

SHAKER HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting  
April 21, 2025

Attendance

Members Present: Dr. Barnard, Dr. Bynum, Ms. Cole-Kelly, Dr. Rogen, Ms. Tendulkar, Mr. Turner, Mr. Yépez

Staff Present: Ms. Ritchey, Ms. Switzer, Implementation Team

Dr. Barnard called the regular meeting of the Shaker Heights Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 6:34 p.m. at the Main Library.

Roll Call: Dr. Barnard, Dr. Bynum, Ms. Cole-Kelly, Dr. Rogen, Ms. Tendulkar, Mr. Turner, Mr. Yépez

President's Report

A. Introduce New Trustee

Dr. Barnard introduced the new Board member Dr. Mario Bynum.

B. Board President's Statement

Dr. Barnard read a statement about the April 1, 2025 shooting at Main Library:

"On behalf of the trustees, I want to thank the library staff, the City, the Schools, the Police, and the community for their efforts and support in the aftermath of the tragic shooting which took place at Main Library the afternoon of April 1.

As Trustees, we are heartbroken and disturbed that an act of gun violence took place in the Shaker Library, which is one of the cornerstones of our community. The library has long been a safe gathering place for all members of our community to connect, to learn, and to grow.

Tonight, the Board will begin a discussion of what's next for us. We need to be both a welcoming and a safe place for everyone. The library has already put in place a greater police presence at Main, and we will continue to work with the library staff and the community to determine what safety measures are most appropriate. This will not be a quick or easy conversation, and we welcome participation by the community so that we can get it right.

Once again, we appreciate the outpouring of support for the library over the course of the past few weeks. We remain deeply saddened by the violence and loss of life. At the same time, as Library trustees we are deeply committed to having the Shaker Library be a safe and welcoming place for every member of our community."

Board Discussion with Shaker Heights Police Chief Hudson and Shaker Heights Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, Colleen Jackson

Chief Hudson provided an overview of the April 1 shooting, though he noted that he was unable to answer questions about it because there is an ongoing investigation. The incident occurred at 4:42 p.m. and the first police unit responded within forty-seven seconds. Police learned that the shooter left the building immediately and he was in police custody within eighteen minutes. Chief Hudson commended Safety and Security Manager Gary Harris for his assistance and noted that the library has excellent security cameras.

Ms. Jackson shared information about how she helped staff prepare for reopening and information about how individuals process trauma. She said that the library is a safe space, and it is not accurate to say that the library isn't safe because of an isolated incident. She emphasized the importance of disrupting and avoiding bias as a result of the incident.

Dr. Rogen thanked Chief Hudson and Ms. Jackson for the information and for their support. Ms. Switzer noted that Ms. Jackson and the police have helped staff feel safer and supported. Other Board members also expressed gratitude for their work.

Ms. Jackson said that the Youth Services staff has been doing important work with young people and that the reason they come to the library is because of library staff. She commended Youth Services Manager Jessica Smith for her advocacy for and support of children and teens.

Community Comment

Patti London said she has been a library customer for 35 years and is concerned about the possibility of armed security and metal detectors. She feels safe in the library. The library is open to all and access is especially important to those without the resources to purchase what the library offers for free. Barriers to access are not aligned with the library's values and mission statement. She knows the young people can be rowdy, impulsive, and excitable, but that does not scare her. She asked the Board not to decide about access to resources out of a place of fear.

Sara Schiavoni, President of Shaker Youth Soccer Association, said she was sorry for the trauma the staff and community experienced April 1. She noted that at the May 2024 Board meeting she commented, asking for cooperation between the schools, library, and city to provide safety services around the library. She asked again that the schools, library, and city work together and said she understands that there are jurisdiction issues. She knows the parking lot belongs to the city and not the library but hopes the city and library will work together.

Board Discussion of Library Security

Ms. Switzer said the library has been contracting with a security company to provide security officers during certain hours at Main Library. Additionally, the library has two afterschool associates, whose focus is on building relationships with young people, de-escalating behavior issues, and enforcing the code of

conduct. The afterschool associates have helped reduce youth-related incidents significantly. The staffing model is based on successful practices at other libraries.

Ms. Switzer recommended hiring an outside company to do an independent security audit of library facilities and operations.

Dr. Barnard said she supported having a security audit done. She noted that the results of security audits are not shared publicly, as they are security records and thus not a public record.

Dr. Rogen said it's useful to have an audit by an outside agency and is a reasonable expense. He said it will be reassuring to the community, to the staff, and to the Board to have the audit recommendations.

Other Board members all agreed that they support having a security audit, both to validate good practices the library already has and to recommend improvements.

#### Approve Off-Duty Police Costs

Ms. Switzer said that the library reopened April 5 after the shooting at Main Library on April 1. Since reopening, the library has been contracting with off-duty police officers to be present at Main Library during open hours.

Ms. Switzer said there has been a positive response from staff and customers to having off-duty officers at the library and recommended keeping off-duty officers through the end of July, to provide time to complete the security audit, review the results, and discuss options with the Board.

