

Salt Lake County Library Board of Directors

June 26, 2023

Draft until approved by the Board

Board Attendees:

Hollie Pettersson, Vice Chair
Anastasia Morgan
Steven Sokol

Suzanne Harrison
Spencer Romney
Nancy Thorne

Members on Webex:

William (Bill) Scarber, Chair
Sandra Osborn

Excused Board Member(s):

Kaati Tarr

Other Attendees:

Jim Cooper
Jennifer Fay
Matt McLain
Pamela Park
Russ Snow

Emily Bullough
Melissa Haslam
Joey McNamee
Kara Pearson
Steve Van Maren

Robin Chalhoub
Isaac Higham
Aimee Winder Newton
Megan Smith
Christa Warren

Other Attendees on Webex:

Holly Challis
Guest
Christie Morgan

Grace Hanley
Trudy Jorgensen-Price
Sara Neal

Wanda Huffaker
Maggie Mills
Erin Rigby

Hollie Pettersson, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:35 pm.

Welcome - Jim Cooper, Library Director

Welcome everyone to the June board meeting at the Millcreek branch. A more formal introduction of the branch will be given later.

Approve Minutes from the May 22, 2023 Board Meeting

Nancy Thorne made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 22, 2023 Library Board Meeting. Spencer Romney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Suzanne Harrison – aye
Anastasia Morgan – aye
Sandra Osborn - aye
Hollie Pettersson – aye
Spencer Romney - aye
Bill Scarber - aye
Steve Sokol – aye
Nancy Thorne - aye

Public comments –

Nothing at this time.

Correspondence -

Nothing at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Introduction and Welcome to the Millcreek Branch – Laura Renshaw, Millcreek Manager

The renovated Millcreek Community Center opened in 2012 as a partnership with the Library, Senior Center, and Recreation Center all sharing the building. The public takes advantage of the one stop shop. They love to come eat lunch at Café Evergreen, work out in the rec center, visit the senior center, and then stop by the library.

The building is beautifully designed and a great place to visit. The library has a “river” running through it that mimics the creek. You will find the river in the carpet and on the ceiling. The children’s area has an artistic tree with windows that allows those on the rec center track a view into the library.

The Millcreek library has around 125,000 physical items. They see an average of 15,000 visitors a month with 728,000 circulations. It is within walking distance from a middle school and the teen librarian is getting positive energy with programming and a teen advisory board. Adults are learning that programming is for all ages and the branch has a great collection of volunteers. There is a running joke that they will cap the volunteers at 20, but the staff can never say no to the amazing individuals who want to help in the community.

Only certain branches have a book club collection and Millcreek is one of those regionally located branches. The collection consists of books already vetted for those looking for book club ideas. Millcreek currently has four book clubs. Three book clubs are for adults, including a cookbook version, and one recently started for the teens.

The branch averages four storytimes a week with around 100 participants. LEGO Club started with 10-12 people and now it averages around 40-50 participants. The branch also hosts a local artist every month, including a reception. The current art display is for upcycled clothing.

The Millcreek branch manager, Laura Renshaw, has worked for the library for 11 years, with the last year and half at Millcreek. The staff consists of 19 members, including three who have worked at the branch for 20+ years. Nancy Thorne stated it is her branch. She takes advantage of the multiple agencies and loves the quiet fireplace reading area. Steve Sokol mentioned Millcreek was his childhood library as well.

Millcreek does have some challenges, such as parking with multiple agencies. The building states on one side that it is community services and the other entrance says it is the library, with community services in smaller letters underneath.

Room sharing happens with all three agencies. The library and senior center swap about every other day and sometimes every morning and afternoon. Communication about programming is very important for everything to run smoothly. A member of the public may say they had an experience at the library, but really, they were talking to the community center desk.

Another issue is accessibility. The rec center has a fee to enter and the seniors have to be a certain age. Some patrons do not understand that they may not be able to use everything free. Millcreek was not included as a possible library for the Sunday hours. The other agencies are not open on Sunday and it is difficult to restrict access to some of their areas.

