

INDIANAPOLIS-MARION COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
DECEMBER 19, 2022

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The Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library Board met in person at the Library Services Center, 2450 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis, Indiana on Monday, December 19, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. pursuant to notice given in accordance with the rules of the Board.

1. **Call To Order**

President Salinas called the meeting to order. Mr. Biederman acted as Secretary.

2. **Roll Call**

Members present: Mr. Biederman, Mr. Bigsbee, Dr. Murtadha, Ms. Payne, Dr. Robinson, Judge Salinas and Ms. Tribble.

Members absent: None.

3. a. **Public Comment**

The Public was invited to the Board Meeting.

Judge Salinas shared we are going to move the Public Comment section to the end of tonight’s Meeting. We will keep the comments at five minutes for each speaker. We have 18 speakers signed up which will take approximately an hour and a half. We do have staff here that need to present items of Library business. He noted that he will be suspending the Library’s By-Laws as far as the Public Comment section for tonight and just have it at the end of the regular business session.

Mr. Biederman made the motion, which was seconded Mr. Bigsbee, to hold the Public Comment section at the end of the meeting.

The motion was approved on the following roll call vote:

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Mr. Biederman – Aye | Dr. Robinson – Aye  |
| Mr. Bigsbee – Aye   | Judge Salinas – Aye |
| Dr. Murtadha – Aye  | Ms. Tribble – Aye   |
| Ms. Payne – Nay     |                     |

- b. **Dear CEO Letters and Responses** were distributed for the Board's information.
- c. **Correspondence** for the Board's general information was distributed.

Judge Salinas noted that before we move on with the formal Agenda he wanted to thank everyone for being here tonight. He stated that he understood there are strong feelings of frustration but it is his hope that we can go forward with respect for all individuals.

#### 4. **Approval Of Minutes: Executive Session, Regular and Special Meetings**

##### a. **Regular Meeting, November 28, 2022**

The minutes from the Regular Meeting held November 28, 2022 had been distributed to the Board.

The minutes were approved on the motion of Mr. Bigsbee, seconded by Mr. Biederman, and the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Aye	

##### b. **Annual Meeting, November 28, 2022**

The minutes from the Annual Meeting held November 28, 2022 had been distributed to the Board.

The minutes were approved on the motion of Dr. Murtadha, seconded by Mr. Biederman, and the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Aye	

##### c. **Executive Session, December 1, 2022**

The minutes from the Executive Session held December 1, 2022 had been distributed to the Board.

The minutes were approved on the motion of Dr. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Biederman, and the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Aye	

d. **Executive Session, December 5, 2022**

The minutes from the Executive Session held December 5, 2022 had been distributed to the Board.

The minutes were approved on the motion of Mr. Biederman, seconded by Mr. Bigsbee, and the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Nay	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Nay	

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

5. **Finance Committee (Patricia A. Payne, Chair; Raymond Biederman, Hope C. Tribble)**

a. **Report of the Treasurer – November 2022**

Lolita Campbell, the Library's Chief Financial Officer, discussed the Report of the Treasurer that had been distributed to the Board.

Ms. Campbell shared that the Report begins on Page 25 of the packet and runs through Page 45. Page 26 reflects the financials as of November 30, 2022. We are at 68% of our revenue in the amount of \$32.7 million.

And for Expenditures, we are at 75% of our projected Budget amount, and that was \$40.1 million. That's favorable because we are under our budget.

The details of those numbers start on Page 28 through 30, and our Cash Projection's are on Page 31. Any questions?

Mr. Biederman asked about the Property Tax income. Last month Ms. Campbell had mentioned that the 64% was just a trailing indicator until the remaining funds came in. What is the status now?

Ms. Campbell replied that we have received \$13.9 million to date in December, so by the end of the year, we should have our projected Budget amount.

Ms. Payne made the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Murtadha, that the Report of the Treasurer be filed for audit.

The Report of the Treasurer was approved for filing for audit on the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Aye	

b. **Resolution 75 – 2022** (Resolution for Self-Insurance Budget Transfer)

Ms. Campbell discussed Resolution 75 – 2022. She advised this is the transfer of operating funds to self-insurance funds. The recommendation is to authorize Resolution 75 – 2022.

In June 2021, the Library Board adopted Resolution 27 - 2021 to establish a self-insurance fund in accordance with Indiana Code 36-12-3-3 and Indiana Code 36-12-3-11. The purpose of this fund is to pay claims, administrative costs, re-insurance costs, health savings account contributions, and other medical insurance-related costs. This transfer will serve to establish a fund balance for the fund for four months of the Library's share of medical insurance premiums. The long-term goal of this fund is to increase the fund balance which would act as a reserve to stabilize the premium cost for the employees. This transfer has no budget impact for the 2022. The total amount of the transfer is on Page 47. It's in the amount of \$1.2 million.

After full discussion and careful consideration of Resolution 75 – 2022, the resolution was adopted on the motion of Ms. Payne and seconded by Dr. Murtadha, to approve Resolution 75 – 2022, Resolution for Self-Insurance Budget Transfer.

Resolution 75 – 2022 was approved on the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Aye	

The resolution is appended to, and made a part of, these minutes.

6. **Diversity, Policy and Human Resources Committee (Hope C. Tribble, Chair; Curtis W. Bigsbee, Patricia A. Payne)**

Ms. Tribble, Chair of the Diversity, Policy and Human Resources Committee, advised that the Committee didn't have any resolutions for approval but she wished to read a short follow-up on the Committee's work regarding the CEO Search. The statement was as follows –

"Like many others and as Chair of the Diversity, Policy and HR Committee, I'm disappointed that our most recent search process was compromised. Members of this Committee are also members of this community and we share the concerns and desires of our neighbors, family, and friends that we create and sustain a Library system that works for everyone. And that means both those who've been most vocal and most visible in this process, as well as those whose voices have not been heard.

We know the Library's employees are our most important asset and that they deserve a safe and productive work environment. We know the Library provides critically needed services to our community and our Library employees are key to ensuring that IndyPL continues to provide those services in Marion County. I believe at this point, our responsibility is to learn from the failures in the recent search process and apply those lessons to a new search."

At this time there were shouts and comments from the audience.

Judge Salinas stated that we understand everyone's frustration. If the audience continues with these outbursts, he stated that he would have to pause the meeting.

Ms. Tribble then continued her statement –

"As was announced earlier today, leaders of this Board plan to put forth a vote on the appointment of a new interim Library head early in the new year. That individual, a respected local leader drawn from outside the Library's ranks would not be a candidate for the permanent CEO position when a new search process commences next year. All prior candidates for the position of Indianapolis Public Library's CEO will be eligible for consideration in the new search process.

If the Board of Trustees votes to appoint a community-based interim leader, that individual's top priority will be to listen to the voices of all our dedicated Library staff and our patrons and ensure that all are heard. These steps are necessary to ensure a working environment and a search process that meets our responsibilities as Trustees and the expectations of Library staff and patrons."

**7. Facilities Committee (Curtis W. Bigsbee, Chair; Dr. Khaula Murtadha, Dr. TD Robinson)**

- a. **Resolution 76 – 2022** (Approval to Award a Services Contract for Housekeeping and Janitorial Services)

Adam Parsons, the Library's Facilities Director, distributed the various resolutions to the Board at the meeting.

He explained that Resolution 76 – 2022 is to award a services contract for housekeeping and janitorial services. The contract that we currently have is with Titan/Sunshine Maintenance Services and it is coming to an end and we needed to issue an RFP, the formal process to find or at least establish a new contract.

We did the formal RFP process and the evaluation committee from the RFP

process and myself are recommending awarding the contract to Comacho Equipment and Supply out of Greenfield, Indiana.

Unfortunately, due to inflation, Comacho was the second lowest bid, but was higher than even the increased budget expectations put together by Mr. Parsons. They're expected to have flat fee costs north of \$1.6 million. The current housekeeping and janitorial budget for 2022 is just north of \$1.2 million.

Mr. Parsons advised that he had spoken with Ms. Campbell, the Library's CFO and we will speak with the Library's Acting CEO, Gregory Hill, about where we can find an additional \$400,000 because Comacho's contract also includes variable costs such as special events labor and special events supervisors. We're confident that we can find the money.

Mr. Bigsbee pointed out that the Facilities Committee wanted to make sure that the staff and the janitorial service have a comparable wage. He requested that Mr. Parsons speak to that.

