

Approved Minutes

Regular meeting of the Fremont County Library System Board of Trustees held March 6, 2024, 9:30 AM in person at the Dubois Branch Library or via Zoom.

Present: Board Members John Angst, Carrie Johnson, Perry Cook, Marta Mossburg, Kristen McClelland; Library Director Anita Marple; County Commissioner Mike Jones

1) **Approval of Agenda**

John Angst motioned to approve the agenda. Passed

2) **Approval of Consent Agenda**

A. Regular board minutes-February minutes

Perry Cook motioned to approve minutes with one change to point 4 of previous minutes.

New sentence under Jane Lynn should read: "She said that parents should choose what their child reads and not other parents."

Passed

B. Record of Financial Statements & Actions

Wyoming Community Bank: \$483,332.53 (2-23-24)

Capital Investment Fund: \$332,775.82 (2-10-24)

Tax Distribution-January: \$95,02.60 (2-12-24)

Cash Reserve: We have \$200,000 from the Fremont County Cash Reserve Fund included in our WCB total.

C. Approval of Bills (including new bills listed on signature page) & Signatures: Signed

3) **Correspondence**

Kristen McClelland said Taylor Jacobs sent an email at 6:30. Her email will be added to next month's record as not everyone had a chance to read it.

4) **Public Comment**

Nancy Shelsta-Lander: She said reading is a First Amendment right and that everyone can choose to read or not read, listen or not listen.

Ami Vincent-Lander: She said she was at the meeting as a parent of a 6th and 8th grader. She said the library has been a place where her family has felt very safe and where her children feel comfortable asking for help. She said the library has helped to build relationships between her and her children. She said it also a place where her children have freedom to explore, but that she is very involved in their selections. She said it has been a blessing to her family.

Troy Jones- Lander: He said rights are inherent and that we have the right to keep and bear arms. The government protects that right but is under no obligation to buy anyone a gun. Similarly, he said we have a right to free speech, but the government does not give us a script. And we have the right to read and look at filthy pictures but the government is under no obligation to buy those images for you. He said we need to clean up the filth in the library.

Amy Cross-Dubois-She spoke in support of Mr. Jones' comments because she said she would like to think there are still morals and values that we adhere to.

Jane Lynn –Lander—She said that the government has not purchased books for the library in recent years as they came from a private donation.

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Wayne Dick-Riverton: He said the library uses a national organization instead of input from local people to choose books. He said “pornography” and “obscene” are two heavily embattled words and that parents and the board could differ on the definitions. He said in the magazine world, those with mature content are covered and/or made unavailable to children. He said libraries could handle mature content in the same way. He said he’d be open to putting all challenged material on a separate shelf – even the Bible. He said this board needs to quit fighting parents.

Karen Wetzel –Lander: She responded to Jane Lynn by saying that a lot of the books that we have talked about were not purchased in the last couple of years. She said they are full of graphic sex, rape, drug use and all of it underage. She suggested that people read the content of the contested books, which were described in a recent Cowboy State Daily article.

Lennie Poitras-Lander: She said she was shocked to see a member of this board wearing a t-shirt saying “Get Your Porn at the Fremont County Library.” She asked how wearing this out in public supports the library. She said that if someone feels that way then she needs to question whether she should be on the FCLB.

Kim Fabrizius- Riverton – She said she used to take her five children to the library but her children will not take their children because of the lack of quality books that do not enrich your life. She said people should respect everyone’s First Amendment rights re: the t-shirt. She said that we shouldn’t forget that everyone has their rights regardless of whether they are on a board or on a county commission because it’s a free country. She said that if people feel the need to put something like that on a t-shirt it is because they don’t feel heard. She said the County Commissioners sent a four-point letter in August 2023 to FCLB and was wondering what has been done that was requested.

Barbara Oakleaf-Lander: She said she worked at the Lander Library 36.5 years. She said she finds it ironic that people would speak about freedom when their purpose is to put a corral around others. She said the library is built upon freedom. She said It started from 1907 shipping books out to people on this side of the state. She said free and open to the public means that everybody can go to the library and find what they want to read.