When items like the HVAC need to be replaced, all three agencies have to work together to determine who is in charge of the expense. Even with the difficulties, the branch is much loved for being part of the community services.

Go Pro added to Library of Things – Kara Pearson, Acquisition Librarian

The library is beginning to roll out the GoPro cameras, which will go live on July 3. The cameras checkout period is seven days without a fee. Late fees will be a dollar a day up to the \$15 maximum. The camera does not come with an SD card, but patrons can purchase one at the branch or on their own.

The GoPro comes with mounts and screws in a labeled box. Instructions and installation guides are included with a QR code to a video. Trouble shooting is available on the back of the guides. The guidelines state the camera can be taken into 33 feet of water.

If the item returns with something missing, the patron will be contacted to bring them back. The staff can request replacement parts as necessary. If the item is not returned or if it is broken, a small fee will be charged to the patron. The cost of replacing the entire GoPro is \$500. This is explained to the patron upon checkout.

Only cards for adults in good standing can check out items from the Library of Things collection. We have not had many problems with other large collections, such as the telescopes or Chromebooks. The replacement costs for those items are similar to the GoPro.

These items can be expensive, but the benefit to the public outweighs the possible cost. Patron stories have been told where the public was interested in the item, but did not know if they could commit to purchasing it. After taking advantage of this service, many patrons have decided to purchase their own version of the service and had a better idea of the features they wanted.

GoPro cameras not be widely publicized at this time. This will keep holds down and give the staff time to determine the success of the service. Success is based on a survey and patron comments. Evaluation of the service will take place after a few months and more cameras may be purchased at that time.

OLD BUSINESS

Display Policy Amendments – Aimee Winder Newton, County Council Chair

As a past board member, Aimee Winder Newton understands this board is unique based on the fact they can make actual decisions on policies. She thanked the board for their service and dedication.

Council member Winder Newton reported that the council receives feedback and complaints from members of the public. While dealing with an unrelated issue, Councilmember Winder Newton was reviewing library policies and came across the library's display policy. A portion of the display policy stood out to her that mentions some displays may include content that some patrons find controversial. Councilmember Winder Newton indicated that some members of the

council who supported the library tax increase, desire to that the library strive to be non-controversial.

Councilmember Winder Newton is on a state content review policy committee and reported that language which they recently adopted states that they strive to not be controversial.

Councilmember Winder Newton requested that the library might consider updating the display policy to show that we also strive to be non-controversial.

Councilmember Winder Newton reported that she has worked with Library Director Cooper and Robin Chalhoub to propose language which was presented as an amendment to the display policy to the board. Councilmember Winder Newton said that her goal is to avoid causing issues in communities, especially as some cities look at potentially having their own library or make other changes to the county library.

Mr. Cooper reported that the current policy was adopted and reaffirmed at the December, 2022 board meeting and while the library has not had an official complaint or request for reconsideration regarding displays this year, the library does occasionally receive criticisms during certain celebrations or times of the year.

Mr. Cooper also indicated that, while he recognizes the language proposed may not be ideal, he would support Councilmember Winder Newton's proposal, however the decision and ultimately the policy would be up to the board to approve and defend in case of a challenge.

The recommended changes are in red.

1.0 Selection of Displays

1.1 As a government entity, the library maintains neutrality, and strives to present all sides of a topic.

- Displays should not make political or polarizing statements, including through the inclusion or absence of materials on display, and strive to be non-controversial.
- The display should not promote an agenda, intentionally or unintentionally.
- Our collection and displays strive to include all viewpoints.

3.0 Materials Display Subject Matter

3.1 Library staff strive to create displays that appeal to a range of ages, interests, and information needs. Staff shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that Material Displays include a wide spectrum of opinions and viewpoints. Although The County Library strives to create displays that are non-controversial, the County Library acknowledges that certain opinions, perspectives, or subject matters included within a Materials Display may include content that some patrons do not agree with and find controversial.

Mr. Cooper indicated that the majority of the new language in red comes from the library's standard operating procedures and is part of the staff training manual. Some of the language is based on a recommendation from Councilmember Winder Newton.