The cost for off-duty police coverage is \$4,554 a week. She requested approval for off-duty police officers for a not-to-exceed amount of \$74,000 through July 31, 2025. She noted that contracting with off-duty police officers to cover all the hours Main Library is open during the year would cost approximately \$246,000 per year based on 2025 rates.

Dr. Barnard asked if the afterschool associates were still scheduled even though the off-duty police were working. Ms. Switzer replied that the afterschool associates are currently scheduled after school on school days and that will continue as originally planned.

Dr. Barnard noted that she would like to have decisions about security made by the July Board meeting.

Ms. Cole-Kelly asked if the off-duty officers would handle security off library property, such as the parking lot and playground. Ms. Switzer said that off-duty officers would be handling incidents on library property, not patrolling the playground and parking lot. However, they are police officers first and off-duty second, so if there was an urgent incident requiring a police presence, the off-duty officers would respond as needed. Ms. Switzer said the police department had increased patrols in the area and the recreation department had a playground monitor scheduled in the afternoons.

Dr. Rogen said maintaining off-duty officers while the security audit is completed makes sense. He noted that full-time coverage by off-duty officers may not be sustainable long-term because of the cost, but said he fully supports it through the end of July.

Mr. Yépez agreed that the security audit was an excellent plan and emphasized the importance of completing it promptly. He said he didn't want to have off-duty officers as a fixture of the library unless the security audit recommends it and determines that the impact on safety is commensurate with the significant cost and potential impact on library access.

2025-14 Mr. Turner moved, and Ms. Tendulkar seconded the motion to approve contracting with off-duty police officers to cover all the hours the Main Library is open through July 31, 2025, not to exceed \$74,000.

Roll Call: Ayes: Dr. Barnard, Dr. Bynum, Ms. Cole-Kelly, Dr. Rogen, Ms. Tendulkar, Mr. Turner, Mr. Yépez

Nays: None. Motion carried.

#### Consent Agenda

- Approval of Minutes – March 17, 2025 Regular Meeting
- Financial Statements – February 28, 2025 Revised
- Financial Statements – March 31, 2025
- Budget Adjustment
- Gifts to be accepted and appropriated to the designated funds

General Fund (101-6510)	
Jacobson Multimedia, LLC	\$25

Frances Belman Fund (210-6110)	
Marilyn Gardner & Marsha Moses	
In honor of Barbara Winicki's birthday	\$50

Marilyn Kammer Memorial Fund (209-6510)	
Randy Kammer	
In memory of Helene Edwards	\$25

2025-15 Dr. Rogen moved, and Ms. Cole-Kelly seconded the motion to accept the consent agenda items as submitted.

Roll Call: Ayes: Dr. Barnard, Dr. Bynum, Ms. Cole-Kelly, Dr. Rogen, Ms. Tendulkar, Mr. Turner, Mr. Yépez

Nays: None. Motion carried.

## Fiscal Officer's Report

### A. PLF Update

Ms. Ritchey reviewed the state biennial budget process related to the Public Library Fund (PLF). She noted that Governor DeWine proposed increasing the PLF from 1.7% to 1.75% of the state General Revenue Fund (GRF). However, the budget proposal by Ohio House of Representatives eliminates the requirement that a percentage of the state General Revenue Fund (GRF) be dedicated to the PLF and creates a line-item appropriation to fund public libraries. The House's proposed allocation for the PLF is lower than the Governor's proposal.

Ms. Switzer said that the House's budget proposal also includes language that would require a public library to place material related to sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression in a portion of the library that is not primarily open to the view of minors.

The House budget has been sent to the Ohio Senate for their consideration. The Senate will create their own budget. Senate budget hearings will take place from April to mid-June. After that the Governor's Budget, House Budget, and Senate Budget will be considered by the Conference Committee, with final approval of the budget required by June 30, 2025.

## Director's Report

### A. Director's Report

Ms. Switzer shared her written report. She noted her appreciation for the staff and for the outpouring of support from the community after the tragic shooting on April 1. She expressed gratitude for the relationships the Library has built with partners at the City and Schools via Forward Together. She said, "A difficult time has been made a little less difficult because of our partners who supported us, collaborated to help ensure library staff and customers are safe, and helped us quickly coordinate details and communicate with residents."

## New Business

### A. Personnel Action

#### Hired:

Sabrina Lopez, Technology Associate, full-time, level 20, effective 3/24/2025

#### Time Status Change:

Ashley Hawkins, Adult Services Associate, half time to full-time, level 18, effective 3/3/2025

#### End of Employment:

Gino Harris, Library Resource Security Officer, part-time, level 14, effective 3/11/2025

Alaine Kay, Technology Experience Specialist, full-time, level 22, effective 3/1/2025

Tracie Pickett, Adult Services Associate, half-time, level 18, effective 3/8/2025

B. Other New Business

None.

Adjournment

Since there was no further business to discuss, Dr. Bynum moved, and Mr. Turner seconded the motion to adjourn the regular board meeting at 7:40 p.m. and trustees unanimously agreed. The next regular meeting of the Shaker Heights Public Library Board of Trustees is scheduled for Monday, May 19, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

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Laura Barnard, President

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Susan Ritchey, Fiscal Officer

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Rajani Tendulkar, Secretary