Mr. Parsons shared that if you go to the last page of the Board Action Request, Page Four, there were five criteria. The fourth criteria is mean wage of frontline staff. So, he did some research and had several conversations with our legal counsel and what he came up with, which was approved by legal counsel, myself, and interim CEO Nichelle Hayes was using the Department of Labor's labor calculator for this area for a particular employee designation. Just like companies have NAICS codes to describe their company operations, employees have a certain code that is defined by the Department of Labor.

The mean wage for this area was \$14.63 per hour. We had four or five that were within a dollar of that or actually within 10 to 20 cents of that. One that was significantly below, and one that was significantly higher. Comacho was at \$14.50, so they're right in line within a couple of percentage points of the mean wage for Marion County.

He confirmed that he did use Marion County. He did not use the Indianapolis combined statistical area since Carmel has a higher mean wage and would throw off the calculators and give an inaccurate representation.

Mr. Parsons went on to explain that our current contract costs about \$950,000 plus or minus every year and so our next year's budget of \$1.2 million was more than 20% higher than the current year. And now we have a contract that is 60% higher and they were the second lowest bid. So, that's an indication of the price fluctuations. We had one that was right around \$2 million with \$2.4 million as the highest.

Mr. Bigsbee pointed out there was one clerical error that needed to be addressed at the top of the resolution. That is with the approval planning, programming, and design services contract. Mr. Parsons apologized for that and said he would correct that before it was sent out.

After full discussion and careful consideration of Resolution 76 – 2022, the resolution was adopted on the motion of Ms. Tribble and seconded by Dr. Robinson, to approve Resolution 76 – 2022, Approval to Award a Services Contract for Housekeeping and Janitorial Services.

Resolution 76 – 2022 was approved on the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Aye	

The resolution is appended to, and made a part of, these minutes.

b. **Resolution 77 – 2022** (Approval to Amend the Services Contract for Security and Alarm Response Services)

Ms. Parsons advised that Resolution 77 – 2022 is to seek approval to Amend the Services Contract for Security and Alarm Response Services. We discussed this back in February of last year. We currently have a contract with Allied Security Services, which was formerly doing business as Allied. It's Universal Protection Services and they were then acquired and became a part of G4S Secure Solutions. Therefore, we are talking about the same company, same contract.

The Library extended this contract through December 31st in late winter of this year in anticipation that we would have a fully staffed Library Security Assistant (“LSA”) staff, both at all of our branch locations and at Central Library. Fortunately, all of our branch locations have an LSA present at them that can fulfill all their hourly needs. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to fully staff the Central Library program to our satisfaction and our needs.

A discussion was held with the Acting CEO and the Area Resource Managers (both interim and permanent) at Central Library and also Allied Security to discuss the process with them. It was agreed that we should extend this for an additional six months, and this will allow us to reach two different goals.

First goal is that it would allow an additional six months to hire the LSAs and positions that we are lacking.

Mr. Bigsbee asked Mr. Parsons if it was six or nine months because the resolution shows nine months.

Mr. Parsons apologized and said that six months is correct – June 30, 2023. The first goal would be to allow us to fulfill the LSA requirements at Central Library. The second goal is that since this is now the sixth extension of this contract, we are at our normal limit of extending the contracts. We really don't like going past two or three, maybe four. But the last few have been months at a time, rather than years.

Allied is aware of this, as is everybody whose involved. Mr. Parsons announced that he would create and release an RFP sometime in mid-March so we can receive

responses and proposals from security companies so they can fulfill this role, be it Allied or a new company. That RFP's scope will hopefully be just second and third shift and backup as necessary for PTO and special events because our goal was to have first shift covered by Library LSAs.

Dr. Robinson asked if this will be our last extension.

Mr. Parsons stated he anticipates that this will be the last extension with Allied. He will issue the RFP in mid-March and if the Library still needs first shift, he will increase the scope of that RFP to include first shift. We should be done with the contract on June 30<sup>th</sup> and have a new one on July 1<sup>st</sup> with the same or different company.

After full discussion and careful consideration of Resolution 77 – 2022, the resolution was adopted on the motion of Mr. Bigsbee and seconded by Dr. Robinson, to approve Resolution 77 – 2022 for the Approval to Amend the Services Contract for Security and Alarm Response Services.

Resolution 77 – 2022 was approved on the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Aye	

The resolution is appended to, and made a part of, these minutes.

## **8. Library Foundation Update**

It was noted that the December Library Foundation Update will be presented at the January 2023 Board Meeting.

## **9. Report of the Acting Chief Executive Officer**

### **a. Confirming Resolutions**

#### **1) Resolution Regarding Finances, Personnel and Travel (78 – 2022)**

Gregory A. Hill, Interim Chief Public Services Officer and Acting CEO, made a recommendation that the Board approve Resolution 78 – 2022 Regarding Finances, Personnel and Travel. He reminded everyone that this is a routine, procedural action. It approves new hires, compensation changes, resignations, travel and financial-related claims and warrants.



Mr. Bigsbee made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Biederman, to approve Resolution 78 – 2022, the Resolution Regarding Finances, Personnel and Travel.

Resolution 78 – 2022 was approved on the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Aye	Dr. Robinson – Aye
Mr. Bigsbee – Aye	Judge Salinas – Aye
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Aye
Ms. Payne – Aye	

The resolution is appended to, and made a part of, these minutes.

b. **Acting CEO November 2022 Update**

Mr. Hill shared the following letter with the Board at the meeting:

Good evening,

The Staff of the Indianapolis Public Library continue to focus on **“Supporting Lifelong Learning in the City of Indianapolis.”**

**System Wide Communication**

We continue to hold meetings with staff at branch locations as well as departments.

**Programming**

Maurice Young Community Resource Fair - Over 50 agencies participated in the Inaugural Maurice Young Community Resource Fair at Central Library. Garfield Park, Glendale, Michigan Road, Nora, Martindale-Brightwood, West Indy, Central and West Perry branches all created eye-catching book and resource displays to help promote the fair in their service areas. Six new book lists were created by staff to promote the collection and share relevant information. Mr. Young's Ted Talk was shown in the CBLC during the Fair. An estimated 200 patrons attended. The Fair was organized by the IndyPL Homeless Resource Committee. In 2022 we continued our partnership with WFYI and the Polis Center with our Data & Drafts Programs. This initiative is an attempt to track disparities over time to shine a light on areas for improvement and areas where progress has been made. 190 in attendance at 5 sessions. Survey responses revealed that some participants appreciated the "community collaboration", "community networking" and "casual vibe".

We offered Nutcracker Sweets, a storytelling and dance program, in partnership with the Indianapolis Ballet. 330 people attended.

Over 3,000 people attended the Oath/Naturalization Ceremonies at Central Library through October 2022. These take place twice a month on Wednesdays, two ceremonies per day. The library partners with United States Citizenship and

Immigration Services, League of Women Voters, Indy 11 and United States Postal Service.

The library partnered with the mayor's office for the book giving event, Season's Readings. Patrons can donate or take a book to gift to a child.

**Note:** He also provided some recent statistics about Indy PL to the Board.

Sincerely,  
Gregory A. Hill, Sr., MLS , MSM  
Acting CEO Indianapolis Public Library

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

10. None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

11. At this time, Dr. Murtadha asked that the Board consider a proposed resolution, which she read as follows:

WHEREAS, the Indianapolis Marion County Library has been without a permanent director and chief executive officer since September 2021.

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has recently concluded an extensive search process for the Library's next CEO utilizing the services of a national search firm and search committee with participation from a broad constituency of the Indianapolis Marion County community.

WHEREAS, following the conclusion of the search process, including interviews with the final candidates, the candidates' participation in a public forum, and feedback from staff and the broader community, the Board has reviewed the qualifications of the final candidates for the role of the CEO based on the candidates' training and proficiency in the science of library administration. And based on this review, the Board has selected a candidate to serve as the new CEO of the Library.

WHEREAS, Nichelle Hayes has previous service as an interim director in a large urban library system and has the training and qualification to be eligible to serve as a library director under applicable Indiana administrative code.

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that it desires for Hayes to serve as the new CEO for the Library. That the Board of Trustees and/or Chair of Diversity, Policy and Human Resources Committee, are authorized and empowered to jointly and severally complete negotiations of an employment agreement by and between the Library and Hayes, which actions shall be ratified by the Board at a subsequent meeting thereof.

