

**Great Falls Public Library
Board of Trustees
Special Board Meeting on COVID-19 Response
Monday, March 16, 2020
City of Great Falls, Civic Center, Gibson Room
4:30 p.m.**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Anne Bulger(on phone), Mr. Mitch Tropila, Ms. Whitney Olson, Ms. Sam DeForest and Ms. Susan McCord

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: None

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Owen Robinson, Ms. Jane Weber

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Susie McIntyre, Ms. Sara Linder-Parkinson, Ms. Treva Higgins, Ms. Sara Kegel and Ms. Katie Richmond

GUESTS PRESENT: Ms. Jenn Rowell, The Electric Reporter and Mr. Matt Holzapfel, KRTV Reporter

Mr. Tropila called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm.

I. AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Tropila asked for agenda changes. There were none.

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

II. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. McIntyre opened by talking about the noon meeting that she had been on with the Montana State Library. She stated that the Montana State Library is not providing guidance and this time but the vast majority of major libraries in Montana are closing to the public. They will continue to provide electronic and telephonic services as well as some curbside services. It was asked how we are ensuring that the materials are safe for patrons. Ms. McIntyre stated that at this time there is no good guidance on cleaning books upon return but we are placing the books on 72 hour quarantine and then wiping them down with triad disinfectant before checking them.

Ms. McIntyre stated that we are still offering online programming and we are looking at assisting a ramp up of ebooks and audiobooks through Montana Library 2 Go.

There was a meeting at 2 pm with Trisha Gardner, County Health Department, Jim McCormick, Great Falls Rescue Mission, and Gary Owen, United Way. They stated that the Rescue Mission will be closing shelter and going shelter in place. So if people are staying there they will be asked to stay in. All agencies are working together to work out providing assistance for the people that are living on the streets and working on how to provide services as needed. The Voices of Hope have a help line and we are recommending that if anyone wants to know about where to get help please call them at 2-1-1. This is the central hub for information and ensures that it is up to date as things change.

Ms. McIntyre also had a department head meeting and some guidance from Human Resources about leave was provided. We will be tracking leave and expenses for a possible refund due to Covid-19. Presently we have staff out for illness not related to Covid-19m quarantine due to weakened immune systems and school closure impact. There may be a chance that some staff will be pulled later on to work in other essential services departments within the City.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Coronavirus prevention measures discussion.

Today we are meeting to talk about the Library being open and the exposure threat. We presently have 1/3 of the public access computers operating and have shut down the others to ensure 6 feet of space. We have shut off library cards and all patrons need a temporary pass to access computers to make sure that there is enough computers to go around. We are presently handing each patron that requests a pass; a library temporary pass and a Clorox wipe. They are being advised to wipe everything down and encouraged to use hand sanitizer or wash hands. The OPACS have been shut down so that is requiring a lot more staff research to be done. The hard decision is if we go to limited hours / limited time or if we close. Mr. Tropila wanted to express his gratitude to Ms. McIntyre and the library staff. He knows that the staff all takes the fact that they work and care for the community seriously. Ms. Bulger asked how the staff felt and if it was going to be too much work for too few people. There was also concern that the library could turn in to a transmittal center. Ms. McIntyre stated that most staff is in favor of closing. The staff that was present was asked how they felt about everything. Ms. Kegel stated that there is potential that she would have to work for City IT and she would like to stay as healthy as long as possible. She felt that we should err on the side of caution and close. Ms. Richmond

stated that having limited access hours would be a preference and staff could continue to be available on the phones for patrons. Ms. Olson asked if locking the doors would be best and Ms. DeForest inquired about what a curbside service would look like. Ms. McIntyre stated that we were not yet sure what it looked like but we are looking into it. Ms. Linder-Parkinson stated that she felt that the hours were going to be too hard to staff if we have people that get sick and other staff out. Her preference would be to get some necessary projects done and keep staff safe and healthy as long as possible. Ms. Bulger felt that it would be most important to take care of the staff and Ms. McCord agreed that keeping staff safe was important and agreed that we should close. Ms. McIntyre stated that there would be no late fees and we would work on a way to renew things easily. Ms. DeForest said that if someone is sick can they be encouraged to not drop off items and we can renew them. It was stated that we will have items in 72 hour quarantine upon return and then we will wipe down all items with cleaner. It was asked if we are closed will we still be available telephonically and electronically. Ms. McIntyre stated that we would continue those services to patrons.

Mr. Tropila wanted to make sure that the staff knew that the Board was thankful for all the steps that they were taking. He said a big thank you to all the staff at the GFPL.

Ms. McCord moved to approve the Coronavirus prevention measures of cosign the physical library starting on 03/17/20 to the public but continuing to provide telephonic services Monday – Friday 8am to 5pm and continue electronic services as corrected. Ms. DeForest seconded the motion. Mr. Tropila opened for any board discussion or public comment. Upon hearing none Mr. Tropila called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Tropila asked if there were any other questions. Upon hearing none, he adjourned the meeting.

Mr. Tropila adjourned the meeting at 5:29 pm.