

Billings Public Library Board Meeting

July 9, 2020
12:00 p.m.

Board and City staff present:

Cheryle Fisher, Chairperson	Peggy McSweyn, Vice Chair	Sue Bach
Lloyd Mickelson	Stella Fong	Andrea Horrell
Jennifer Quinn	Roger Young	David Darby
Gavin Woltjer, Library Director	Kathy Robins, Information Systems Coordinator	Jamie Bratlie, Library and Facility Coordinator

Not Present:

Hannah Stewart, Assistant Director

Guests:

Clare Young, Friends of the Library	Leslie Modrow, Library Foundation	PJ Smith, Yellowstone Genealogy Forum
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Public Comment

None

Chair's Comments

- Chairperson Fisher commended library staff for stepping up and being innovative and creative to find the best ways to serve patrons.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the May minutes as corrected. Motion approved.

Young/Fong

FOL Update

Clare Young said the Friends are back in the library with gloves and masks on. They have been sanitizing the Nook. The Friends' board meeting will be held tomorrow. Young said there have been some people browsing the Nook, so that is good.

Yellowstone Genealogy Forum Update

PJ Smith said the genealogy room is still closed. The May and June meetings were cancelled, and July's may be as well. Some of the programs they have been planning have been put on hold for now. Woltjer offered library staff to assist with setting up some of the programs online.

BPL Foundation Update

Leslie Modrow said she has been working in the library; but Carol is still working at home, as her desk space is located in an open area.

Modrow said they are planning to present Food for Thought virtually, possibly in mid-October as a week-long event. She also said the Royal Johnson forum in early 2021 will most likely be virtual as well.

BPL Reopening Update

Kathy Robins, Systems Technology:

Robins provided the following stats since the library reopening on July 1:

- 3,125 people have come into the building, with busiest hours between 10 and noon.
- 9,210 checkouts: 7,011 through the self-checks and 2,199 through curbside service.
- Hundreds of take-away kits have been picked up. The kits are a substitute for in-person craft programs.
- Social media connections continue to grow exponentially – Facebook up 320 followers in June (normal average 70/month), Instagram up 73 (normal 20), and YouTube up 37 new subscribers (normal 1).

Hannah Stewart, Circulation and Reference (Woltjer provided the update):

- Summer Reading participants are down, but level part is up. Over 500,000 minutes read so far.
- Over 400 Take and Go crafts have been handed out.
- Reference Summer Reading is going great.
- The Reference team is also adapting Summer Reading to online this year.
- Curbside service is seeing 50-60 vehicles a day.
- Library staff continues to explore how to expand services to patrons.

Jamie Bratlie, Facilities:

Since reopening, library staff has added extra cleaning/sanitizing protocols and checks:

- All staff sanitize the general areas (self-checks, elevators, stairs, counters, etc.) first thing in the morning before the library opens. Maintenance continues throughout the day.
- Maintenance is checking the restrooms hourly and sanitizing stall doors, dispensers, and sinks.
- All staff are sanitizing the self-checks, counters, children's bench, and all general areas throughout the day.

Security has reported people are generally understanding of the protocols that have been put into place. Some have expressed gratitude. The Stompin' Grounds café is open, and business has been good for the numbers of customers in the building. Outreach is on the road and being received well. Both senior outreach and bookmobile have solid, no-contact policies in place.

Gavin Woltjer, Director:

Woltjer has been on the first floor every morning when the library opens. He estimates that 85% minimum of the people entering the building are wearing masks. Most people are in and out within 15-20 minutes. They come in, grab their stuff, and head out, so Woltjer said the philosophy is working.

Woltjer said there is an ELT meeting today where the County uptick in cases will be discussed. He has three alternate plans to present at the meeting if the COVID numbers rise significantly. He has directed management to prepare plans for staff to work at home if necessary. Woltjer also said he has a plan ready if any staff are closely exposed or become sick.

Woltjer told the Board the City budget was approved, with no changes to the library budget.

Board member Darby inquired if the library could require that all people have to wear masks to come into the building. Woltjer said some other Montana cities have either already set that policy or are considering it, such as Great Falls and Kalispell.

Following extensive discussion, Darby proposed that all staff and patrons be mandated to wear masks while inside the Billings Public Library. Mickelson seconded. Chairperson Fisher conducted a roll call vote. All were in favor, except Quinn who voted for a staff-only mask requirement.

Darby/Mickelson

Woltjer said he would present the Board's position at the ELT meeting at 2:00 p.m. With City Administration approval, he will write a press release on behalf the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.