IT IS FURTHER resolved that upon execution of an employment agreement and

commencement of as an employee with the Library, Hayes shall have all authority and responsibility given to the CEO.

Dr. Murtahda stated that she wished to submit this in part because we received a resolution at the last meeting which did not come to us all. It was put face down in front of us at the meeting. She found that to be truly problematic, so taking the very same language, she put in for Nichelle Hayes.

Following discussion, Russell Brown, the Library's attorney, advised that the Board must vote to amend tonight's Agenda to allow for discussion and voting on the proposed resolution.

At this time, Ms. Payne moved to amend the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Dr. Murtadha. The motion then failed on the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Nay	Dr. Robinson – Nay
Mr. Bigsbee – Nay	Judge Salinas – Nay
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Nay
Ms. Payne – Aye	

## **AGENDA BUILDING**

- 12. Future Agenda Items** – This time was made available for discussion of items not on the Agenda which were of interest to Library Board members and the opportunity was given to suggest items that should be included on future Library Board Meeting Agendas.

Items suggested for upcoming Board Agendas are as follows:

**January 2023** - None

## **INFORMATION**

- 13. Materials**

- a. **Notes of the December 6, Facilities Committee Meeting**

- 14. Board Meeting Schedule for 2023 (Notice and Place of Meeting) and Upcoming Events/Information**

- a. **Board Meetings Schedule** for February – December 2023 will be presented at the January 2023 Meeting.
- b. **Library Programs/Free Upcoming Events** may be found at [attend.indypl.org](http://attend.indypl.org).

- 15. Notice of Special Meetings**

None.

**16. Notice of Next Regular Meeting**

Monday, January 23, 2023, at the Library Services Center, 2450 North Meridian Street, at 6:30 p.m.

**17. Other Business**

None.

At this time, Judge Salinas announced that we would now commence with the Public Comment section of tonight's Agenda.

**3. a. Public Comment**

The Public was invited to the Board Meeting.

Judge Salinas noted that in every Library Board Meeting, we open up with the public comment section. We moved this to the end of the meeting. We have made this time when the public may address the Library Board for everyone who signed up to have a fair chance to speak and be heard. It is important that each observe the following rules. If there are several of you representing the same group, please select a spokesperson. Please do not repeat the same comments someone else has offered. Persons making comments which are unduly repetitive may be asked to be moved onto the next point or conclude their comments.

Public comment time is not the appropriate forum for commenting on matters related to alleged employee misconduct and as such matters should be promptly brought up to the attention of the Acting CEO or the human resource department where matters can be properly addressed in compliance with established library policies and procedures. We ask that all attendees not disrupt and not cause disruptions that prevent the Board from proceeding through this portion of the Agenda in a reasonably efficient manner.

The Judge stated he knows there are a lot of persons here and we're now going to go ahead and we're going to observe a five-minute limit. There will be a clock because normally he said that he keeps the time but it's easier for the speakers to see how much time is on the digital clock that is displayed.

**Speakers:**

Jean Breaux - Well, I signed in as an individual even though I am a State Senator for District 34 representing portions of Marion County Indianapolis, I am here this evening in the capacity as a patron and as a citizen of the City of Indianapolis. I am very perplexed by what I'm seeing and the process that I'm witnessing this evening and so I really feel compelled that I just must speak.

And first, let me start. Ms. Tribble addressed the board with comments that the search was compromised. I don't understand how the search was compromised when you had three top candidates that the board selected, one of which did not go through the final process, the other did, was selected, declined, and you have one left. I don't understand how that one left is the result of a compromise. You also made the statement, Ms. Tribble, that you plan to pursue a new search commencing in January. That's a decision that was made that apparently was not agreed to by all on this board. I'm confused by the process. Trust me, I do understand what it is to be on a board and the difficult decisions that come with that title and those responsibilities.

Although I am a state legislator, I am also a member of the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus as well, and the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus, one of the things that we pride ourselves on doing is advocating for individuals of color in positions all across the State of Indiana, in positions of government and in positions of private sector and public sector positions. To the extent that we try to advocate that there'd be people of color put in positions of leadership in all of those areas, we were very excited to learn that the board was considering a African American female in contention for the top leadership spot.

We had considered weighing in on that decision with a letter of support for Ms. Hayes. What we want is to see people of color given an opportunity. We did not necessarily need to see Ms. Hayes. We just wanted to see someone, and I was told that there would be more than one person of color applying for this position so we decided to stay out. But then, when you came down to Ms. Hayes, I'm confused as to why that's such a difficult decision to select her as the next CEO.

I do not know what it is, what skills and experiences are needed to be a CEO of a public library system such as this one here in Indianapolis, but you do, board, you do know those skills and accomplishments and talents that are needed and you selected the top three out of all of the candidates. Now, those top three, Nichelle Hayes, an African American female, was one of the top three. I'm going to put my trust and faith in you that you're going to do what you were looking for and you decided that she was one of the top three candidates that had what you needed.

To my knowledge, there have been no other African American or people of color in the CEO position in this library. You walk down that hallway, you see nothing but photographs of former white CEOs. The board has an opportunity to make a historic decision, and I just don't understand why that is so difficult. Ms. Hayes is familiar with the system, she has staff support, she has led this organization for more than eight months, and she is a minority female with the training in a field that is not heavily populated by minority candidates. Most importantly to me, she wants the job. She understands this library system, and she wants to do the job. Why not give her an opportunity?

All minorities in any position, Judge Salinas, Ms. Tribble, all of you should understand how important it is to give opportunities to those who are most marginalized in our society, and to have a minority person in a position as important as the Indianapolis Public Library sends a loud, strong message to the people of

Indianapolis, and recognizing that talent and that we are going to promote homegrown talent such as what we have in Nichelle Hayes.

I come back to my question, why not Nichelle? If the experience is the problem, then should have never been the interim and she should have never made it to the top three. It feels like this is an abusive relationship where you get strung along and you're told that you're just not good enough when the time comes to make a commitment. Why not Nichelle Hayes? Why not give her a chance? If you need to give her a conditional contract so that after six months if she's not performing in the manner of which you would like to see, then you can at least say you gave her a chance. I just don't understand why not give Nichelle a chance, why not give her an opportunity?

Adam Stan - My name is Adam Stan. I'm the local organizer for the Service Employees International Union. We were here today to speak in support of the use of responsible contractors for cleaning contracts with the Library. Unfortunately, I see that the board's made the decision that public comment was not necessary. That is something that we were never provided information by the Facilities Committee when we requested once the RFPs were opened of the bids. It seems there is an issue with transparency in this body. What I would say to you is look, I'm very proud of the fact that you've decided to make the decision to increase wages for janitors. All labor has dignity and all workers deserve respect. Money alone does not grant respect.

Responsible contractors, and this is what we're asking you to do, is to use responsible contractors, responsible contractors who respect the workers' rights to organize and ensure that they have access to a bona-fide grievance process. They ensure that workers are treated with respect. It isn't only about money. You've chosen to select a contractor that is not a responsible contractor. You've chosen to hold a meeting in which those who chose to speak beforehand weren't able to do so. I question whether this is legal under Indiana law and whether it couldn't form a basis for impeaching members of the board as there is a process in Indiana law for that. What I would say is I see many members on this board. You should go home tonight, look in the mirror and ask yourself, "Should I really be here?" If you can't make a decision, you can't follow the rules that exist for everyone, why are you sitting at that table?

Tony Davis - I want to first say thank you for allowing the public to speak from the hearts on a lot of these issues going on. You guys have a great responsibility, given great power in your positions, but I think a lot of times we forget that we're human beings, whether it's becoming power drunk, whether it's whatever influence that we feel that we can have in doing what we want to do, sometimes behind closed doors for self-interest or whatever it may be, for greed, for power control, or just the other many prejudices that we all have within our lives. But I implore you to understand one thing. As a community organizer, I look at things totally different. You guys have to understand that, and forgive me for saying to you guys.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me offer you something that is very often not done in politics, in these power structures that are in our systems. The board members should be speaking for the people, not what you want to do. This is something that we totally have missed the mark on in our positions. You are granted these opportunities for

your board positions because you were appointed. Now, we understand that we could have other routes that we could possibly go, going to the commission asking for a vote of no confidence and have you board members removed. But I'm hoping that you will listen to the passionate people here today. If Nichelle was not qualified, as was stated, she should have never been given the opportunity to be an interim CEO nor been a candidate to become permanent CEO, and then the decisions of her not becoming CEO, why are we not being transparent to say why she's not qualified?

