

Great Falls Public Library
Board of Trustees Board Meeting
Tuesday, January 23, 2023
Great Falls Public Library – Cordingley Room (Basement of the Library)
(Virtual access to meeting was available upon request)
4:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Anne Bulger, Ms. Jessica Crist, Ms. Sam DeForest, Ms. Noelle Johnson, Ms. Whitney Olson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Shannon Wilson - City of Great Falls Commissioner (via zoom)

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Rae Grulkowski - Cascade County Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. John Collins, Mr. Aaron Kueffler, Ms. Susie McIntyre, Mr. Bob Miller, Ms. Sara Linder-Parkinson

GUESTS PRESENT:

(Illegible) Beckman – Resident of Great Falls, Deb Chibroski – Resident of Great Falls, Jeni Dodd – Resident of Great Falls, Keith Duncan – Resident of Cascade County, Ellen Hagen – Resident of Great Falls, Kathie Hansen – Resident of Cascade County, Richard Irving – Resident of Great Falls, Gerry Jennings – Resident of Great Falls, Brianne Laurin- GFPL Foundation Executive Director, Tracy M. – Resident of Great Falls, David M. Price – Resident of Great Falls, Sandy Rice – GFPL Foundation Liaison, William Ross – Resident of Great Falls, Jenn Rowell – The Electric (via zoom), Bill Tacke – Resident of Great Falls, Ellen Wayne – Resident of Cascade County, Jane Weber – Resident of Great Falls, Beth (Illegible) – Resident of Great Falls,

Ms. Olson called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

I. AGENDA APPROVAL

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had additional items to add or remove from the agenda approval.

Ms. Bulger moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees approve the agenda items as presented. Ms. DeForest seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment. Upon hearing none, Ms. Olson called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

II. STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Bob Miller and Mr. John Collins introduced themselves and talked about their positions at the Library and how they came to be at the Library. After questions from the board, they left the meeting.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Tracy M., a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. She reminded the board that they were appointed to represent the best interest for the citizens of Great Falls, both children and adults. She has fond memories of the library and wanted to share them with her children, but no longer wants to. She is disgusted with the library for books that were on display in the kid's area. She proceeded to read an excerpt from the book The Bare Naked Book. She commented that this book was pornographic and sexual and is directed at elementary age children. She did not appreciate this book being purchased with her tax payer dollars. She asked for the board to do better and choose books more appropriate for kids.

Mr. Irving, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. He voiced a concern with items being added to the board packet at the last minute and stated he felt the Director is pushing a social and political agenda. He cited the Palestine presentation that the library held, and their lack of providing an Israeli or non-partisan point-of-view presentation.

He voiced concerns with the change in the consent agenda. He recommends we follow the city and county meetings, as well as have a video back-up of the meetings.

He voiced a concern regarding the library financials. He strongly suggest the library board conduct an outside, independent audit; not one that is approved by the city or the library.

Ms. Ellen Haggen, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. She asked how the library felt it was appropriate, to have a book titled The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish. She stated that she will no longer support the library if material like this continues to be purchased.

Mr. William Ross, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. He stated that many books available to children show pornography, the small sample he had with him (titles unknown) was just a small percentage of what's available in our community. He stated that members of P.S.T.V. (Parents Saving Traditional Values) find it appalling. The Library should not have this material in its collection. These books must be removed immediately, and the person or persons responsible should be fired. House Bill 234 has made these books illegal in Montana. Mr. Ross read the Montana code annotated 45-

821, 205, 206. He stated that he has been in contact with the County Attorney's office to make sure that these books are removed.

Ms. Gerry Jennings, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. She is appalled that any parent would send their small child anywhere without parental supervision. She stated that if parents don't like what books their children bring home, then why are they are letting them check out books without their permission. Ms. Jennings stated that all of her children have used the library throughout the years. The Library is essential.

Ms. Jennings also stated that she is appalled at the angry tone that is being used against the board and the director. She stated that if you are a parent, you should be looking at what books your children bring home.

Ms. Jeni Dodd, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. She asked why the library director didn't alter her hiring plan when she knew that electric prices were rising; which caused the library to go into debt. As a tax payer, she would like answers.

