

CUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

MINUTES LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING JULY 24, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dennis Cedzo called the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees to order at 9:05 a.m. on Thursday, July 24, 2025 in the Boardroom at the Headquarters library.

Trustees Present: Chair Dennis Cedzo, Vice Chair Ann McRae, David Breece, Daniel Montoya, Gloria Nelson and Rebecca Pedigo

Trustee Absent: Pamela Story

Present from the Library: Library Director Heather Hall, Division Manager for Collection Development & Circulation Pamela Kource, Community Engagement Division Manager Kohnee Harmon, Hope Mills Branch Manager Denice Enstine service award recipient (see table below) and the Director's Executive Assistant Marili Melchionne

A. INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUEST: Chair Cedzo introduced Casie Dowd, the Secretary on the Friends of the Library Board who gave the following report:

- ✓ There are now 396 Friends members for 2025.
- ✓ Thanks to our awesome staff & volunteers, the Books & Brew pop-up sale at West Regional on 7/11-12 was very successful for the Friends and for Miller's Brew @ Café West. There were 302 shoppers and the sales came to \$1,145.
- ✓ Upcoming Book Sales – August 11th is the next Member's sale, and the public sales begin Friday, August 15th thru Sunday the 17th.

II. APPROVAL OF TODAY'S MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: Vice Chair McRae moved to approve today's meeting agenda.

SECOND: Trustee Pedigo seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 17, 2025 REGULAR TRUSTEE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Vice Chair McRae moved to approve the April 17, 2025 meeting minutes.

SECOND: Trustee Pedigo seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

IV. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Presented by Library Director Heather Hall

A. Service Award Recipient: Director Hall recognized and honored the following staff member for her years of dedicated service with the library:

Name	Title	Branch Location	Years of Svc.
Amanda Dekker	Headquarters Branch Manager	Headquarters	10

B. Director's Update: Library Director Hall updated the group on the following items:

1. Cumberland County received 17 achievement awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the two that are associated with the library include:
 - **Miller's Brew @ Café West and the**

- **Community Navigator Program**

Program Overview:

- Library staff member Ray Santini serves as the Community Navigator and he provides advanced reference support beyond traditional library services.
- Santini also assists patrons with complex needs including housing support, domestic violence situations, and service connections.

Program Impact:

- Santini has been in the position for over a year and has assisted over 500 clients during this period and provides tailored, almost akin to a case manager-style support to help clients navigate complex service systems. He addresses barriers such as documentation requirements and language comprehension issues.
- Santini assisted a family stranded on I-95 by securing hotel accommodations for two days.

Program Background:

- The community navigator position was created in response to strategic priorities and staff feedback
- Addresses challenges faced by public library staff who encounter patrons with significant personal needs.
- Helps staff maintain professional boundaries while ensuring patrons receive appropriate support.
- Santini has developed extensive community connections and partnerships with local agencies.

2. Miller’s Brew @ Café West Statistics:

- **Door Count Analysis** – Comparison of Pre and Post Miller’s Brew Opening:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage Increase</u>
April	2024 vs 2025	27% increase
May	2024 vs 2025	36% increase
June	2024 vs 2025	32% increase

With Miller’s Brew being in the library, foot traffic has definitely increased.

3. Current Strategic Projects:

- **Library Training Plans Update:**

- Branch managers developing updated training plans for new employees.
- Strategic effort focused on recruitment and retention.
- Goals include structured onboarding, supervisor coordination, and timely training completion.
- Existing training guides require revision and updates.

- **Library Handbook Project:**

- Consolidation of all policies and procedures into centralized location.
- Subcommittee reviewing content for updates, cuts, and consolidation.
- Addressing current issues with duplicated/conflicting procedures (example: multiple laptop checkout procedures in different locations with mismatched information).
- Part of current strategic plan implementation.

- **Community Resource Hub**

- Project funded through LSTA (Library Services & Technology Act) EZ Grant Award.
- Location: Glass-enclosed case classroom on first floor of Headquarters library.
- Larger room: Will remain programming space with updated technology and furniture.
- Smaller former quiet area: Converting to 2-3 one-on-one consultation spaces.

- **Service Integration:**
 - Community Navigator will meet with public during open hours.
 - Community organizations can provide intake interviews.
 - Partnership with Southlight on Ramsey for mental health and behavioral assessments.
 - Rotating schedule of community support services at Headquarters location.