Accountability are cornerstones in relationships and getting the support of the community. I guarantee you, I promise you, if you guys said, "You know what? Yes, these are the bylaws that are in place. These are what are the standards." They're not set in stone. You all aren't the Supreme Court that can just sit up here and do what you want at whatever will. You're there for whatever reasons or whatever may be that causes you to vote the way you do. I hope that you guys or you board members can possibly say, "You know what? Let's stop all the madness. Let's really put a halt to all this ...". These people that are here, they have many other things that they want to do. They don't want to sit here and have to banter back and forth and then see the smiling and the disrespect on possibly both sides in that manner.

I'll give you that aspect. I like to hear what is said, who votes, this, that and the other, because I know how to work in different ways. If people aren't doing what the people want, how to get them out of positions. I've done that before. I've organized the community to do that and I don't want to do that. I'd rather sit there and say everyone on the board did the right thing in the end, regardless of what you said or did not say why Nichelle Hayes is not or should not be the CEO. We're wasting money if we have to go through another search that was mentioned earlier that said that they had to find a way, that \$100,000 that would probably go into the firm or how much other money would go into it, there's a quarter of that money right there.

Simple stuff. Listen to the community. If you say, "Well, yeah, there's other community members that haven't come out and said that they were in favor," why is that not transparent? To be able to lay it out there and say, "Here's a list of how many petitioners said that no, she shouldn't. Here's why." See, we don't want to compartmentalize our prejudices, our personal issues with people and say, "Is this person possibly going to be a good person for this position?" And not only put that person in that position, but put them in to succeed, not to set them up for failure. Empower people. That is what we should do. That's what community is about. Elevating.

I'm asking you all to sit there and even before you call the next person, to think about what I've just laid out to you and truly consider what is being said. Now, if there's some ulterior motives here that we don't know, trust me, we're going to be finding out. It only took the community less than an hour to find out the history of Morley that apparently was dropped in the search process. Some of those simple things that we're saying, "Man, we need to take another look," and not so quick to say, "Because he has years." This is people who've been in positions for decades that are not qualified to speak for a community. There's some value to time, but we can throw that out the window as far as everything else goes, as far as appointing people in leadership.

There's many other qualities, and I believe I've seen it personally with my own eyes. Nichelle is perfect for this job, and if she isn't, let's give her the support to get her to wherever you feel that she needs to be as far as that position. That's the honorable thing to do. That's the right thing to do. Like I said, we need to, regardless of other people's issue and them talking to you about their personal, whether it be Jackie Nytes or whatever it is, because she felt slighted out of this whole ordeal and she said, "Oh, yeah. A whole other new search," whatever it is, why did she feel that way? Why does she feel that way?

Some of you all know that answer and are just unwilling to say why, but we don't have to sit here and go through this madness anymore and drag this out any further. There's hundreds, if not over a thousand, some odd thousand people in Indianapolis who feel the same way, that Nichelle should be the CEO.

I appreciate it and I will end this. Do the right thing. Take a moment before you call the next person. Talk amongst each other. If you have to say, "Look, let's take a quick two, three, five minutes and let's come back," and if you feel that you want to continue on with your meeting and get public discussion, that hour and a half that you talk about can be cut real quick. Appreciate your time, and consider that before you call the next person.

Let me ask you this. Would the list be willing to sit there and give them five minutes to discuss, if that's possible, to sit there and discuss? You know the bylaws, I'm sure, but the bylaws can be changed even in the interim of the meetings. I know this. I've been in organizations.

Judge Salinas advised the Board will do their due diligence.

Wildstyle Paschall - I don't want to be here. I was supposed to be having dinner with a friend. Thank you Dr. Payne and Dr. Murtadha. The rest of you all, you all are responsible for why I can't go enjoy dinner with a friend. I'm embarrassed that you all claim to be in this community and you all manage to think you all are smarter, and no more than everybody else in the room when we have nonprofit directors, we have the arts creatives, curators, we have doctors, lawyers, everything else in here. You all think that you all are smarter than everybody else. The candidates you put up only had a tenure of four years and then two years, and then when he gave the presentation in front of everybody, he said he thought four years was a long time to be a library director and you all thought that was okay. That is embarrassing.

He was called out at his own library, New Orleans Library meeting for spreading misinformation to defund the library by 40%. This was all Google searchable. And then the book ... Anybody read the book? You know about the book. Nobody else made you all look incompetent. It made you all look incompetent. Nobody should have to be here. They should be chilling with their families right now. Please, look in the mirror and think about this. Some of you all are hurting you all's legacy like you all hurt Jackie Nytes's legacy.

Well, she had help from you all. Had you all done the right thing when she was still CEO, she might still be CEO today, but instead you participated in the coverup, you tried to shut people up, you tried to shut people down and it didn't work. The



community is not going anywhere. We're not going anywhere. You think you can wait us out. We're not going anywhere. We're still going to be upset if you don't do the right thing. I just want you all, some of you all to preserve your dignity, preserve your professional and personal relationships where people don't have to get off the phone with you all and talk about, "I was embarrassed about what that person said, but I felt bad about saying something," because that's happened with some of you all. I know that for a fact.

You all need to do better. Nichelle deserves this job. Did you all read the paper today? Did some of you know that Jackie did this to Nichelle back in the day too? What was that? Lilly Endowment grant money? You all have been derelict in your duty. You all need to resign. Please, do the right thing and just resign. Let somebody else handle it or whatever. I don't know what it is that you all think is going on, but the facts speak for itself, and nobody's produced any other facts than the one, and I'm able to get a lot of information. Nobody has produced anything to say that Nichelle is not qualified. Everything that's been produced is that she's overqualified. She should have been handed this job to begin with. Who do you think is going to come here if you start another search?

Everybody knows that the board is dysfunctional. The board has been incompetent. You all let the other CEO ruin her legacy. Why would somebody else want to come here? But you're going to waste money for a search? You all got to do better. The community demands that you all do better. I'm really sorry that I did not want to speak. I told everybody, I was like, "Hopefully I don't have to speak. Somebody would do the right thing," and enough of you all didn't do the right thing and now here I am. Please, do better. Do better by yourselves. Preserve your dignity because the community is coming for you. The community's not playing. This is a library meeting. It should not be this many people. They're not going away. Obviously, these people are calculating. I'm calculating. I know everybody else in here. We're not going away. Please, save yourselves, please.

Mashariki Jywanza - Good evening to everyone and thank you First thing I want to say, I'm a taxpayer and you need to take some of my taxes and get a sound system because we should be able to hear each other. My name's Queen Mother Mashariki Jywanza. I am a resident of Indianapolis. My family's been in this city since 1863. I'm a patron of this library. I have been ever since I was five years old. My children are patrons, my grandchildren are patrons. We are invested in this library system, which is why I followed this particular position that we are talking about today.

It got down to the last two. I was at that meeting. I need to know, were you all there? If you were there because when we listened to the last two candidates to get their vision, where they wanted to go, their involvement in the community, Nichelle Hayes stood above the rest. I left that meeting knowing that you all were going to do the right thing and she was going to have that position. I went out of town, got off the plane, got a call, they chose that other guy. Unbelievable. It was unbelievable to me. But here we are.

I asked you today as the person before me, I said, "Do the right thing." Why would we need another search? So you've made one bad decision. Appointed the guy that we all thought was pretty much a joke. At least, he had enough sense to decline the

offer, and now you're going to make another bad decision by opening up the search again. Where's the logic in there? If Nichelle had made it up to the last two candidates and the one declined, common sense tells you who needs to be the CEO. I'm a taxpayer, I'm a property owner, and I know my taxes go to help this library and I'm glad that it does, but I am extremely disappointed in this board other than Dr. Murtadha and Dr. Payne.

As the gentleman said before, "Go home, look in the mirror, do the right thing and put Nichelle in place." Secondly, everyone but Dr. Payne and Dr. Murtadha needs to resign. It's very important. This is important to our community. As you can see, we're all out and I'm so proud of our community. It's not about just for that Black woman. It's not about that. Who is qualified? Like I said, if you all were at the presentation, Nichelle showed us what she would be able to do, and I know she needs some help. To be honest, I don't even know why she would still want it, but and I hope you do the right thing and get behind her because I tell you, if justice is not served here, there will be no peace.

