

**RUTHERFORD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF MEETING
Monday, August 25, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Allison Belt
Lisa Brewer
Beth Duffield
Benjamin Groce
Sam Huddleston
Susan Quesenberry
Darrell Thomas
Cody York

MEMBER/S ABSENT:

Dina Piazza
Jeffrey Wienczek

One (1) seat on the board is currently vacant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Luanne James
Kathleen Tyree, TEC Branch Manager
Leslie Collum, FOLL President
Cynthia Matthews, SRRL Asst. Director
Elsa Britt, Recorder

PUBLIC (who signed in):

Tatiana Silvas
Josh Walker

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, August 25, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. at the Council Chamber, City of Murfreesboro City Hall, 111 W. Vine St., Murfreesboro, TN.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER/S:

- Luanne James, Director Rutherford County Library System.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (action items on the agenda): None

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING:

The Minutes of Meeting held on July 21, 2025 were presented for consideration. There being no amendments, changes, additions or corrections Mr. Huddleston made a motion to approve the

Minutes as presented. Ms. Duffield seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote. Those who were present voted “aye”. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: None.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

Budget and Finance: Ms. Brewer was unable to open the financial reports in the board packet and requested that it be deferred for the next meeting.

By-Laws & Policies: Ms. Piazza was absent.

Development & Acquisitions: Vacant.

Facility Maintenance: Vacant.

Nominating:

Personnel Committee: Vacant

Strategic Planning: Vacant.

Ad Hoc Committee: Mr. York reported having initiated several conversations with both the city and county mayors to discuss future branch development. These discussions are encouraging but complex, indicating ongoing negotiations. The Rutherford County is pursuing the purchase of the Bank of America building. This plan has reduced the county's immediate interest in funding a new library building compared to six (6) months ago. However, the county remains open to using the building for library purposes or supporting other branch initiatives in other locations (Blackman area, South Church, or Siegel area). No firm decisions have been made, and all possibilities (additions, replacements, or reconfiguration) are being considered.

Mr. York invited board members interested in serving on the ad hoc committee to join, specifically to contribute to discussions about locations, building, and future planning.

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.

Ms. James asked if the board has any questions pertaining to reports submitted by the managers/supervisors. Ms. James then proceeded to report about the Foundation Board meeting where a proposal/request was presented for funding to convert a decommissioned school bus donated by Murfreesboro City Schools, into a second bookmobile. The Foundation board's feedback was positive and is seriously considering the request.

Ms. James also discussed two (2) action items in the Agenda:

1. PM 206 – Use of Library by Non-Rutherford County Residents. This policy governs how non-residents of Rutherford County can access library services, including physical materials and electronic resources (Hoopla, Libby & Overdrive). The amendments address issues with overuse of electronic resources by non-residents, particularly through e-cards. The proposed amendments to the policy were as follows:

- Issue a new Out-of-County Library Card and eliminate the current eCard offering.
- An Out-of-County Library Card will be available to Non-Rutherford County residents for an annual fee of \$25.00. Exemptions: Military personnel and students residing outside Rutherford County will be eligible for a free Out-of-County card with valid military or student ID. This card grants full circulation privileges equal to those of resident cardholders, and is subject to yearly review by the board.
- Current eCard holders will have their cards expire based on their enrollment date (within the next year) to avoid overwhelming staff with simultaneous expirations.

Mr. Huddleston made a motion to the proposed amendments to PM 206 effective October 1, 2025. Mr. Groce seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote. Those who were present voted “aye”. Motion carried.

Mr. Groce move to amend the main motion by adding a 90-day validity limit to section a.2 “Temp card” of PM 206. Ms. Quesenberry seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote. Those who were present voted “aye”. Motion carried.

Mr. York credited Ms. James for identifying eCard as a weakness in the system because it allows excessive usage of electronic resources, specifically Hoopla, by non-Rutherford residents, including international users.

2. HR 2007 – Holidays

Ms. James requested board approval to close the RCLS branches on Saturday (August 30) and Sunday (August 31) immediately preceding Labor Day, September 1, 2025.

- The extended closure complies with policy HR 2007 – Holidays, which states: *if all funding bodies recognize a holiday, RCLS will also recognize that holiday.*

- All local municipal offices that fund RCLS operations are traditionally closed on weekends.
- The closure will have no impact on the Maintenance of Effort agreement with the SRRL. In addition, there will be no financial impact on the municipal funds supporting salaries.
- Closing on the weekend allows staff to spend time with family or travel without using leave. This was seen as a way to show appreciation to staff.
- Data from door counts showed a significant drop in library usage on major holidays, including Labor Day, making closure cost-effective compared to operational expenses.

