08/30/2024 2:00 p.m. Library Board Meeting Minutes - APPROVED

Board Members Present: Karen England, (Library Director), Mary Fontes, Amanda Jenkins, Katie Jensen, Heather McKee, Linda Nay, and Vail Batty.

Board Members Attending Remotely: Vail Batty.

Excused: Sonja Norton (County Commissioner).

Other Attendees: Tonya Craven (Human Resources Director), Jon Stearmer (Uintah County Attorney), Karina Valencia (Uintah County Paralegal), and Chrystal Summarell (Assistant Director), with Stacia Watkins (Librarian) taking the minutes.

1. Welcome

The meeting started at 2:02 p.m.

2. Introduction of New Library Director

Karen England was appointed as the Library Director at the end of June. She expressed her fondness for Vernal and the Library, and her eagerness to be here. She also emphasized that she welcomes any questions the board may have for her.

3. Introduction of New Board Member

Katrina “Katie” Jensen is the newest member of the Library Board, appointed by the County Commission on Wednesday, August 28th. She is a previous library employee and will serve a four-year term. Amanda Jenkins and Mary Fontes were both reappointed and will serve four-year terms.

4. Election of Officers for 2024-2025

Linda nominated Heather to serve as the Chair. The motion passed unanimously. Amanda nominated Mary to serve as Secretary. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Regular Meeting Schedule Discussion and Possible Amendment

Mary moved to amend the Library Board By-Laws to change the regular meeting schedule to the third Friday of the month at 10:00 a.m. Amanda seconded. The motion passed.

6. Approval of Previous Minutes

Mary noted the following corrections to be made on the May meeting minutes:

- Line 10: Clarify which minutes were approved.
- Line 50: Change "We received the board's support." To "The board agreed to wait for the new library director to be appointed before making any major decisions on the space."

Amanda moved to approve the May minutes as amended. Linda seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Linda moved to approve the June minutes as presented. Mary seconded. The motion passed unanimously

7. Room Booking Policy Amendment and Adoption – Vote

Jon Stearmer joined the meeting at 2:16 p.m. Karina Valencia joined the meeting at 2:23 p.m.

Stacia explained that in years past, they have had groups reserve rooms with such frequency that other community members were unable to make reservations on days and times consistent with their needs. Essentially, certain groups had monopolized the rooms. Staff is beginning to see that same pattern occurring again, with some rooms being books for several hours multiple times a week by the same group.

In order to provide equal opportunity for the rest of the community to use the meeting rooms, the following amendments to the Meeting Room Policy were recommended:

- "**3.2** Individuals and groups needing to schedule a meeting room on a regular weekly basis may do so for up to twelve consecutive weeks, no more than twice per week. They can renew their request for an additional twelve weeks following their eighth-week meeting, provided no other meetings have been scheduled that would preclude the renewal."
- "**3.3** Individuals and groups needing to schedule a meeting room on a regular monthly basis may do so for up to six consecutive months, no more than twice per month. They can renew their request for an additional six months following their fourth-month meeting, provided that no other meetings have been scheduled that would preclude the renewal."
- "Contact Information" was added to the required information for reservations under Section **4.7**.
- It was recommended during the meeting that "Individuals may not reserve a meeting room as a 'placeholder' for an event" stand as **4.7**, and the current 4.7 section be renumbered as **4.8**.

Linda moved to approve the Uintah County Library Meeting Room Policy as amended. Amanda seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Collection Development Policy Amendment Discussion and Adoption – Vote

Karen presented several amendments to the Collection Development Policy, which may be viewed in the accompanying document on the Utah Public Notice Website. This document is titled "Collection Development Policy (with changes) DRAFT 2024" and includes the tracked changes in red.

The proposed amendments focus on refining the collection development policy to ensure clarity and neutrality. Key points included criteria for adding materials, such as currency, relevance, purpose, budget and price, existing holdings, available space, and purchase requests. The policy avoids endorsing specific ideas and maintains a balanced collection without bias. The Library does not add items based on protected classes, ensuring a neutral tone and avoiding endorsement of specific ideas.

Deselection of resources is based on timeliness and relevance, with a focus on current information. The Library aims to provide materials in various formats, including large print and audio, to accommodate diverse needs. Budget constraints dictate cost-effective acquisitions, with interlibrary loans used to expand the collection. The policy emphasizes accessibility and educational value, balancing old and new information.

There was extensive discussion on the criteria for adding materials to the collection

Heather has tabled the vote for this policy amendment. They would like to call a special meeting to approve it after she has had a chance to read through the policy. The meeting will take place on Thursday, September 5th at 10:00 a.m.

9. Statement of Concern Form Revision and Adoption – Vote

The form is being updated for better accessibility and conciseness. It is branded as a Uintah County Library form and consists of comprehensive contact information, resource information, and a more concise questionnaire.

Jon wondered if we would discount any statement of concern if a patron marked that they hadn't read, listened to, or viewed the entire content. Amanda pointed out that they aren't required to read the entire work, only that the question is asked. Karen explained that the staff would not discount a statement of concern where a patron had marked "No" for that question.

The board discussed when the form is considered incomplete, what fields are required to be complete, and what we would do in that event. The board asked that staff adjust the form to merely ask whether they have spoken to a staff member, and if so, whom. Karen mentioned that "I don't know" is an acceptable answer to questions on the back side, particularly about what material the patron would recommend to replace the item the statement is about. Heather recommended referencing the Collection Development Policy at the top of the page so patrons may understand that if the form is incomplete, then it will not be accepted.