Patty Hefner - Good evening and thank you for this opportunity to speak. I'll stand so hopefully I can be heard by everyone. As the speaker before me, I'm a community member, a taxpayer, an involved library person. My husband Tom and I are starting our fourth generation of supporting this library through the foundation. I was able to serve on the library foundation board in the early 2000s when we were trying to help raise the millions to produce the Central Library as we get to enjoy it today. We've funded foundation requests, we've visited libraries, we have met with library leaders, and we've seen what a strong library system can do for Indianapolis. We agree with Andrew Carnegie as he acted, I'll get rid of this now, as he acted over a century ago that libraries are the great equalizers and they provided in his time. Now there is access to information about the world through technology, which our libraries present to our patrons free of charge. It's an essential service.

We submitted a letter to this board that was read at your October meeting in 2021. We did express concerns about the group not working together as a team and not staying in their role as a governing body. But we did not, nor did we have any intention of being interpreted that we expressed that we felt that this library board was racist as this morning's IndyStar article implied. No IndyStar or other reporter has interviewed us, and I just want to be very clear about that. That was a very false implication. We have had concerns.

Since that letter was submitted, our concerns have become more profound. I did attend the presentation of both candidates on November, 31st or 30th. Excuse me. I was amazingly shocked and embarrassed by the rudeness that was shown to our other candidate by people in this room. They had obviously not heard Nichelle's pronouncement that we can be adversarial. That's not her right terminology, but that we can disagree and be respectful of one another, and we're not showing that again tonight. Okay.

I expected that each of the candidates that would be presenting would tell about their experiences and successes of running a library system. I expected to hear their goals and how their goals could be met by involving each of the stakeholders in the library system. I did not hear that from Ms. Hayes. Just me. I want to assure to this board

that we, my husband and I and others in this community do not agree with the assertion that's being made that Ms. Hayes must be made our permanent CEO because it is the will of the people. That is not true. We are adamant that this board should continue to look for an experienced, qualified, effective leader.

I will say to the board, we have concerns about the board's dysfunction. No doubt. We ask you to each individually and collectively look at the problems that are being faced now, examine them and acknowledge how to solve them

Mahasin Ameen – So, my name is Mahasin Ameen and I am currently a tenure track librarian at IUPUI University Library. In my role I am the liaison to the School of Informatics and Computing, and the School of Social Work. I am currently the president of the Indiana Black Librarians Network. My work has been published in peer-reviewed journals and I have a book chapter to be published in 2023. I am currently an adjunct lecturer for IUPUI's Library Science program, and I have been in that role since 2017.

But today I'd like to talk about what I was. I was a Black librarian that IndyPL wanted to fail.

I completed my MLS in 2016 with a 3.87 GPA. And at that point was when I started to apply for public services librarian positions. Between July of 2016 and January of 2018, I applied for five positions as a public services librarian, two as a supervising librarian, and I applied for the Center for Black Literature and Culture Director, the position that Nichelle got. Like Nichelle, I wanted to raise up through the ranks and become a manager. I've even got a graduate certificate in public management, thinking that one day I would want to be CEO. I've thought a lot about the fact that I could be in her position.

I remember once, John Helling (former Interim IndyPL CEO) had found out that I'd secured a second round interview at Butler University, and he called me into his office, and you know what he said to me? Wouldn't tell me how he found out that I had a second interview, but first of all, but told me that he understood that I might get this other position, but if I just held tight there might be a technology-based funded position at a branch. That's how I ended up as a librarian at the Martindale-Brightwood branch.

Okay. I got out because I had... I threatened to leave, and I had a credible out. You can't deny that. I'm here because the system is broken and it starts with the board. With the exception of Dr. Payne and Dr. Murtadha, you are not doing your job as a library board. You are not acting in the public trust. The very term "trustee" indicates what the community expects from you. They put their trust in you to make sure that the library's operating the way it should, the way they want it to run. It is your job to keep an eye on the progress of the library for the community.

Indiana Code 36-12-2-23B, and Indiana Code 514-1.5 states that "poor board meetings can alienate the community." You've done that. It states that "it can cause turmoil in the community and hamper the operations of the library." You've done that. It also says that you can waste your time and the time of the board members. You've clearly wasted my time, Nichelle's time, and community time.

And finally, Mr. Bigsbee, specifically, in the voting section of Indian Code 5-14-1.5-3B, it says that "abstaining should be done very rarely and that the reason should be a conflict of interest. The conflict of interest is required to be disclosed." What is your reason for abstaining?

Stephen Lane - All right. I got some people with me. I got the union president, Tony Davis, the past president for the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, the current president of the Indiana Black Librarians Network. Good evening to everyone who came out here and supported Nichelle Hayes as the next CEO of IndyPL. Special thank you to our board members Dr. Murtadha and Dr. Payne. My name is Stephen Lane and I'm a former IndyPL library worker, a union member of AFCSME 3395. I'm currently an organizer with the Indianapolis Liberation Center, the secretary for the Indiana Black Librarians Network and a member of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association.

I'm here tonight to present to this board the over 1,850 signatures we have collected through the Liberation Center's petition from the community, locally and nationally, that stand with us in support of Nichelle Hayes as the next CEO of the IndyPL. We have such significant people standing in support of Nichelle Hayes, and some of those people are 120 staff at IndyPL, including managers and supervisors, 29 former staff, 148 outside library workers, two former board members, signatures such as Tamika Catchings who was on the Indiana Fever as the owner of Tea's Me Cafe, A'Lelia Bundles, the great-great granddaughter of Madame C. J. Walker, the president-elect of the American Library Association, Emily Drabinski, Chicago Professor William Ayers, the former president, even the past president, Kenny Garcia, who is also the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and Spanish-Speaking, foundation donors, numerous officers and members of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, members of the Special Olympics, Indy Pride, Southern Poverty Law Group, Immigration Advocates Network, Girl Book Club, Indianapolis Kwanzaa Committee, Indiana Youth Group, D.J. Kyle Long with WFYI, and Arte Mexicano in Indiana.

The board's decision to hire Morley fits right into the history of IndyPL. When the Indianapolis Public Library was founded in 1873 the appointing bodies decided to hire Charles Evans from Boston despite public outcry to hire a local librarian. Evans was eventually fired from his job for a disagreement with the board, and IndyPL did end up hiring a local librarian, Eliza Browning, who was responsible for getting Carnegie to build the beautiful Central Library we have today.

IndyPL hired its first Black librarian in 1922 as the system decided to build Black branches in Black neighborhoods to curb Black patrons from going to white branches at the time, which included Central Library. Lillian Childress Haydon Hall was that first Black librarian who started the Dunbar branch and later the Crispus Attucks branch.

One hundred years later and we are close to having our first Black woman CEO of IndyPL. The board's pick to hire Gabriel Morley reminded me of a librarian from the 1930s, known as Mabel Hunt, who on the surface seemed progressive yet actively tried to get Black children out of her branch, which was located on the north side of Indianapolis. She kept names and addresses of these children to submit to the library

director to see if she could get them removed from the branch, and a book station set up after schools where they can go and pick up and return their library books.

Mabel Hunt also went on to publish a children's book about Black children who grew up in the rural South just as this board tried to hire Morley, who wrote an offensive book involving a Black teenager named Ray Ray. This board has the chance to rectify the wrongs of history and change its course forever by doing what is right by this institution, the city, and library workers paying attention to this issue all over the country. The board members who made the decision to hire Morley over Hayes did so over the wishes of the community who want Hayes, and now those board members sit here isolated with no one standing in their corner to even vouch for their decision.

This board cannot even explain to the community why they chose who they chose.

Nor would they explain, after Morley declined the offer, why an offer has not been extended to Nichelle Hayes. And then they continue to double down on their stance by gaslighting the community into believing that Hayes somehow is not qualified to do this job, yet... Excuse me. Again, no one is backing the board. No one is in your corner. No one is here to stand up and fight with you except for that lady. If the public library is truly the cornerstone of democracy then let the board put that into practice by listening to their patrons. The community will not stop in our quest to create a more just and equitable public library system for all, and that begins when this board extends an offer to the people's choice for IndyPL CEO, and her name is who? Nichelle Hayes.

