

Great Falls Public Library
Board of Trustees Board Meeting
Tuesday, January 26, 2021
Great Falls Public Library - Cordingley Room in Library basement
(Virtual access to meeting was available upon request)
4:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Anne Bulger (via zoom), Ms. Jessica Crist (via zoom), Ms. Sam DeForest (via zoom), and Ms. Whitney Olson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Susan McCord

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Jim Larson – Cascade County Commissioner

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Mary Moe – City of Great Falls Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Sara Kegel, Ms. Debbie Stewart, Ms. Susie McIntyre, and Mr. Aaron Kueffler

GUESTS PRESENT: Mr. Ken Robison, SSgt Rivera-Acosta, SrA Williams, SrA Cleveland, Mr. Bill Tacke - GFPL Foundation Liaison (via zoom), Ms. Jill Baker - GFPL Foundation Director (via zoom), and Ms. Jenn Rowell - The Electric (via zoom)

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

I. AGENDA APPROVAL

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had any additional items to add or remove from the agenda approval. If not she would entertain a motion.

Ms. DeForest moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Crist 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.

At this time Ms. McIntyre asked Ms. Kegel, and Ms. Stewart to give a brief overview of who they are, what they do, and how long have they worked at the library. Ms. Kegel and Ms. Stewart left the meeting after their introduction.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Olson asked if there were any questions or comments from the committee regarding the consent agenda items on pages 1-30, and the personnel report on page 35.

Ms. DeForest noticed that the packet contained some different reports. Ms. McIntyre stated that the new reports are from the new system. Some of the numbers do not match with the old reports and that is due to the city still merging data from the old to the new system. Ms. Olson asked if the old reports will eventually go away. Mr. Kueffler said yes.

(Ms. Bulger provided a written note, after the meeting, indicating some changes to December's board meeting minutes. On page two, the second line should read 'go' not 'do'. On page three, lines 8 and 10 DVDs should not have an apostrophe. On page 5, item VIII, line 4 should read "none of these is...". And on page seven, 1st paragraph should read "change its name since it is..."

Ms. Olson asked if there were any other questions and if not she would entertain a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Ms. DeForest moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Ms. Bulger seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment. Upon hearing none she called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

III. OPERATING VOUCHERS

Ms. Olson asked if there were any questions or comments from the committee regarding the operating vouchers on pages 31-34.

Ms. Olson asked Ms. McIntyre to explain the relationship between the VISTA and Rural Dynamics. Ms. McIntyre stated that Rural Dynamics is the organization that coordinates VISTA's in this area.

Ms. Olson asked if there were any other questions and if not she would entertain a motion to approve the operating vouchers.

Ms. Bulger moved that the Great Falls Library Board of Trustee approve the claims and payroll as presented. Ms. Crist 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.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. McIntyre thanked the Library Foundation for applying for the CARES funding. The final report is in and included in your packet. If you have any questions please ask.

The basement flooding project is finished but came in over budget. As a result we will need to present to the City Commission again.

The new electronic reader board is here in Great Falls. The permit has been submitted and it is expected to be installed in early February. Ms. Deforest asked who was installing the sign. Mr. Kueffler replied it will be All State Signs.

Tax Help Montana will be returning to the library this year. They will operate as a pick-up and drop-off site this year. They will be here every Tuesday from February to end of Tax season.

Ms. McIntyre realized that she is always mentioning the craft kits that the Library hands out; so she showed the group an example of the craft kits. We have been handing them out to families and community partners. We have provided many kits to the Cameron Center, the YWCA, and many schools. This month's craft kit is a slime making.

Ms. McIntyre informed us that the Library Foundation has approved all our requests. The request includes two big projects; A web site upgrade and funding for stage one of the RFID system.

The little free libraries have been very popular during COVID. The library has been stocking them. They were installed in 2014 and are in need of repairs. Since the library was unable to do programming last year due to COVID, we will be using those funds to purchase and repair the current ones.

A strategic plan update is included in the board packet.

Ms. Crist asked if the little free libraries were also stocked by individuals in the community. Ms. McIntyre replied yes, we have agreements with the neighborhood councils. There is a Little Free Library in each neighborhood district. It is a take and give lending process.

Ms. Crist asked about the Montana Library Association Conference. Ms. McIntyre encourages all board members to take a look at what is offered and to attend. Ms. Olson asked if there was an incentive to register early. Ms. McIntyre said there is an Early Bird rate for people that register early.

