



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

January 22, 2025

Meeting held in Library Community Room

Trustees Present:

Jim Windisch, Board Chair
Steve McCrea, Board Member
Katie Saylor, Board Member
Ruth Pratt, Board Member

Others:

Dan English, City Council Liaison
Holly Stetson, Library Foundation Manager
Ayla Frens, Student Representative
Elizabeth Westenburg, Library Director
Angela Flock, Teen Coordinator (Notetaker)

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Jim Windisch at 4:00 pm

Public Comment - None

Consent Calendar – Moved to approve Katie, Ruth & Steve 2nd

Jim brought up the office supply budget line being over 100% left. Elizabeth will ask Brenda about why it's over (103%). Katie remembered Sharalee had an issue with a bill that hadn't been received yet in the past.

Shortly after, the consent calendar was approved unanimously.

Director's report (Elizabeth Westenburg)

"Holy cow!" was Katie's reaction to how much was going on in the staff reports.

"We went live with public bookings," Elizabeth explained, referring to the new LibCal online booking system. To get to the form, Elizabeth demonstrated that a patron would go to our website (cdalibrary.org), go to Services > Book a Room > Book a Room Form tab for online bookings. This will be for both the Meeting Rooms (the Community Room, Gozzer, and Jameson) and the four Study Rooms. Katie wondered why the Nelson Room was included. Elizabeth explained that we didn't want it publicly bookable, since it's a space that's used throughout open hours. Ruth asked how far in-advance rooms can be booked. Elizabeth explained that the Study Rooms are only available for reservations 24 hrs in-advance. But the Meeting Rooms are available 3 months in-advance.

Although public reservations are only available one booking at a time, Elizabeth also noted that Olivia has been working with some local groups to help with repeated reservations when possible. Katie appreciated the thought that we were working with "partners that allow us to participate in something, but we don't have the staff to make it happen."

Jim was glad that the library was going to participate in America 250 and that staff are attending ICfL professional development conferences.

Steven was concerned about the 200+ missing books that were mentioned in Melissa's report. Elizabeth explained the difference between the "Missing" status and "Lost" status; books that can't be found are "Missing". Katie remembered that Tyler once used a drone to check the tops of our bookshelves for missing books that were hidden behind.

Steve asked about Long Lost Overdue books and whether they pay for the price of the book. Elizabeth explained that we do charge for the price of the book, but we don't send them to collections, and we don't have overdue fines, which hopefully, encourages patrons to simply bring them back. Missing books are handled differently and can happen for a number of reasons, including being accidentally taken due to not knowing how to self-checkout, or they might be mis-shelved or rarely stolen.

Dan English mentioned RFID tags that NIC uses, as a possible solution. Elizabeth explained that while that would solve the problem, it costs hundreds of thousands of dollars to purchase. "But the tags are great. There are benefits," Elizabeth added, but it's out of the library's price-range.

Other Reports

City Council Liaison (Dan English)

Dan English is glad to be back. He's still in "learning mode" (for being our City Council Liaison). Dan mentioned that he had a meeting with the mayor, who asked Dan whether the activity groups (like Yoga) that reserve the library are charged for their reservations or charging their attendees. Several people said, "No" in the room, and Katie clarified, "The concept of a public library is activities that are open to all. They are free."

Student Representative (Ayla Frens)

Ayla Frens was very excited to share that she got into Gonzaga University! Volunteering experience was an important part of the application, and she's sure that her time as a library volunteer helped her tremendously. "Everyone is either starting or ending things today," she commented, referring to school schedules and how some were just beginning, and others were in finals. She was very excited that teen clubs were resuming this week, and she was also excited that an art book she had been looking forward to reading had come in for her. It's a book by one of her favorite artists, Sam Yang, from Sam Does Art. Ayla explained that the artist does mostly digital art, and she especially loves his use of light.

Friends (Elizabeth Westenburg) - None

Foundation (Holly Stetson)

Holly mentioned some upcoming Foundation events, including:

- Feb 13 - Sax event - with Ruth and Craig (on sax) and small jazz ensemble (donation event)
- Mar 9 - author event (Sunday, 2-4pm)
- Future event - Love your library concert - River theme - \$35 ticket, Bakery By the Lake will serve wine

Holly is trying to get a couple of grants; one is for furniture upstairs.

Holly also mentioned that the Foundation's fundraising calendar committee is meeting this Thursday to talk about it. The goal is to have it completed by June 1.