Barbara Ann O'Leary - My name is Barbara Ann O'Leary. I'm an IndyPL library worker. IndyPL is the public's library. The voices of the community and the library workers who serve them need to be heard. Their needs must be the foundation on which decisions that impact the health and wellbeing of the library are made. The climate study recommendations tasked us all with transforming IndyPL into an organization that serves every part of our community and provides a fair and inclusive environment for workers. We need a leader who understands the community, values workers, is deeply committed to dismantling racism and white supremacy within our library system and the community at large, and who has organization skills to make change that is sustainable.

I believe that Nichelle M. Hayes should and will be our permanent CEO, and Indianapolis would benefit from her leadership. Nichelle M. Hayes holds a vision for the library and for Indianapolis, a vision that can foster a collaborative, healing, life-giving environment where people can thrive and be their best selves in service to the community and each other.

Sarah Jane Batt - Thank you. I'm very nervous right now, sorry. I've been very distressed by the tension that's been in the air around this library system for the past two years. I've tried to remain quiet because I'm afraid of being one of the people who doesn't agree with the people who are speaking with louder voices than mine, but I feel compelled to talk to you today because I don't want to be a coward. I want, first of all, to tell you how much I value your volunteer service, every one of you. You're giving up so much time for the good of the library, and I know you're not

doing it for personal gain. You're not doing it to build your resumes at this point. You're just doing this out of the love of the library, and I really, really value that.

I also want to thank you for appointing Gregory Hill to be the acting director of the library during this transition time. I've had to report to Gregory after John Helling left. He was my former boss. And I've really grown to appreciate Gregory's leadership style, and I think you could not have put the library in better hands than his.

Somebody earlier said that there's nobody in your corner, and I want you to know that there are many people who are in your corner, and I know that you've heard from some of them anonymously. You heard from me anonymously, Judge Salinas, and you heard from me as well, Ms. Tribble, anonymously, and I'm here to just come out and tell you it was me who encouraged you to do the right thing, and I would encourage you to continue to do the right thing and help this library get to a better place where we can better serve our public, because that's really what we're all about. Thank you.

Dr. Brandon Cosby - I choose to stand rather than sit. Earlier there was a reference made to the fact that this notion that we can come together and disagree without being disagreeable. That's a very comfortable place to be able to make statements like that when you are a representative culture that has always had the benefit of privilege. Like my colleague, Wildstyle, I didn't want to be here. I am the CEO of Flanner House of Indianapolis. I have now been there seven years. When I came to that agency seven years ago, it was on the brink of bankruptcy. We were down to about 18 employees. Seven years later we now run the largest urban farm in the city. We have our own grocery store. We have our own café. We also have our own bookstore called Ujama Community Bookstore that we actually had to open because this board voted to rip a branch of the library out of the Black community and put it 40 blocks north where no one in our neighborhood had access to any of the library amenities.

I share all of that with you not to brag on my accomplishments but to share that with you to let you know that the board at Flanner House was in a very similar situation that you are in right now. You see, because in January of 2016 when I was offered the job, I was not their first choice. I was their second choice. I served on four national boards. I serve on seven local boards. I have been part of hiring processes since I became a principal at the age of 27. And never, not one time in the hundreds and hundreds of people that I have interviewed and hired, never, not once, when an offer was extended to the candidate of choice, did the entire interview process have to start all over again, because professional process and practice requires you to go with the next most qualified candidate. And every single one of you sitting here who come from professional walks of life actually know that you would never execute this behavior in your own current professional practices. You have decided to arbitrarily and capriciously change the rules to undermine, yet again, the value of a Black woman in our community.

You see these kind of passive aggressive microaggressions that we have to endure and that Black women in our community endure. For example, let me be very clear. This is Dr. Pat Payne, not Ms. Payne. Nine times tonight this board has referenced

her as Ms. Payne. I have known this woman longer than I can even bother to remember. It is Dr. Payne. And yet again, in the most common situation of which Black women must endure, she didn't say anything.

You all screwed up in a diabolical cover-up process with Jackie Nytes, and you called on a Black woman to clean up your mess. And she did. She performed exemplary. If she was not qualified, you shouldn't have interviewed her. Even if you decided to interview her, there is no logical reason that she should have been moved into the realm of a finalist for consideration. And yet, in typical racist fashion, you called on a Black woman to clean up your mess, and then you offered to hire a white person to go ahead and move it forward once the real work was done. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves.

All of you are appointed. You were appointed by someone. Someone who is either sitting somewhere quietly right now outraged at your dereliction of duty, or applauding you for carrying out their nefarious intent.

And for anyone that would want to push back and say that this is not an issue of race because there are Black people that voted against Nichelle, in our neighborhood and our community we regularly talk about that all skin vote.

Noah Leminger - My name's Noah Leminger and I am the local co-coordinator for Answer Indiana. That stands for Act Now to Stop War and End Racism. I'm also a high school social studies teacher here in Indianapolis. I teach at Thrival Indy Academy, which is an IPS Innovations School. Thrival is located inside the former Arlington High School building, and predominantly serves Black students who make up over 70% of our student population.

Our faculty and staff are trained in trauma-informed practices to break the cycles of trauma and to create a space, a cocoon in this white supremacist society that we inhabit in which our students know that they are loved and appreciated. This is already challenging work, but this board, despite the fact that some of their Black faces are up on there, they've made that work even harder through the outrageous disrespect.

My students have just seen a majority Black board vote to snub a respected and qualified Black woman. Because of this board's vote, we've now got white supremacists in the comments of WISH-TV and IndyStar and the Recorder. WTHR saying, "Well, she wasn't qualified to have the job. That's why the board voted the way they did in the first place," and that's nonsense.

She was qualified, highly qualified, too qualified, to be the permanent CEO at a core institution of our city. My students have seen this board's leadership from President Judge Jose Salinas, who was somehow appointed by the IPS school commissioners.

To incoming President Hope Tribble, who was somehow appointed by the Council right off Nichelle's decades of experience in the trenches of our public library, so that we could give the benefit of the doubt to a white man from out of state who was obviously not competent or qualified.

In his presentation on November 30th, that man said ... Out of the 15 minutes that he had to speak he gave 27 minutes, but one of those minutes that he spoke, he was talking about how he could not figure out how to get out of the parking garage of the library, and you voted to extend the leadership post to that man. Make it make sense.

Salinas and Tribble wrote in a statement that Morley was the best-suited for the job with 20 years of library administration experience compared to Hayes' short stint as interim CEO. So I teach my students that quality is more important than quantity. Morley might have more years of experience, but what were those years like for his employees? As Stephen said when he came up and presented, hundreds of library employees from out of state, including former employees of Morley, said that it was unacceptable. And that's what the community's verdict is on this board and your decision to snub Nichelle. It is unacceptable. A third search is unacceptable.

The people of Indianapolis are here to tell you in simple terms, hire Nichelle M. Hayes as the library CEO today.

Dr. Lionel T. Rush - Hi, I'm Dr. Lionel T. Rush. I am the president of the Interdenominational Ministry Alliance Greater Indianapolis. I came here today... I thought I read somewhere y'all's budget was \$75 million. Y'all can't afford a microphone and stuff like that?

Now, there's been some suggestions and amazing speakers up here with great historicity and all that junk. I ain't getting ready to try to broach all that, because I've been Black long enough to know when I can't appeal to a conscious when there is no conscious.

When I was an airborne paratrooper and me and my brother, we was come out of the war and all that stuff, coming back here, a white man right down here on Pennsylvania told me, "You're too dumb to go to college." First class I took, the Kelley School of Business, got an A in it. I have a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, and a doctor's degree because people say you can't do stuff. And so I can feel it when I'm in it.

One of my great friends, he's dead now, he was a homicide detective. Name was Willie Larkin. And cancer got his throat but he told me to, "Dr. Rush, follow the dollar," and so Larkin's been in my head all this time. I'm trying to figure out why would you all risk the wrath of this group, the media, and everything else? Something is going on. This does not make sense to me.

