justice from School Curriculum
 - SB 49 is similar to the Florida Don't Say Gay or Trans Bill and requires:
 - Mandatory reporting if a child comes out as transgender and gender nonconforming
 - Requires teachers to make curriculum and lesson plans available for review by parents
 - Prohibits teaching LGBTQ+ topics in school classroom curriculum from grades K-4
 - HB 187- Seeks to limit education on topics regarding race and racism, systemic oppression and American history. Also, a curriculum bill.
- LGBT Related Bills
 - SB 631/HB 574- requires students in middle, high school, and intercollegiate sports teams to participate in a team aligned with the sex assigned at birth.
 - HB 673- would make drag performances illegal on public property or in the presence of anyone under the age of 18.
 - Bills Restricting Access to Gender Affirming Healthcare for Transgender Youth
 - SB 560- restricts gender-affirming care for minors, introducing unnecessary requirements for youth, families and healthcare providers.
 - HB 819- would allow the denial of care for any group based on personal beliefs
 - SB 641/HB 819- makes it unlawful for healthcare and mental healthcare professionals to provide gender-affirming care.
- Things to Watch
 - Partisan school board races legislation
 - Proposed committee substitutes
 - Bills in Rules Committees: House/317, Senate/622
 - Book ban groups: The Heritage Foundation, Moms for Liberty, Families for Educational Freedom, No Left Turn in Education, Parents Defending Education

Legal Considerations

Operational Concerns

As legislation progresses, library operations and staffing could be impacted as shown in these examples:

- Staff refusing to provide service or information because of personal beliefs
- Public or staff communicating in a style that resembles hate speech toward other customers or staff
- Public programs using drag performers, art exhibits, spoken word that could be considered obscene (who is liable, the performer or the host?)
- Programming celebrating culture (LGBTQ+, Dia, Black Lives Matter, etc.)
- Clothing or other attire that staff wear for personal expression
- Use of pronouns or failure to use pronouns
- Building a comfortable / safe space for all staff and public
- Promoting / marketing materials through displays or communications

Mark Kutny presented the following:

- Understanding how Legislation Progresses
- Status of Current Legislation – None of this has passed
- Challenges to legislation if passed
- Definitions of some useful legal terms that might be hard to prove: reasonable; average user, etc.

Trends and Developments

Across the nation, individuals and groups are fighting back against censorship and bans. Publishers are supporting authors and communities through lawsuits. Legislation is moving to combat censorship. Groups are organizing to protect intellectual freedom. And at the national level, we are seeing some incorporation of book bans as an issue when politicians and government entities are discussing democracy and individual rights.

Protecting Intellectual Freedom

Government and Association/Organization Support

- Mecklenburg County Lobbyist – Starla Tanner
- NCPLDA Lobbyist
- NCLA Section
- Intellectual Freedom Chair
- North Carolina General Statute – State Aid to Libraries
- ALA
- ULC
- EveryLibrary

Future CML Resources

Items to be Developed and/or Expanded

- Staff Training
 - New employee onboarding
 - Ongoing deep dives into intellectual freedom and how to handle challenges and questions
- Board Training
 - Expansion of Onboarding coverage
 - Continuation of Today's training
- Foundation Board Training
- Media Training for Board and Staff
- Library Policies Review, Revision, Addition

The Role of the Board – Next Steps

- Intellectual Freedom Statement
- Consideration for future Board recruitment and vetting
- Stay Informed - Be Ready

Bottom Line/Key Takeaways

- Intellectual freedom and the challenges we are facing now are more than books.
- Public libraries have a responsibility to promote and defend intellectual freedom.

- As a leader in North Carolina, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library leaders and board members need to be ready to support libraries across the state
- Questions from media or others? Direct inquiries to Library Marketing & Communications

After some Board discussion, Joe Helweg adjourned the board meeting at 7:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcellus Turner
CEO