



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

February 23, 2022

Meeting held in Library Community Room and via Zoom

### Trustees Present:

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

### Others:

Holly Stetson, Library Foundation, Zoom  
Melissa Searle, Reference & Technical Services  
Librarian, Zoom  
Michael Priest, Library Director, Library

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Katie Sayler at 4:03 p.m.

**Public Comment:** Coeur d'Alene resident Wendy Smith appreciated that the CDA Press documented the recent violation of Idaho Open Meeting Law by the Board of Trustees. She cited the September 22, 2021 meeting that was switched from an in-person meeting to a virtual one and felt that appropriate notice had not been given. She reinforced her previously stated concerns about materials containing LGBTQ+ content in the children's collection and believes that around forty requests to review these materials had been submitted. The board's decision to conduct meetings virtually felt like they were not willing to engage with citizens over this matter.

Coeur d'Alene resident Kara Claridge noted that she rejects the Material Review Committee's decision that was issued to her on December 28, 2021. She has searched the library catalog and has found numerous books with LGBTQ+ themes that she considers sexually graphic within the children's collection. She does not think that the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gives a pass for these materials to be included within the collection, nor should the library, as an independent entity, be influenced by recommendations from the American Library Association. The library should instead be adhering to Idaho Code 18-1513 Obscene Materials — Dissemination to Minors. Her suggestion is to have the materials in question either be shelved in the adult collection or within a separate, limited access LGBTQ+ space. She stated that it has repeatedly been difficult to contact and send supporting documentation to the trustees. At the conclusion of Mrs. Claridge's public comment, Katie asked if she had ever been prevented from delivering documents to the library board, director, or staff. Mrs. Claridge declined to respond.

Jen McKenzie mentioned that she is a heavy library user who previously enjoyed attending the in-person children's programs the library offered before the pandemic. She wishes for a full schedule of in-person programming to return as they have at the Community Library Network locations. She feels the current schedule of mostly virtual programs does not reflect the needs nor expectations of the community. She also wishes to have the activity room in the children's area reopened for use by

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families. She would like to hear a plan or timeline for when in-person programs will become a feature again.

Heather DeHay has found numerous LGBTQ+ themed children's books within the library catalog. She is deeply concerned with the move towards normalizing LGBTQ+ content and the topic of sexuality among children.

Rathdrum resident Nina Beesley said that she holds children's literature dear and has a background in education. She feels that indoctrination in LGBTQ+ lifestyles is encroaching upon all forms of education. She believes I.C. 18-1513 needs to be enforced by either separating these materials from the rest of the children's collection or moving them to the adult collection.

**Consent Calendar:** Motion to approve, Steve; second, Ann. Approved.

**Director's report:** Christopher Brannon, IT Coordinator, has completed the digitalization of CDA Press editions through 1963. Uploaded copies are available on the library-managed Coeur d'Alene Digital Archives at <https://cdarchives.org/>. Since the library's newspaper database Newsbank contains text-only articles of the CDA Press from October 2003, there is a roughly 40-year gap for online access. Michael met with Clint Schroeder, Regional Publisher for Hagadone Media/Newspaper Groups, and Mike Patrick, CDA Press Editor, on February 22 and both agreed to give the library non-exclusive rights to continue digitalizing the CDA Press through the year 1999. The library may check in again on future permissions once it gets close to completing this batch. The library will now plan the next steps for continuing with the digitalization project.

Melissa Searle, Reference & Technical Services Librarian, assisted in ordering around \$15,000 worth of new eBooks and eAudiobooks for the Cooperative Information Network's (CIN) OverDrive collection. This was achieved through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds made available by the Idaho Commission for Libraries.

The library is planning Earth Day celebrations for Saturday, April 23 (the day after the actual Earth Day) in collaboration with the Kootenai Environmental Alliance, City Parks & Recreation, City Water, and City Wastewater. It will coexist in McEuen Park alongside United Way's Spring Dash, although Earth Day activities will mostly be situated in and around the library building.