Mr. Cooper also acknowledged that occasionally the council receives complaints that bypass the library. He requested that comments be redirect to the library and follow the procedures in place for reconsideration of materials and services.

Although the library has not received a formal complaint about displays. Library staff are instructed to listen to a complaint and as appropriate give them a copy of the policy. The patron may enter into the formal reconsideration process. The process starts with a committee reviewing the material or service. If the patron is unsatisfied with their response, they can appeal the decision to the director. If another appeal happens, the reconsideration will be brought before the board. The board is the final decision in the process.

An in depth conversation took place with all board members giving their input about the updated language. Some worried that the new language would not be defensible and could cause the staff to censor material. Others pointed out section 3.2, which states the library does not endorse any cause and strives to maintain neutrality already addresses the concerns.

Varying language and possible wordsmithing was discussed regarding the policy. The board affirmed that any language changes in the policy should reflect that:

1. We do not seek to promote political or other agendas.
2. We have a selection policy that tries to be popular and may include material that people may disagree with.
3. If you disagree with something or feel offended, there is a reconsideration policy.

The consensus of the board was that they would like more time to review any policy changes and ensure the policy is representative of all members of the public, is in the best interest of the public, is sound and is defensible.

Bill Scarber made a motion to postpone making a decision on the updated display policy language and review it again in a later meeting. Sandra Osborn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Suzanne Harrison – aye
Anastasia Morgan – aye
Sandra Osborn - aye
Hollie Pettersson – aye
Spencer Romney - aye
Bill Scarber - aye
Steve Sokol – aye
Nancy Thorne - aye

Material Selection – Jim Cooper, Library Director

The County Council has provided Mr. Cooper an opportunity to do a presentation on the library's material selection policy and processes. The current target date for a presentation is at the July 11th, 2023 council meeting, but no formal request has been made at this time. As part of the council presentation we will provide information that we serve as a popular library with focus on in demand services as opposed to serving as an academic, archival or special library.

Mr. Cooper then previewed the presentation, which included information regarding our 900,000 residents, who have varied interests and backgrounds, are looking for a variety of topics to fit their needs. Central selectors purchase most of the book materials. Some branches purchase

items that are unique to their patron demographics. Statistics determine what circulates well with each community.

Salt Lake County Library is an award-winning system. In the past six months, we have received five awards, including a prestigious one for distinguished services. Wanda Huffaker received an award for intellectual freedom and years of service. Alexis Alires won an award for going above and beyond to help patrons and be a role model to the staff.

The system maintains a collection of two million items. One million items check out every month with the average circulation as six times a year. Even with a large collection, the library only purchases 10% or less of published books. Each year 45,000 items are added, but the same amount has to be retired to maintain proper shelf space.

A group of selectors are trained to represent multiple viewpoints. There are selectors that specialize in a specific genre, such as romance. All of our librarians are professionally trained. In addition to reviewing statistics within the community, professional reviews are read when purchasing books.

Most of the households in the Salt Lake County area have at least one library card member. Some households have a library card for each family member. We try to avoid infringing on first amendment rights. We encourage patrons to choose their own material, while still offering our services in finding appropriate materials.

We encourage parents to help their children pick developmentally appropriate books. The library has an unattended child policy, even if it is difficult to enforce. We discourage children under age 12 to be in the library alone. This is to encourage parents monitoring their children's selections.

A nationally recognized cataloging system – the Dewey Decimal system, is used to catalog books by subject as well as author and title. Most publishers provided an age recommendation on their books. Reading lists are available for all ages and grades either in paper form inside the library or online. These lists include gentle reads, which fills a need for some of our patrons.

Megan Smith mentioned there is a difference between being offended and feeling threatened. Everyone gets offended about something. Circulation is very telling. You may not like a book, but that does not mean that another patron has a need or desire for that book.

Mr. Cooper reminded the board that the Material Selection Policy was approved in April, 2023. It provides for the representation of a variety of viewpoints and selections. Librarians are trained to follow certain criteria presented in that document. The board also approved the display policy in December 2022. Displays help merchandise the collection without regard to an agenda. The library celebrates different cultural events for a variety of individuals. We receive comments from those who appreciate that help.