The board discussed whether a library account is required to submit a statement of concern. Jon pointed out that anyone who walks through the door is considered a patron and may use our materials inside the building, regardless of whether they check out materials. He feels that the purpose of a library card is to contact someone when they check out and remove materials from the building. He feels that anyone who would like to submit a statement of concern should be able to do so. The board would like to strike the line “who is a resident of Uintah County and holds a library card” in the Collection Development Policy.

The board would also like a link to the policy to be added to the online form.

Heather would like to table the vote to approve the form until the special meeting on September 5th when a revised form has been sent to board members for review.

10. September Freedom to Read Celebration Discussion

Karen read an email from a patron expressing gratitude and approval for a poster and signage put up around the Library called “Understanding Inclusion” in an effort to support the freedom to read. The email and the poster in question are attached on the Utah Public Notice Website. The email is titled “Uintah Mail Patron Message” and the poster is titled “Understanding Inclusion (Letter Size Flyer)”.

This message ties in to the issue of censorship facing libraries across the country and the upcoming Freedom to Read week in September. Karen explained that censorship impacts the ability for children and adults alike to see themselves in stories, to relate to stories, and to find the words to express their feelings and bring difficult issues up in conversation.

Karen advocated for diversity in our library collection as we go into the September Freedom to Read celebration, which takes place September 22nd-28th. Katie suggested blind dates with books that people most related to as a display.

Linda expressed her concern about banning books, as she remembers the impact of past historical events which involved book burnings.

Jon encouraged the Library, in its development of the collection, to be as neutral as possible. This includes censorship such as abstaining from purchasing certain books as well as removing books. He recommends not being subject-specific when planning the Freedom to Read displays in September.

Chrystal commented on how the Library strives to walk the line of being neutral while providing something for everything at the same time. Book lists, for example, are pulled from neutral resources to support school curriculum and so on. Other book lists might come from publishers or other neutral groups. She wants to make it clear that as a Library, we are never trying to push an agenda.

11. Outreach Opportunities

The Tridell Branch discussion has fizzled out. In budget discussions, Karen has asked that the funds for that be moved into a new budget line called Bookmobile. She explained that the bookmobile, which is still in its very early conceptual stages, would service all of our outlying communities. It would also be a service to our Native American neighbors. The bookmobile is meant to serve as a possible solution to providing services to the Randlett community as well as our other outlying communities. It would look like a small van with popular titles, patron requests and holds, and other options to provide services with a lower cost.

Amanda wondered if we could dissolve our involvement in Avalon. Sonja and Karen are trying to reach all of the stakeholders to discuss who and what is responsible for that center to thrive and continue. The board members would be invited to that, but it would not be considered a board meeting. This is still in the works.

Mary wondered if we have to limit how many board members can attend. Jon did explain that if there is a quorum, then the Open Public Meetings Act would come into play. He suggested a committee to attend that meeting so there isn't a quorum and bring it back to the board. Vail wondered if the meeting can take place on site at Avalon.

12. "Searching for the Wendigo" Shelving Placement Discussion

A statement was submitted by a patron about the book "Searching for the Wendigo" by Jennifer Rivkin. The following is a summary of the statement:

- Her son brought the book to her attention
- She objects to "scary & disturbing horror pics"
- She has not read the entire content
- She feels the effect of the material might be nightmares
- She would like the book shelved upstairs.

It is the board's responsibility to determine where it is shelved. Each board member has read and reviewed the book. Amanda stated that she and her son have checked the book out many times prior to this statement being submitted, and that he is a big fan of the "monster" section. The book currently resides in the Unexplained Bin of the Junior Nonfiction section of the library.

Amanda moved to keep the book in the junior nonfiction section as recommended by the publisher. Linda seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Public Comment (3 minutes per person, maximum of 15 minutes)

Heather wondered what is happening with the director's office. Karen explained that the room in the upstairs northeast corner of the building is being utilized as a director's suite. It will also be used as a space for board meetings, staff meetings, and other similar meetings.

The room upstairs which was previously the teen room is currently in use as a reservable meeting room, and we intend to build a creation space. We intend to have tools for beginners, items like sewing machines and a 3D printer.

The space which was previously Sam's office is now available for public use as a study area. There are discussions about combining those two smaller rooms into a smaller meeting room for groups that do not need as much space as the teen room, but more room than study rooms.

Heather asked whether Karen has had a chance to interact more with patrons. At this point she feels her job is making sure her staff can do their jobs, and she will be taking time to be at the circulation desk to learn the system and meet the patrons. Once she has become comfortable at the circulation desk, she will also take time to work the reference desk upstairs.

Stacia recommended that the board authorize a letter of gratitude at the special meeting to Juan Lee, the Director of Wasatch County Library, for contributing half of the cost to send Karen and Stacia to the koha-US 2024 Conference. Because of this contribution, they were able to attend the conference in Round Rock, Texas from August 13th-16th and gather valuable knowledge about the Integrated Library System to share with staff and the rest of the Basin Libraries Consortium.

14. Next Meeting Date

There will be a special meeting on Thursday, September 5th at 10:00 a.m. The next regular meeting will be on Friday, September 20th at 10:00 a.m.

15. Adjourn

Linda moved to adjourn. Amanda seconded. The meeting ended at 4:16 p.m.