

MEETING OF THE NATRONA COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD
October 10, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm by President Mike Stepp.

MEMBERS PRESENT: *Mike Stepp, Cathi Carr, Vickie Cawthra,
Chris Mullen via Zoom*

MEMBERS ABSENT: *Alaina Stedillie*

ALSO PRESENT: *Lisa Scroggins, Executive
Kate Mutch, Assistant Director
Greta Lehnerz, Business Manager/Human Resources
Megan Bratton, Marketing/PR
Kellie Humphries, Adult Services Specialist
Leda Pojman, Deputy County Attorney
Candice Cochran, NCPL Foundation Executive Director
John Griffith, NCPL Foundation President
Debra Cheatham, Member of the Public*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved to approve the agenda. (Carr/Cawthra); motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Debra Cheatham thanked Mike Stepp and Cathi Carr for meeting with her as part of her continuing education program.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 12 2023 MEETING

It was moved to approve and file the minutes from the September 12, 2023 meeting with correction. (Cawthra/Carr); motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT

It was moved to approve the Financial Reports and payments for September 2023 bills. (Carr/Mullen); motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director submitted the WLMCF grant application, which included a letter from the County Commission that indicates support of the library project but did not commit to funding. The Director learned a written commitment for funding is required for the application to be considered. She obtained an extension to provide this until November 9.

Board Member Alaina Stedillie was unable to attend the meeting but sent the following via email and suggested it be read into the minutes:

"I did want to let you know that I am aware of the County's decision to not give us funding at this point in time. I plan to write each commissioner a letter describing how I feel completely deceived by the Commission and disappointed that, as one of their

appointed representative on a County board, they could not have been more open and honest with me regarding the future of the library. I am also going to point out that it is unconscionable for them to continue to force County employees and residents to work in and patronize a facility that we know is unsafe (and we have been on notice of this for over 10 years). Frankly, I feel misled, and that makes me angry. As a resident of Natrona County, I am even more disappointed in their actions. I use the Library often. My daughter LOVES the children's section. Every time I come in, I see an incredibly diverse group of individuals using the library for any number of reasons. While it is laudable that Lisa and her staff are able to provide so much programming and so many resources to the community, despite the dearth of support from the County's elected leaders, it is unsustainable. The community should not have to "make do" with a crumbling building that is too small for its needs simply because the current Director and her staff are magicians. Natrona County leads the state in so many areas – education, technology, business; we are the hub of the state – look at the schools we have, the facilities we offer, our parks, our outdoor space, our commitment to being an incredible place to do business and raise a family. A new library could be a crown jewel about which the County could crow. To be shoved down, once again, on the priority list and be told "sorry, everything we told you about supporting a new library and the use of the funds from the sale of the hospital was just to placate you" is shameful. Just shameful."

The Director introduced Kellie Humphries, an NCL staff member who is working on her library degree.

The Director reported that the Telehealth booth should be delivered sometime next month.

The Director reported the donated buffalo is now on display on the first floor. The Director and Megan Bratton are working on introducing the buffalo to the community and will conduct a naming contest as a community engagement opportunity.

Megan Bratton will be speaking with Michael Stedillie at the Democratic Issues Forum on Saturday at noon at the Ramkota.

Two staff members, Lee Tschetter and Lorene Heinzen, are attending the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS) in Pennsylvania. Their presentation on library services was well received and was standing room only. They also presented last week at the Wyoming Library Association (WLA) conference here in Casper.

Between presenters, conference committee members, and attendees, NCL staff was well represented at the WLA Conference. This is a great opportunity for staff training and development.

The Director informed the Board that the State Librarian Jamie Markus has accepted a position and the University of Wyoming Library. His last day will be October 20.

The library has purchased board books which will be used to promote the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program. The books will have a QR code sticker on the back with program enrollment information and will be included in the bags given to new mothers at the hospital. The books were purchased with funds from the Natrona Collective Health Trust held by the NC Library Foundation for this program.

The Director thanked Leda Pojman, Deputy County Attorney, for her quick response to questions concerning library policies.

FOUNDATION REPORT

Candice Cochran reported the Foundation received a grant from the Rocky Mountain Power Foundation to help fund library programs. She is working on other grants as well. The annual appeal is under way.

John Griffith reported the Foundation was concerned about the pivot by the County Commission regarding support and funding for the library project. Conversations with the City are continuing. The Foundation will work with the Director and the Library Board to educate the County Commission on possible funding options available to the county, the economic impact of a new library in the community etc.

Megan Bratton created a talking points document that addresses the potential economic impact of a new library. The Director will send the document to the Library Board and Foundation Board.

FRIENDS REPORT

Cathi Carr reported the Craft Book sale was a success. A bag sale will be held on November 9. There will not be an October meeting.

Lisa Scroggins reminded the Board the sandwiches provided at the Board meetings are paid for by the Friends of the Library.

AJOURNMENT

It was moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:19 pm. (Cawthra/Carr); motion carried.






