



## Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Coeur d'Alene Public Library Board of Trustees

January 25, 2023

Meeting held in Library Community Room and via Zoom

### Trustees Present:

Katie Sayler, Board Chair, Library  
Jim Windisch, Board Vice Chair, Library  
Steve McCrea, Board Member, Zoom  
Ann Smart, Board Member, Library  
Fay Sweney, Board Member, Zoom

### Others:

Lily Givens, Student Representative, Library  
Holly Stetson, Library Foundation, Library  
Sharalee Howard, Youth Services Librarian, Library  
Michael Priest, Library Director, Library

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Katie Sayler at 3:59 p.m.

**Public Comment:** At the beginning of public comment, Katie expressed that the board welcomes feedback from citizens. However, public comment means that the public gives input to the board. This does not mean that the trustees will interact with those commenting. The meeting will then follow the items listed on the agenda. If there is an issue that has been channeled through staff from the public, this will be given consideration as a future agenda item after study, examination of the applicable law(s) if necessary, and a review of the board's power to act on the subject. The public can address questions and concerns to staff during open hours and to the trustees in writing as well as public comment.

Katie stated that clarification should be added to public record for one particular line of comment the board has received:

1. The library is a public library and not a school library. Schools operate in "loco parentis"; public libraries do not. Only parents have authority over what their children check out or read in the library until that child reaches the age of 18. If the public has information regarding school libraries, it should be shared with the appropriate school district.
2. In general, patrons do not wish to give up their right to supervise their own children's reading selections. Trustees in Idaho cannot remove that right as it would be against the law.
3. One particular religious group has expressed concerns about book selections. The library's policies, and state and federal law has been shared with this group. The library and its trustees serve all 50,000 Coeur d'Alene residents, who represent many different religious and moral views. Each perspective is respected and supported and reading materials have been added for this group as demand and budget allows.
4. If the public wants to express their group or individual view, the board welcomes it. However, submitted articles that many would view as hate speech or even harassment of library trustees or staff make it hard to find the germane concern expressed. The trustees have heard and read the concerns of a few patrons in north Idaho. They have the right to express their freedom of speech and filter what their children read from this library. It is only asked that they respect the right of other families to do the same for their children.

Wendy Smith, Coeur d'Alene, thought that the December 17 children's book club program should have had a content warning for the selection *When You Trap a Tiger* by Tae Keller. She feels that parents who were considering having their children attending the program had the right to be given prior notice that the book featured LGBTQ characters. The lack of transparency from the library on the matter seemed to her like a targeted attack against conservative families in the community. Ms. Smith made several suggestions for future book club selections including *The Diary of Anne Frank* and any book by Patricia McLaughlin.

Marianna Cochran, Rathdrum, represents Clean Books 4 Kids, a group of local residents who are concerned about the content that has infiltrated area libraries and promotes the indoctrination of minors. The group started a petition on [change.org](https://www.change.org) in protest to the selection of *When You Trap a Tiger* by Tae Keller for the December 17 children's book club program. Ms. Cochran read an excerpt from *Boy Toy* by Barry Lyga that included sexual content. She noted that the library has the book in its young adult fiction collection. She thinks that the library can no longer use its Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy as a justification for including pornographic content like it in the library.

Heather Greenman, Post Falls, mentioned that the library says it represents all members of the community. She recounted some recent State Legislature election results that were won by candidates who say they support strong Christian and tradition family values. Ms. Greenman does not feel that the library is creating an environment that is representative of the citizens who voted for these candidates. She noted the LGBTQ content present in the recent children's book club selections *When You Trap a Tiger* by Tae Keller and *The War that Saved my Life* by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley (January 21). The library should better inform parents about book club selections they may find objectionable.

Kara Claridge, Coeur d'Alene, felt that her commitment to the wellbeing of her family gives her the responsibility of speaking out against recent cultural developments. She quoted recently published studies that indicate that between 16-30% of "Generation Z" adults identify as LGBTQ, as does 7.1% of the US population in total. She believes that biological science has been put aside in today's society in favor of feelings and emotions. Ms. Claridge stated that the board members are the gatekeepers of the library and need to be more aware of the sexually explicit materials that have been included within its collections. She additionally thinks that library staff need a better process for vetting materials during the selection process as the current system is failing.

**Consent Calendar:** Motion to approve the consent calendar, Ann; second, Jim. Approved.

**Director's report:** Coinciding with the Foundation's successful annual campaign, several updates to the Children's Library are currently being planned out in accordance with Youth Services Librarian Sharalee Howard's overall vision for the space. This includes a central cabin/playhouse, replacement shelving, new furniture and additional opportunities for creative play. The idea is to add enhancements to the space while retaining its established nature and outdoors theme.

A project is underway to shift and better organize the large print, magazine, newspaper, reference and Spanish collections situated in the middle area of the upper level. This will also free up shelf space in that area to display the new adult fiction and adult non-fiction titles. The current location for the new fiction titles, next to the entrance and opposite the circulation desk, tends to create a bottleneck effect for foot traffic. Moving the titles to a more central location should assist in alleviating this issue.

Part-time Circulation Clerk Meagan Myrberg was promoted to the full-time Reference Clerk – Technical Services position on December 16. Jessica Levy joined the library on January 2 in the full-time Reference Clerk – Outreach position. She comes to the library from the Coeur d'Alene School District, where she was the librarian at Bryan Elementary School.

