

Minutes Friends of the Library Meeting Wed. Jan. 28, 2021

Those attending: Ted Anderson, Dani Buehler, Sandy Birkland, Mike Chapman, Mary Frieze, Tony Gies, MaryJo Hamling, Jim Hansen, Arlene Mari

Arlene Mari, President, called meeting to order at noon. Minutes and agendas were distributed. Motion by Mike Chapman (2nd Mary Frieze) to accept the minutes from the Nov. meeting. This was approved. NOTE: there was no December 2020 meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Tony Gies reported a balance of \$20,132.64. During 2020 the FOL had earnings of \$16,143.59 (donation \$1,400; Book sales \$5,348; membership \$4,395; and \$5,000 grant from the State.) Expenses for 2020 were \$9,933. These included office supplies, book sale needs, and other costs. Largest cost was for garbage removal \$830. Tony reported the taxes are complete.

I. New and Continuing Business:

Arlene stated the final report for the grant money for the new book drop was completed. Arlene wrote a letter of support for the grant Dani is seeking from the Montana History Foundation to refinish the stone masonry on the front of the library building. She worked with C. J. Bailey, masonry contractor, on this. They will know in April if the grant is approved.

II. Purchase of first aid kit for the Book Station:

Tony Gies will find a kit in the \$50 - \$100 range. Recently during a sorting session, a volunteer was accidentally cut, so this brought up the need.

III. Results of December by-appointment-only book sale

are \$310 on Friday and \$154 on Saturday, for a total of \$464. One customer bought approximately \$100 worth of books. The \$464 was more than the November sale total. The amounts on both sales were higher on the Fridays than the Saturdays. Some customers preferred to come after work or school on Fridays. The Google calendar for appointments worked well. Through contact with people who made appointments for these sales, some new people showed interest in volunteering and being part of the Friends group. Arlene said this was a good way to draw in new members.

IV. February Book Station Sale.

Dani said there is lots of interest from library patrons for a book sale in February. It was decided to have a similar book sale by appointment only on Friday, Feb. 19 from 1 till 5 pm and on Sat. Feb. 20th from 9am till 2 pm. Workers will be Sandy B. on Friday who will contact Cheryl Gillen about working. Tony and Louise Gies will work early shift on Sat. with Mike Chapman and Mary F. working late shift 11:30 pm till 2 pm.

Customers will phone either Mary F. or Sandy B and make an appointment. Masks will be required for all, with a limit of people in the Book Station at any one time, as was done in the two earlier sales. FOL will advertise with signs in the library, announcements in the newspaper and FOL members on the radio. It will be announced that all shoppers need to have an appointment.

V. Arlene was contacted by a Great Falls person who wants to buy books at the Book Station.

A long discussion was held regarding this. Motion was made by Mike Chapman to not allow people to buy books at the Book Station except during FOL book sales. (2nd Mary F.) This motion carried.

Discussion included: Question of whether to limit the number of books or type of books a person can purchase. People who attend the sales get books very cheaply and might resell them for a profit. It was also discussed about maintaining the trust of local people who donate books and also the local people who buy books from the sales. People from outside the area also purchase books. Some of our customers could be book dealers who buy books and then sell at a much higher price. It was pointed out that we don't really have any control of that. In the past FOL felt one purpose of the used book sales is to give access to reading materials at very affordable prices promoting equity to people of all incomes. There is also the issue of people who come to the Book Station to donate books or notice that we are having a sorting session and they might want to buy some books then.

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continued: In the past, FOL had a collectibles separate section with books priced higher than all the others on the regular shelves. These were kept separate from the general sale. Jim Dullenty and Floss Kettering researched those and priced them individually. Some were older books or special categories, such as history or Montana history. Also in the past, Lyle Gorman helped the FOL by selling on eBay a collection of special donated books. He brought in quite a bit of money this way. Presently, we do not have any FOL members doing this nor are experts in book valuations. The group decided for this

particular instance, Arlene and Mary will meet with the individual today, see what he is interested in and possibly limit the number of books. The Montana history books would not be available for him. The Book Station has many duplicate copies of certain titles and those would be available for him to buy. We will continue to study this issue, and will contact some other libraries for information about policies for selling used books.

VI. Thursday Book Sorting Sessions. We will continue these with hours of 10 am till noon. Discussion about shelving book categories. EX: the paperback mysteries start in an odd location separate from the main paperback mysteries, as do the hardback mysteries out in the front area. This can be challenging for the sorters. FOLL will continue to accept book donations. After the FOL February book sale we will assess the situation. If too many books care donated, FOL would need to halt accepting any books.

VII. Membership Cycle. FOL uses the calendar year as the time for membership and the FOL President wrote a letter to encourage people to join or renew their FOL memberships. Also, this was announced in the library articles in the newspaper. Usually most people join during Jan. - March of the year, and some other memberships continue to come in later. This will be on the agenda for the Feb. meeting.

Library Director Report by Dani:

The minutes of previous FOL meetings are on the Library website. Missing are a few months of 2020, possibly due to Covid and quarantine. MaryJo will check on these and will email any to Kari D.

Library will continue to take donations of used books during library hours.

She reported the library is working on a technology update including WiFi and internet connection improvements. Also included are laptops and devices to check out including the hotspots. This year those have been limited to public school students who need those for distance learning studies. The state gave the library four laptops registered to the state. Two will be checked out by patrons, with library requirements. The patron will sign a library policy before being allowed to check out the laptops. A discussion followed. Dani explained there is a trust that happens in this. Many people would use these for doing their taxes or exploring job applications, or to use social media. Every night these laptops are wiped clean digitally.

Dani reported things are going well at the library and they miss the usual programming and patrons as was the case before Covid situation. Circulation is up and patrons are still able to access the library.

Dani explained the need for updating the stacking chairs. They are older and have been very well used. Some are now failing and need to be replaced. One issue is possible damage when they are stacked. Also, since Covid there is a heightened need for disinfecting the chairs and any of cloth material are hard to clean. The stacking chairs are easier to clean. These are utilized in the upper reading room for presentations and meetings, etc. There is limited space for storing these in the entryway upstairs. There are approximately seventy chairs. She asked if the FOL would consider donating toward replacing these. The cost per chair is between \$70 - \$150 and she thought it advisable to purchase just a few at first to be sure they meet the needs and can be stacked without damage.

Respectfully submitted: MaryJo Hamling, Secretary FOL