



Lewistown Public Library’s Mission Statement:

“The Lewistown Public Library provides free and equal access to quality materials and services, which fulfill the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the entire community.”

1:30 PM Call to order -- roll call – Regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees was called to order by Jean Collins. Members present: Jean Collins, Arlene Mari, Gayle Doney, Andrea Payne. Director: Alissa Wolenetz. Library Staff: Drew Kettering.

Appoint Recorder of Minutes: Drew Kettering.

Reading of the Mission Statement: Gayle Doney.

Revisions to the Agenda

- None.

Comments for the Good of the Library

- Alissa asks for clarification on this portion of the meeting and Gayle explains that it is a time to share any positive comments the board or others may have heard about the library recently. Gayle shares that she has positive vibes for the library.

Disposition of Minutes

- Alissa notes that Andrea’s name is spelled wrong in the September minutes and Andrea finds another misspelling of her name.
- Andrea moves to approve minutes as amended. Gayle 2nd. All in favor.

Financial Reports

- September financials will be approved at the November meeting.
- Alissa still needs current financial breakdown for staff wages; Gayle recommends tabling this discussion for now.

Director's Report

DR - Questions

- Alissa asks if there are any questions about the Director's Report before going into specifics. Gayle asks about Ray Pryor's statements at the previous meeting. Alissa explained Mr. Pryor's suspicion of the Collection Management policy revision being due to *Heartstopper* and his objections to language in the ALA's Bill of Rights. She also reiterated that the policy was already being revised before any issues with *Heartstopper* arose and that the updated version allows for more public involvement as modeled from the Bitterroot Public Library policy, which allows for additional input from library professionals outside the Board. Gayle commented that she anticipates additional challenges in the future.
- Alissa noted that another Montana library recently received public comment from an attorney who provided more information about Montana's defamation laws and the potential repercussions for slandering librarians. She suggested more training in these areas (i.e., free speech vs. defamation) in the future.
- Gayle also noted she has not received her board packet due to email issues and asks for text confirmation the next time packets are sent out.

DR - Administration

- *ALA: Accessible Rural and Small Communities Grant* - We have completed an interim report and are preparing to order materials.
- *Board CE* - Alissa hopes to schedule a training with MSU-Extension in January and will also provide Board members with a series of letters to Trustees from retired MSL Commissioners called "Your Work Matters Too." The Board discussed visiting other library board meetings to learn how they run their meetings and institutions. Alissa suggested Bitterroot and Philipsburg libraries. Andrea expressed interest.
- *Technology Updates* - We continue to identify technology needs to prepare for a T-Mobile Hometown Grant. New computers are a high priority as well as improvements to allow for private space for telemedicine and other meetings. The Genealogy Society is allowing us to utilize their space when it is not in use for Zoom meetings.
- *Disaster Planning and Annual Plans* - Pending. Slowed due to the hiring process.
- *SCF Meeting* - Alissa represented the Board as a Trustee proxy. The next conference will be in the spring.
- *Other Comments* - Alissa mentions that the Phillipsburg Library integrated an older building into their current building, and that it would be wonderful if the Library could eventually do a similar thing with the Bartel house (currently for sale). Gayle agrees to purchase it and donate it to the Library if she were to win the lottery. She suggests we all buy lottery tickets. Alissa and Gayle suggest that perhaps the German company thinking of opening operations in Lewistown would put up half the money to contribute to community enrichment. Alissa envisions the space for Community Education.

DR - Programming

- *Unsolved Murders in Fergus County* - Tabled.
- *Book and Movie Clubs* - These continue to grow. The Library recently renewed our movie license for another year.

- *Color of the Month Challenges* - Due to popular demand, these will return in November of this year.
- *Youth Take-Home Kits* - Paired activities and books that Brittney prepared have been popular. We will continue to provide these until a new YSL is hired. This program has been very popular with about 30 Take-Home Kits distributed each weekend
- *Magical Middles Radio Program* - Tabled pending new YSL hire.

DR - Building Updates

- *Community Development Block Grant* - Cathy and Alissa requested City Commission approval to apply for this grant on behalf of the Library at the 10.16.23 meeting. It was unanimously approved. Alissa and Cathy have received assistance developing the grant from the new City Planner and the MT Department of Commerce.

DR - Staffing and Training

- *Hiring* - The Hiring Panel is assisting with the search for a new YSL (32-40h). We will hire to fill the remainder of our open hours (12-20h) afterward.
- *Training* - Alissa has completed the Library Administrator Track from the MSL Certification program. She also attended the MLA's annual training retreat in early October. The annual MLA conference will be held in April in Butte. A deep clean of the Library (including shampooing all carpets) may be scheduled simultaneously so that all staff can attend.

DR - Statistics

- Generally, all numbers are up. Gayle notes that as the library evolves to fulfill the needs of modern times, it makes logical sense that more people would take advantage of those services.
- We have sent out over 1,300 books to children via DPIL. The two counties we helped start their own DPIL programs will soon begin administering them independently.
- We now have access to Montana History Portal statistics and can see how often our collections are viewed - over 4,000 views for the month of September for our Central Montana Photo Archive.
- We have promoted via social media a Montana History Portal program that uses pictures from our archive for the basis of a walking tour that teaches about the history of floods in Lewistown. The posts have been doing well.
- Alissa notes that we recently had increased interest from prospective volunteers. She has been considering new projects, as the usual shelving and cleaning needs are already being met. One idea would be to have them help with a library newsletter.
 - Mary wonders if these tasks could be organized by the FOL so that all volunteers should be connected and informed. Alissa is willing to ask the FOL to do that if they have the capacity for it.
 - Alissa also suggests the possibility of volunteers helping with after school programs as there is a need to support Junior High students who often hang out in the library (due to proximity) and Mary agrees that such programs are a good idea.