But here's what I'm going to say. We encourage every member that did not vote for the Ms. Hayes, we encourage you to voluntarily resign. Not because you didn't vote, but because you are deaf. We make this call because we, your community... I'm reading this because I'm president of the Alliance and I want to represent my Alliance. Your community no longer have confidence or faith in you and trust in you as stewards of the public trust. We no longer believe that you value or consider our voices. Can I say this one thing? That bothers me most sitting in here today. I know when I'm ignored, and I was ignored. We no longer believe that you consider our voices if you elect not to resign. Now here's what I'm talking about. If you elect not



to resign... I want you to hear this. Then we invite your appointing authority to make such an invitation or run the risk of losing their faith and confidence.

I'll tell you one thing. This board as it is presently constituted, y'all ain't going to be up there next time.

Judy Gray - Hello, members of the board. My name is Judy Gray and I'm here tonight to talk to you personally, not in my role as a branch manager for Indianapolis Public Library, not in my role as the chairperson for the Indianapolis Staff Association Compensation Committee. I wish to let you know how disappointed I am in your choice for library CEO. As a board, you had a chance to appoint a very qualified African American woman as our CEO, but you chose not to.

The last couple of years have been very racially troubled and painful for the staff. As a staff, we've been working to change this. Interim CEO Nichelle Hayes has been very instrumental in starting the healing process. The board decided to appoint a white man from the South into this position. This just tells me the board members do not care about the staff and their well-being. Unfortunately, the board seems to want to erase all of Ms. Hayes' hard work with the staff. I'm very sad and disappointed in the Indianapolis Public Library board, and I want to ask you, what were you thinking?

Shauntee Burns-Simpson - Hello. I'm Shauntee Burns-Simpson, the immediate past president of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, and I stand here representing the members of BCALA, and we are really concerned by what's happening here in Indianapolis. We are currently scheduled to have our 12th National Conference of African American Libraries here in Indianapolis in 2023, and we are no longer confident in doing so. Recent events have us rethinking our conference location. Black librarians from across the country have been viewing the chain of events, and it's leaving a negative impact on our members and the profession as a whole. Equity, diversity, and inclusion is a topic and theme of so much of our work, and we are seeing that it's just talk and performative here in Indianapolis. We don't want to financially contribute to a place that has mishandled the CEO process. I don't believe any viable candidate would really consider to work in such an environment. BCALA stands in support of all your library workers who have been negatively impacted by the catastrophic chain of events. BCALA advocates for librarians, support staff and services for African Americans and the communities they serve. BCALA will go ahead with an investigation in this matter. And again, for that reason, the Black Caucus of the American Library Association will be reconsidering having our 12th national conference here in Indianapolis here in 2023. Thank you.

Larry Smith – Good evening and thank you for allowing me to speak. I'm the president and CEO of Fathers and Families Center. I'll start by saying this, you are trustees. The root word of trustee is trust, and even in the dictionary, transparency comes before trust. If you want us to trust you, you need to be transparent. Whatever the reasons are that you believe that Nichelle Hayes is not qualified for this role, even though she's been in it for nine months, simply tell it to us, the people. What are the reasons that she's not qualified? And if she were not qualified, then why make her a candidate to begin with?

Nine months, I am not a physician. I am not an obstetrician, but my limited understanding of human biology is that a baby proves its viability over nine months. If nine months is good enough for a baby, nine months is good enough for Nichelle Hayes. I'm a minister of the gospel. I am pro life but this CEO process needs to be aborted.

With sincere, sincere apologies to Dr. Payne and Dr. Murtadha, I am going to turn my back and address this group in the same way that you have turned your backs on us. Protesting without planning is merely postural.

The inimitable Frederick Douglass said, "Power concedes nothing without demand. It never has. It never will." If you want to reclaim the power, go to the boards that appoint them, to the county, to the school board and the county commissioners. Let your voice be heard by those who have a power to make a difference. All power to the people.

J. Wertz - If you can hear me, raise your hand if you can hear. Okay, this is only going to take a minute, has nothing to do with this. I thought there'd be 10 people in here today. I just want to ask for a little favor. I have to go outside Marion County to use the computer at the library, because the computers block any computer program I want to use in Marion County. So I have to go to Johnson County or to Salem, Indiana. But I can't use the computer in Marion County. I want to ask if somebody can let me please talk to the technical services guys, because they won't talk to patrons. They'll only talk to employees. And we're done. That's all I want to do, is be able to talk to the technical services people, so I could use this computer program. And I'm sorry to take your time, please forgive me.

Jason Jones - Good evening, everyone, Dr. Murtadha, Dr. Payne. Thank you so much for giving me a little bit of time to speak. I hate public speaking, but here I am again, public speaking, because there are anti-democratic, anti-worker and racist forces operating in our public library board. I'm going to be brief. It's not going to be that long, but I come here to support Nichelle Hayes, who has the class, qualifications as well as the support of the majority of this community and my brave workers. I supported the library workers back when they organized in 2006, and I'll continue to organize, or I'll continue to support those library workers for as long as I can. I'm inspired by the size of this beautiful crowd here tonight, and I think that it says a lot that this community cares this much about their public library, and especially in a time, in a political climate where we have one political party specifically that is inciting violence against librarians, censorship, book burning and fascism. We need Nichelle in that seat especially now, and they know it. So maybe the board only responds to power, but I see a lot of power in this room. Nichelle now.

Eric Brooks - Hello, board. Hello, everybody. So I am a library card carrying person, and I also just want to say, I would be proud to be part of any organization that could turn out this kind of community support. The question of why Nichelle is not the CEO can have only one answer, which is racism. She had the job for eight months. She was selected as the top three by this board. The person who was given the job thankfully left. And now there's motions to actually ignore her as the CEO. And I don't understand what has been the discussion here tonight, except that I see a board that has something that would be a prize, which is it has a engaged community that

wants to have a good library system. And you're not able to listen to it, and you're not able to appoint somebody who has the community's support and has the support of the unions and of the workers in this environment. And I stand here in 100% support of Nichelle Hayes for CEO and for this library to thrive and to meet the needs that all these people are talking about.

What brings them to this room tonight isn't a lack of interest. It's because this is an important, vital institution in our community, and it has no place for racism in it. It has no place for turning backs on the voices of the community that supports them. And I'm not even talking about financial support. I'm talking about they show up, and they use the services. That's the kind of support the library needs. That's the kind of support that says this library is a working library and an important library. So give Nichelle the job.

Dr. Derek Ford - Dr. Murtadha, Dr. Payne, nice to see you, excellent work. I think we should reintroduce that proposal, actually. The community here has clearly spoken with one voice. Now there's this idea that's been thrown around that there's a silent majority that supports the board. But so far we've seen like one or two people speak. The rest are anonymous. They're too scared. Nobody has come to the board's defense. Did you read the paper today?

Not even the board came to their own defense. They won't even talk to the press about this, because they know that they don't have any answers. But you know what? I don't give a s\_\_t what the answers are. I want action. That's what we're here for, and it's not about bending to the will of the most vocal, because all right, yeah. Not everybody here is speaking. How many people do each of us in here represent?

A lot. There are people from such broad sectors of the community, different unions, different religious groupings, different political groupings, a cross section of the community, cross section of the community. And to see the way that you continually disrespect that is honestly insulting and enraging. And yes, it's an issue of racism, and it's an issue of white supremacy. And white supremacy functions through many institutions and many individuals.

When they overthrew the colonial powers in Africa, what did the US do? Well, they turned to neocolonialism, and they got black faces in high places. That's where Kwame Nkrumah's war comes from. So it's about ... What are you doing? What are your politics, and what are you basing them on? There's no basis for any of these decisions, and we have heard a single person come to your defense, I mean other than some random person. We've had protests. There weren't any counter protesters. It's really easy to set up a petition online. Has anybody done that on this silent minority or majority?

No, there's not a single ... Because I was at those presentations, and I'll tell you what. I'm amazed that that man was a finalist. That man could not string a sentence together. He spent the first 10 minutes talking about stories about his wife and whatever. And then when he got to his vision, it was just ... I mean, did you see his f\_\_\_\_g PowerPoint? Excuse me, I'm sorry, but I swear. Actually I'm not sorry, because, did you see his PowerPoint? I mean, did you see that? And then did you see Nichelle's? She's up there in 15 minutes and displays a tremendous amount of

knowledge. It's clear. I mean she's talking about how we have access to Minesweeper. Not Minesweeper, but Minecraft. Minecraft and all that, right? Somebody wants to build the library. Morley wants to destroy the library, and that's probably why some of the people on this board wanted him in there.