4. Meeting Room Audio-Visual Upgrades:

- **Project Overview:**
 - Multi-phase initiative to upgrade AV systems in large meeting spaces.
 - Year One (Completed): Four locations received upgrades: Headquarters, North Regional, Cliffdale, and Hope Mills libraries
 - Meeting rooms closed during June – construction period for all of those locations.
 - Year Two (Current Phase): Bordeaux, West Regional, Spring Lake, and East Regional.
 - Similar closure schedule anticipated for construction period.
- **Upgrade Features:**
 - Podium Replacement: Modern design replacing outdated 1980s-style podiums with large signage and device connectivity.
 - Projection Systems: New software and equipment.
 - Headquarters Special Features:
 - ✓ Giant monitor with Webex kit (only location to receive this feature).
 - ✓ Multi-screen capability depending on room position.
- **North Regional Transformation:**
 - Added three screens.
 - Removed outdated wooden panels and carpet walls.
 - Significantly improved room appearance and perceived size.
- **Cliffdale Regional:** Large center monitor installation completed.
- **Hope Mills:** Major aesthetic improvements including color scheme changes.

5. Library of Things Program:

- **Status: Preparing for launch**
 - Cooking Programs coming soon.
 - Learning and Innovation Manager created promotional video for staff excitement.
- **Mobile Kitchen Program:** Charlie Cart Mobile Kitchen units included in project
 - Project team developing rotation schedule for all library locations.
 - Specialized programming opportunities at each location.
- **Educational Resources:**
 - Charlie Cart project provides plug-and-play programs.
 - Originally designed for educational sector with national standards alignment.
 - Library adapting for "edutainment" approach without standardized testing requirements.
 - Includes specific recipes and timing instructions for activities.

6. System Personnel Changes

- **Strategic Restructuring Overview:**
 - Three position changes made to address staffing gaps and strategic priorities.
 - Changes designed to maximize existing talent without adding new positions.
 - No additional budget required for restructuring.

- **Position Changes – Events and Communications Specialist:**
 - Our former Community Engagement Specialist is now in our Programs Division as the Events and Communication Specialist.
 - Focus: Centralized marketing for program services and resources.
- **Community Engagement (CE) Librarian (New Position)**
 - Created from vacant Librarian I position and tailored it to be a CE Librarian I and we're recruiting for this role.
 - Primary focus areas:
 - ✓ Staffing outreach events in the community
 - ✓ Conducting tech classes and one-on-one public instruction
 - Narrowly focused on these two specific service areas
- **Programming Librarian Position**
 - Current staff member was previously the Adult Services Programming Librarian II but now she is a Programming Librarian II – giving the position a broader scope.
 - Rationale: Youth and adult programming require similar skills for different audiences.
 - Change eliminates duplicated work and streamlines operations.
- **Deputy Director Recruitment:**
 - Position currently posted and accepting applications.
 - Continuous recruitment process ongoing.
 - Target start date: September (pending candidate availability and relocation needs).

7. Cumberland County Literacy Council Partnership

- **Organization Structure:**
 - Formed through United Way partnership
 - Multiple community partners including library and county government
 - Added bilingual programming partner (same organization used for library's bilingual story times)
 - Mission: Increase literacy and break down barriers across the community
- **Library Involvement:**
 - Imagination Library Programming: Every Saturday at rotating library locations
 - Weekend story times accommodate families unable to attend weekday programs
 - Partnership with Dolly Parton Imagination Library through United Way
 - Developing volunteer networks and training processes
 - Program Hosting: Deploying volunteers to host United Way reading programs at library spaces

8. Friends of the Library Recognition:

- **Giant Battleship Game Purchase:**
 - Friends purchased large battleship puzzle/game for library system
 - Funded by a United Way grant for \$12,000
 - Friends provided supplemental funding for the purchase.
- **Programming Potential:**
 - Mobile community outreach capability and provides educational focus: Basic strategy, coordination, and logical thinking.
 - Multiple programs planned around the resource

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. **Trustee Nominating Committee Update:** Interviewing process a candidate to fill one vacant seat and Gloria Nelson's being reappointed: Committee Chair Ann McRae

Gloria Nelson completes her first term on December 31, 2025 and has agreed to be reappointed to a second term (2026-2028). Ann McRae's (my) second term will end on December 31, 2025 and I am not eligible for reappointment.

On July 1, 2025, the Nominating Committee met and interviewed Brian Tyler to fill the 1 vacant seat on the board. The nominating committee supports the reappointment of Gloria Nelson to a second term and the appointment of Brian Tyler to his first term (2026-2028). At the October 16, 2025 Trustee meeting, with a vote by the Board, both recommendations will be forwarded to the County Commissioners for consideration at their November 3, 2025 (9:00a.m.) meeting with a second vote at their November 17, 2025 meeting (6:45 p.m.)

