

CARSON CITY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES (LBOT)

Minutes of the August 26, 2021 Regular Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Library Board of Trustees was scheduled for 5:15 p.m. on Thursday, August 26, 2021 in the Community Center Robert “Bob” Crowell Board Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Chairperson Julie Balderson
Trustee Beth Lucas
Trustee Elizabeth Markle
Trustee Sarena Nichols

STAFF: Joy Holt, Department Business Manager
Ermal Reinhart, Access Services Manager
Jason Woodbury, District Attorney
Danielle Howard, Public Meetings Clerk

NOTE: A recording of these proceedings, the Library Board’s agenda materials, and any written comments or documentation provided to the Clerk during the meeting are part of the public record. These materials are available for review, in the Public Meetings Division of the Carson City Clerk’s Office, during regular business hours. For minutes and audio recordings of this Board’s meetings, please visit www.carson.org/minutes.

I. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL

(5:15:55) – Chairperson Balderson called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. A quorum was present.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

(5:16:04) – Chairperson Balderson entertained public comments. Lisa Taylor introduced herself and stated that she works with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Cooperative Extension. She noted that the UNR Cooperative Extension has been a part of the Library’s Strategic Planning process since around 2019, and she was interested in participating during this meeting. Ms. Taylor mentioned that she had her Strategic Plan survey responses for submission and thanked the Board for “opening this opportunity for all of us in our community, and certainly we’re very excited to be supportive as we can for the process.”

(5:17:18) – Ms. Holt stated that she was submitting a returned completed Strategic Plan survey on behalf of Tammy Westergard, Project Coordinator for the Supporting and Advancing Nevada’s Dislocated Individuals (SANDI) Grant.

(5:18:00) – Nikki Peterson from ACCEL at Western Nevada College (WNC), appearing via phone call, introduced herself and stated that she would be acting as a representative for ACCEL during this meeting to participate in helping with the Strategic Plan.

III. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

III.a FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (JULY 22, 2021).

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(5:18:39) – Chairperson Balderson introduced the item and entertained comments, changes, and/or a motion.

(5:19:02 – MOTION: Trustee Lucas moved to approve the July 22, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Trustee Markle seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-0.

IV. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES BUSINESS

IV.a FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – CARSON CITY LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE PRESENTATION AND REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS INCLUDING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, AND SOLICITATION OF INPUT FROM LIBRARY TRUSTEES AND STAKEHOLDERS TO INFORM THE ANNUAL REFRESH OF THE LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN.

(5:19:16) – Chairperson Balderson introduced the item. Dr. Fred Steinmann introduced himself as an Assistant Research Professor at the UNR College of Business and referenced the agenda materials.

(5:25:09) – Chairperson Balderson entertained Trustee input regarding suggested items that the Library should address over the next year while Dr. Steinmann recorded input and responded to clarifying questions. Based on the Strategic Plan survey results, Trustee Markle believed that space for community group meetings and space that can be accessed outside of the Library should be added.

(5:26:18) – Trustee Nichols pointed out that there was a higher percentage of older users of the Library than those that were 19 years of age or younger according to the 2019 Strategic Plan survey, and she did not wish to exclude the older users. Mr. Reinhart confirmed that, based on his experience, there tend to be older users rather than younger children at the Library, and discussion ensued on the matter, during which Trustee Markle commented that older users typically join broad-based, high interest programs such as programs about photography or art. She also stated that it made “some sense” to keep track of the older users involved in Library activities.

(5:31:08) – Chairperson Balderson pointed out that many Library users are not aware of equipment that could be used in the Library’s makerspace. Trustee Lucas believed that the knowledge of the in-person services that the Library offers may have been lost to the public due to the Library having been closed and the Library needed to get back into public view through such methods as advertising the Library’s services.

(5:33:27) – Trustee Markle referenced the survey comments regarding space at the Library and noted the challenge with creating comfortable spaces for users, which Chairperson Balderson attributed with how the Library features are organized. Chairperson Balderson also indicated that she needed to touch on being a resource for struggling community members and wished to prioritize addressing those community members’ basic needs and “stepping stones out of worrying about your basic needs.” Trustee Nichols proposed partnering with the Northern Nevada Food Bank for its Mobile Harvest program, and Trustees could volunteer to assist as well as include community resources such as the Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR) to aid community members with finding employment to show that the Library “is here for you; we’re more than just a place for you to come get a book.”

