

NOBLE Executive Board Meeting Minutes - Hybrid October 8, 2025

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

1. Call to Order

Catherine called the meeting to order at 2:05PM.

2. Approval of minutes for September 10, 2025*

Jonathan made the motion to approve the minutes from September 10, 2025, seconded by Theresa. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Treasurer's Report

Myron reports that nothing is out of the ordinary, and the audit is ongoing.

4. ERDWG Report

Myron reports that Aspen was a big topic of conversation. There were no action items.

5. Advocacy Committee

Abby reports that the Advocacy Committee rehashed last year as they plan for the Legislative Breakfast in February 2026 at the Melrose Public Library. Abby attended the Library Advocacy Bootcamp in Worcester, and it was suggested that February was late to do a legislative day. The committee will keep this in mind for 2027. Rhea Heaven and Shilpa Jacobie are continuing on as Chairs.

6. Resource Sharing Working Group

Theresa reports that the Network Transfer Policy was discussed and the inconsistencies as to when holds can be placed. With the Aspen launch, it is not the best time to tackle this.

7. Executive Director's Report

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

- Aspen: Most libraries are now live, with the exception of SSU. Transition went smoothly, just a few issues as to be expected. The preferred pick up library may not be pulling correctly. Evergreen made the transition last night to point to Aspen. This will carry patrons to the new catalog even if they have bookmarks. The next big step is the removal of MARC records for the electronic resources since those will be loaded through

Aspen now or accessed via API. There is no timeline yet for the other records, but want to make sure these are things that are being sideloaded into Aspen. Brian gave big kudos to Christine Morgan for all her assistance with the transition. NOBLE is talking to EBSCO about the best way to handle EDS.

- ECDI: Sarah Moody, starting October 20, as the new ECDI Program Director.
- Backstage Library Works Project: Submitted a quote to perform work on three projects to improve our bibliographic database: 1) a record upgrade project 2) a one-time authority processing service and 3) a deduplication service. NOBLE is reviewing the quote to make sure it is only for services truly needed (e.g. it included some work on the 300 and 008 fields that is not critical). The quote will likely be presented to the Board in November, with a request to use capital funds. While central cataloging is a core function of NOBLE, one NOBLE library has contracted with OCLC for multilingual cataloging. NOBLE staff are concerned that some of our records may not be as rich/full as some libraries wish them to be.
- Content Cafe: This Baker & Taylor owned service provides book jacket images to the NOBLE catalog, which we subscribe to through EBSCO/Novelist. Kathy reached out to EBSCO for how they plan to go forward. Syndetics is the only other vendor that provides this service. Should have an update next month.
- Salesforce: Scheduling a kickoff call with the consultant to use Salesforce to better track member libraries and staff, manage support requests, and track enhancement ideas for Evergreen, Aspen and the mobile app. The goal is to make this a seamless transition for member libraries.
- Filtering pilot: Four libraries have participated and the feedback is very mixed. While Kathy does not feel we can move forward with E-Rate this year, it still seems worth looking into. There were no issues with the filter in Winthrop, Swampscott, or Melrose, but Beverly had significant issues (e.g. blocking innocuous web sites and embedded images/video, sometimes with no indication or reason) and thus withdrew from the pilot. Beverly was the only library that loaded the filter on staff computers, which may be the reason they had a different experience. NOBLE is now asking that pilot libraries install the filter on some staff workstations, and NOBLE is also investigating another content filter at their office.

8. Gordon-Conwell Membership Status

Gordon-Conwell has convened a task force regarding their potential membership, but has not yet made a decision. Dr. Daniel Flores asked for a breakdown of NOBLE benefits which Kathy provided in advance of the task force's meeting.

9. FY27 Budget Recommendation

It has become clear that, due to the uncertainty with Gordon-Conwell, NOBLE needs to move forward with the budget that was presented to NOBLE members this month.

10. Potential FY26 Budget Revision*

If Gordon-Conwell formally withdraws its interest in NOBLE membership, we will need another revision to this year's (FY26) budget. The proposed revision makes the following adjustments:

- A slight reduction in the salary line to account for a later upgrade to the Office Administrator position.
- A slight decrease to the Office/Cleaning Supplies line.
- A \$1,000 decrease in funds allocated for Evergreen development.
- The removal of the ongoing authority processing service from Backstage Library Works. This would have been a new service for the network.
- A decrease in the network security line. These funds would have covered the cost of moving forward with the filtering project, but we most likely will be delaying widespread adoption of a filter.
- A \$1,400 reduction in conference fees to cover what expected conference attendance for this fiscal year.
- A \$1,000 reduction in the training line.
- A \$5,000 increase in the amount of network infrastructure funds that will help offset Evergreen cloud hosting fees.

Brian made the motion to approve the recommended revisions to the FY26 NOBLE Operating Budget, seconded by Anna. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Vote to recommend FY27 Action Plan to Members*

Kathy reviewed the proposed FY27 Action Plan.

Theresa made the motion to recommend the FY27 Action Plan to members, seconded by Myron. The motion passed unanimously.

12. 2026 NECHE Accreditation Standards Draft Language

The New England Council of Higher Education (NECHE) is proposing new accreditation standards that drop any mention of libraries or librarians.

The board discussed submitting public comments regarding the proposed changes. Anna volunteered to draft a letter and share it by email, so the board could conduct an electronic vote and submit it by the October 15 deadline.

13. New Business

The Director of the Nahant Public Library requested that NOBLE lock their fee for a certain number of years with no increases, due to a concern among their Trustees about potential cost increases. After some discussion, the Executive Board agreed that this was not something that could be offered.

Abby shared more about the Library Advocacy Bootcamp, saying Adam Chapdelaine shared very good tips for engaging with the Select Board, Tim Garvin was a great closing speaker, and Rachel Overbeck did an excellent job sharing her experience in Stoneham.

Myron asked Kathy to escalate the EBSCO record issue in Aspen.

14. Adjournment

Myron moved to adjourn. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 3:39PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Babin
Clerk