

CUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

MINUTES LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING OCTOBER 16, 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, October 16, 2025 in the Boardroom at the Headquarters library.

Trustees Present: Chair Dennis Cedzo, David Breece, Daniel Montoya, Gloria Nelson, and Pamela Story

Absent: Vice Chair Ann McRae (Excused)

Present from the Library: Library Director Heather Hall, Senior Division Manager for Collection Development & Circulation Pamela Kource, Division Manager for Programs Carla Brooks, Friends of the Library Vice President Liz Mileszko and the Director's Senior Administrative Professional Marili Melchionne

A. INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUEST: Chair Cedzo introduced Friends of the Library Vice President Liz Mileszko who gave the following report on behalf of the board:

- ✓ There are now 424 Friends members for 2025/26.
- ✓ Upcoming Book Sales – Nov 17th is the next member's sale, and the public sales begin Friday, Nov 21st thru Sunday, Nov 23rd.

II. APPROVAL OF TODAY'S MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: Trustee Nelson moved to approve today's meeting agenda.

SECOND: Trustee Montoya seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 24, 2025 REGULAR TRUSTEE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Trustee Nelson moved to approve the July 24, 2025 meeting minutes.

SECOND: Trustee Montoya seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

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

A. Service Award Recipients: Director Hall recognized and honored the following staff members for their years of service with the library:

Name	Title	Branch Location	Years of Svc.
Cindy Brown	Custodian	Headquarters	5
Deborah Jones	Admin. Technician	Headquarters	5
Adam Lindsay	Facilities Supervisor	Headquarters	5
Carmelita Torrey	Circulation Manager	Cliffdale	15

B. Director's Update:

Director Hall updated the board on the following items:

1. Recruitment & HR Updates

- Deputy Director recruitment: The top candidate has been identified; paperwork submitted to County HR. Effective October 1, 2025, North Carolina now requires state fingerprint background checks for offers of employment. Candidates may receive conditional offers while checks are pending. Due to a regional backlog, clearances may take 1–4 weeks, delaying new employee start dates.

2. **Budget Season (FY2027 Planning)**

County departments are submitting requests for ITS (technology maintenance), major repairs (<\$100k), and CIP projects (>\$100k). The library aims to present a comprehensive, high-quality request package.

Key items under consideration include:

- Twenty-five laptops and accessories to outfit the first-floor flexible programming lab (~\$30,000).
- Systemwide security camera upgrades (CIP; previously approved for the current fiscal year; expected resubmittal ~ \$250,000).
- Entrance door replacements at select locations to reduce maintenance and improve utility efficiency.
- New flooring: Hope Mills (entire building following recent activity room upgrade); Headquarters flexible learning space; Conference Room 1 (HQ) to support Artist-in-Residence program needs.
- Replacement of traditional water fountains with bottle fillers across all locations.
- Bordeaux library: Glass enclosure for the new children's area to improve acoustics and programming capacity.

3. **Music & Movement Garden (Headquarters)**

Cumberland Community Foundation (CCF) funded outdoor space combining music and motion. Instruments are designed for high-use urban environments. The garden will be on the right (when facing the building); durable finishes prioritized with select color accents. A Movement Garden will feature seasonal vinyl paths on concrete pads (with QR codes linking to programs), select seating, and fencing for safety (ADA access). Supplemental funding opportunities will be explored (county requests and others).

4. **Marketing & ADA Compliance**

Centralized marketing function working with County Communications; style guide and cross-training is underway.

New ADA requirements effective April 2026: all public-facing content and linked resources must be ADA compliant. Non-compliance carries substantial fines per infraction. Centralization will ensure fidelity and compliance.

5. **Digital Forms & Customer Feedback**

A new public-facing 'Customer Suggestions' form will route submissions directly to the Director for categorization and response coordination. Tagging will enable trend tracking and branch-level insights. Comment cards will remain available for those customers who have not gone digital.

6. **2026 Thematic Programming Calendar**

A systemwide thematic calendar will guide programs, services, resources, and marketing:

- January – First Starts & Lifelong Learning
- February – Love & Acceptance
- March – Storytelling & Creativity
- April – Explore Science & Nature (NC Science Festival)
- May – Life Skills & Testing Success
- June – Summer & Destinations (Summer Reading kickoff)
- July – Freedom to Read & Learn (America's 250th)
- August – Back to School & Music (Back in the Groove)
- September – Libraries Empower (Banned Books Week; Library Card Sign-Up Month)
- October – Autumn & Animals (31 Days of Love with Animal Services)
- November – Cooking, Culture & Community
- December – Holidays & Year-End Reflection

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Information only – At their October 6, 2025 meeting, the Commissioners had their first vote and reappointed Gloria Nelson and appointed Brian Tyler and Sabrina Steigelman to the Trustee Board.