(5:38:48) – Chairperson Balderson entertained public comments. Ms. Taylor commented about the “amazing opportunity” she had when she at one point was a library worker at a library that had started at a “very small” location before Smoky Hill Public Library was built, which she added had enhanced everyone’s usage, enthusiasm, and excitement for “not only what was possible, but certainly as it relates to having so many more people take advantage

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of that possibility.” She believed that “the saddest part ... is what an amazing place we have with our current Library, but that I don’t always think that all people come to it with the same types of enthusiasm. ... And as we think about it, this is still a very growing and, I think, continuing-to-grow place in Nevada.”

(5:40:45) – Ms. Peterson commented that ACCEL focuses on adult literacy as well as partnering with the current technical education programs to help develop the workforce. She offered to have a meeting later with the Board to figure out how to work within the Strategic Plan on this matter.

(5:41:36) – WNC Library Director Ron Belbin introduced himself and stated that the library at WNC was already in a partnership with the Library through the SANDI Grant. He commented that “one of the things that we in the library world try to do is cover as much area and as much stuff as we can to provide as broad of a range of services and meet as many needs as we possibly can.” He added that doing so often leads to a breakdown and a “watering down” of the services offered, and he strongly encouraged the Board to prioritize thinking about partnerships with organizations that are already providing specific services that the Library could “draw on” to meet the needs of Library patrons. Mr. Belbin mention that WNC staff would “love” to spend more time working closely with the Library to meet as many of the needs as they can.

(5:43:36) – Trustee Markle commented that there should be a way to make technology easier for users to operate and believed that people would need more assistance and guidance with using technology effectively. Chairperson Balderson pointed out that the discussion between Trustees Markle and Nichols had an emphasis on the user experience and less so on the technical requirements and indicated that the Library’s number one resource is Staff. She recommended enabling and empowering Staff to be flexible, “take ownership,” and have a level of expertise to walk Library users through using the equipment as well as allow Staff the time, leeway, and resources to assist users. Trustee Markle commented that it can be scary to people when Library Staff are behind a desk and suggested having roving Staff or an open desk so people feel less threatened to approach for assistance. She also inquired about how to make the Library space feel more inviting to users, since many survey responses indicated that people did not feel comfortable coming into the Library. Trustee Nichols proposed further discussion on ensuring that Staff are trained on new technology that the Library acquires.

(5:51:11) – Chairperson Balderson wished to include an emphasis on families and “interfacing and kind of knowing a little more about how those things works” concerning childcare facilities. She believed that the Library should have a strong foundation with either the Nevada Division of Emergency Management (DEM) or Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Crisis Intervention in order to “be able to pick up on those less obvious cues” for mental health. She also brought to the Board’s attention about considering who the Board is trying to reach and how there might be a different message for a different audience and/or motive. Trustee Nichols suggested using the marquee outside of the Library more, and Chairperson Balderson added that the marquee could be used to advertise when a representative from DETR or the Food Bank’s Mobile Harvest would be assisting at the Library. Trustee Nichols commented that the Library’s social media personnel could write articles on Carson Now (www.carsonnow.org) to talk about what is happening at the Library.

(5:57:37) – Trustee Markle stated that “the Library needs to go out to various locations” and suggested taking the Library’s pedal bike to areas such as the Bob McFadden Plaza or setting up a display table at the Carson City Senior Center that relates to the individuals’ possible interests. Chairperson Balderson added that after school events or programming would also work for Trustee Markle’s suggestion. Ms. Holt noted that the Library had a presence at the Boys and Girls Club with a collection that Staff strives to keep “robust, new, and fresh for the kids,” and she

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believed that “we have a fairly good response from the tween age down” while the “teens” seemed less interested. She mentioned that Staff intended to improve the Library’s presence with the teenaged demographic. Trustee Markle pointed out the importance of engaging adults with children because the adults are responsible for the children, and she commented that it was important to “grow a commitment to the Library from the time the kids are little.” Ms. Holt noted that the “takeaway” from the discussion was concerted outreach and mindful outreach with members of the community.

