

Great Falls Public Library
Board of Trustees Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 23, 2024
Great Falls Public Library – Cordingley Room (Basement of the Library)
(Virtual access to meeting was available upon request)
(zoom recording of meeting is available on the Great Falls Public Library YouTube page)
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. Rae Grulkowski – Cascade County Commissioner, Ms. Shannon Wilson – City of Great Falls Commissioner

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Heather Hayes, Ms. Treva Higgins, Ms. Sara Kegel, Ms. Elizabeth Kim, Mr. Aaron Kueffler, Mr. Lukas Meier, Ms. Susie McIntyre, Ms. Sara Linder-Parkinson

GUESTS PRESENT:

Jeni Dodd – Resident of Great Falls, Keith Duncan – Resident of Great Falls, Richard Irving – Resident of Great Falls, Amber Kegel – Resident of Great Falls, Brianne Laurin – GFPL Foundation Executive Director (via Zoom), Rodney Meyers – Resident of Great Falls, Sharon Patton-Griffin – Resident of Cascade County, Sandy Rice – GFPL Foundation Liaison, Bill Tacke – Resident of Great Falls, Jane Weber – Resident of Great Falls, Millie Whalen – Resident of Cascade County,

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. Crist moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees approve the agenda items as presented. Ms. Bulger 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

Ms. Heather Hayes and Ms. Elizabeth Kim 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

Mr. Richard Irving, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. He stated that he was disappointed in the library for being political and not neutral. He also stated his concern with kids being put in the basement after the library remodel.

Ms. Sharon Patton-Griffin, a resident of Cascade County, addressed the board. She voiced her concerns with public comment not being civil. She read a section from Roberts Rules regarding public comment. She asked everyone to be kind.

Ms. Jane Weber, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. She complimented the board and library for hosting a Jewish Heritage evening in May.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Ms. Bulger made a motion that the Great Falls Board of Trustees approve the minutes as presented. Ms. DeForest seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment.

Ms. Bulger provided Mr. Kueffler with a list of typos that need to be fixed. Ms. Crist had a correction on page 7 paragraph two. The word subjected should be replaced with subjective.

Ms. Olson indicated that the motion will need to be adjusted to read "approval of the amended minutes".

Ms. Johnson moved that the Great Falls Board of Trustees approve the minutes as altered with corrections. Ms. Crist seconded the motion. Ms. Olson asked if there were any additional comments, upon hearing none she called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

V. ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

Ms. DeForest asked why line item 455150 Credit Card Fees has a zero percent. Ms. McIntyre stated it was because it was not budgeted for FY24.

Ms. Bulger asked if the Tilleras Landscaping amount on page 17 was for the removal of the trees in the Library park. Ms. McIntyre stated that it was for trimming the existing trees and the laying of the new sod.

Ms. Bulger moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees accept the financial reports as presented. Ms. Deforest seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or comment. Upon hearing none she called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. REPORTS

Management Team Report

Ms. Kegel gave her systems technology report.

Ms. Olson asked what the status was regarding the newspaper tablets. Ms. Kegel stated we have the tablets set up, we are just waiting on maintenance to mount them to a table. She expects them to be live within the next week or two.

Director Report

Ms. McIntyre presented her director's report. She also added that the City Manager's office has posted an opening for the library board. The term Ms. Johnson filled in for expires in June. Ms. McIntyre added that this year the City Commission will be interviewing all of the candidates.

Statistical Report

Ms. McIntyre stated that the Advantage Program has driven the increase in circulations.

Personnel Report

Ms. Crist stated that it was nice to see new staff attending the City Commission meeting during the Library Proclamation.

GFPL Foundation Report

Ms. Rice informed us that Ms. Laurin attended the MLA conference last week. The Annual report is complete; it should go out the end of this week or next week. The City Commission approved the design contract. Next week is Give Great Falls. Thursday, May 23rd, is non-profit night at the Voyagers; please contact Ms. Laurin if you would like to purchase tickets. Ms. Rice added a thank you to Ms. Olson and her family for helping with the Friends of the Library book drop-off. This Saturday is the last day to donate. The sale begins on May 9th.

Chair Report

Ms. Olson stated that the MLA conference went really well. She hopes more staff will be able to attend next year.

Board Reports

No reports were given.

City/Library Management Agreement Committee Report

Ms. Olson stated that the first meeting with the city will be this Thursday. She will have an update at the next meeting.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS: LIBRARY STANDARDS ROADMAP REVIEW – BOARD EDUCATION AND RECRUITMENT

Ms. McIntyre presented. She recapped the information that was presented in the board packet.

Ms. Crist stated that the board should consider having one board member be certified by the Montana State Library. Ms. McIntyre gave an overview of the process and stated that she will email the board more information regarding that.

Ms. DeForest ask if the Continuing education training was the same training to be certified. Ms. McIntyre stated that is was the same, but a different amount of hours is needed to be certified.

Ms. Bulger asked for clarification on board education and recruitment. Ms. McIntyre stated that the City Commission would not be seeking input from the library board regarding applicants. Ms. Bulger asked if the board job description that was worked on would be available to the commission. Ms. McIntyre stated that the job description was not posted with the board opening announcement. We can share that information with people that apply.

PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS POLICY REVIEW: ACCESS AND USE OF FACILITIES SERVICES AND MATERIALS

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had questions or changes to the policy. Ms. DeForest asked if we inform parents signing up their children that they will not be able to access what their children checkout. Ms. McIntyre stated that it is on the card application form.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that info had been crossed off on page 42, but not on the related form on page 73. And the same for page 43 and page 76. Ms. McIntyre stated that she will get those updated. Ms. Johnson asked if the form on page 77 should read contract since it looks the same as the form on page 75 that says application. Ms. McIntyre stated that page 75 is the old form and page 77 is the proposed new form.