Steve wanted to give a comment about the Staff Report again; he wondered about Continuing Education, and whether staff can give highlights of what they've learned and what they liked about the professional development they attended in their Staff Report. Katie commented that online conferences are great, but there's "an energy pattern" to in-person professional development. She was concerned that if we don't show the benefits of training or use the money that's been set aside for training that the budget for it might be taken away, saying, "Some of the city committees—their work is more obvious to the city council. But we serve the committee every day." Dan commented on the possible need in the future to justify the dollars spent— "And we can," he stated.

Unfinished Business - None

New Business

Policy Schedule

Elizabeth has read through all the minutes of the last two years and set a schedule to review policies, based on past practice. This month's policy to review is the "Internet Policy".

January Review - Internet Policy

Katie asked, "Did you see any red-hot things that we should change?" Elizabeth replied, "No, it seems pretty standard to me." Jim agreed that he hadn't seen anything that needed to be changed. The trustees didn't change anything, and it wasn't an action item, so no votes were needed. Katie asked that the review date be updated, which Elizabeth agreed to do.

Strategic Plan Proposal

Elizabeth explained that the Long-range Plan became the Strategic Plan when Mandi took it on as her doctorate project. Elizabeth would like to redraft the Strategic Plan to focus on the elements in the mission statement, focusing on "Create, Learn, Share". She included more examples of Strategic Plans that she likes. Some parts of the plan would roll over, "but we'd still have some things to put in the annual report," Elizabeth added. She wants to add a visual component, as well.

By February's meeting, Elizabeth wants to have something to show them.

Ruth liked the plan's visual aspects.

Steve was concerned about measurable outcomes and ways to tell whether a goal is being met. He also wanted to know how the board could be involved in its implementation. Steve used the example that staff might say 'we need more community outreach', and one way to do that is to attend community group meetings, perhaps the board could be the ones to attend. He wants the board to be invested and part of the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Katie wondered if there could be a form with "mechanisms that are used to implement that part of the plan"; with "levels of achievement or highlights or something". Katie thought that some of the form could be easily filled out, while some of it would take more contemplation.

Steve said, "We need something more concrete."

Katie wanted “something formalized and printed”. She liked the idea of everyone getting it printed in their packet, believing it would give the trustees background on what’s done and what still needs to be done.

Elizabeth believes that she’s already implementing strategic goals that she has in mind. Elizabeth used one of the Strategic Plan examples to demonstrate: “Goal 5: Staff will be knowledgeable, helpful, and proactive in assisting the community”. To meet that goal, she would implement database training for reference and make sure staff can demonstrate the necessary skills. She’s also asked staff to use books in programs to connect services to each other. She wants staff input, because “they’re really involved in the day-to-day.” Elizabeth wants to talk with staff about the specifics of the Strategic Plan and include things that they see as important.

Jim is looking forward to seeing the annual report.

Steve hopes the plan identifies potential obstacles. He brought up community growth, and asked, “Are we keeping up with the population growth? How do we?”

Katie wondered if the staff size is changing as the population increases. She wondered how many staff members we had back when the city was closer to 35,000 people versus today, where the city is closer to 56,000 people. “Are we increasing staff when the population increases?” she asked.

Elizabeth asked Angela (who has worked at Coeur d’Alene Public Library for over 10 years) if she knew how much the staff size had changed. Katie believed that we’d added about 2.5 FT positions during that time. Angela believed that we’d added significantly more part-time staff in the last ten years.

Dan mentioned that “adding personnel is always the hardest sell”. He recommends looking at other libraries and comparing them in terms of size of the collection, population, and size of staff.

Katie believes that the priority for the city has been that it needs more firemen and police. “No one wants to say no to that,” but you can’t keep saying “no” to adding library personnel “for 25 years and never address it.” Katie wants more data to proceed with a strategy.

Code of Conduct for Posting in Library

Elizabeth mentioned that the city attorney advised us to post a code of conduct about in-house behavior. If this looks nice, she’ll have JD print them and put them up.

Katie mentioned that we had to do that when we found out that miniature ponies could be service animals.

Board Bylaws (need signature)

Jim mentioned that when reading through the bylaws, he realized that they should have discussed electing officers at today’s meeting. He asked for a volunteer to gather nominations. Katie volunteered.

The board needs to vote for a chair and vice-chair. The nominations will be available at next month’s meeting.

Other Business

Jim mentioned that the mayor is holding regular meetings with city committee chairs, and that the next one is next Wednesday at 10am in Jewett House. Jim is unable to attend. He asked for a representative from the library board. Katie volunteered. Jim will email Katie the details and notify the mayor of the change.

Next regular meeting - February 26, 2025, 4pm in Library Community Room.

Adjourned at 4:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Flock, Teen Coordinator (Notetaker)
Elizabeth Westenburg, Library Director