Jahnelle Hahn-Lander: She said age-inappropriate material is in the library and that most parents aren’t there like Ami Vincent, who had spoken earlier. She said the books being challenged would not pass the Supreme Court’s Miller obscenity test and that she wished more parents were like Ami Vincent.

Sarah Reilly – Lander: She said that she would like a policy that says if you haven’t read the book you can’t issue a challenge. She said it’s hard to give an accurate depiction if you haven’t read it yourself. She said taking talking points from a national organization is disgusting. She said she would love to see every parent actively involved.

Kyle Neary-Dubois: She said it is so important that the library to provide whatever we want to read. She added that If the parents can’t get involved then maybe they shouldn’t have kids.

5) Reports

Mike Jones said that there are lots of laws in limbo as of March 6 and that much will be decided in the next two days. He said none of the property tax bills that could impact local funding are overly concerning.

He asked to be a part of the Executive Session.



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B. Director Reports

Anita Marple said she has received another application for the Riverton Manager position but that she is still waiting for the right application. She said that while we are waiting for a new employee it is good that she is spending time in Riverton. She said that the library is moving to budgeting software that will keep things up to date

6) **Unfinished business**

A) Director's response to Patron: Letter included in board packet.

B) Internet Use Policy revision update: Anita Marple said on February 20th we received our review from Deputy Attorney Nathan Maxon. He had no changes to suggest and the new language is now posted on the website. She said people have the opportunity to comment, and that she will be sharing staff comments.

7) **New business**

A) Collection/Circulation Information

Marta Mossburg said that FCLS turnover statistics (Annual circulation/total number of items) is low. She said it was concerning as it is one of the best ways to measure whether or not the collection meets the wants and needs of patrons. She said she would like to see statistics by library as well as more detail on collection use in the future.

Anita Marple said there isn't one statistic that shows the health of the collection and that there are lots of different criteria for judging a collection. The rise in use of the digital collection also impacts the turnover of the physical collection.

Perry Cook said having a high turnover rate would be great, but we have an incredibly restricted budget making buying a lot of books to achieve a high turnover rate problematic.

B) Strategic Planning

Carrie Johnson asked that people carefully look over the current 2020-2024 plan over so that we can craft a new one.

Anita Marple said she thought a combination of the last two plans would be best for us as the current one doesn't have a lot of specific goals. She said she would like to see more specific steps that are measurable.

Perry Cook asked Anita Marple to email out the previous strategic plans.

8) Citizen's request for Reconsideration of Library Materials: Perry Cook discussed a recent 60 Minutes program where a Beaufort, SC library was issued 97 book challenges. It took the library a year to process and involved getting a large number of diverse people from the community to read and evaluate all the challenged books. After all the effort, less than 5 % of the books were removed (5/97). She said that she was worried about an increasing number of book challenges in Fremont County and that she personally was not interested in reading a huge number of challenged books as she would rather read books of her choosing. She also said that it was the Board's role to hire a qualified Director (per State Statutes) and the Director had the skills to evaluate Library content.

A) Board Action on *Smoke* by Ellen Hopkins

Perry Cook motioned: Because I support the director's rational analysis of *Smoke* I move to affirm the director's determination.

John Angst requested a roll call.

Kristen McClelland: Nay; Marta Mossburg: Nay; Perry Cook: Yay; John Angst: Yay; Carrie Johnson: Yay

B) Board Action on *Tricks* by Ellen Hopkins



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Perry Cook motioned: Because I support the director's rational analysis of *Tricks* I move to affirm the director's determination.

Kristen McClelland: Nay; Marta Mossburg: Nay; Perry Cook: Yay; John Angst: Yay; Carrie Johnson: Yay

9) Action Items Update

Carrie Johnson said strategic planning will be on the agenda in coming months.

John Angst motioned to go into Executive Session at 11:29 for personnel issues. Passed.

Perry Cook motioned to end regular meeting at 12:25. Passed