

**Great Falls Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, December 20, 2023**  
**Great Falls Public Library – Cordingley Room (Basement of the Library)**  
*(Virtual access to meeting was available upon request)*  
**5:00 p.m.**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Jessica Crist, Ms. Sam DeForest, Ms. Noelle Johnson, Ms. Whitney Olson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Anne Bulger

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Rae Grulkowski - Cascade County Commissioner, Ms. Susan Wolff - City of Great Falls Commissioner

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Sarah Cawley, Mr. Ian Kaiser, Mr. Aaron Kueffler, Ms. Susie McIntyre, Ms. Nikki Robinson

GUESTS PRESENT: Ms. Brianne Laurin- GFPL Foundation Executive Director, Larry Anderson – Resident of Great Falls, Nancy Anderson – Resident of Great Falls, Molly Beck – Resident of Great Falls, Jack Buckman, Dennis DeForest – Resident of Cascade County, Jeni Dodd – Resident of Great Falls, Mark Good – Resident of Cascade County, Richard Irving – Resident of Great Falls, Alice Klundt – Resident of Great Falls, Joe McKenney – City of Great Falls Commissioner, Terri Nelson – Resident of Great Falls, Dave Powers – Resident of Great Falls, Mary Rearden – Resident of Great Falls, Jenn Rowell – The Electric (via zoom), Jerry Rukavina – Resident of Great Falls, David Saslav – Resident of Great Falls, Beth Schmoyer, Melinda Smith – Resident of Cascade County, Chris Smyth – Resident of Cascade County, Stephen Underwood – Resident of Great Falls, Jane Weber – Resident of Great Falls

Ms. Olson called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

**I. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had additional items to add or remove from the agenda approval.

Ms. Crist moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees approve the agenda items as presented. Ms. DeForest seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment. Upon hearing none, Ms. Olson called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

## **II. STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Nikki Robinson and Mr. Ian Kaiser introduced themselves and talked about their positions at the Library and how they came to be at the Library. After questions from the board, they left the meeting.

## **III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Irving addressed the board with concerns regarding the financial reports. He does not believe that the City can run a fair audit and calls upon the board to obtain an outside audit.

Mr. Saslav, from the Electron, thanked Mr. Sorich for doing such a great job with the Press Releases. He also wanted to thank all the staff for supporting the Electron.

Ms. Weber responded to Mr. Irving's call for an outside audit. She informed everyone that the City does retain an outside company for its fiscal audit and that the Library and Foundation are included.

Ms. Weber also shared her love of the diverse type of books the library has.

Mr. Good wanted to share that he appreciates the Library staff and board for all they do.

## **IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

Ms. Olson asked if anyone had additional items to add or remove from the agenda approval.

Ms. Johnson directed our attention to page two of the minutes. Under Consent Agenda, after the first paragraph, details were missing regarding the vagueness of information shared. (Ms. Johnson provided a typed sheet with wording to be added to the approved notes) Continuing on page two, under Section III: Public Comment, Ms. Johnson requested an amendment to Mr. Irving's comments to be consistent with other public comment statements; This was also requested for the last paragraph on page two. (Ms. Johnson provided a typed sheet with wording to be added to the approved notes). On page three, third sentence down, Ms. Johnson corrected "master plan" to be Capital Campaign".

Ms. DeForest asked why the State Aid line item (334150) on page 19 was higher than expected. Ms. McIntyre stated that it was increased due to legislation. Ms. DeForest asked why the Computer Programming line (435500) was so high for the year to date. Ms. McIntyre explained that this is OCLC, Montana Shared Catalog, and GSuite costs and that OCLC and the Montana Shared Catalog services get paid in a lump sum at the

beginning of the year. Ms. DeForest asked why Other Professional Services (435900) was listed twice. Ms. McIntyre stated that the first line item is for services such as Snow Plowing, Courier Services, etc. Whereas the Second line item is designated for the Health Care Professional. She also stated that the health care professional is currently being provided and funded by an outside group.

Ms. Olson asked what the Computer Equipment Maintenance line item (486970) is for. Ms. McIntyre stated that it is part of the internal service charges that we pay a lump sum.

