



BILLINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

January 9, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Board and City Staff present:

Susan Plath, Chair	Lawrence Klee, Vice Chair	Staci Samuelson
Peggy McSweyn	Kathy Houska	David Darby
Gavin Woltjer, Library Director	Kelsie Rubich, Assistant Library Director	Megan Thomas, Information Systems Coord.
Jamie Bratlie, Library & Facility Coordinator	Jaclynn Reaves, Patron Services Manager	

Absent:

Roger Young	Jennifer Smith	Trudi Paulson
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Guests:

Clare Young, FOL	Jeannie Tracy, Foundation
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Public Comment

None

Chair's Comments

Chairperson Plath said at this time of the year, she reflects on the year just ended and envisions the upcoming year. She noted 2024 was a great year at the BPL, including overcoming some challenges. She noted the Genealogy Forum / Foundation move, the Library's 10-year anniversary, and the new Co+Lab. Plath said she is proud to be a part of it all. Plath also gave an update and passed a get-well card for one of the vacant members.

Consent Agenda

a. Motion and second to approve the November 2024 minutes. All in favor. McSweyn/Darby

Election of Chair, Vice-Chair

Woltjer read the by-laws regarding annual election of Board officers and asked for nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair for 2025.

Motion and second to nominate Klee for Chair. McSweyn/Darby

Klee expressed thanks for the nomination and mentioned that he most likely will miss a couple meetings through the year. He will decline the nomination if the Board is concerned; no concern was voiced. All in favor.

Motion and second to nominate Darby as Vice-Chair. All in favor. Klee/McSweyn

BPL Strategic Planning

Woltjer said he would cover the three points of this agenda item consecutively. He noted City Administration is currently brainstorming and there may be some form of partnership between Parks

and Recreation and the Library in the future. In November, Council approved the City Strategic Plan, including City Council goals. Included in their goals is a Library Growth Plan. There are multiple steps required to complete a growth plan; therefore, Woltjer would like to extend the current Library Strategic Plan for one year. He thanked the board members who volunteered for the committee and asked the Boards' opinions. Through Board consideration, Darby offered the idea of discussing thoughts and issues to work toward the Library strategic planning process. Motion, second, and approval to extend the current strategic plan for one year.

McSweyn/Darby

Woltjer said he would put together a plan to add ideas to the agendas to start discussion toward the strategic planning process.

BPL Updates

a. BPL Management Updates

Kelsie Rubich, Assistant Director:

- The new bookmobile librarian started working this week.
- The wires for the lighting in the new book drop conveyance are coming down, so the book drop is currently closed. Rubich is working with the contractor for repairs and also to add two more access points.
- The BPL has a new service called Patron Point that will individualize information sent to patrons, for example marketing programs, through email.
- Rubich said the current newsletter is available on the counter for the board members.
- Rubich provided an update on upcoming programs in the library.
- The Children's department has been awarded a grant through MLA for programming and supplies, such as board games and tablets, to be combined with the programs.

Jaclynn Reaves, Patron Services Manager: Reaves said interviews for the open LSSII position just wrapped up with a successful candidate that she will be offering the position to.

Megan Thomas, Info. Systems Coordinator: Thomas provided December statistics for the Board. She said the CO+LAB was very busy in December, and she covered some of the programs that were offered throughout the month. Thomas said Systems has a couple upgrade projects she is scheduling: Community Room technology and the security cameras throughout the building.

Jamie Bratlie, Library and Facility Coordinator: Bratlie said one of the Facilities I positions is open and currently posted and accepting applications. Also, the City budget process will start soon, so she is prepping for that.

Gavin Woltjer, Library Director: Woltjer said he is monitoring the new Legislative session as it begins. He will update the Board if and when any items become important for the BPL. Darby asked if he foresees any issue coming up that the Board would take a position on. Woltjer said he does not.

Woltjer explained the BPL will submit a nomination to MLA for the Library Program of the Year award for the CO+LAB. He has received supporting letters from the Library Board and has asked the Library Foundation and Friends to submit letters. Woltjer also said the BPL will give a number of presentations at the MLA conference this year.

Woltjer thanked the Board, Foundation, and Friends for their support to the BPL and its staff.

b. Friends of the Library: Clare Young said 2024 was a very good year for the Friends. They were able to support the library with \$32,000 throughout the year. She said the Friends retreat will be held tomorrow.

Foundation: Tracy told the Board she has accepted the full-time position with the Foundation. She had a number of updates to give the Board:

- The Foundation's plan is following closely with the Library's strategic plan.
- The endowment is at a good place with nearly \$5 million.
- An open house will be held soon for donors to see the new space and meet Library staff.
- Committee is being created for Food for Thought planning.
- Tracy is working on a more directed campaign for membership, including businesses becoming sponsors.
- Tracy is creating a specific list for projects. She explained it is easier to fundraise when a direct answer can be given when donors ask "what's next".

Tracy said she is grateful for the legacy that has been built that she can launch from. Darby asked if she has staff to help her. Tracy told him she has a part-time admin, and that is enough for now.

Good of the Order

McSweyn told the rest of the board about the Glowforge charcuterie board she made as a Christmas gift in the CO+LAB. Thomas helped her make the reservation and Taylor was great helping her in the lab. She told them how much fun she had. Woltjer offered CO+LAB training as some of the pre-Board meeting training each month.

Klee mentioned looking for a space for the fly-tying classes he instructs. Rubich and Thomas jumped in because they have been discussing offering such a class through the CO+LAB in the spring. They will continue discussion toward possible partnerships.

Adjournment: 1:02 pm. Next meeting: 2/13/2025.