



BILLINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

April 10, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Board and City Staff present:

Lawrence Klee, Chair	David Darby, Vice Chair	Trudi Paulson
Peggy McSweyn	Kathy Houska	Jennifer Smith
Susan Plath		
Kelsie Rubich, Interim Library Director	Megan Thomas, Information Systems Coord.	Jamie Bratlie, Library & Facility Coordinator
Jaclynn Reaves, Patron Services Manager		

Absent:

Staci Samuelson	Roger Young
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Guests:

Clare Young, FOL	Jeannie Tracy, Library Foundation	Gavin Woltjer, Interim PRPL Director
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Public Comment

None

Chair's Comments

Chairperson Klee congratulated Woltjer on his appointment as Interim PRPL Director and also congratulated Rubich on her appointment as Interim Library Director.

Consent Agenda

a. Motion and second to approve the March 2025 minutes. All in favor. Paulson/McSweyn

Co+Lab equipment presentation

Thomas presented the Charlie Cart to the Board. She said the BPL is one of three organizations in Montana that are members of the Charlie Cart Project. The Project focuses on teaching children about healthy cooking and food choices. Thomas told the Board there is always a waiting list for the Co+Lab Charlie Cart programs. This month the program is DIY Dressings. Klee inquired how many spaces are available per class. Thomas told him 18.

FY26 Library Policies

Rubich reviewed the updated Co+Lab language in the policy document. Paulson inquired whether children under 12 should be/must be accompanied by an adult in the Co+Lab and recommended adding the language if so. Rubich noted that change could be made. Houska asked about the 3D printing clause and whether it would hold up under legal action. Rubich told the Board that is currently under review at City Legal.

Motion to approve the new Co+Lab language with amendment. All in favor. Smith/Paulson

Transition Updates

Woltjer explained there have been two failed searches for a Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands (PRPL) Director; and, therefore, City Administration appointed him into the role. He apologized for the lack of communication to the Board noting that he had very little notice of the move. He expects to serve PRPL for 12 – 18 months. He said following this period, he will not be coming back to the library. His plan is to move into city administration somewhere. Woltjer said he will be available in an advisory role to Rubich if needed.

Houska asked what the process will be for the Strategic Plan due to these changes. Rubich noted she intends to add that to next month's agenda.

The Board thanked Woltjer and voiced support for Rubich as Interim Library Director.

BPL Updates

a. BPL Management Updates

Kelsie Rubich, Interim Director: Rubich updated the Board regarding the possible upcoming Federal and State funding impacts. She said there are a lot of unknowns, but it is possible that impacts could be felt across the board – programs, cataloguing, electronic resources, etc. She also stated there is nothing definitive yet, and she will update the Board as more is known.

Megan Thomas, Interim Assistant Director: Thomas provided March stats to the Board. She said there are a number of great increases for the month. Thomas said 730 badges have been earned in the Co+Lab since it opened in October, five new courses have been added, and three new kits are available as well. The Co+Lab was also featured in the most recent Simply Local magazine publication. Thomas told the Board that Library Staff presented on the Book Lockers, Tech Services, and the Co+Lab at the MLA Conference in Bozeman this year. Further, she noted the BPL's Cataloguer, Courtney Lujan, recently achieved her certification.

Jamie Bratlie, Library and Facility Coordinator: Bratlie told the Board her main focus currently is the FY2025 year-end budget process. New Community Room tables will be coming.

Jaclynn Reaves, Patron Services Manager: Reaves said the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast occurs on Friday, May 2nd. She said ideas and planning for next year's breakfast have already started as well. Rubich invited the Board to attend the breakfast.

b. Friends of the Library: Clare Young said the Collectibles sale was very successful. She also said the big spring sale is next week. Thursday, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm, is for members only. Friday and Saturday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, the sale is open to everyone.

Foundation: Tracy updated the Foundation's items:

- Tracy congratulated the BPL for the Library of the Year award, stating Rubich did a beautiful job accepting the award. She said the award dinner was very inspirational. Tracy also toured the Bozeman and Belgrade libraries while at the conference, and she came up with some great ideas.
- The Foundation recently held their spring meeting. They determined next year's distribution to the BPL will be \$80,000.

- The Fortin Foundation's annual distribution of \$15,000 was received. These monies support Children's programming.
- Tracy said she is ready to kick off a new challenge that will focus on monthly giving. She explained the challenge is geared toward new donors.

Good of the Order

Smith said she has been on a number of boards. She is really proud to be on the Library Board and to tell people what the Library offers. McSweyn said the library is a nice space to walk into.

Smith thanked Woltjer, Rubich, and Thomas. She said transitions are not fun, and she voiced confidence and support for all of them.

Klee said he is working with Magic City Flies for kits that the Library Co+Lab can own. He said the kits would have all the basic needs for starters.

Adjournment: 1:00 pm. Next meeting: 5/8/2025.