(6:05:12) – Trustee Markle believed that Library’s makerspace had “a lot of possibility” and proposed having an assortment of appliances and utensils for people to borrow from the Library. Ms. Holt pointed out that a comment in the survey results indicated that a user wished for the Library to lend such materials as cake pans to patrons, and a recurring idea as for the Library provide the opportunity to socialize young children and help develop their motor skills.

(6:11:10) – In response to Chairperson Balderson’s inquiry, Dr. Steinmann briefed the Board on how the survey was constructed and how the results were compiled. He noted that all of the returned responses were English and had not received any returned Spanish copies. He also clarified that he would put together a draft Technical Report that would summarize all the work that was done as part of the annual update and review, and the draft would be provided to Staff for comment before refining the document for presentation to the Board.

(6:21:02) – Trustee Lucas wished for the Board to keep the possibility of an embedded social worker open.

(6:23:14) – Chairperson Balderson inquired about the methods and other resources that were used to form a Strategic Plan. Dr. Steinmann stated that the 2019 Strategic Plan survey, the collection and analysis of the community data, and the opportunity to conduct approximately 40 hours of one-on-one stakeholder interviews with internal Staff and external partners with a purpose to serve the community had all helped with forming four separate organization Strategic Planning workshops that he had facilitated with Staff, representatives with the Friends of the Carson City Library, and other key stakeholders. He added that, after the workshops process, the two 2019 Technical Reports were developed, published, and presented to the Board for adoption and implementation.

(6:26:36) – Trustee Nichols pointed out that many of the comments in the survey results were regarding the Library’s lack of electronic books (ebooks). Ms. Holt assured that Staff was actively working on the matter and informed the Trustees that the Library had received the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant from the Nevada State Library and Archives in the amount of \$4,500, which had all been spent on ebooks and audio books for the Library. Trustee Markle noted that people in every survey she has been a part of request a larger supply of books, and the \$4,500 would amount to approximately 75 more books, which “doesn’t add up to more books very fast.” Ms. Holt also pointed out that adding more books causes space issues. Trustee Markle inquired about the possibility for a broader ability to borrow ebooks from a larger group of libraries, and Ms. Holt indicated that such an idea is possible. She also stated that there was a lot of potential and opportunity with cooperating with larger libraries with more robust audio book and ebook collections; however, “that is something that is only so much in our control because of the Consortium, but also the benefit of the Consortium is that we have a strong voice that can be heard, and we can work with them to develop that.” She believed that such mediums for purchasing ebooks as OverDrive were becoming “way less stringent with the piece of their offerings” due to growing popularity.

(6:36:00) – Discussion ensued regarding engaging other libraries, such as the Washoe County Library, to join the Consortium for access to a larger selection of ebooks and audio books, during which Mr. Belbin informed the Board that the WNC library had switched out of the UNR system and noted that the relationship with UNR was more of a

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collaboration in which the WNC library was provided its catalogue through UNR while the library staff were purchasing all of their own resources. He mentioned that the library has access to some of the databases provided by the Nevada State Library and Archives. He believed that it was worth exploring the matter of libraries working together and sharing resources within the State and providing service to patrons, as it was a good opportunity with coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Trustee Markle noted that doing so would involve collaboration, money, and time, and she suggested evaluating how other states handle the matter.