Mr. Cooper also reported that it was his understanding that one of our branches received an informal comment about a particular display pushing an agenda. The display in question was for New Arrivals of Children's Non-Fiction. That display contained a variety of books including a title on Julie Andrews, Jackie Chan, horsemanship, gravity and more. The display states it is informational books, which will be evaluated to see if changing the sign to non-fiction will benefit the patrons. Mr. Cooper also reported that items that are on display are typically new arrivals and they actually stay on the display for a very short time before they are checked out.

Therefore a display that has certain titles today will be quite different tomorrow, and sometimes even in the next hour.

There is a reconsideration process if a patron has a complaint about a book, display, or service. A team of individuals will take that request and review the item or service. The reconsideration information was given to Suzanne Harrison to share with the council and the member of the public who shares concerns with them. Christa Warren can do a presentation on reconsideration.

Members of the board asked how they could support Jim during his presentation to the council. A few will try to be present to answer any questions and be supportive.

Sunday Hours Update – Jennifer Fay, Associate Director of Public Services

During the tax increase proposal, a question arose about expanding services to Sunday. Money was set aside for a long-range planning pilot. The Public Policy Data Analysis class at the University of Utah was able to do some data collecting and provide recommendations to the eight-branch manager workgroup.

The class analyzed door count, including nearby locations such as rec centers that are open on Sunday. Certain branches were excluded as possibilities for pending closures for remodeling. Results included two separate groups of libraries in a five-mile radius.

Daybreak and Granite were difficult to evaluate based on limited statistics for the new building. Those buildings do offer create space services, which is an important factor to consider. Other factors include locations close to public transportation.

The chosen group includes Daybreak, Granite, Kearns and West Jordan. Draper is the backup library. Sunday hours will be 10 am – 3 pm or 11 am – 4 pm. We prefer the 10 am – 3 pm hours, mimicking the current time we open to the public. The staff shift will be six hours on Sunday.

The amount set aside for the pilot is \$400,000. The current estimate for a four-branch pilot is \$410,800. This includes hiring new staff and obtaining additional custodial and create space supplies. Kearns utilities are much lower than the other branches based on the geothermal heat. The estimates are for hiring staff in the mid-range grade. Daybreak and Granite currently have enough staff, so no additional employees are expected to be hired at this time.

The next step of the process is the 2024 FTE request. This includes refining the budget and coverage model. Marketing will create a plan on how to roll out the news to the public. Hollie Pettersson stated this could be a game changer for some families. We found that other libraries are busiest on Sundays.

Ideally, the program would begin in the summer of 2024. The program will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. If it is successfully, it will be doubled in 2026 and with continued success it will be implemented across the system in 2028. Success is determined by functionality with staffing levels and no unforeseen problems. Door count will be evaluated to see if it is comparable to other days and worth the cost of staff.

There are some staff who are excited to work on Sunday. However, there are a few people where this is a major problem. We will look at transferring them for the time being.

STAFF REPORTS

Statistical Report – Jim Cooper, Library Director

As shown on the board report, the day count and other statistics continues to increase.

Marketing Update – Matt McLain

One Cent fine is going well at the moment. A full report will come soon.

Finance & Operations Update – Russ Snow, Fiscal Manager

The June budget was approved. We received an increase in the utility budget for gas. This was a countywide problem. Some branches already had a negative utility budget in May. Robin Chalhoub gave a shout out to Russ. He did a great job showing the impact of the utility costs per dekatherm. His presentation helped other county departments receive the budget increase they needed.

We are starting 2024 budget process, which will be fully evaluated in July.

Personnel Report – Pamela Park, Human Resource Manager

Full-Time Merit Staff: 288

Part-Time (30 hour) Merit Staff: 77

Part-Time (20 hour) Merit Staff: 115

Substitute Staff: 93

Interns: 20

Merit Vacancies: 44

The meeting was adjourned by Hollie Pettersson at 2:30 PM.