



## BILLINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

November 10, 2022  
12:00 p.m.

### Board and City Staff present:

David Darby, Chair  
Staci Samuelson  
Trudi Paulson  
Gavin Woltjer,  
Library Director

Andrea Horrell, Vice Chair  
Jennifer Smith  
  
Kelsie Rubich,  
Info. Systems Coordinator

Peggy McSweyn, via Zoom  
Roger Young  
  
Jamie Bratlie,  
Library & Facility Coordinator

### Absent:

Cheryle Fisher

### Guests:

Vanessa Justice, Teen Librarian      Victoria Cassou, Archival Librarian      Kenzie Lombardi, Library  
Foundation

### Public Comment

BPL Management thanked Vice Chair Andrea Horrell for her service on the Library Board of Trustees.

### Chair's Comments

Chairman Darby stated the Board dinner is a nice event and he hoped some of the board members were able to attend.

Darby noted he sent a link to the Board of the webinar that the League of Women Voters sponsored at the Lewis & Clark Library. He asked to confirm if the email came through and that the link worked. McSweyn and Paulson confirmed.

Darby thanked Horrell for her service on the Board.

### Consent Agenda

- a. Motion and second to approve the October 2022 minutes. All in favor.      McSweyn/Samuelson

### Nomination of Board Officers

McSweyn said they have two nominations: Smith for Chairperson and Samuelson for Vice Chair. Darby thanked her and said voting will occur in January.

### BPL/Mgmt Updates

- a. Meet the Staff: Woltjer said the Board has expressed interest in bringing back civic conversations. He introduced Vanessa Justice and Victoria Cassou, librarians, and said they are starting a series that will interest the Board.

Justice passed a handout (Attachment A) to the Board and read it to them. It highlighted the Social Awareness Series: Examining Social Issues in Billings, Montana. There are topics scheduled

every two months throughout 2023. McSweyn asked if these discussions will be advertised and if they will be held in the Community Room. Justice answered yes. McSweyn stated the Board should be engaged in these discussions. Horrell inquired what time the discussions will occur. Justice told her it may vary depending on the availability of the speakers, but evenings would be optimal. The first one is booked on January 25, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm. Answers to other questions included depending on the speakers preferences, discussion following may occur in a Q & A session or panel, and the conversations may or may not be recorded.

b. Kelsie Rubich, Information Systems Coordinator:

- Harry Potter program is next Saturday beginning at 11 am. Rubich noted the program is short a couple volunteers. Paulson and McSweyn said they would check their schedules and let Rubich know if they can assist.
- The Americans at the Holocaust exhibit is assembled and ready to view. Rubich will email the programming schedule for the exhibit to the board members.
- The Moss Mansion tree has been decorated. The theme this year is Wild about Christmas. BPL staff incorporated cats and owls, including combinations that Staff named Cows.

Jamie Bratlie, Library and Facility Coordinator: The hail repair of the library scrim is progressing, hopefully to occur next spring.

Gavin Woltjer, Director: Woltjer said the board vacancies have been advertised, with five applications received so far. The board should be full by January.

Woltjer commended Rubich and her staff on the Holocaust exhibit. They put together a variety of eight programs for the exhibit at the BPL. He stated Gonzaga University only held three programs when they had the exhibit. Included in the BPL line up of speakers is a survivor of the Holocaust. He asked the Board to look at the exhibit and told them the opening event is Monday, November 14 at 5:00 pm.

Woltjer updated the Board on the timeline for the open staff positions at the library. He also said that Locker #2 will be in place by the end of the month. Information of the ribbon cutting will be forthcoming.

c. Foundation, FOL, YGF

Library Foundation, Kenzie Lombardi:

- KTVQ-2 televised an awesome story about the book lockers. The Foundation is very excited for the second locker. Currently fund raising for the third locker is short approximately \$9000.
- Giving Tuesday is November 29 this year. Continued funding of the hotspots is earmarked for these funds.
- The next Books and Brews event will be held at the beginning of next year.