(6:48:15) – Trustee Nichols agreed with comments made in the survey responses about how the Library felt “cold” and uninviting when walking in due to the open and sparse appearance, and she noted that the back area of the Library, which a survey responder called “creepy,” was also “cold and dark and not the most exciting place to be.” She mentioned that the Library felt “warm” when it had a reference section, and the back area used to be “a really open, lovely place” when it was a children’s section due to how bright and colorful it was. Ms. Holt believed that the tall shelving made the back area appear darker. Trustee Nichols suggested looking “with a hard eye” at how the Library feels when walking in. Dr. Steinmann indicated that Trustee Nichols had made an “excellent” point and pointed out that the space in the Library, which he called a “big-ticket item,” was a part of the last Strategic Plan and had come up in 2019 as well as during the August 13, 2021 Staff Retreat. He suggested starting the process of making the item a number one priority for funding sources for a top-to-bottom renovation of the existing facility or “a truly new facility that meets these needs is on the horizon,” and he noted that the item may not be something that is completed the following year or “within the current five-year Strategic Planning horizon.” Trustee Nichols agreed with Dr. Steinmann and suggested in the meantime, for example, switching out the tall shelving from the back area of the Library. Trustee Markle pointed out that it would not be feasible to allow more light in the back area due to the quantity of books that fill up the shelving. Chairperson Balderson proposed that the issue may be more with orientation and arranging the shelves a different way. Trustee Lucas noted the issue with having softer surfaces and more seating was sanitation and complying with COVID-19 regulations, and the current conditions made the matter difficult to resolve. Trustee Markle suggested looking into using vinyl plank flooring or laminate flooring that looks like wood to maintain ease of cleanup while also providing more “warmth” to the area, though Ms. Holt and Mr. Reinhart pointed out such factors to consider for the flooring as the expense, the noise, the smells, and the stains.

(6:59:27) – Ms. Holt indicated that a lot of what the Trustees were saying aligned with what Staff had been discussing when reviewing the survey results during the Staff Development Day.

No formal action was taken on this item.

V. INFORMATION ONLY – BOARD MEMBERS’ ANNOUNCEMENTS & REQUEST FOR INFORMATION.

(7:04:07) – Chairperson Balderson entertained Trustee announcements and requests for information, and she thanked those who participated and provided feedback for the Strategic Planning process.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

(7:04:34) – Chairperson Balderson entertained public comments. Mr. Belbin was interested in the comments concerning the atmosphere and the layout of the furniture and invited the Board to come to the Library at WNC, as it had recently been renovated, which included removal of the circulation desk and the addition of a small desk that is open for people to come into the space.

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(7:06:17) – Gerd Poppinga with Vineburg Machining introduced himself and stated that he was present due to a request from the Board to consider showcasing technology. He noted that Vineburg Machining has been operating for 44 years, and he noted a decline in “skilled individuals looking for jobs.” He stated that there were approximately 5 million open job offerings in the United States, and everyone within the industry was suffering because they could not attract young people into manufacturing. He added that he has involved himself in career development and career opportunities over the years for young people, and he had been a member of many boards at the community college level. Mr. Poppinga mentioned that he has several employees that have been instructors in advanced machine programming, which were cut due to a lack of students registering for them, and he stated that, according to a college professor, 30 graduated students would be going to college out of the Carson High School graduating class. He believed that the school system has failed the young people and noted that career development or career opportunities are not taught in junior high or high school. He indicated that it was sad to see that there is no guidance toward a good-paying job for the cases he has seen because such has not been showcased to them. Mr. Poppinga commented that Vineburg Machining “is on the cutting edge of technology” and employs people with a high degree of technical skills. He mentioned that Vineburg Machining makes parts for the Starship Program for the mission to Mars as well as for Tesla, the aerospace industry, and the medical industry; therefore, the company needed a lot of people with specific skills, and he has to find people that are teachable due to people not being taught those skills. He believed that the last institution that could help the youth was the Library and wished to have the Library showcase technology and what is available to children. He believed the technology the Library possessed should be moved to the front, and the Library, as an institution for resources and learning, needed to “draw the kids in” by showing things that interest them so they could learn on their own. Mr. Poppinga added that “we need to do something entirely different than what we have done in the past.” He also suggested showing what local manufacturers do, and the Library could ask other companies to participate. He was willing to donate “whatever it takes to bring a little glitz and glamor to the Library.”

VII. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – ADJOURNMENT

(7:16:04) – Chairperson Balderson adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

The Minutes of the August 26, 2021 Carson City Library Board of Trustees meeting are so approved this 23rd day of September 2021.