V. GFPL FOUNDATION REPORT

Mr. Tacke informed us that the foundation had a meeting yesterday. Ms. Baker is now fully in place as the Foundation's new Director. Ms. Andre remains available as needed.

The Bookmobile/Book-A-Thon campaign has reached the 150K mark and the foundation can now receive the 50K grant that was applied for. With other pledges that have been made, we are over the goal of 255K. There has been wonderful support from the community. The campaign is scheduled to run through March. Ms. Crist asked what the

exceeded amount would be used for. Mr. Tacke said it will be used for new materials and to the youth services materials.

Ms. Olson asked where the process was at for the new bookmobile. Ms. McIntyre stated that we are on track for a late March delivery. Ms. Olson asked if any plans have been made for the unveiling. Mr. Tacke said there has been some discussion, but we will have to see where we are at with COVID when the time comes.

Ms. McIntyre reminded everyone that we are currently not running the bookmobile, only using the van to pick up and drop off books.

VI. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Ms. Olson had nothing to report.

VII. BOARD REPORTS

There was nothing to report.

VIII. PROPOSALS/COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

There was nothing to report.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

COVID-19

Ms. McIntyre reported that we are carrying on as we have been. Staff have been having discussions on what needs to be revised due to the new governors guidelines. The drive up window is very popular, and there have been very few instances of patrons not wearing masks.

Library Standards Calendar

Ms. McIntyre stated that the board has nothing to review this month. Next month we will benchmark the Great Falls Public Library against the other big six libraries in Montana.

Adding an attorney on an hourly retainer

Ms. McIntyre managed to get a clear understanding of what the City Attorney does for the Library. Ms. McIntyre recommends we create a relationship with a local attorney and not put one on retainer. This way they can be an on-call when the City Attorney cannot provide support to us. Ms. McIntyre has talked with Ms. Crosby and is awaiting a

quote for services. Once she receives that she will contact other attorney's for comparisons.

Ms. Crist asked what MMIA stood for. Ms. McIntyre replied, Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority.

Naming Policy

Ms. McIntyre shared that she had received a request to change the name of the library and brought it to the board last month. After a discussion, Ms. Moe had suggested that the library create a naming policy before moving forward. Ms. McIntyre researched naming policies from other Montana libraries and has had the City Attorney look over the draft in the board packet; the Great Falls Public Library Foundation has also looked it over. Ms. McIntyre asked if anyone had any questions. Ms. DeForest pointed out a typo on the bottom of page 57.

Ms. Olson asked how the sponsorship levels for the bookmobile might be effected by item B on page 57. Ms. McIntyre stated that if we were to name something after someone they would need to go through this process. Since the bookmobile is only being sponsored, not renamed, it will not affect it.

Ms. DeForest asked about the Cordingley room and if there was a naming policy in effect when it was named. Ms. McIntyre stated that we could not find any paperwork when it happened in 1967.

Ms. Crist asked about item C on page 56. Ms. McIntyre said that when ImagineIF library changed its name it went through this entire process. This appears to be a standard addition to renaming policies. Ms. Olson asked how long ago was ImagineIF rebranded. Ms. McIntyre believes it was seven years ago.

Ms. Crist asked if there were other naming policies within the City. Ms. McIntyre said there are and have been referenced in the draft policy. Ms. DeForest asked if we had legal look over this policy. Ms. McIntyre said yes. Ms. Olson asked if this policy allows us to rename something at a later date that has already been named. Ms. McIntyre directed us to page 56 of the draft, item E stating that naming agreements may be modified; as well as item G giving the board the right to terminate a naming opportunity.

Ms. Olson asked if there was a motion.

Ms. DeForest moved that the Great Falls Library Board of Trustees approve the Great Falls Public Library Naming Policy as corrected. Ms. Bulger seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment.

Mr. Robison said that he liked the naming policy and felt it was very reasonable. He also appreciates the consideration to rename the library. He looks forward to having a discussion regarding the renaming in February.

SSgt Rivera-Acosta thanked Ms. McIntyre for drafting up the policy. She made the following statement on why Alma Smith Jacobs means so much to her.