Meagan Myrberg, Circulation Clerk, suggested highlighting the resources found within the Nelson Room and its Idaho Collection on the library website. Meagan supplied the information and the page can be found at <https://cdalibrary.org/about/idaho-collection/>.

**Friends:** The Friends met on February 22. Their main business was to approve \$900 for a Shred Day event on Saturday, April 9. Similar to the Shred Day events held in the past, it will be a drive-up event where patrons can hand over boxes of unwanted documents for shredding. Friends' volunteers will assist in the process.

**Foundation:** The Foundation is looking into sponsorship opportunities from the local business community to assist in funding more Mudgy & Millie book giveaways. They are looking to the summer for fundraising events, beginning with a Jess Walter author talk. Mudgy plans to be at the Spring Dash and Earth Day events on April 23. Holly is continuing to look out for and work on grants for the library.

**Material Review:** Katie noted that Mrs. Claridge's request to review the children's materials *Prince & Knight* by Daniel Haack and *The Hips on the Drag Queen go Swish, Swish Swish* by Lil Miss Hot Mess had

reached the last step of the Material Review Policy process, which is to have the library Board of Trustees action to make a final decision. Katie presented four motions for the trustees to consider. 1. Accept the accept the findings of the Material Review Committee and have its decision be included as an addendum to the minutes. 2. Reject the findings of the Material Review Committee, which would have to be tabled until a future meeting so that the Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy could be discussed and updated. 3. Accept the findings of the Material Review Committee with amendments that match the current Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy. 4. Table a decision for a future meeting in order to have more time to review the associated material.

Steve acknowledged the opinions made earlier during public comment. He does not expect to change anybody's mind, but he considers it a fact that there are LGBTQ+ people in the community and the library has a responsibility to provide materials to all groups. He believes it is a parent or guardian's responsibility to limit their child's access, not the library. He agrees that the library should be adhering to Idaho Code 18-1513 Obscene Materials — Dissemination to Minors. However, he does not agree that the books in question meet the criteria of I.C. 18-1513. He therefore feels that there is no reason to remove them from the collection. He would be interested in speaking with library staff to learn more about how the library shelves its collections.

Ann noted that the freedom to read is protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. She also noted that it is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to uphold its policies. She believes the request is not in accordance with the library's Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy.

Jim asked if the Material Review Committee had included a member of the community. Michael replied that it had. Jim sought clarification on how many requests to review materials the library had received and for how many books. Michael said that the library received five requests concerning the two books in question. One of the requests included a book that was not in the Coeur d'Alene Public Library collection. Jim agreed that the Board of Trustees should uphold library policies and that the materials within the library should reflect all community members. He read the following quote from *Forged by Reading: The Power of a Literate Life* by Kylene Beers and Robert E. Probst:

"It has been said that books change us, and certainly they might, but perhaps it would be better if we thought not that books change us, but that *books give us the opportunity to change ourselves*. We, the readers, should remain responsible for who and what we become. If we let books change us, forge us into what their authors want us to become, we will have turned responsibility for our own lives over to others. We will think what someone else wants us to think, believe what someone else tells us to believe, value what someone else tells us to value, and we will have abandoned ourselves. We will truly be metal under the smith's hammer or clay in the potter's hands.

On the other hand, if we don't submit to texts, but rather take them in, reflect on what they have offered us, test their visions and understandings against our own, assess what we have brought to them and what they have offered us, and do that responsibly, willing to accept what is good and reject what is bad, and willing to reshape our own thinking, then reading will not simply forge us, but will enable us to forge ourselves, to shape ourselves into the best people we can become."

Motion to accept the findings of the Material Review Committee and have its decision letter be included as an addendum to the minutes, Steve; second, Jim. Approved.