Ms. Johnson pointed out some discrepancies between the Budget Report and the Vendor. On page 20, line items 434200-434700 shows a monthly expense, but on the vendor report on page 21 nothing is listed. Ms. McIntyre explained that since those expenses are paid for by the City, then billed to us, Fiscal Services suggested we not include them on our Vendor report, since that report is for expenses we pay directly.

Ms. Olson asked if there were any additional questions or comments from the committee regarding the consent agenda. Upon hearing none she asked for a motion.

Ms. Crist moved that the Great Falls Library Board of Trustees approves the consent agenda as updated. Ms. DeForest seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment. Upon hearing none Ms. Olson called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

## **V. DIRECTORS REPORT**

Ms. Cawley presented her Community Engagement report. Ms. Crist shared that she loves all the programs and publicity that Ms. Cawley and Mr. Sorich have been doing. Ms. Crist asked if the response has been immediate or if it has been a slow build. Ms. Cawley stated that she has noticed there is a group of people that attend most of the programs, but her goal is to increase attendance to adult programs by 40% by end of 2024.

Ms. McIntyre presented her Director's report. Ms. McIntyre stated that she has received some information on the December property taxes. The payments are low right now. It was estimated the mills would be around 103K (same as last year) but they came in at 93K instead. The main reason for this is due to appeals and protests.

Ms. McIntyre stated that we had wanted to start the third wave of hiring in January, but due to the low tax payment revenue, the rising cost of electricity, and the need to have 60% of funds in our library fund, we will have to postpone additional hires at this time. She is working on options to present to the board in January. Ms. McIntyre added that the SMART objectives from staff will have to be adjusted as a result of the postponement of additional staff.

Ms. McIntyre stated that the Credit Card process is still not working. She will update the board next month on the progress.

Ms. McIntyre gave a quick overview of the current Foundation Approved Asks.

Ms. Crist asked a question regarding page 53, last line of the MontanaLibrary2Go paragraph. She would like to know what 'Advantage Funding' is. Ms. McIntyre stated that money the Library puts towards MontanaLibrary2Go goes to purchase digital materials that are used by everyone in the program. With the advantage program, we can purchase additional item that are just for our library patrons.

Ms. DeForest ask if the \$1K, on page 54, to reserve the Mansfield Theater for Shakespeare in the park was the total, or would there be additional costs if it were to be used. Ms. McIntyre stated that last year we did not have to pay because we did not use the theater space; this was because no other group wanted that date. Ms. Cawley added that the Mansfield has not yet stated their 2024 charges so she doesn't know the exact amount, but \$1K should cover the entire rental.

Ms. McIntyre informed everyone that the Design Committee has met and has chosen the high scoring firm. We do not have a contract yet, but the next step is to negotiate the scope of work in their contract.

Ms. Johnson had a question regarding the mill levy implementation. With the requirement of 60% for the library fund, it leaves a drastic cut of funding for the library's budget. Will an adjusted budget be presented to account for this loss? Ms. McIntyre stated that we had budgeted for the entire staff to be hired July 1<sup>st</sup>, knowing that it wasn't going to happen. Ms. McIntyre said she could present budget numbers, but due to the budget being approved by the City Commission, the City Fiscal department would not recommend we do a modified budget.

Ms. Johnson stated again that it is a drastic cut in funding and wanted to know how it would be addressed. Ms. McIntyre stated she will be providing a spending plan at the January meeting to address these concerns.

Ms. Johnson was happy to see the SMART objectives from the staff. She asked if they could include December data as a "Starting" point.

Ms. Johnson asked what role law enforcement played in the hate propaganda that was found in the library books. Ms. McIntyre stated that only the Library Policy was broken, and since nothing was vandalized no crime had been committed. The library did file a police report.

## **VI. GFPL FOUNDATION REPORT**

Ms. Laurin informed everyone that the PSA for the book-a-thon has been running on both television stations through January. This is fundraising for materials and programs for youth services.

Ms. Laurin is working on the Foundation's annual report. It will come out early next year.

## **VII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Ms. Olson informed us that she, Ms. McIntyre, Ms. Kinzler (City Finance Director), and Mr. Anderson (City Deputy City Manager) met to discuss the taxes. We are only at about 70% of what we thought we would receive. Ms. Kinzler also went over what the state and city require for auditing. A contract is between the State, City, and an outside accounting firm. The outside firm that audits the City is Anderson ZurMuehlen; now known as Pinion. Pinion produces an ACFA report and presents it to the city commission. That report is available for anyone that would like to look at it. Ms. Kinzler also offered to meet with any board members that may have questions.

