

Billings Public Library  
August 10, 2017  
12:00 pm

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Chair Stella Fong, Vice Chair Bernard Rose, Sue Bach, David Darby, Cheryle Fisher, Bill Lamdin, Shanna Singleton-Deitsch, Roger Young, Gavin Woltjer, Library Director; Tori Koch, Assistant Library Director; Kathy Robins, Systems Administrator; Mary Murphrey, Administrative Coordinator. Guests: P.J. Smith, Yellowstone Genealogy Forum President; Leslie Modrow, Library Foundation; Clare Young, Friends of the Library; Pat Bellinghausen, Billings Gazette

**Public Comment**

Smith noted the Exiled Irish exhibit, Irish cultural events and the start-up of genealogy classes. The events have been well attended.

Rose said that all the titles have been chosen for the One Book Billings series. Books are ready for pick-up for the September session. September: Fifty-Six Counties by Russell Rowland; November: The Round House by Louise Erdrich; January: Stars Go Blue by Laura Pritchett; March: The Carry Home by Gary Ferguson; May: A Bloom of Bones by Allen Morris Jones.

**Chair's comments**

Fong introduced Shanna Singleton Deitsch as new board member. Singleton-Deitsch gave brief remarks about herself.

Fong thanked all for contributing to the director's evaluation.

Fong invited board members to participate in the High Plains Book Awards in October.

**Consent Agenda**

Bach reported that the FOL brought in lots of new books today. They participated in Summer Fair along with Library staff. The FOL sold books and asked for donations instead of pricing each book. It was very successful.

Rose pointed out the Foundation's event "Food for Thought for Millennials" on September 13.

Smith noted that the Yellowstone Genealogy Forum will host the Montana State Genealogy Conference in September. Fong and two national speakers are featured.

MOTION: Approve the consent agenda.

Approved

Rose/Fisher

## **Election of Officers**

Rose encouraged members to serve as vice-chair or chair in the future.

MOTION: Approve Fong as Board Chair and Bach as Board Vice-Chair

Approved

Rose/Lambdin

## **Strategic Plan Update**

Woltjer noted that library staff will participate in the next stage of development of the plan. He received rich community feedback via Coffee with the Director events, Neighborhood Task Force meetings and the public survey.

4 areas of focus:

- Programming
- Outreach
- Facility usage
- Administration

3 goals for strategic objectives:

- Measurable
- Ability to be built upon
- Sustainable past 2020

Timeline:

September – Goals draft ready

October – Present draft plan to board.

November – Presentation of plan to community

December – Board to finalize the plan

## **Library Hours**

Woltjer explained the decision to change library hours, eliminating Sunday open hours and adding those to other days. Feedback from the community showed that there was a need for more family-focused activities. Loss of funds from the State Library provided an impetus to increase efficiency. Sundays are the slowest days for usage and checkouts. With the change, the library will be able to provide more service on the busiest days. Friday evenings will feature family activities.

Fong commented that Board would like more timely communication.

Bach interested in hearing if there is an impact on student research time.

Young commented that the new hours provide a bigger, bolder idea for use of the facility. Board members can now explain the change to people who ask.

## **Civil Conversations**

Woltjer reported that 2 more events are scheduled for the Civil Conversation series.

- September 27 – “Censorship in America” in conjunction with Banned Books Week including an event facilitated the Foundation.
- November 16 – “The Politics of Food” with partners including Art House Cinema and Yellowstone Valley Citizens Council Community Food Campaign

Woltjer would like to create a committee with diverse participation for guidance for topics and panelists for the Civil Conversation series. Darby received a public comment that the topics appeared politically liberal. Darby noted that the topics were timely and controversial issues discussed among reasonable people. Darby said he supports having the conversations in the Library as a neutral venue.

## **Summer Reading Statistics**

Robins reported that the participation in Summer Reading program was up 8% from last year. New software provided a way to add games, challenges, badging and other options for increasing fun. Feedback from the public was very positive. The Library will be able to use the software for other reading programs year-round.

## **HB 261**

Woltjer reported due to State revenue declines, State aid to our library will be cut by \$55,000 per year for the next 2 years. The cut will be absorbed in the amount of money spent on collection development. In 2020, the funds may return for 4 years. SINGLETON-DEITSCH offered to help Foundation with grant writing. Rose and Darby suggested funding partnerships for civil conversations.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn.

Approved.

Rose/Darby

Adjourned at 1:12 pm.