Ms. Jane Weber, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. She began by reading a letter that she sent to the City Commission, Mayor, and the City Manager. She stated that she has attended many events held at the library over the years. She has always been impressed by the professionalism of the library board members and the management reports made by the director. The Library is a wonderful resource to the city and county. Ms. Weber stated that she has been reading the books that some community members felt don't belong on the library shelves. She has not found any of these books offensive. She appreciates the work of all the library staff that maintain our library collection. Ms. Weber stated that she was troubled by city commission discussions regarding the removal of Mills from the library. The 2023 levy request voted by the citizens was based on the continuation of the mills under the agreement with the city.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had any changes to the meeting minutes.

Ms. Bulger pointed out a misspelling on page 2; punctuation on pages 4 and 6.

Ms. Johnson pointed out a misspelling on pages 2 and 4.

Ms. Crist pointed out a misspelling on page 4.

Ms. DeForest pointed out a misspelling on page 4.

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had questions regarding the Statistical reports.

Ms. Bulger asked why the volunteer count was low in December? Ms. McIntyre believed that it was due to the gap between the end of the AAUW book sale and the beginning of the Friends of the Library book sale. Volunteers take a break and some go on vacation. December is typically low in volunteer numbers due to that.

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had questions regarding the Financial reports.

Ms. Johnson had a question regarding line items 346150 and 346250. She asked Ms. McIntyre why they had amounts when they have had zero in the past, and why were they not budgeted. Ms. McIntyre stated that those items are paid out as people retire. We don't budget for it since we use salary savings generated by waiting to hire the replacement.

Ms. Johnson had a question regarding line item 455150. She asked Ms. McIntyre if these fees were monthly or overdraft fees? Ms. McIntyre stated that those are the Credit Card monthly fees. Ms. McIntyre stated that the credit card implementation has not gone well, and she has challenged the company regarding the fees; requesting they be refunded.

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had questions regarding the Financial reports. Upon hearing none she moved on to Operating vouchers.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that the total on page 26 was not accurate. Ms. McIntyre stated that we would get that fixed.

Ms. Olson asked if there were any additional questions or comments from the committee regarding the consent agenda. Upon hearing none she asked for a motion.

Ms. DeForest moved that the Great Falls Library Board of Trustees approves the consent agenda as updated. Ms. Bulger seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment.

Ms. Jeni Dodd addressed the board. Ms. Dodd had a concern with the use of an automatic door counter being used to record visitor statistics. People go in and out throughout the day and this number should not be used for asking for money, levy's, or budget purposes. It is not accurate.

Mr. Richard Irving addressed the board. Mr. Irving questioned the use of Foundation funds being used for out of state presenters. He requested the Foundation do an audit to see where the funds could be better used.

Ms. Olson asked if there was any additional board discussion or public comment, upon hearing none she called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

V. DIRECTORS REPORT

Ms. Linder-Parkinson presented her Public Services Department report.

Ms. DeForest asked if Mr. Kaiser fills the Partner Crates himself. Ms. Linder-Parkinson stated that Mr. Kaiser does a majority of the work, then he, Mr. Miller or Mr. Collins moves the crates onto the dock for pick-up.

Ms. DeForest asked how the 2023 incidents compare to previous years. Ms. Linder-Parkinson did not have that number on hand, but stated that Mr. Kueffler does have the incident forms filed in his office that can be referenced.

Ms. Johnson stated that she likes the partner share and has used the service herself. She also asked if the 57 hotspots that were never returned were disconnected. Ms. Linder-Parkinson stated that the service is shut off after seven days past due. The patron can still return the unit, but if they don't return it within 180 days, the unit gets removed from the system and the patron will be responsible for paying for a replacement. We are currently down to 29 active units with at least a 20 hold waiting list.

Ms. Crist asked about statistics regarding the library book clubs. Ms. Linder-Parkinson stated that she could compile that information for the board.

Ms. McIntyre presented her Director's report.

Ms. Crist asked for the date of the demolition of the library band shell so she could inform the Library Park Task Force of the date.

