

Billings Public Library Board Meeting

October 8, 2020

12:00 p.m.

Board and City staff present:

Cheryle Fisher, Chairperson
Roger Young
Lloyd Mickelson

Peggy McSweyn, Vice Chair
David Darby
Gavin Woltjer, Library Director

Andrea Horrell
Jennifer Quinn
Hannah Stewart-Freeman,
Assistant Director

Jamie Bratlie, Library and
Facility Coordinator

Cody Allen, Information
Systems Coordinator

Not Present:

Sue Bach

Guests:

Clare Young, Friends of the Library

Public Comment

None

Chair's Comments

- Chairperson Fisher mentioned Continuing Education credits, including the upcoming MLA fall retreat, hoping the Board members have signed up for some.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the September 10, 2020, minutes. Motion approved.

Horrell/McSweyn

BPL Update

Cody Allen, Information Systems Coordinator

- Library's redesigned website will launch next Tuesday.
- Allen is talking to some vendors about purchasing tablets or E-readers in lieu of paper-copy periodicals and magazines.
- Allen provided statistics for website and database hits. There have been significant increases in some areas, such as YouTube.

Jamie Bratlie, Library and Facilities Coordinator

- Hands-free soap dispensers, which were on back-order, have been installed in public and staff restrooms.
- Light bulbs are starting to be changed out with LEDs to participate in the NorthWestern Energy Rebate Program.

Hannah Stewart-Freeman, Circulation and Reference:

- Take and Make Kits are very popular and a huge success.
- The library received a grant in the amount of \$1836 to purchase six Kindles for Senior Outreach. The Kindles will be loaded with a variety of books, and seniors will be able to check them out.
- Marketing for One Book Billings is going well, and people are starting to sign up.
- Children's is teaming with School District 2 to assist in any way they can, such as signing children up for library cards, online resources, etc.

Gavin Woltjer, Director:

- COVID numbers are trending up, thus prompting conversations about more restrictive measures, such as possible shut-down to curbside only, possible teaming with the hospitals again, and if necessary a complete shutdown.
- The Genealogy Room may have to be closed again, but for now it will remain open as planned.
- Thanksgiving and Christmas Friends book sales are now off the table, but can be reconsidered if numbers improve sufficiently by then.
- The Billings Public Library will partner with St. Vincent's NICU for the next 12 months in a Read-A-Thon.
- The Community Room upgrade should be completed by mid-December.
- Woltjer reminded the Board that the Library pays for the Board's registration for the MLA fall retreat. Registration should begin in about a week, and Woltjer will forward the email when he receives it.

Director Evaluation

Chairperson Fisher said she combined the Board's evaluations and forwarded the document to Assistant City Administrator Kevin Iffland. The same document she sent to all the Board members as well. Woltjer thanked the Board, stating he is humbled by the Board's support of the library and him also. He reminded them to please always share if they have something, and that they do not have to wait for the annual evaluation.

BPL Board Vacancy

Woltjer stated the Mayor has received a few applications for the vacancy. Once it closes, the Mayor will contact Woltjer again for his input on the applications. Woltjer would like to ask the Mayor to give the Board the opportunity to provide feedback as well. He asked the Board's thoughts about this. Quinn and Mickelson both said it is a good idea and it used to be that way in the past.

Age Demographics at the BPL

Woltjer stated a board member emailed him about continuing education topics, and he thought it would be a good time to discuss the library's potential "blind spots." There was discussion about the older population and whether the library is currently able to provide for their needs sufficiently. Woltjer said he will speak to the Outreach staff and bring more information back to the Board. There was a market analysis completed four to five years ago, but it is uncertain how much has changed since then.

Public Library Standards

Woltjer said he received an email regarding the Federal and State Aid funding the library receives. The library was dinged this year, though never in the past, about the board access to the library's personnel policy. Woltjer explained the City does not differentiate between departments, so the library falls under the City's HR policy. He has sent the City policy to the Board. Also noted was the library's hours of operation. Woltjer said many other libraries have been dinged for their hours as well, due to COVID-19.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. The November meeting will continue via Zoom.