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Book Display Policy Discussion:

- Library has collection policies (board-reviewed and approved) covering purchasing and shelving procedures
- No official policy currently exists for book displays
- Display Purpose and Goals:
 - Enhance collection visibility and usage
 - Connect patrons with information and resources
 - Highlight underused materials
 - Reflect diverse community interests
- Proposed Policy Direction:
 - Guidance to staff: Change displays from narrow topics to broader themes with multiple examples:
 - ✓ Instead of: Single-focus display on "ADHD"
 - ✓ Recommended: Broader display titled "All Brains Are Different"
 - ✓ Inclusive Content: ADHD materials, traumatic brain injury resources, mental health topics, memoirs (reference to Brian Wilson of Beach Boys having schizophrenia), self-help, fiction, non-fiction, true crime - all related to neurodiversity theme
 - **Additional Examples:**
 - ✓ TikTok Made Me Buy It: Mixed genres including true crime, fantasy, and other popular titles
 - ✓ Color-themed displays: "Blue covers" display with any book featuring blue covers
 - ✓ Seasonal themes: October displays with orange, yellow, or red-covered books
 - ✓ Family diversity: "All Families Are Different" instead of just "Mother's Day" - including single parents, pet parents, etc.
 - **Professional Ethics Rationale:**
 - ✓ Avoid inadvertent exclusion through overly narrow focus
 - ✓ Ensure equal access and representation across diverse community interests
 - ✓ Maintain professional librarian standards of inclusive service
 - **Current Implementation:**
 - ✓ Internal expectations already established with staff
 - ✓ New book displays expanded from 12-18 month rotation to ensure continued circulation
 - ✓ Recent example: Pride month display titled "Love is Love" included traditional and non-traditional family representations.
 - **Board Consideration:**
 - ✓ Question raised whether formal policy needed or if internal procedures sufficient – board says yes.
 - ✓ Consideration of current political climate surrounding libraries
 - ✓ Request for board guidance on policy development
 - ✓ Staff prepared to draft formal policy if board requests

B. Library Endowment Annual Comparison Report – Endowment Overview:

- **Fiscal Year Comparison:** FY25 vs FY26 totals decreased by few hundred dollars
- **Board Payout Rate:** Cumberland Community Foundation board set payout rate at 4% of trailing average
- **Current Impact:** Approximately \$300 reduction in available funds

C. Approval of the Library Endowment Trust and Library Endowment Fund Cumberland County, NC Disbursements

Chair Cedzo asked for a motion to approve the Library Endowment Trust and Library Endowment Fund disbursements.

MOTION: Trustee Nelson moved to approve the endowment disbursements

SECOND: Vice Chair McRae seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

D. Branch Report – Hope Mills Branch Manager Denice Enstine

Hope Mills Branch Manager Enstine shared programming statistics for FY25, comparative statistics for FY25 and FY24 circulation numbers, and took the Board of a photo tour of branch improvements.

E. Collection Development & Collection HQ Reports – Division Manager for Collection Development & Circulation, Pamela Kource

- TS team processed 41k+ items in FY25 and transitioned to their own location in the catalog, allowing for the final big change to our processes. New materials are now checked in before going to the branches, catching holds so those items go directly to the pick-up locations, reducing transit times.
- Collection diversity efforts continue to show results, we're on the second year of targeted funding for the Easy Books collection.
- Switched to BTCat for catalog records. This product has macros and other features which streamline cataloging, at a lower cost.
- HQU and CLF completed major weeding projects, but everyone made progress in efforts to catch up on the backlog of weeding. We're still managing the 2 year hiatus on weeding caused by the Covid shutdown.
- Book circulation was very slightly down. There were supply issues with our vendors which meant some hot titles were not available until demand had waned. AV circulation continues to decline as patrons embrace digital and streaming services.
- Six databases had a cost per use of under \$1 this year, with most of the rest falling into the \$4-5 per use range, which is standard.
- There was a 4-month delay in the PO for ebooks/audiobooks, which affected the fulfillment of holds. However, E-audiobook circulation continues to grow. Average cost per circ was below \$1.
- Magazines are back for FY26 and we're introducing the Library of Things collection on August 1, with a publicity push to begin in September. Focus of the initial LOT collection is STEAM, learning experiences and physical/mental health kits. The selection team is already working on FY26 kit ideas.

- F. **Other Business:** The next meeting will be October 16th. An email will be sent out to check everyone's availability for that date. If for some reason we're not going to be able to all attend that meeting, let us know and we'll coordinate for a different date.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, Chair Cedzo adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.