Ms. Johnson asked about the funding for the demolition. Ms. McIntyre stated that it was from donations given over that last 6 months and includes some "Best Use" donations.

Ms. Johnson asked why the Remodel Design Project firm hasn't been made public. Ms. McIntyre stated that they are waiting for the contract to be approved. As soon as it is approved it will be made public. She hopes it will be ready for the February board packet.

VI. GFPL FOUNDATION REPORT

Ms. Rice informed everyone that the Book-a-Thon has raised over \$63K. The goal was \$65K. Donations are still arriving, so it is expected that the goal will be met.

Ms. Rice also stated that the Friends of the Library are collecting for their summer sale. Book collection will be every Saturday from now until April 27th, from 10am-2pm.

Ms. McIntyre wanted to inform the board that the Great Falls Public Library Foundation is also audited and that is included in the City of Great Falls audit. She also wanted to state that the Friends of the Library funding goes through the Great Falls Public Library Foundation.

VII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Ms. Olson informed us that she and Ms. McIntyre met with Mr. Doyon (City Manager), Ms. Kinzler (City Finance Director), and Mr. Anderson (City Deputy City Manager) to discuss the hiring plan and finances. Ms. Olson stated that Ms. Kinzler will be attending the February board meeting to present to the board.

Ms. Olson wanted to make public a conversation she had with Mr. Dennis (City Attorney). At a previous board meeting, a board member brought up a wish to record meetings and the board considered making a motion at that time. Because of the need for public notice, the correct procedure would be to have that suggestion added to the next month's agenda.

VIII. BOARD REPORTS

No Reports were given.

IX. PROPOSALS/COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

Ms. Johnson asked if the Policy Review should be under New Business after the staff looks at it, then the following board meeting it gets moved to Old Business.

Ms. Olson stated that if an item has previously been discussed it will be in old business.

Ms. McIntyre said it was her understanding that New Business was only for items the board has not seen before; since the policy review has been discussed previously it would go under Old Business.

X. OLD BUSINESS

LIBRARY LEVY IMPLEMENTATION

Ms. McIntyre presented. She recapped the information that was presented in the board packet. Once the timeline is approved we will have more detailed information. Ms. McIntyre also pointed out the proposed modified spending plan that both Ms. Kinzler and Mr. Doyon approved.

Ms. Johnson had questions regarding the numbers on page 49. She asked if the Expected Jan to June numbers were accurate for line item 411100. If the Year to Date amount reflects four new hires, then the Expected Jan to June numbers seem low considering it accounts for nine new hires.

Ms. McIntyre stated that the numbers were derived from a personnel spreadsheet that looks at the total cost of each employee for the year. It then breaks down the total per month. An example would be the Director is counted as 100% each month, where as Mr. Collins, who started the second week of a month was counted around 75%. Ms. McIntyre also wanted to point out that most of the upcoming hires are part time. They are the lowest paid and get no health insurance.

Ms. McIntyre stated that she is happy to show the spreadsheet to the board, but due to it having detailed information regarding health insurance for each employee she did not feel it was appropriate to show in a public setting.

Ms. Johnson stated that according to the city agreement and the code, all that information should be provided to the board before any budget can be decided.

Ms. Olson stated that was addressed due to people's expectation of privacy. If the board wants to enter into an executive session down the road to discuss those things they can.

Ms. Johnson asked why the electric line item (434200) decreased since we have been saying the cost has increased. Ms. McIntyre stated that it was an average of what was already spent.

Ms. Crist moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees approve the Library Levy Implementation plan as presented. Ms. DeForest seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment.

Mr. Richard Irving addressed the board. In regards to the master plan, He asked that we do not put the children in the basement to give the first floor to the unhoused and their social workers.

Ms. Jeni Dodd address the board. She asked why Ms. McIntyre could not release the information to the board with redacted personal information. Position and Salary is public information.

Mr. Dave Price addressed the board. He voiced his concern on the unacceptable reading material for children. He is unsure what the protocol is, but where is the quality control, and who is responsible for purchasing and purging these materials. As a tax payer he is concerned and that is why he is coming to these meetings.