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

**Programming Policy:** Michael presented the draft policy for library programming with adjustments made after the January 26 meeting. Ann’s recommendation that the language within section C. line 6. be tidied up had it now read: “Every attempt will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend a program. However, when safety or the success of a program requires it, attendance may be limited and may be determined with either advanced registration, or on a first come, first served basis.” Holly’s suggestion that fundraisers hosted by the Foundation and Friends be incorporated into the document was included under section C. line 1. as “Library programs are free of charge. Exceptions are fundraising events hosted by the library support groups Coeur d’Alene Public Library Foundation, Inc. and Friends of the Coeur d’Alene Public Library.” Michael provided a further edit to section C. line 10. that read: “Programs are not used for commercial, religious, or partisan purposes, or the sale of goods that do not directly or indirectly benefit the library.” The trustees wanted further clarification on section C. line 10. and the sale of goods that benefit the library. Michael used the annual Coeur d’Con event as an example; vendors selling goods or a food truck would pay a fee or portion of their sales to the library in order to secure a space, and that money is then handed over to the Friends of the Library. Steve questioned why a food truck would have to pay money to the library to be there when their presence ultimately enhances an event. Michael replied that this is how it has generally been run in the past. Motion to approve the Programming Policy as written, Steve; second, Ann. Approved.

**Gift Policy:** Michael proposed an update the Gift Policy to include guidance for gifted equipment to the library such as electronic devices. Motion to approve the updated Gift Policy, Jim; second, Steve. Approved.

**Board contact form on website:** Michael offered the option of adding a form to the library website that the public can use to contact the board. After a patron has made a submission, it would be emailed to Michael, and he would then forward it on to all five board members. If a response is requested by the patron, one board member would volunteer to respond either by phone, email, or meeting in person at the library. A solution would have to be found for those patrons wanting to submit files. The board decided to table it for the March meeting so that Michael could further research options for submitting files, how this would comply with Idaho Open Meeting Law, provide options for how the board members might respond if they do not wish to use their personal phone or email, and ask the Community Library Network how it works out for them.

**Children’s programming:** Jim and Fay inquired as to whether there was a timeline on children’s programming returning to a fully in-person schedule. Michael said that the library was looking at April. Jim requested that a plan for this be presented at the March meeting.

**Idaho Open Meeting Law:** Fay asked if the board could have a review of Idaho Open Meeting Law at an upcoming meeting in place of doing a library policy review. She would appreciate a representative from City Legal being present for questions. Michael will make inquiries.

Next regular meeting – March 23, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. in the Library Community Room and via Zoom. Ann and/or Fay will be the trustee(s) present at the library.

Adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Priest

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Addendum:



702 East Front Ave.  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

8 December 2021

Dear Mrs. Claridge,

The Material Review Committee met on December 8, 2021. The committee was composed of three members, pursuant to the Material Review Policy of the Library Section, II 5, consisting of Delaney Daly, children's librarian; Judith Salzer, member of the public; and Stephen McCrea, library board member.

The meeting was held to consider your written request for the following materials: *Prince & Knight* by Daniel Haack and *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* by Lil Miss Hot Mess.

The purpose of request for review was to make the aforementioned titles available by parent request only, rather than remaining available on the shelves of the children's library. In your completed Request for Review Material, you state that the materials are "... a slippery slope into gender confusion and eventual attempts to legalize pedophilia," describing further that the content is not suitable for young children and that it entices them into a lifestyle which can be harmful to them and might also harm them psychologically and physically.

The review committee does not dispute that you hold a deep and authentic belief that the content of the challenged book is not suitable for young children.

Each member of the committee has thoroughly read both books in question. *Prince & Knight* is a story about a prince whose parents introduce him to several eligible bachelorettes in hopes that he will find a wife. The prince is simply not comfortable with any of the women he meets. When a dragon threatens the kingdom, the prince rides out to fight the dragon. During his battle, he encounters a knight, a man, who helps him. The knight turns out to be his perfect partner and the kingdom celebrates that the prince has found his match.

*The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* makes no explanation of what a drag queen is and contains primarily illustrations and rhythmic sounds as an updated version on the classic children's song: "The Wheels on the Bus." The title also does not have a concrete story line, other than portraying cartoon characters, who apparently are drag queens, dancing through the streets.

While studying the books thoroughly, the committee also reviewed the following materials: the Coeur d'Alene Public Library Material Review Policy and its Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy; the American Library Association (ALA) Library Bill of Rights; the ALA Challenged Materials Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights; reviews of *Prince & Knight* published by School Library Journal and The Guardian; reviews of *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* published by Kirkus Reviews and Publisher's Weekly. The committee also reviewed your provided article about children's books published in The Federalist.

