

NOBLE Executive Board Meeting Minutes - Hybrid September 10, 2025

Present: In Person: Kathy Lussier, Catherine McDonald, Theresa Hurley, Myron Schirer-Suter, Allison Babin, Brian Courtemanche, Jonathan Nichols, Abby Porter; Virtual: Anna Sarneso

1. Call to Order

Catherine called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM.

2. Approval of minutes for August 13, 2025

Anna made the motion to approve the minutes from August 13, 2025, seconded by Jonathan. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Executive Director's Report

Kathy reviewed the Director's Report, which included the following:

- Aspen: The Aspen go-live date for most public libraries has been pushed back until the end of September. Several public libraries have opted to go live next week anyway. The delay was due to the training process being more extensive than originally expected and NOBLE staffing issues. Several academic libraries have already been live on Aspen for a couple weeks which served as a good pilot.
- ECDI: Interviewed three candidates for the part-time Program Director position and have made an offer with a projected start date in October.
- Proposal for Nahant: Kathy met with the Nahant Library Director on August 22 and discussed the proposal. Kathy will follow up in a few weeks.
- MLA: The MLA Legislative Committee is sponsoring another [Advocacy Boot Camp](#), with this one focusing on advocacy at the local level. Rachel Overbeck from Stoneham will be one of the speakers.
- Executive Director Schedule: Kathy expressed her appreciation for the board's understanding and noted that she expects her schedule to return to normal this week.

4. Approval of Proposed Revisions to FY26 Budget with Revised Salary Schedule

Kathy presented four potential budget revisions for FY26. The key differences were: a 3% COLA; a 3.2% COLA (based on this year's Boston-area CPI); a 3% COLA with a salary adjustment for the Office Administrator; a 3.2% COLA (based on this year's Boston-area CPI) with a salary adjustment for the Office Administrator.

In all four proposals, there is actually a decrease in the salary line due to a high estimate for the cost of benefits for an employee who was hired after the FY26 budget was approved.

The board discussed the COLA percentage for NOBLE staff. Cost of living increases are typically budgeted into a pool for 3%. NOBLE typically consults the Boston-area CPI; until 2020, 3% usually aligned, but since then the CPI is usually higher. This year it is 3.2%. The Board agreed to the 3.2% COLA.

The board also discussed a salary increase for the NOBLE Office Administrator. Kathy looked at comparative wage data for the position in library networks and other organizations, and determined the position at NOBLE is somewhere between an Office Administrator and Office Manager. The Board agreed to a reclassification/salary increase for this position from ~\$76,794 to \$85,000.

Kathy reviewed the other FY26 Budget revisions:

- Travel: A one-time increase in Travel to support three or four NOBLE employees attending the in-person Evergreen conference in Seattle
- EZProxy: Reduced because anticipated price hike did not materialize
- Evergreen Software Support: Renaming to Evergreen Software Support. The Board supports participation at the \$5,000 level of membership
- Software Development:
 - Transferring \$6,000 out of Evergreen Development and moving it into Aspen Development
 - Mobile app: Increased to \$8,000 for FY26 to support the new SMS and provide Aspen integration with lists and history.
- Catalog Enhancement: Reactivated an old line called “Record Enhancement” and moved \$7,500 here to support ongoing authority projects after the projects (e.g. authority record service, deduplication, and record upgrade) are complete.
- Telecom Equipment Maintenance: Did not increase this line, despite seeing some very high quotes. If the cost increases beyond the budgeted amount, Kathy would like to cover the overage with MLBC Network Infrastructure grant funds.
- Consulting: One-time use to fund a Salesforce consultant, who will begin work in October.
- A few other things to note:
 - Adding Aspen hosting (only \$1,042 because of fiscal year timing)
 - On the Revenue side - decrease in funding from MBLC Network Infrastructure Funds and MBLC Resource Sharing Funds
 - Using Payroll Protection Funds for cloud hosting ends in the FY27 budget

The board discussed the revisions and their consequential impact on assessments for FY27, determining that the revisions were justified, and at a projected percentage increase of 1.76%, have a small/reasonable impact on assessments.

Myron made a motion, seconded by Brian, to approve the revisions to the FY26 Budget at the 3.2% COLA with the salary upgrade for the Office Administrator. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Vote to Recommend FY27 NOBLE Budget to Members Meeting

Anna made a motion to recommend the Proposed FY27 Budget to members as presented, seconded by Jonathan. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Vote to Recommend Proposed FY27 OverDrive Budget and Assessment

The formula for the OverDrive assessment for member libraries has typically included half of the previous fiscal year's fee, with the other half being determined by each library's OverDrive circulation figures, then subtracting Advantage circulations. The formula is not working correctly with some member libraries this year (e.g. Everett's calculation is negative). Kathy consulted colleagues at other networks, and is looking at other ways to fairly calculate this Assessment.

Brian made a motion to recommend to members a total OverDrive proposed assessment of \$297,414, seconded by Jonathan. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Vote to Recommend Proposed FY27 PC Support Assessment Rate

Kathy recommends no increase to the PC Support Rates for FY27. Even though doing so will create a small deficit in the annual budget, an increase cannot be justified as the account for the PC Support Program has a healthy balance. Kathy recommends NOBLE keep the rates the same in FY27: Flat rate of \$295 for each PC support library, with \$131 per PC.

Allison made a motion to recommend the Proposed FY27 PC Support Assessment Rate to members as presented, seconded by Abby. The motion passed unanimously.

8. FY27 Executive Director's Goals

Kathy reviewed her three goals for FY27 which focus on developing an investment policy, revising the NOBLE employee handbook, and cross-training.

9. Internet Policy Recommended Revision

Abby made a motion to approve the Internet Policy Recommended Revision as presented, seconded by Theresa. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Collection Management Working Group

This agenda item was tabled due to meeting time constraints.

11. New business

Catherine shared that ERDWG is still in need of an Executive Board liaison. Myron agreed to serve as the liaison again.

12. Adjournment

Jonathan moved to adjourn. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 3:59PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Babin
Clerk