Ms. Olson asked for clarification on the term “uncataloged” on page 53. Ms. McIntyre stated that the adult paperback and board books are classified as uncataloged. The process of adding those items to the catalog is lengthy. Adult paperback and board books are not typically searched for, that is why they are entered as uncataloged.

Ms. Johnson informed us that the total on page 54 does not match what is on the hot spot permission forms. Ms. McIntyre stated she would get it updated.

Ms. DeForest informed us of a spelling error on page 57. Ms. McIntyre stated she would get that corrected.

Ms. Johnson questioned conflicting laws regarding the age of minors and the limiting of parent’s access to their child’s records. Ms. McIntyre stated that when the legislation passes laws that contradict each other, usually the law that has been in place is not suddenly changed. It is not clear how the parental law is going to impact other laws. The State of Montana constitution indicates that minors continue to have free speech rights and privacy rights. Until the courts clarify, Ms. McIntyre recommends we continue to follow the MCA 22.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that too many numbers are behind the MCA on pages 50 & 70. Ms. McIntyre stated she would get that corrected.

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had any additional questions. Upon hearing none she asked for a motion.

Ms. Johnson moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees approve the updated and amended Access and Use of Facilities Services and Materials policies as amended in this meeting. Ms. Crist seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or comment.

Ms. Jeni Dodd, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. She voiced concerns with patrons under 13-17 signing a contract for a library card. She asked how this is legal without a parents signature.

Ms. Dodd also had concerns regarding the Photography Policy. Since the library is a city owned building, how can the library ban photographing persons in the library. She stated consent is not required in a public space. Citizens have the right to photograph

public officials including Library Staff and City Employees. She cited court cases regarding this.

Mr. Richard Irving, a resident of Great Falls, addressed the board. He advises the board to not ask the director for legal opinions.

Ms. Johnson asked if individual policies could be brought back to the board if changes were needed. Ms. Olson stated that they can be.

Ms. Olson asked if there were any additional comments, upon hearing none she called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS: LIBRARY OPERATIONAL BUDGET

Ms. McIntyre presented the library operational budget that was presented in the board packet. Ms. McIntyre added that what the board approves today will not be exactly what is approved by the city commission. This is due to that fact that we do not yet know the final internal services and utility costs.

Ms. Johnson clarified that the total taxes on page 85 is next fiscal year's December and June disbursement. Ms. McIntyre stated that was correct. It reflects total revenues received in fiscal year 2025.

Ms. Olson asked when we will see the revenue from the tax protests. Ms. McIntyre stated there is more tax protest than there has been in the past. That is why she has budgeted conservatively this year. Based on feedback from city finance department, we did not budget for an increase in tax revenue.

Ms. DeForest ask where the Federation money would come in, and what can it be used for. Ms. McIntyre stated that line item 33800 Coal Tax support is the Federation funds. We only receive that if a board member attends at least 50% of the federation meetings. At their May meeting, they will have a plan of action that will determine what the funds can be spent on.

Ms. Olson asked why the Cultural Grant State Aid (33500) was lower than the modified 2024 amount. Ms. McIntyre explained that it is due to the legislation passing an increase in per capita, and allowing tribal libraries to get a share if they participate in the library standards. With more libraries, the distribution has been adjusted.

Ms. Bulger asked if renting out office spaces has balanced out what we have lost in parking revenue or late fees. Ms. McIntyre stated that is has some but not fully.

Ms. Olson asked about sick and vacation time. Ms. McIntyre explained how sick and vacation time is paid out.

Ms. DeForest asked for an update on line 43590 Mental Health Contract. Ms. McIntyre explained that the program is currently a pilot program funded by ARPA funds. When the funds run out in September, this will keep the program running for another nine months.

Ms. Johnson asked how this position overlaps with the new safety specialist positions. Ms. McIntyre stated that the safety specialists are still in training. The person currently in the pilot program is a mental health professional employed by Many Rivers Whole Health with relationships to health contacts in the community. This person can direct patrons to specific programs for their needs, where the safety specialists are focused on enforcing the policies of the library.

Ms. DeForest asked if the current person would stay when the contract ends. Ms. McIntyre said we would have to work with Many Rivers Whole Health to discuss a renewal of the contract.

Ms. Johnson asked about funds budgeted for staff travel and training. Ms. McIntyre explained that funds for staff training and travels are a yearly donation from D. A. Davidson. The donation goes through the foundation and does not show on the operation budget.

Ms. Johnson asked if any money has been budgeted for unexpected expenses. Ms. McIntyre stated we could reserve funds for a project, but they come from the library fund.

Ms. Olson asked when we could expect actual numbers for internal services. Ms. McIntyre explained the process of how those amounts are calculated.

Ms. Olson asked if there was any more discussion. Upon hearing none she asked for a motion.

Ms. Crist moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees approve the library operational budget as presented. Ms. Bulger seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or comment.

Ms. Olson asked if there was anymore discussion regarding the motion. Upon hearing none, she asked for a vote. Motion passed 4-1 (voting yes: Ms. Bulger, Ms. Crist, Ms. DeForest, Ms. Whitney Olson. Voting no: Ms. Johnson).

IX. PROPOSALS/COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

Ms. Crist stated that she does not find the roadmap helpful. She may bring a proposal at the next meeting to just have one meeting to discuss it instead of it being discussed at every meeting.

X. ADJOURMENT

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

Ms. Crist moved that the Great Falls Library Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting. Ms. DeForest seconded the motion. Ms. Olson called for a vote.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Olson adjourned the meeting at 6:16 pm.