The committee also reviewed community needs and standards. Current newspapers refer to LGBTQ+ groups in the community. It was noted by the current children's librarian, Delaney Daly, and the former children's librarian, Mandi Harris, that a diversity of material is necessary to adequately serve the Coeur d'Alene community. The committee notes that two books are being challenged out of approximately 30,000 children's materials and that to meet the needs of the large Christian community, more faith-based books are actively being acquired.

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The committee relied primarily upon the Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy adopted by the Coeur d'Alene Public Library Board of Trustees. It should be noted that the ALA documents referenced above are included as an appendix to the Materials Section and Collection Development Policy, but those ALA documents do not form the primary basis for the conclusions reached below.

The committee finds that neither of the books in question contain pornographic or harmful information to minors as defined in Idaho Code Section 33-2741(7)(a) and (b). The committee also finds that neither of the books are obscene, also as defined by Section 33-2741(7)(d). They do not depict sexually explicit conduct or nudity. To view the link, the committee has provided it here:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title33/t33ch27/sect33-2741/>

Furthermore, in 2013, the City of Coeur d'Alene enacted a full non-discrimination ordinance on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, meaning for Coeur d'Alene Public Library that the public accommodation portion of the ordinance does in fact apply to us, wherein individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ should be made to feel welcome, accepted, and finally, just as everyone else, able to locate materials and information that will serve them.

Turning to the Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy, the committee notes the following relevant principles:

- "Materials in the library are not marked, labeled or sequestered to show approval or disapproval or judgment as to suitability of content for particular audiences." Section C-3
- "Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature and reflect the diversity of the community and our world." Section C-3.
- "It is only the parents and legal guardians who may restrict their children's —and only *their* children's— access to library materials..." Section C-3.
- "Indicating a material's point of view or bias by labelling it or shelving it in a special area is considered an unwarranted assumption on the part of the library. Cataloging and classification should, in no way, reflect a value judgment of the material." Section G-4.
- "No materials are excluded or removed from the library on the basis of race, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, political, social, or religious beliefs." Section G -5.

Access to Coeur d'Alene Public Library policies may be found here: <https://cdalibrary.org/about/policy-manual/>

While the committee recognizes that persons requesting review of *Prince & Knight* sincerely believe that homosexual marriage is harmful, it is still a constitutional right and has been since 2015. One may, in this country, safely, disagree vociferously, but regardless, libraries exist to provide knowledge on a wide range of topics, opinions, research, points of view, and for all people from all walks of life.

It is not disputed that discussion of sexual identity or gender are important topics for parents to discuss with their children. If a child wishes to discuss with a parent the contents of one of the books in question, it is the parents' responsibility to determine whether their child is ready for such information, but only their child. Some parents would find the books to be a welcome gateway into discussion of gender identity and the reality of same sex attraction, which has existed since time immemorial.

What is the danger of segregating those books, to be made available upon request? The library could categorically determine that only books which depict same sex relationships be put behind a curtain in the children's section. However, if one's religion prohibits same sex marriage then the library may be asked to curtain religious books which are not consonant with the requester's faith. Then, the library is being asked to determine that other

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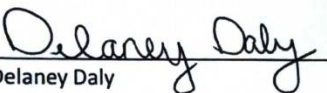
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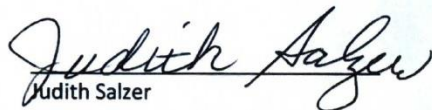
subjects are to be curtailed off. That is not the function of the library. The library has no say over how one raises one's child but must make resources available to those of all different persuasions, paths, and beliefs.

By leaving the books in question on the shelves, the library fulfills its mission and allows the parents to decide what books their children may or may not read.

Therefore, the request to remove or to sequester *Prince & Knight* by Daniel Haack and *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* by Lil Miss Hot Mess is denied.

Report dated December 13, 2021.

  
Delaney Daly

  
Judith Salzer

  
Stephen McCrea

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