The library is pivoting to meet its goal of providing more varied programming opportunities for adults. Reference Clerk Bernadette Ambrozic is shifting her primary focus to adult programming and has added a yoga class, a classic movie matinee, an ESL café with a tutor and a homeschooling meet-up, among others. Meagan Myrberg will be implementing some adult programming in her new role and is planning a self-directed art class.

The part-time Page positions have been reworked by converting the 54 hours per week to 40 Circulation Clerk hours. At \$11.23 an hour, the Page positions did not have broad appeal nor much sustainability in today's job

market. The Page positions also had overlap with the Circulation Clerk position. The Page duties will therefore be carried out at the Circulation Clerk hourly wage of \$15.44 – \$16.21 moving forward. The move is budget-neutral.

The library is looking to implement a notary service for the public with Communications Coordinator JD Smithson and Bernadette Ambrozic registering with the Secretary of State as notaries. The exact parameters of the service are still being determined.

Virtually all of the 230+ missing YA graphic novels have now made their way back to the library.

In reference to a recent conversation he had with Katie, Michael provided a comment on why and how the library provides a balanced collection of materials that address the diverse perspectives and interests found within the community. He shared that it is not the library's role to enter or take sides on political, religious and cultural debates. It is instead tasked with objectively providing information that reflects multiple viewpoints, including those that may be opposed. Staff apply these principles to their selection process and the library is open to purchase suggestions from the public. If community members disagree with certain content being included within the collection, he would ask that they provide examples of materials they would like to see on the shelves. This assists the library in its mission to ensure that all citizens feel represented. As long as the materials fulfil the standards set forth in the library's Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy, they will be considered for addition to the collection. Katie reiterated that several residents who have previously expressed concerns about some of the content present in library collections have utilized the material request process and had their suggestions accepted.

**Friends:** The Friends generously provided funds for two replacement Chromebooks for patron checkout. Their income from the bookstore and various other endeavors during 2022 totaled \$13,096.58. \$12,622.19 of this was spent in support of the library.

**Foundation:** Given their proximity in date and similarity of both programs, the Foundation has opted to continue the annual Muddy & Millie Birthday Celebration in September but discontinue the Holiday Singalong in December. They may review this for 2024. Holly shared that the Foundation's annual budget for 2023 had been approved. It was greatly enhanced by the annual campaign, which raised twice the amount than it has done in recent times. Much of this was thanks to Knudtsen Chevrolet's \$25,000 donation towards a cabin/playhouse for the Children's Library. Holly, Sharalee and Michael met with architect and builder Jef Lemmon regarding the design and construction of the cabin/playhouse. They are awaiting his initial drafts and estimates. The Foundation are looking to put together a schedule for fundraisers in 2023 and Holly asked the board to pass along any ideas they may have. Ann mentioned Muddy & Millie author Susan Nipp's frequent presentations and book giveaways at local schools in an effort to promote early literacy. Holly noted that Ann provides assistance to Susan during those events.

**Election of officers:** Motion to approve Jim as Board Chair and Ann as Board Vice Chair, Fay; second, Steve. Approved.

**Offering Zoom access for meetings:** Michael presented five different options for remove public accessibility to board meetings for the trustees consider. The first was take the traditional approach and only offer minutes posted to library website. The second was the run the meetings as they currently are with Zoom access. He noted that continuing to offer live Zoom access to the public was not the preference of city administration as it was inconsistent with how other city meetings are run. The third was to offer the Zoom recording uploaded to the library playlist on the city's YouTube channel. The fourth was the offer the Zoom recording streamed on YouTube. He noted that this option would require permission from the City IT department and some testing to find out exactly how it would work. The fifth was to offer a live CDATV broadcast and upload the CDATV recording to YouTube. This would require the library to negotiate and sign an independent contract with Jeff Crowe and Zoom would no longer be an option. Katie asked if the library had room in the budget for FY 2022-23

to contract with Jeff. Michael said that there was not. Jim shared that he liked the third option best. He did wonder whether public comments could be turned off on YouTube since they would be another source for the board to keep track of. Michael did not know what was possible at the meeting but subsequently learned that comments would be turned off. The trustees agreed to pursue the third option. Katie reminded the board that they could pivot to another option if needed. Motion to approve uploading the Zoom recordings of board meetings to the library playlist on the City of Coeur d'Alene YouTube channel, Steve; second, Jim. Approved.

**Social Media Policy review:** Michael explained that an update to the Social Media Policy was required since it is now considered by the city to be a standard operating procedure for the departments that utilize these platforms. He had also taken the opportunity to gather City Attorney Randy Adams' input on the policy. Steve recommended the board accept the updated policy as written. Motion to approve the updated Social Media Policy, Ann; second, Steve. Approved.

**ICfL Facilities Improvement Grant:** Michael shared that the Idaho Commission for Libraries was looking to launch a Facilities Improvement Grant, pending its approval during the 2023 Idaho legislative session. Libraries could apply for facility upgrades up to \$500,000 if they enhance the library's ability to support the areas of work, education and health. Applications must hit on all three. Given those parameters, library staff are still considering what projects might be eligible. Updates to the teen spaces, flowing on from the updates to the Children's Library, might be the preference if they are possible. Any project would require a letter of support from the board. Applications close February 27.

Next regular meeting – February 22, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. in the Library Community Room and via Zoom

Adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Priest