



## BILLINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

August 11, 2022  
12:00 p.m.

### Board and City Staff present:

Andrea Horrell, Vice Chair  
Staci Samuelson  
Gavin Woltjer,  
Library Director  
Kelsie Rubich,  
Info. Systems Coordinator

Cheryle Fisher  
Trudi Paulson  
Hannah Stewart-Freeman,  
Assistant Director

Peggy McSweyn  
Roger Young  
Jamie Bratlie,  
Library & Facility Coordinator

### Absent:

David Darby, Chair

Jennifer Smith

### Guests:

Kenzie Lombardi, Foundation

### Public Comment

None

### Chair's Comments

Vice Chair Horrell confirmed all members of the board saw the emails from Darby (annual report) and herself (director evaluation).

### Consent Agenda

- a. Motion and second to approve the June 2022 minutes. Young stated the minutes were well done.  
No discussion. Vote all in favor. Paulson/McSweyn

### BPL Management Update

Meet the Staff: Rubich introduced Katie Burkhalter to the Board. Burkhalter is a 6 ½-year library staff member who started her career in Circulation and is now the Assistant Cataloguer. Added to Burkhalter's work duties, she is the Library's Teamster shop steward and attends a monthly meeting for the Union, as well as another as a Teamster rep on the City's Health Insurance Committee. Paulson noted she was unaware library staff were part of a union. Burkhalter said yes, the City has three unions – Teamsters, and the police and fire fighters are in their own separate unions.

Management updates: Rubich provided the Board a number of fiscal year end stats, including:

- Over 641,000 check outs, of which almost 500,000 were physical items;
- Over 63,000 database searches;
- Over 19,000 computer users and 9,000 wifi users.

Woltjer noted the library is getting "back to normal." The locker helps with checkouts and there has been an uptick in programming. Young mentioned that some people feel libraries, as well as printed books, are becoming obsolete. These stats show the inconsistency of that idea. Horrell inquired if these stats are congruent with industry standards. Woltjer said he has never come across that data, and then



McSweyn questioned if Woltjer knows how the BPL compares throughout Montana. Woltjer noted the BPL compares at the top with other libraries across the state, including being first in materials purchased and typically second in circulation behind Bozeman. Rubich completed with the very successful Summer Reading and Bike Library stats.

Stewart-Freeman said following the upcoming LSSII interviews, Circulation will be fully staffed again. She noted a number of the upcoming fall programs, including Children's Bat Walk in October that may be expanded to Teens and Adult programming as well. She said One Book Billings has started and also noted there are six author visits booked in the next three months. Fisher asked if the book drive for children's materials was successful. Stewart-Freeman told her it was extremely successful.

Bratlie told the Board re-ordering of Children's materials damaged in May would begin in early October. In addition, the café is closed throughout August for annual cleaning, maintenance, and inventory. Horrell asked if the café equipment belongs to the library. Bratlie explained that some does and some belongs to Stompin' Grounds.

Woltjer told the Board the next book locker is shipping, so he is connecting with St. Vs to finalize details. He has a couple edits for the annual report, which he will make and send back to the board. Woltjer is also finalizing some points for the new Patron Services Manager position, which will open up this fall. Woltjer will have some additions for the Board's binders at the September meeting, including updated Strategic Plan, Policies, and Org Chart. Thank you to the Board during the Strategic Planning process. Board shadowing will start again in September. Woltjer said if a member cannot make it to the scheduled shadow, but is really interested, let him know and he will work something out. Paulson stated she appreciates that.

### Fall Retreat Discussion

Horrell and Woltjer noted the logistics and history of the Board retreat. The retreat always replaces the monthly meeting during the month it is held. The retreat historically takes place on a Saturday and typically lasts 3 – 4 hours with the library providing lunch for the board members. Discussion included what the focus/theme of the retreat should be, such as education opportunities for the Board, which ties directly into one of the Board goals. Also discussed was current events and challenges for libraries. Woltjer noted that the MLA Conference will be held in Billings next April. Horrell asked Woltjer if he would have a guest speaker contact, to which he answered that he might. Horrell said discussion and planning will continue on this topic next month.

### "Trust Me" Documentary

Woltjer reminded the Board that 5 or 6 months ago a couple versions of the "Trust Me" documentary emerged. Darby supported an idea of the library offering a public showing of the documentary, and he encouraged the Board to view it. Horrell told the Board if they decide to make this a Board project, they will have to vote to sponsor it. Discussion ensued that consisted of the members present stating they would not want to sponsor the film without viewing it first. Woltjer and Stewart-Freeman were uncertain whether the free links for viewing are still available and wondered if Darby has an active link. Horrell summarized the discussion: the board members want to find a way to view the film, either individually or as a group, and then it can be added to the agenda for them to vote on sponsorship.



## Mid-year Review of Board Goals

Horrell told the Board she put together a summary of where the Board is with completion of their annual goals. She said many items are complete, as summarized below, and it is only halfway through the year.

- Under Governance: first four goals completed and #5 is an on-going function,
- Under Advice: all items are on-going/in-progress functions,
- Under Advocacy: #2 and #3 have been completed; #1 and #4 are encouraged individual board member engagement efforts, mostly on-going functions; #5 is in-progress,
- Under Board Development: #1 and #5 completed; #2 and #3 in progress.

Horrell inquired whether the Board should establish a Board Development Committee. Woltjer explained to the Board that they are not able to create any subcommittees that are not already established.

## Good of the Order

Kenzie Lombardi updated the Board on a few Foundation items:

- The Heritage Garden ribbon cutting was on Monday. The donors were present, as well as members of the Crow Tribe. Dr. Realbird gave a traditional Crow blessing for the garden. Brochures are available downstairs.
- One Book Billings has begun. There will be a discussion group in Shepherd this year as well.
- The Royal Johnson Forum is coming up on September 14. The Foundation will host a luncheon at the library and a panel reception at MSU-B.
- The Foundation is currently fundraising for Book Locker #3. This fiscal year the Foundation has granted \$10,000 to the library and has approximately \$45,000 more available.
- Three new people will be joining the Foundation board.

Young updated for the Friends. He said the Friends nook is currently closed with the café cleaning and maintenance. They plan to re-open in September and have a pop-up sale slated for September 3.

Update for the Genealogy Room, sent via email prior to the meeting: "The Genealogy Room had 15 patrons in July."

## Adjournment

Motion, second, and approved to adjourn.

McSweyn/Horrell

12:55 pm