

**East Cleveland Public Library
Special Board of Library Trustees Meeting Minutes
(To Discuss the Meeting Room Policy)**

Saturday, September 10, 2022
14101 Euclid Ave., East Cleveland, Ohio 44112
Lower Auditorium 1:00 PM

Mr. Mays called the meeting to order at 1:08 PM.

MP3
SBOT20220910

I. **CALL TO ORDER**
A. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Mr. Rashid, Mr. Silvera, Ms. Shaheed, Mr. Mays, Ms. Sharpley

A quorum exists. Present – 5; Absent - 2

Also present at the table were: Mr. Carlos Latimer (Executive Director), Ms. A'Sarah Green (IT Network Manager), Mr. E.F. Turner III (Exec. Admin. Assistant)

II. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mr. Mays asks for approval of the agenda.

Discussion: None

The agenda is approved through consensus.

The agenda is approved.

III. OLD BUSINESS

(None)

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Latimer stated that there is a need to tighten up the library's meeting room policy and to ensure that we're following the American Library Association's interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights concerning meeting rooms. There is also a need to clarify the policy due to past challenges of the policy by library patrons.

Mr. Latimer later referenced the second paragraph of the Library Bill of Rights by saying publicly funded libraries are not obligated to provide meeting spaces to the public, but if libraries choose to do so, such spaces are considered designated public forums, and legal precedents, host libraries may not exclude any group based on a subject matter to discuss, or the ideas for which the group advocates. Mr. Latimer went on to say that if ECPL provides meeting rooms, it has no control over the content of those meetings. By following the norms set by the Ohio Library Council and the American Library Association, this can prevent the library from being sued.

Mr. Silvera inquired as to what aspects of ECPL's current meeting policy is in conflict with the Library Bill of Rights?

Mr. Latimer replied that the library's community has differing interpretations of a public meeting verse a private meeting. He also stated that community has inquired about the use of the Performing Arts Center, but that requires user to have insurance that will cover damages or injuries. Because of this, ECPL must provide clarity in its policy. This is why the Performing Arts Center is removed from the Meeting Room Policy.

Mr. Rashid agrees, given the investment that ECPL has put into the Performing Arts Center. Mr. Rashid also stated that there should be a fee if people want to have a private meeting.

Mr. Mays asked what constitutes a private versus a public meeting and why a person having a private meeting should have to pay?

Mr. Silvera said that he thinks what distinguishes a private meeting from a public meeting, is when the patron can limit access to the meeting space. This is what the patron would be paying for.

Mr. Latimer stated that ECPL's Code of Conduct would still have to be followed regardless of the meeting being public or private.

Ms. Green stated that the current policy has different pricing for non-profits verses for profit organizations.

Ms. Sharpley asked how do we set the pricing?

Mr. Rashid stated that it would make everything easier if patrons were charged based on them wanting a public or private meeting.

Ms. Green stated that there is no need to charge fees for set up or the use of equipment. However, there are currently items in the current policy that covers charges for damaged equipment.

Ms. Shaheed inquired about how the library bills patrons.

Mr. Latimer suggested that only patrons wanting a private meeting will be charged a deposit. However, all patrons will be charged for any damages. If charges are not received then the patrons will not be able to use ECPL's meeting spaces.

Mr. Turner suggested charging \$20 per hour for private meetings (instead of a flat fee) to help prevent the meetings from running over their scheduled time. Everyone agreed with adding that to the policy

Mr. Silvera suggested having signs designating that a meeting is private. Everyone agreed that this would eliminate any questions people may have at the time of the meeting.

It is agreed that by everyone that violators of the policy who are banned can appeal to the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Silvera suggested that we adopt some of the language from the State Library of Ohio's policy. He referred everyone to the last paragraph that stated "We reserve the right to limit the frequency of use when you cancel reservations. Booking requests are reviewed before granting approval. Reservations are made on a first come first serve basis. The needs of the East Cleveland Public Library take precedence over other groups.

In reference to the Performing Arts Center, Mr. Rashid stated that information has been sent over to the library's attorney about drafting a contractual agreement, for the purpose of renting the Performing Arts Center. We are still waiting for a response, and it may be a good idea to table this part of the discussion until we get feedback for the attorney.

There was discussion on being open outside of library operating hours and staffing during those kinds of events.

Ms. Sharpley expressed concern that people will confuse non-ECPL programs with ECPL programs if we grant usage of the Performing Arts Center.

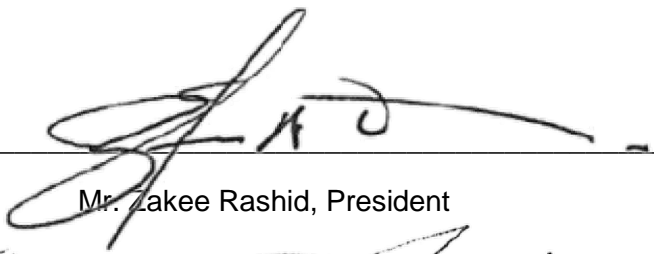
Mr. Latimer suggested that no program shall have access to the Performing Arts Center unless it is sponsored or co-sponsored by ECPL. Everyone agrees that the Performing Arts Center should not be considered a meeting room.

V. ADJOURNMENT

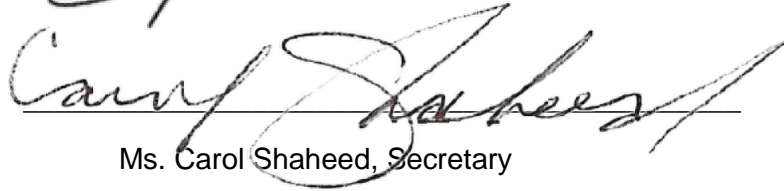
Meeting is adjourned by consensus.

[Meeting is adjourned at 2:55 PM]

Meeting is adjourned.



Mr. Zakee Rashid, President



Ms. Carol Shaheed, Secretary