(The following is the complete statement as received via email, by request from the board)

Good day board members of The Great Falls Library. I would like to express my gratitude for being afforded the opportunity to present my proposal for a name change and dedication as well as bring honor to an extraordinary person in black history, Ms. Alma Smith Jacobs. Preemptively, I had reservations about my assignment to Malmstrom Air Force Base due to the minimal minority presence as disclosed by the census. Once settled, I drove around the city to gain a better perspective of the community; initially nothing peaked my interest. I parked my vehicle adjacent to 301 2nd Ave N and began to lament, tears streaming down my face as I questioned God as to why I was relocated to this area an area that felt foreign to me. I lifted my head and gazed upon the mural Alma Smith Jacobs. Her image took me out of my immediate defeatism and created a strong sense of representation that renewed my spirit. My mother (as mothers tend to be) was concerned about my welfare being away from home and at a new base. When she came to Montana to visit, I made the mural one of our first locations to see. My mother commented that I needed to create a new home with new roots in this community. Ms. Smith Jacobs truly inspires me. I dedicated personal time to researching and discovering more about Alma Smith Jacobs. She was not only the first African-American to serve as Montana state librarian, but she also dedicated her life as the President of the Montana Federation of Colored Women's Club, the first African-American president of the Pacific Northwest Library Association, the first African-American on the Executive Board of the American Library Association Commission and Humanities Montana (which she also co-founded). Lastly, her and her sister Lucille Smith Thompson developed a catalog entitled The Negro in Montana: 1800-1945 (with a revision in 1970). The importance of her position and purpose was that of a mouthpiece for inequality and the disenfranchised. In the 1950s she contacted 20 property managers inquiring if they would allow upstanding negro families to reside in available rental properties; to which one affirmative response was received. Prior to joining the military, I was homeless and am empathetic to the plight of having no place to call home; understanding what subpar living conditions are like and simply wanting a quiet, clean, and safe place to call home. Ms. Smith Jacobs advocated for black people to live in the aforementioned. However, domiciles being offered to black civilian and military alike in the Great Falls area were desolate, unsanitary as well as rat and roach infested. In addition to her local and state civil rights causes; she championed for free access to critical library resources. She was instrumental in the construction of the Great Falls Public Library. The mural in honor of Ms. Smith Jacobs shows that this community is

dedicated to the celebration of exceptional people as well as amenable to the edification of diversity. Ms. Smith Jacobs used her life to make the lives of others better and in doing so became part of not just Montana's history but Black history. I petition that she be honored this day for her spirit of excellence and her willingness to make the world a better place for those who truly needed it. She was a beacon of hope for many and an example for future generations, regardless of color to emulate. Thank you for your time and consideration.

The board thanked SSgt Rivera-Acosta for the statement.

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

X. NEW BUSINESS

Strategic Plan

Ms. Olson pointed out that Ms. McIntyre has accomplished almost all of the goals from the strategic plan. Ms. McIntyre thanked the board for creating a doable plan.

Ms. Olson stated that with so many things completed, she would like to revisit this plan. Ms. Bulger stated that she would prefer to revisit the plan when the board can meet in person again. Ms. Olson agreed and asked what the rules are in terms of strategic planning and inviting the public. Ms. McIntyre stated that the board could do a work session and state that no actions will be voted on. Ms. Olson asked when people would feel comfortable meeting in person again. Ms. Bulger suggested the board have some discussions first to generate the questions that can be asked, then go forward from there. Ms. McIntyre stated the need to be more diversified and inclusive in our strategic plan including the members on the board. Ms. Crist suggested we invite the Little Shell Tribe to sit on the board. Ms. McIntyre stated that the library board is defined by the Montana Code Annotated. It states that the board can have five voting members and multiple ex-officio members. Ms. Crist recommended having advisory councils. The Little Shell and Malmstrom are two sources of diversity in our community. Ms. McIntyre thinks that is a great idea, but a discussion will be needed regarding it since the City Commission does the appointing.

Ms. Olson feels the board should start with an informal discussion regarding the strategic plan. Ms. Crist asked if we had strategic plans from other libraries. Ms. McIntyre said we do, and she will send links to the different ones.

Ms. Olson stated that she would like to have a conversation on how one rises to the ranks of being on the board. At the next board meeting she would like a discussion on recruitment and the process of vice-chairs.

Board Recruitment and Skills Assessment

Ms. McIntyre will send out a questionnaire to determine what skills we currently have and what we should be looking for in a future appointment to the board.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no other public comment.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Olson asked if there were any other questions; upon hearing none she would entertain a motion.

Ms. Bulger moved that the Great Falls Library Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting. Ms. Crist 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.

Ms. Olson adjourned the meeting at 5:50 pm.