Ms. McIntyre stated that she would be happy to talk to Mr. Price after the meeting regarding his concerns.

Ms. Olson called for a vote for the motion that is on the table. Motion passed with a vote of 4 in favor and 1 against.

GFPL POLICY REVIEW: GENERAL INFORMATION

Ms. McIntyre presented the GFPL policy review for the General Information section. She reminded the board that the library public standard requires the board to review policies every three years. As requested by the board, the review is broken into sections. The management team met and made changes to the first section. The attached document is our proposed changes. Ms. McIntyre reviewed each change.

Ms. Bulger asked if the Right to Privacy in the Library Bill of Rights extended to Staff. Ms. McIntyre said the Library Bill of Rights is for patrons of the library, not staff.

Ms. Johnson asked why the Bill of Rights occurs in the Policy twice, once here and once in the appendix. Ms. McIntyre stated that it is included in the Collection Development Policy because the Collection Development policy often stands on its own and is approved separately.

Ms. Crist agrees with all the changes from staff, but would like to request that in the donation section, it say "Great Falls Library Foundation" instead of just the "Foundation". She is also in favor of the library board adopting what the ALA board has adopted in regards to the Bill of Rights and the Code of Ethics.

Ms. DeForest asked why the request to purchase materials is not in the Public Participation Policy. Ms. McIntyre stated that this section is only for items that need to be a written request. For items to be purchased, you can call, write, use the website, or email the Collection Development manager and request an item.

Ms. Johnson asked if the ALA code of ethics violates any law and asked if Ms. McIntyre has reached out to the City Attorney to discuss it.

Ms. McIntyre stated that she has only discussed open meeting laws with the City Attorney.

Ms. Johnson asked if the motion should be postponed or be tabled. She then read the Montana Code annotated, section 493205. She asked how do we define what is Social Justice. Most ways that Social Justice is defined is that they are political ideologies. Should these sections be moved to an appendix since they are not the library's policy's or do we get legal advice to see if this can legally be in our policy. It appears to violate Montana code.

Ms. Bulger stated that if Social Justice is viewed as a political ideation, then what Ms. Johnson has said is true. Ms. Bulger stated that she views Social Justice as human rights and doesn't see it as a political ideation.

Ms. Johnson stated that the wording is very vague and needs to be defined.

Ms. Olson asked if there were any other questions, changes or comments, upon hearing none, she asked for a motion.

Ms. Crist moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees approve the Library General Information Policies as amended with changes. Ms. Bulger seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment.

Ms. Jeni Dodd addressed the board. She made a comment on the page 62, the Code of Ethics. She stated that it is not the job to "recognize and dismantle systemic and individual biases; to confront inequity and oppression; to enhance diversity and inclusion; and to advance racial and social justice... through awareness, advocacy, education, collaboration, services, and allocation of resources and spaces". The Great Falls Public Library is a governmental entity of the City of Great Falls and sponsored by tax dollars. It is subject to the provisions of the Montana Code annotated.

Ms. Dodd read section 1049, chapter 3 part 2. MCA 49-3-5. The library does not present equal sides of the political coin. The proposed changes do sanction certain political ideas and violates this section.

Mr. Richard Irving addressed the board. He stated that the Collection Development person does an excellent job of balancing the social and political issues of the books that are ordered. He knows nothing of the children's collection.

He suggests that the board get a lawyer's opinion on what is in the document.

He suggests that the board do not adopt this motion tonight. The library needs to put in a mission statement and guiding principles as well as a statement that says the library will not participate in, or support any partisan political action or ideology.

Mr. Keith Duncan addressed the board. Mr. Duncan encourages the board to table the motion until they can get a legal opinion. The Montana Code annotated has been referred to, and Ms. Bulger has stated herself, her opinion of the wording. How does this conform to Montana Law? This motion should be taken to the county attorney.

Ms. Jane Weber addressed the board. Ms. Weber stated that she agrees with the motion on the table and does not feel it needs to go to an attorney. Adopting the ALA policies is the right thing to do.