## **VIII. BOARD REPORTS**

Ms. Olson informed everyone that the RFP committee has completed their work. They reviewed good applicants. Ms. Olson added that both Fiscal and Public Works have been very helpful with this process. The next step is to negotiate the scope of work for the contract

Ms. Crist asked why the removal of the band shell was not included in the Foundation Approved Project ask. Ms. McIntyre talked with the Foundation. The Foundation did not feel taking down the band shell was an appropriate ask. The Foundation has raised over \$420K for the capital campaign, they would consider using some of that money for the removal of the band shell. Ms. McIntyre also stated that there is some money left in the master plan from the anonymous donor that could be used; Ms. McIntyre would have to reach out to the donor first to make sure they were agreeable. Ms. McIntyre is also looking into alternative funding.

## **IX. PROPOSALS/COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES**

Ms. Olson informed the board that Ms. Wolff will be stepping down as the City Ex-Officio. Ms. Shannon Wilson will be taking her place at the next meeting. Ms. Wolff thanked everyone. Ms. Olson thanked Ms. Wolff for all the time she has given to the board.

Ms. Johnson requested a discussion to possibly utilize Zoom to record the board meetings, and use that as the official minutes. This has been done and officially used by MCA for multiple boards.

Ms. Olson asked if Ms. Johnson was making a motion.

Ms. Johnson made a motion that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees Use Zoom recordings to serve as the formal minutes of the meetings. Ms. Olson asked if there was a second. Upon hearing none. She asked if there any other questions or proposals.

Ms. Crist had a question on the consent agenda. She stated that we don't use the consent agenda the way they are designed. Consent agendas should be items that have no questions. She asked for a discussion on what items to put in the consent agenda that the board would not have questions on. Ms. Wolff explained how the City Commission handles their consent agenda. Ms. Crist has sent articles on what is and isn't a consent agenda to Ms. McIntyre and Ms. Olson. She hopes that we can make changes to be more efficient.

Ms. Olson brought up the board quarterly training in January. Ms. McIntyre stated that every two years the City brings in Mr. Dan Clark to speak and that the board is required to attend. She suggested the board use that as their quarterly training requirement. Ms. Wolff commented that Mr. Clark's schedule has not been provided yet. She also wanted to commend the board for the major changes they have made in doing their business, and everyone benefits.

Ms. Olson asked the board if they wanted training in addition to Mr. Clark's. Ms. Crist suggested to just have the training by Mr. Clark.

## **X. OLD BUSINESS**

### PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS: 2024 Calendar

Ms. Olson asked if there were any comments regarding the Public Library Standards 2024 calendar. Ms. McIntyre presented a new calendar plan. The Policy review happens every three years, 2024 is the year to review. Per the board's request, the policy review will be broken up over several months so it isn't so overwhelming. Ms. McIntyre has set up a Manager Policy Review committee to review each section and offer suggestion and changes for the board to review.

Ms. Crist moved that the Great Falls Public Library Board of Trustees adopt the 2024 Public Library Standards Calendar as presented. Ms. DeForest seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment.

Ms. Crist stated that she finds the revised calendar plan helpful.

Ms. DeForest asked if the information that needs to be reviewed will be given at the beginning of the month so the board has time to look at it.

Ms. McIntyre asked if the board would like a supplemental board packet that would include that information at the beginning of the month, then the main packet a week before the meeting.

It was decided to have two packets each month.

Ms. Olson reminded everyone that a motion was open and called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **XI. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

#### **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Olson asked if there were any other questions or comments, upon hearing none, she asked for a motion.

Ms. DeForest moved that the Great Falls Library Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. Ms. Olson opened for any board discussion or public comment. Mr. Irving stated he was happy to see the board has adjourned after making progress becoming a real board and not a rubber stamp. He felt new business should have included directing the director to apologize to the people that have signed up for mango languages for archiving their voiceprints and not warning those that sign up. It is also shameful that the board has not ordered their director to take financial education and training. Not doing so the board will continue to issues with the finances. Ms. Olson asked if there were any more comments, upon hearing none she called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Olson adjourned the meeting at 6:16 pm.