



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

February 10, 2021
Meeting held via Zoom

Trustees Present:

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

Others:

Holly Stetson, Library Foundation
JD Smithson, Communications Coordinator
Mandi Harris, Youth Services Librarian
Melissa Searle, Reference & Tech Services Manager
Tyler McLane, Circulation Manager
Michael Priest, Director

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Sayler at 4:00 pm. Board members McCrea and Sweney experienced technical difficulties with audio and video respectively. McCrea contributed comments via the chat feature during the meeting.

Public comment: Michael shared a public comment received during a phone conversation on February 9. The patron expressed concern that their 9-year-old daughter is missing out on the enriching opportunities that the library offers for visitors. They felt that adequate social distancing is achievable within the library and requiring masks was an acceptable precaution. The library's current status is unfair to those who are willing to adhere to safety guidelines and want to reintroduce a sense of normality to their lives.

Reopening Plan: Michael presented a document (attached hereto) detailing advice from local and state sources, what other Idaho libraries are doing, and patron safety guidelines for reopening. He also covered three different reopening strategies that could be run in addition to the library's current status of offering curbside service; limited capacity access, limited access by appointment, and limited computer appointments.

Discussion: Fay asked how staff would manage people in the library if the building capacity and visiting times were restricted. Michael explained that it was mostly an honor system but the computer time limits would be adjusted, most of the seating would be removed from tables, and staff could perform regular sweeps of the building to ensure patrons are aware of the limitations. Steve offered that limited access by appointment could be done in groups of 5 patrons every 20-30 minutes or so. Given that the Panhandle Health District mandate is in effect, Katie asked how mask enforcement would be performed by staff while allowing limited access. Melissa replied that there is no true way for

staff to enforce it but they could address disruptive behavior stemming from enforcement. Michael added that the greeter position would be reintroduced for this purpose. Staff could also remind patrons if they see non-compliance in the building. Fay noted that the Latah County Library District's mask requirements were clear and specific. Katie agreed and noted LCLD's guidelines on what to do about medical exemptions and people who have received the vaccine. Katie asked about alternatives for people with a medical exemption such as a 15-minute private browsing appointment. Michael noted that other libraries offer curbside and remote services as reasonable accommodations. Steve agreed that curbside service is an acceptable alternative. Melissa detailed the variety of ways for patrons to get the materials they are looking for via curbside service; catalog request, phone request, online form request, or utilizing the library's upcoming online reader's advisory service. Katie proposed a pamphlet to give patrons explaining these options and all the other offerings the library currently has available.

Katie mentioned offering computer appointments for patrons. Fay noted Meridian Library District's policy about allowing computer appointments but staff not providing assistance. If the library were to offer computer appointments in addition to curbside service, Michael shared that setting up around four computer stations in the lobby would be a possible starting point. Holly asked if the set of Chromebooks were being checked out and satisfying those patrons who require a computer. Michael replied that around 5 were currently checked out and it is difficult to judge whether these are meeting the need. Jim offered that the Community Room could be a possible venue for computer appointments during certain hours. Michael said that the library could look into that further, finding some regular times the room is not in use by the City. He noted that it would require a staff member present to oversee activity.

Ann pointed to Beaverton City Library in Oregon's model that allows patrons come into the lobby to pick up holds. Michael added that it could be possible with some rearranging. He added that Meridian Library District allows self-service pickup of holds and browsing of new and popular materials in their main library's lobby, but they have a much larger space to cater for it. Tyler shared that CDA Library originally ran curbside service out of the vestibule area during May of 2020 when the weather was warmer.

Katie asked what Michael proposes. Michael offered that his original plan was to wait through February and have any adjustments to services begin March 1. The service level would highly depend on the local situation surrounding the pandemic near the end of February. Securing vaccinations for staff before reopening to visitors would be a strong preference, but there is no certain timeframe on when this might occur. PHD estimated March or April depending on supplies and demand. About 12 staff have received their first shot due to a limited one-time opportunity through the city. Fay asked if all staff members plan on getting the vaccine. Michael thought that a majority likely would.

Fay said that issues may arise if the Community Library Network is offering different services than CDA Library and parity would be preferable. Michael replied that he has been consulting with John Hartung, director of CLN. The CLN Board of Trustees have a special meeting on February 12 to discuss their next steps. Katie asked for Michael to pass along any decision CLN makes regarding reopening.