Communications

Friends of the Library - Arlene

- The September Book Sale made \$536. The October Book Sale made \$701. The next Book Sale is November 4-5.
- Santa's Second Sale is scheduled for December 2. Arlene expresses her gratitude to St. James for storing items for the sale. A location and time for more donations are still in the works.
- FOL bought the library a new vacuum which arrived this week and Alissa is excited about it.

City Commission - Gayle

- The Community Development Block Grant was approved. The Commission is currently working on water and sewer rate updates. They will meet again before the election in November. Ballots have been mailed out.

Building Committee - Alissa

- Alissa explained the application process for the Community Development Block Grant and expressed her appreciation for help from Cathy Moser and the new City Planner, Doug Osterman. She noted that the Library qualifies for this grant because 52.8% of City residents are low- or moderate-income folks.
- The end goal of the grant is the development of a Library Master Plan for all Library property (including the Book Station) that will explore the feasibility and create timelines for facilities maintenance, historic preservation, renovation, and changes to services.

Discussion with the Public

- Ray Pyror expresses his appreciation for Gayle's work on the City Commission.

Continuing Business

- **Strategic Plan**
 - There are no questions about the new Strategic Plan. Gayle moves to approve the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan. Andrea 2nd. All in favor.
- **Chili Bowl Volunteers**
 - Andrea Payne and Mary Mendel have offered to be part of the Chili Bowl Logistics and Coordination Committee (CHIBICO-LOCO). Alissa asks if anyone else is interested. Mary and Gayle offer to join the Committee.
 - Mary inquires as to what the role of the Committee will be. Alissa explains that it may involve securing a venue and helping to set up and promote the event. Meetings will hopefully take place mostly through email, but there may be in-person meetings once or twice a month as the event approaches. The first meeting will be scheduled soon (this week).

- o There is some discussion of an early February event date (within the first two weeks) instead of a January event date, since there has been difficulty with post-holiday scheduling conflicts in the past.
- o Gayle and Ray both comment on how fun past Chili Bowls have been.

New Business

- **Update of GOV policies**

- o *Summary of Changes*

- GOV 2 - Hours. Alissa explains a suggested change to the Library's hours policy to include a statement about extreme weather. This is particularly due to winter storms, but will also allow for the possibility of the Library being used as a AC cool down hub on days of extreme heat. Alissa notes that closing during extreme weather may contribute to the idea of the Library being a non-essential service, but that this consideration is for safety reasons.
- GOV 6 - Library Goals. Alissa recommends this reference the LPL's current Strategic Plan, which should be updated at least once every five years.
- o Mary moves to approve revisions to the GOV policies. In discussion, Gayle suggests that the Director's weather closing decision in GOV 2 - Hours be made in consultation with the Board Chair. Mary and Alissa agree. Mary moves to approve the changes with Gayle's suggested amendment in GOV 2 - Hours.
 - In public discussion, Ray Pryor questions the wording of GOV 5 - Mission Statement, particularly the words "quality" and "entire." Mary notes that she is not currently interested in revising the Library's Mission Statement. Gayle notes that the word "quality" to her means a degree of excellence which she doesn't have a problem with, but suggests that occasionally it is a good idea to reconsider and update the Mission Statement if need be. Alissa notes accessibility is part of our concern and is part of making sure the entire community can access our services. Mr Pryor suggests that what the Library does is "attempt" to provide services for the "entire" community. Gayle responds that in fact the Library does provide for the entire community as there has not been any criticism of the Library's accessibility legally or otherwise that would suggest it doesn't.
- o Mary again moves to approve the changes with Gayle's suggested amendment to include consultation with the Board Chair before closures in GOV 2 - Hours. Gayle 2nd. All in favor.

- **Community Development Block Grant**

- o Alissa requests that the Board formally approve the LPL's application for \$50,000 from the Montana Department of Commerce for a Library Master Plan. Gayle half-jokingly asks if we can add \$1,000,000.
- o Gayle moves to approve the November Community Development Block Grant Planning Activities application for \$50,000 from the Montana Department of Commerce. Andrea 2nd. All in favor.

- **Rescheduling November Meeting**

- o Alissa requests that the November meeting be held earlier in the month in order to consider a hiring recommendation for a new Youth Services Librarian. November 2nd and 8th are discussed. November 8th works best for everyone and a 10:30AM start time is decided upon.
- o Gayle moves to approve rescheduling the November Board Meeting to November 8th at 10:30 AM. Mary 2nd. All in favor.

Trustee Minute

- Gayle had a great trip driving to Louisiana with her sister, and she suggests we all do more traveling. She said the food was great and the drive was beautiful. She stocked up on books from the Book Station and left them wherever she finished them.
- Mary watched *JAWS* for the first time and is excited for the Curious Cinema Club's showing of *Rocky Horror Show Picture*. Jean asks how the CCC chooses its films and why they can't advertise the names of the films they are showing. Alissa explains our movie licensing company's rules on promotion and the extent to which we are able to use the film's titles - only in the Library or on our website, not social media. She also explains that the CCC decides on films by voting, but the Halloween showing was initially a joint idea with the Judith Theater. Since they were unable to obtain licensing for the film, we are showing it here.

(3:15PM Jean moved to adjourn, Mary 2nd. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.)

NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 10:30AM
Respectfully Submitted: Drew Kettering, Librarian, and Alissa Wolenetz, Director