Friends of the Library: Young said the Friends annual book sale was probably one of the most successful ever, earning almost \$10,000. What an accomplishment when most of the books sell between .50 and \$1! Darby asked how the Friends promote membership. Young gave an overview and noted that membership only costs \$20/year.

Genealogy, PJ Smith report via email: The Genealogy room had 10 visitors in October.

### Opportunities and Concerns 2023

Darby said this agenda item is to consider/think about things going into 2023. McSweyn mentioned the webinar offered before today's meeting was about tech savvy board trustees. She stated the webinars have excellent information and offer CE credits as well. She feels the webinars help the members be better Trustees. Going off the webinar from today, she contemplated whether library tech offerings could be added to the meeting agendas (one item at a time) for the Board to learn about and, therefore, be better able to promote to the public. One example is the hotspots.

Darby mentioned interest in creating an "all encompassing" brochure promoting the library, including the Friends and Foundation and other groups and how these groups tie to the library.

Darby inquired about the library offering a full staff directory on its website. Woltjer explained to him the City is actually moving away from that and removing personnel names from the website. The most common phishing scams occur through "mining" from staff contact information available publicly. Therefore, it is possible less personal information will become more prevalent.

### Good of the Order (Discussion Only)

Darby welcomed Rubich in her new position as the Assistant Director and stated he is looking forward to the coming new year.

### Adjournment

12:55 pm

# ATTACHMENT A

## Social Awareness Series: Examining social issues in Billings, Montana

The BPL's Social Awareness Series is a set of presentations, discussions, and activities centered around exploring the social and cultural influences on the Billings community. This series will rely on partnerships with local organizations and experts who will share their knowledge with participants. Events will occur in two-month pairings starting January 2023. The series will last approximately 1 year depending on interest from the public and partnering organizations. One large presentation will occur alongside smaller, department specific events for each topic.

The schedule of topics is as follows:

- Jan/Feb- Trauma
- Mar/Apr- Human trafficking
- May/Jun- LGBTQ+
- Jul/Aug- Community Development – Billings Metro VISTA Project
- Sep/Oct- Missing and Murdered Indigenous People
- Nov/Dec- Suicide Prevention/Mental Health

At least one representative from the Children's, Teen, Reference, and Circulation Departments will make up the planning committee. Additional staff members who are interested in planning are welcome to join. Programs may be geared toward all ages, or be specific to a department. Overall, this series will not differ from regular program planning, other than being guided by social and cultural aspects. The planning committee has every intent of representing a wide range of viewpoints and is open to suggestions from patrons, staff, management, and partner organizations.

One session that we would like to host is a presentation by Utahna Payne, a trauma survivor and life coach. She has recently started a trauma support group which meets at the Library. This presentation would be aimed at reaching adults and teens and would share strategies for dealing with traumatic experiences.

Another proposed presentation would be by the new organization, 4Q6 Youth. This would be aimed at teenagers and parents/other adults wanting to keep up to date about LGBTQ+ youth culture/identity trends and issues that they face.

For the Human Trafficking topic, we would invite an agent from the MT DOJ to do a presentation/ Q&A. We have spoken with Alex Sterhan, the Policy Advisor with the MT Attorney General's Office, and they are excited at the prospect of sending someone for a presentation.

For our MMIW/MMIP program, we are in talks with Charlene Sleeper, a local artist and advocate who is scheduled to give a private lecture on this exact topic in November 2022 at the Billings Public Library. She has agreed to come back next year (2023) and give another free

lecture to the public. She comes very highly recommended to us from Reno Charette, the Project Director at American Indian Higher Education Consortium.

The Social Awareness Series at Billings Public Library aims to embrace differences, empower and inform patrons, and enrich our community by providing opportunity for thoughtful and engaging dialog.

It is our intent to compensate presenters who share their expertise by utilizing the speaker's budget and requesting assistance from the Foundation. Several contacts that we have spoken to so far though, have indicated that there will be no fee.