

MINUTES OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONTHLY MEETING
June 18, 2025

Members Present: Susan Montalvo-Gesser, President
Rodney Ellis, Treasurer
Kathi Mattas, Secretary
Kevin Dorth
Al Mattingly

Others Present: Erin Waller, Director
Debbie Young, Business Manager
Comm. Janie Marksberry, Fiscal Court Liaison

The meeting was called to order in the 2nd floor public lounge by Mrs. Montalvo-Gesser at 4:59 p.m.

Mrs. Montalvo-Gesser called for approval of the May 2025 minutes. The motion to approve was made by Kevin Dorth, seconded by Rodney Ellis, and carried unanimously.

Rodney Ellis presented the Treasurer's Report. With no questions or corrections, the motion to approve was made by Kathi Mattas, seconded by Al Mattingly, and carried unanimously.

Erin Waller presented the Director's Report, including:

1. The summer reading program kickoff at the end of May involved about 1,000 people.
2. Library Outreach staff have been all over town for various programs with our community partners.
3. There is no construction project update as of yet.

There was no Old Business.

There were two items of New Business.

First, there was consideration and discussion of two items: a proposed Request for Reconsideration Policy DCPL staff had formulated, and an updated RFR form. After discussion, concerns were noted and suggestions made on various aspects of each, and Mrs. Waller indicated that staff would incorporate the board's recommended changes to each for further consideration at the July meeting.

Second, there was discussion of The Bare Naked Book, coming to the board through the RFR process. The board's initial motion to keep it in the juvenile department was met with three "no" votes and two "yes" votes. Then, a suggestion was made to reconsider the review committee's original motion to classify the book under "juvenile parenting" which keeps it within in the children's department, but held concerns that the existing location of JPar books was within easy reach of young children. There were three "yes" votes to reconsider that idea, with a followup recommendation receiving three "yes" votes to instruct the library director to look into creating a JPar books location, such as with higher shelving, in order to keep the JPar collection within the children's department area for parents'

convenience, while also making it less accessible to young children. Director Waller stated that she and staff would look into possible solutions.

Susan Montalvo-Gesser called for Public Comment. There were about 40 people in attendance, with several signed up to speak to the Board.

Kevin Whear gave thanks for the board's efforts made in the process and discussion this meeting. He asked that another policy be looked at concerning the choices and decisions made regarding the library materials selection process, to seek to fit the culture of our local community.

Robin Scott questioned the board's continued allowing display and accessibility of sexually explicit materials to minors in violation of KRS 531.030, also noting that the restricted card is worthless if minors have such easy access to view such material in the library without checking it out. She urged the board to create policy to keep all such adult books downstairs, on the Frederica St. side of the building. She is "exasperated" that her tax dollars are used "to buy obscene and sexually explicit books," which are then exhibited to minors against KY law.

Claudia Ramisch spoke of her experiences getting into ministry and about the lack of library materials for girls interested in such. She contrasted this unavailability of materials, "being not seen," with having books about abuse, rape, trafficking, lgbtq, etc., "helping us feel seen."

Jen Vogel said relocating sexually explicit or lgbtq YA books is censorship, that because it is "uncomfortable for adults" does not mean it is inappropriate for teens. The library is to protect access for all and is where all are equal.

Abigail Matthews brought concerns about the library's associated apps, specifically "Beanstack" for the children's summer reading program. When logging the child book Miss Meow on her child's account and with her child right beside her, she was shocked that the app showed a different Miss Meow book with a pictured woman in lingerie. She is disappointed in library-use apps that are supposed to be "for children" but cannot be trusted.

Sarah Jacobs, the DCPL teen librarian for 10 years, outlined her criteria for selecting the Young Adult (age 13-18) reading materials and added that her personal viewpoints do not dictate what is on the shelf to meet the needs of the entire community.

Aaron Thomas spoke as a parent and long-time resident concerned about community organizations like the library not honoring God nor helping to raise children well, rejoicing in their God-given sexuality rather than perversion.

Cheryl Brown said that people were misinterpreting Bible verses and disagreed with the claims of obscenity in the library. She referenced a board member who was supposed to have "no hidden

agenda,” then said that that was “not true.” She said it was wrong to demonize those you disagree with, and that children were more likely to get abused elsewhere than at the library.

Forest Roberts said that the Bible should be restricted because of the sexual and violent stories, listing some examples, and adding that “context matters.” She said that removing or restricting books does not make a safer library; this is about control, not protection.

Kathy Estes stated from her seat, “Thank you all for what you do.”

Trey Matthews was glad to see the board looking at these books, and stated that comparing the Bible to these issues was not equivalency. He thanked the board for reconsideration of The Bare Naked Book.

Percy Adkins, Apollo High School graduate heading to WKU, stated having read all kinds of books as a small child helped form their thinking as being queer, then later as trans. Percy said finding books about procedures and social impact, as well as access to that information and how it applies, was helpful.

Following Public Comment, Kathi Mattas addressed the false statement about “a board member having a hidden agenda.” She said that it was known this falsehood was directed at her, having also been previously printed in a local newspaper after being publicly stated to the Fiscal Court. Kathi Mattas stated that she had not sought the position, but was asked and was willing to accept the nomination and serve. At her nomination and since, she was open and forthright with all of the county commissioners and reporters in phone interviews, as well as at board meetings, about her background, her faith, having no affiliation with the two groups at odds over library issues, and that she did not promote burning or banning books, yet also did not support sexually explicit materials being placed in the children nor teen departments. She reiterated having “no hidden agenda.”

Commissioner Janie Marksberry expressed thankfulness for the board discussions. She also noted that during Public Comment it was “odd” to hear those who complained about the quoting or referencing of the Bible and Scripture to then quote and reference the Bible and Scripture themselves. She encouraged all that we, as a community, may not agree on everything, but maybe can find some common ground. She was thankful for those who had come and for being allowed to speak.

With no objection, Susan Montalvo-Gesser adjourned the meeting at 6:40 pm.

The next meeting of the Daviess County Public Library Board of Trustees will be held at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, July 16, 2025, in the second floor public lounge.