Ms. Johnson made a motion to postpone this vote to another meeting until we can get legal counsel. Ms. Olson asked if there was a second. Upon hearing none, she asked if there was any additional board discussion.

Ms. Johnson made a motion to table the motion. Ms. Olson asked if there was a second. Upon hearing none, she called for a vote for the motion that is on the table. Motion passed with a vote of 4 in favor and 1 against.

PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS: LIBRARY STANDARDS REVIEW-LAWS AND GOVERNANCE

Ms. McIntyre presented and explained the handout in the board packet. It will be presented every year. If the board would like any of the items calendared, we can put it on the agenda for next month. Ms. Olson suggested we wait until the Policy Review is completed.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

CONDUCT OF LIBRARY BOARD MEETING: REVIEW OF PACKET AND CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. McIntyre presented a Memo regarding the consent agenda. She asked the board if they wanted to continue to keep it the way it is or change it to be more standardized.

Ms. Crist stated that the board doesn't use the consent agenda properly. The consent agenda should only include items that are pro forma. There is no point in calling it a consent agenda if we don't treat it like one.

Ms. McIntyre suggested we have approval of the minutes, approval of the finances, and move all the statistics to her director's report. Ms. McIntyre stated the point of using Robert's Rules, and using the consent agenda, is to have a productive, transparent meeting where work can get done. We are not perfect, but are doing our best and can try to be more efficient.

Ms. Bulger agreed that the tag Consent agenda is not being used correctly. We need to get rid of that term.

Ms. Johnson asked if the approved minutes were posted anywhere. Ms. McIntyre stated that they are on the Library's website and on the City website. Ms. Johnson said all she sees are the ones that say Draft. Ms. McIntyre will follow-up on why they are not being updated.

Ms. McIntyre presented a Memo regarding the meeting minutes. Ms. McIntyre mentioned that the meetings could be recorded, but would highly recommend they not be classified as the official minutes and to continue to use the written minutes as the

official record. This is because official minutes need to be able to be accessed years from now and with technology changing there is no guarantee that recordings in today's format will be able to be reviewed in the future without being converted. We recommend that the written minutes be the official record and we will begin recording the meeting via zoom and post it on our You Tube channel. We will also suspend the recording if the board goes into executive session.

Ms. Bulger asked if they would be archived. Ms. McIntyre said they would be kept on our YouTube channel.

Ms. Johnson stated that Kalispell records their meetings and their minutes are timestamped. Ms. McIntyre stated we are happy to record the meetings, but we would need special software to record and timestamp the way Kalispell does.

Ms. Bulger stated that in the article in the packet it said recordings are useful tool, but are not the official transcript.

Ms. McIntyre's recommendation is we record the meetings, but not make it the official record; and she asks for guidance on the level of detail the board would like in the written minutes.

Ms. Crist read a section from the board meeting minutes' handout; "It's important for members to be able to have meaningful discussions without being concerned about individual liability; therefore, names or direct quotations should not be recorded in relation to the debate." Ms. Crist feels this is good advice, less rather than more.

Ms. Johnson agrees, but wanted to point out that the article was talking about non-profit boards and we are a governmental board. Roberts Rules of order states you don't have to record who seconded a motion. There are a lot of things in our minutes that we don't have to have. Robert's Rules also says when you are mentioning members of the public, you just have to state their name and a brief comment.

Ms. Olson stated that to her it didn't sound like we are asking Mr. Kueffler to change the way he is doing meeting minutes right now.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Olson asked if there were any other questions or comments, upon hearing none, she asked for a motion.

Ms. DeForest moved that the Great Falls Library Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting. Ms. Bulger seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment.

Mr. Richard Irving addressed the board. Mr. Irving stated that in any board meeting there is one person who is never the interrupter of the rules of order or procedure; that is the director.

Mr. Irving stated that he is ashamed of 4 of the board members. Four people voiced concerns regarding the wording in the policy. At this time Ms. Olson informed Mr. Irving that this was a motion for adjournment and since his statement was not on topic she would move on to other public comment.

Upon hearing no additional public comment, Ms. Olson called for a vote.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Olson adjourned the meeting at 6:38 pm.