Katie asked the group how they feel about waiting to make a decision at the February 24 meeting. Fay agreed but wondered about the implications of delaying a decision. Katie noted everybody wants to provide the highest level of service, but we want to see the majority of staff get vaccinated before making big changes. Fay anticipated a comparison between the service levels of the library and the school district. Jim mentioned that schools are offering onsite learning but no teachers have so far had a second shot of the vaccine. Melissa noted that a point of difference is that the school have a set plan to get staff vaccinated. Katie outlined that it is easier to apply safety rules and protocol in a school

setting. Jim added that contact tracing once a case has been confirmed is also easier within schools. Michael mentioned that the library's services have been set a month at a time for the past several months and further discussion could wait for the regular meeting. He suggested inviting Mayor Widmyer and City Administrator Troy Tymesen to join. Katie thought it would be helpful for City leadership to hear the board's specific concerns and share their perspective. Michael will send an invitation to the Mayor and Troy. Katie confirmed that no board member is proposing action at this time.

Steve indicated the case count within the community is trending downward. If it continues, the board could consider a limited reopening. Michael screenshared the Covid-19 related statistics on the PHD website for reference.

Next meeting via Zoom – February 24, 2021

Adjourned at 4:56 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Priest

CDA Library Reopening Plan Discussion Items

Reponses to Stage 3 of the Idaho Rebounds plan

Kootenai Health (2/3/21):

The physician consulted pointed to the high volume of touched surfaces the library typically gets when open to visitors – chairs, tables, countertops, computers, materials, etc. While surface transmission is considered less of a risk, there is uncertainty about the more contagious variants that have emerged. The library should consider its sanitizing/quarantining plan for public spaces before reopening. The physician recommended reopening to visitors after staff had received their second dose of the vaccine and waited the 2-week period for maximum efficacy. He additionally recommended retaining the status quo for 2-3 months as more information emerges about the variants, if possible.

Panhandle Health District (2/4/21):

Director Lora Whalen advised to follow protocols from the [CDC](#) and the Governor's [Idaho Rebounds](#) plan (note that public libraries are not specifically mention in any protocol). We should pay close attention the Governor's protocol under Stage 3 for [gatherings up to 50](#). Library workers will most likely fall into Phase 3 of the [vaccine rollout](#) in late March or early April depending on supply and demand.

Idaho Commission for Libraries (2/5/21):

ICfL's perspective is that this represents a continuation of what Idaho libraries have been doing – adopting a wide range of approaches while interpreting guidelines that seem to never include libraries and their staff. The commission are advising libraries look locally to see what is a best fit for the library and community.

Scott Dietrich, Fire Department/Infectious Control Officer (2/5/21):

Refer to [CDC](#) guidelines. Ensure the space is adequately arranged to maximize social distancing. Have face masks and hand sanitizer available to patrons. The PHD Mask Mandate was [renewed on January 28](#) for a further 90 days unless revised.

Idaho libraries

Community Library Network:

Currently curbside service and computer appointments. John Hartung, director at CLN, is also calling a special board meeting on the topic. He has expressed an interest in coordinating the same level of access available at the CLN and CDA libraries, if at all possible.

Boise:

[Limited in-person browsing](#) starting February 8. Monday-Friday from 2-6 at the Main Library, Wednesday 2-6 at branches. Limited capacity, 20-minute browsing, face masks and social distancing required. Curbside service and walk-in computer access will be available expanded hours at all locations.

Meridian:

So far continuing with [modified services](#). Main Library is limited to 18 people at a time, Silverstone is limited to 1 person or family at a time plus 4 computer users. Face masks and social distancing required. Self-service browsing, holds pickup, computer lab access, returns through book drops, and study room reservations at Main Library and Silverstone on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 10-6, Wednesday 12-8, Saturday 10-5, Sunday 1-5. Selected services at Tiny Library and unBound. Home delivery available.

Nampa:

Not yet public, but some details can be shared at meeting.

Lewiston:

Reopened on January 27. Regular hours, regular services, social distancing required. Curbside service available.

Moscow:

From February 2, [limited in-person browsing](#) during regular hours. 25-person capacity, 15-minute browsing, face masks and social distancing required. Curbside service available.

Code of Conduct

If we are to reopen to visitors, I would strongly suggest adding temporary guidelines to the Library Security and Patron Behavior section of the CDA Library Policy Manual. I have drafted language below. Medical exemptions are a discussion point.

COVID-19 Pandemic Safety Guidelines

To comply with recommendations of Public Health officials on the local, county, or state level, and to assist in ensuring patron and staff safety, the Board of Trustees require that individuals adhere to the following temporary guidelines until lifted:

- a. Do not enter the library building in the event that you are showing symptoms of illness.
- b. All visitors over the age of 3-years-old must wear a face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth when inside the library building. **Medical exemptions?**
- c. Maintain a distance of 6 feet from staff and patrons who are not members of your household.
- d. Do not enter areas of the library building that have been closed to public access due to safety concerns.
- e. Follow all safety precautions as requested by library staff.