The board engaged in a robust discussion with one member suggested shortening the hours or closing only on Sunday to accommodate school children and workers who rely on Saturday access.

Mr. Huddleston made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Thomas seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote. Those who were present voted “aye” with one (1) “nay”. Motion carried.

Ms. James will notify the public immediately of the closure via social media, the library website and other channels. Mr. York suggested that Ms. James review the calendar for other holidays where similar closures might be warranted. However, the board remain open to revisiting the closure decision if future data indicates significant public impact.

Stones River Regional Library (SRRL): Reports were submitted in the board packet. Ms. Huddleston highlighted the following from her reports:

- Mr. Groce signed up for the Trustee Workshop to be held on September 10, 2025 at Brentwood Library.
- Awarded Core Competency certificate to Hayden Solinger for completing 10 hours of training.
- Provided orientation packets for new trustees.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (non-agenda items):

1. Tatiana Silvas: Before proceeding with her public comments, Ms. Silvas mentioned that she requested a copy of the RCLS budget on May 6, 2025. To date, she has not received it yet. Mr. York replied that there is a process in accessing public records one has to follow.
As for her public comment, Ms. Silvas spoke on book bans, citing scientific inaccuracies in other non-fiction books, argued against censorship based on personal/political views, and need for diverse perspectives.
2. Josh Walker: Addressed the board on Trans existence as scientific/historical fact, opposed bans as Christian nationalist agenda, and emphasized intellectual freedom.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Old Business

- Proposed Bylaws Revisions

Mr. York introduced proposed changes to the RCLS bylaws, prompted by inefficiencies in the current committee structure due to recent law changes requiring public notices and open meetings.

No vote was taken, as bylaw changes require a 10-day public notice per existing rules; the proposal will be placed on the next meeting's agenda as an action item. (NOTE: Mr. York distributed a draft proposal for the board to review during the meeting.)

The proposal includes the elimination of standing committee structure and the addition of the Facilities Maintenance Liaison. The treasurer retains budget oversight and the full board handle committee functions, with ad hoc committees for specific tasks such as branch planning. Preliminary discussions were exchanged.

Due to the urgency of the matter concerning the leaking issue at the Smyrna Library, Mr. York, as chairman of the board, appointed Ms. Belt to be the Facilities Maintenance Committee Chair, due to her expertise in the field until the bylaws are finalized. Ms. Belt accepted the role.

- PM 500 – Board of Directors

Mr. York proposed to remove section (i) of the PM 500 which mandates a fixed agenda order for board meetings, in order to allow greater flexibility in structuring agendas based on meeting needs.

Mr. York also proposed to add a provision to section (h) requiring that "agendas and supporting documents should be posted on the library board webpage when possible" to enhance public transparency.

Mr. Huddleston made a motion to adopt the proposed change to PM 500, section (h) as stated. Ms. Quesenberry seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote. Those who were present voted "aye". Motion carried.

- New Business

- Budget amendment – Hoopla

Mr. York proposed that the budget for FY 2025-26 be amended with an increase of \$165,000 to be split between the City of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County (with the County covering most reflecting their funding roles), to sustain Hoopla, a digital media service. Additionally, Hoopla checkouts will be reduced from 7 to 3-4 checkouts per user per month and limit to Rutherford County residents only. Limiting electronic resources to county residents prioritizes those who fund the library through taxes.

Ms. James presented a data showing 85% of Hoopla usage by County residents and the other 15% by non-county residents via eCards.

Ms. Duffield made a motion to adopt the budget amendment request for a \$165,000 increase to sustain Hoopla, to be split between Rutherford County and the City of Murfreesboro, with a reduction in Hoopla checkouts from 7 to 3-4 per month, effective upon budget approval by the funding bodies. Ms. Belt seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote. Those who were present voted “aye”. Motion carried.

Mr. Huddleston moved to amend the main motion by adding a provision to restrict access to electronic resources (Hoopla, Libby & Overdrive) to Rutherford County residents only effective upon budget approval. Ms. Quesenberry seconded. Mr. York called for a voice vote. Those who were present voted “aye”. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Approved by:

Susan Quesenberry

Secretary

RCLS Board

/eab