B. 2025 Post Summer Reading Program Report – Division Manager for Programs Carla Brooks

Brooks shared the following information with the group:

Our adult programmers have strived to increase their offerings for our patrons. We achieved an 18% increase in the number of programs with an almost 6% increase in attendance in the last fiscal year from the prior year. We went from 776 in-person programs to 917 and our attendance went from 7,234 to 7,645. We decreased our virtual programs from 53 to 48 with almost doubling attendance from 3,369 to 6,412.

Teen programming increased some. We had a 13% with our in-person programs from 405 to 458 with a decrease in attendance from 4,482 to 3,708. We stopped virtual programs for teens as there weren't many views therefore making it not worth staff time.

Children's programming has flourished even more. Our in-person programs went from 1,513 to 1,719 with an almost 20% increase in attendance going from 46,596 to 55,394. We also decreased our children's virtual programs from 8 to 5 with an attendance increase from 1,375 to 1,709. Our children's virtual programs are only the bilingual programs we hosted monthly at HQU.

2025 Summer Reading Challenge

Our Summer Reading Challenge was successful this year. We decided to track all participants by minutes read. We had the stamps again this year. Participants were able to get extra entries into the drawings by visiting other branches and getting a stamp on their reading log.

There were 1,164 participants in our children's program with a total of 835,206 minutes read. This was a 2% increase and almost 3% more in the number of minutes read. For Teen programs, they had 263,117 minutes read. There was a 13% increase in participants and an 8% increase in minutes read.

For our adult program, there was an increase of participants with 693. Adults read for 1,059,244 minutes. That is an increase of over 20% more participants and almost 27% more minutes read. The participation in missions on READsquared also increased by over 45%. We presented 297 in-library programs for children with 11,935 attending. We also presented 60 outside children's programs with 1,777 attending. That is a total of 357 children's programs with a total attendance of 13,712. That was a 5% increase in the number of attendees from last summer. We had 61 in-library programs for teens with 481 attending. We also presented 9 outside teen programs with 215 attending. That is a total of 70 teen programs with a total attendance of 696.

We presented 160 in-library programs for adults with 1,145 attending. We also presented 32 outside adult programs with 180 attending. That is a total of 192 adult programs with a total attendance of 1,325. We also presented 8 virtual programs with a total attendance of 632.

Summertime Kids was successful. We served 893 children and teens. We visited 10 different organizations in 32 sessions. There were less camps this year due to the Boys & Girls Club not participating as they reorganize. A total of 1,786 books and 893 tote bags were distributed and this was all made possible by a grant the Friends of the Cumberland County Public Library, Inc. received from Cumberland Community Foundation.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of 2026 Trustee Officers – Chair Dennis Cedzo

Nominations were received for Chair: David Breece and Daniel Montoya. A vote indicated a majority in favor of David Breece for Chair. A motion to confirm David as Chair for 2026 was made by Trustee Nelson and seconded by Trustee Story. The motion carried unanimously. Then Daniel Montoya was nominated for Vice Chair and a motion and second was received and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Proposed Changes to Section 5 – Safety Policies – Director Heather Hall

The Board considered revisions to support equitable enforcement and a safe, welcoming environment. Key points included:

- Respectful conduct; no solicitation; family-appropriate dress (clothing must cover the body; shoes required); service animals only.
- Belongings: must remain within sight; may not obstruct aisles/egress or become unsafe/unsanitary; excessive volume may be limited; staff may request consolidation or reduction; library is not responsible for unattended items.
- Facilities: restrooms/water fountains may not be used for bathing/shaving/washing clothing — clarified as “no bathing of any kind.”
- Noise/environment: no speakerphone use in shared areas (accommodations available in private rooms); maintain clean, welcoming spaces.
- Stay-awake standard applied to support safety and appropriate use of space.

Hall shared that a public communications plan will accompany rollout. Effective date targeted for November 1, 2025, pending legal review.

MOTION: Trustee Story moved to approve the proposed policy changes as presented.

SECOND: Trustee Nelson seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

C. Proposed 2026 Board of Trustee Meeting Calendar – Chair Dennis Cedzo

Discussion was held regarding frequency (quarterly vs. every other month). By unanimous consent, the 2026 calendar approval was tabled until the January 15, 2026 meeting to allow the full seven-member Board to discuss and vote.

D. Recognition of Outgoing Trustee Ann McRae – Chair Dennis Cedzo

The Board expressed appreciation for Ann McRae’s exemplary service, leadership, event support, and collaboration on personnel matters. In lieu of the traditional engraved globe, and at Ann’s request, a \$125 donation (equivalent cost) will be made to the Library Endowment Fund by the Friends of the Library.

E. 2025 GivingTuesday Campaign – Chair Dennis Cedzo

Cedzo shared that GivingTuesday falls on December 2, 2025, with campaign activities beginning November 24 (early donations may be accepted starting Nov 1). Board members are encouraged to participate to leverage matching funds and to help achieve 100% Board participation.

F. Other Business: Chair Cedzo thanked the board for allowing him to be Chair for the past few years. He knows that David and Daniel will do a wonderful job. Looking forward to a new year.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, Chair Cedzo adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.