Because that's what they've been doing to all of our public spaces and institutions for 40 years. They disinvest from them. That's what they're doing to the postal service. They take money away from them, and then people get dissatisfied with the services. And they say, "Well we should shut them down." And people say, "Yeah, no f\_\_\_\_\_g services. We don't need them anymore. Let's privatize them."

Judge Salinas advised that he wanted to go on to the next speaker.

Dr. Ford stated that no, not okay. I've got something more to say.

All right, well then never mind. Listen, why don't you appoint Nichelle Hayes now? Because I've also been on search committees at DuPont University. I've been on search committees, and you know what happens? If the first candidate doesn't accept the position for whatever reason, what do we do? We go right to the second candidate. We don't start a whole new search. Also, we don't bring some in diversity, equity and inclusion consulting firm for us to end up hiring some white guy. What is going on? Obviously, this is all performance, and nobody has any respect for any of you except for these two, Dr. Murtadha and Dr. Payne.

And we're not going away. You can't wait us out. I mean, look at these. Look it, this is the biggest crowd I've ever seen. When we kicked Jackie Nytes out for her racism, there were, I don't know, a third as many people here. You got this many people, and this has been going on for weeks. We had 100 people last week at the protests. We had, I don't know, half as many at the special board meeting. So we're not going away. Our numbers aren't going down. They're going up. And yeah, it's not about ... I don't appeal to your conscience, because it's clear that there's another agenda there. So you got to resign, and we've got to appoint Hayes now. And we need people on this board. We need a board, whether we have to reconstitute it or not, whether we have to take it over and create a whole new set of bylaws that are authorized by the force and will of the public, the people. That's what we got to do, and that's what we will do. Thank you.

Doris Jones - I'm going to stand up for this one, because this has been two freaking years. My name is Doris Jones. This is my oldest, Rosetta Walker. And this is my new baby, Samantha. We're here to actually show support. I'm part of the party for socialism and liberation. And also as a former substitute teacher for a preschool out of Liberty, Indiana, and I kid you not, when we was out there at Liberty, that was a community that actually came out and actually fought and stood up for more, for more room and for more services and for more resources. This is the community. When they said we, the people, this is we, the people. We are now here, and we tell y'all to be serious, even through the doggone protection, to hire Nichelle Hayes. But y'all want to hire some dude who has no qualification, who is from Mississippi. Y'all should be ashamed of yourselves. You should be ashamed of yourselves. You've got a woman who is actually more qualified than the outside person. So you can look

down all you want, but doggone it, I'm telling it like it is. This is white supremacy at its finest.

That's it. It's time. Next time, it's time to vote y'all so-and-sos out, because if you can't do the right thing, it's time to kick y'all so-and-sos out, all but you, who always spoke out. And y'all ignored him, because these women, they know what they're talking about. Our Black sisters know exactly what we're talking about. I stand up here along with my daughters, let them know. And we just got out of a volatile situation and then teaching my kids it's okay to walk away from and stand up against bullies. I'm showing her today, time to stand up against bullies like you who is withholding jobs, a very qualified job for a qualified like Nichelle Hayes. Hire Nichelle Hayes.

The board should appoint her now. And if you don't, we will be back and then some, tenfold.

Niki Messmore - Hi, everyone. I wasn't planning on speaking tonight, but after that first white woman came in talking racism, I thought they can't be the only one. We had some other great ones too, though. My name is Niki Messmore, and I've been teaching civic engagement for the last ten years at a local university. The library has always been my home away from home. My family income growing up was under \$20,000. There's not a lot to do when you don't have money. And it was because of the library that I was able to climb up out of poverty and help my family. I share this so you understand how important libraries are to me but also every other person and child who does not or did not have economic privilege in the world. Right now American libraries are under attack in a way they haven't been in some time. People are pushing agendas into libraries that are transphobic, homophobic and pushing white supremacy. And right now, the call is coming from inside the house.

In one way, the board should be proud of themselves. Engagement in local government is never that high, but look at this turnout here. I think that's amazing. As we battle bigger forces that push bigoted agendas and decrease library funding, it is the people right here who are going to continue to support the library. So you must listen to them, because they are the allies of the public library. As a loyal patron of the library but outsider to the politics involved, it's still clear to me that the library staff and community want Ms. Nichelle Hayes as the CEO. She is more than qualified in standard HR processes, as everyone has been saying, saying that you should hire her. Pride is a challenge for all of us at some level, and I imagine that this is a challenging experience for most of you, to have your wrong choices under scrutiny.

I mean the majority of y'all really thought that less than mediocre white man who wrote that racist book was the one. I still don't understand it. So I ask you to take a breath. We're in a novel right now, and this is the climax. The choice is before you to make the right choice. I demand that you hire Ms. Hayes, or else trust that this story is getting zero stars and good reviews.

Judge Salinas announced that's all the people that were signed up to comment.

Someone in the audience asked if there was a press release that the Board was handing out or giving to the press tomorrow.

Judge Salinas stated there was no release.

At this time, Dr. Murtadha commented that she always likes to thank everyone that comes up and speaks at Board Meetings. We had two people who spoke about their support. But we have overwhelmingly heard from you. This is not a board that is working in a united way. We've had individuals, and I want to appreciate Sarah Batt. You said that you were distressed, and it made sense that you would share that. But we are distressed too. Pat Payne and I have worked hard again and again to say that Nichelle Hayes not only has the qualifications, having grown up through the ranks, and understands what's going on. And it's not just because she has come up. But she understands this community in ways that an outsider does not. Her and I wrote down names again and again, but we've heard from internal leaders.

Judy, thank you as a manager of a branch. Others have said and spoken about the resolution. And the reason why, and I shared it before some of you came in. The reason why we wrote this resolution was because we took the exact same language that was put before us without any knowledge of our agreement. I'm talking about Dr. Payne and I. We had no idea that a resolution would be put on the table, turned over and in front of us. So I took the language, that same resolution, and said that we wanted Nichelle Hayes to be appointed. It is therefore resolved that the President of the Board of Trustees and/or the Chair of Diversity, Policy and Human Resources Committee are authorized and empowered jointly and separately to negotiate an employment agreement by and between the Library and Hayes. Which action shall be ratified by the Board at a subsequent meeting. I want to put this forward again.

Understanding that we have also not received anything, I asked Pat again and again. A new community-based interim leader, I understand that was just a statement that was made. A statement that's made, and we reject that as well. We want someone who knows and understands, has been represented, has the experience, has the knowledge. And just like several of you have said, the first one didn't get it. The second one gets it. Let's understand that. We cannot afford not to have individuals say that this is an important one and that multiple voices, different voices have the right to speak. And we will honor that, and that many people, 1,800 people signed a petition. That does not just come about. And you were right. Anybody could've started a petition. Where is it? It's not here. Someone actually said, "There's going to be some type of retribution if we speak up, so we're saying we're going to keep ourselves anonymous." What retribution? Pat and I are over 70 years old. Give me a break. There wouldn't be any retribution. What we would do is understand that if somebody needed more preparation to be in this position, give them that opportunity and learn more.

That's what happened with me at IUPUI. I had to learn in my position. And now I've been there over two decades. I continue to grow and learn, because somebody had the nerve, the strength, the audacity to say, "That woman can do the job." Give her a chance, thank you so much for coming out.

Let's put the resolution forward again. We had it voted down once and I asked us to reconsider. And if it's going to be tabled and come back again, I understand. But let's not refuse this opportunity to speak in a way that says something is of worth and of value. I watched some of my board members, at least one, constantly texting all during this time. And I thought someone back there said out of respect and regard, you don't do that. I ask us not to do that, and I ask us in part because what you were saying was so very important. Texting to each other and not regarding what you said as individuals in our community. It's disrespectful. It's a lack of understanding of community voice, of community organizing. Thank you again, and I wanted to resubmit this. I wanted to resubmit.

Dr. Murtadha made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Payne, to reconsider the resolution that was presented earlier in the meeting.

The motion then failed on the following roll call vote:

Mr. Biederman – Nay	Dr. Robinson – Nay
Mr. Bigsbee – Nay	Judge Salinas – Nay
Dr. Murtadha – Aye	Ms. Tribble – Nay
Ms. Payne – Aye	

**18. Adjournment**

The Secretary announced that there was no further business to come before the Board.

The Chairman then declared the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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Raymond Biederman, Secretary to the Board

