

CARSON CITY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES (LBOT)

Minutes of the December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting Page 1

A regular meeting of the Carson City Library Board of Trustees was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 14, 2023 in the Carson City Community Center Robert “Bob” Crowell Board Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada 89701.

PRESENT: Chairperson Julie Knight
Vice Chair Jonathon Olivas
Trustee Beth Lucas
Trustee Elizabeth Markle
Trustee Sarena Nichols

STAFF: Joy Holt, Library Director
Mihaela Neagos, Deputy District Attorney
Briana Munoz, 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

(5:32:20) – Chairperson Knight called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. Roll was called; a quorum was present.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

(5:32:54) – Chairperson Knight entertained public comments. Lior Singer, a Carson City resident, expressed concerns regarding the Library’s safety, restroom cleanliness, and a lack of sidewalk and lighting in the parking lot. Mr. Singer cited incidents where blood, needles, and human feces were found on the floors of the restroom. He recommended that the Library install a family restroom requiring a key for access and suggested increasing police presence at the Library.

(5:40:40) – Deni French introduced himself as a Carson City resident and said he appreciated the Library Staff’s hard work. He echoed Mr. Singer’s suggestion to require keys for the Library restrooms.

(5:44:00) – Sue Ellen Perez, a Carson City resident, shared concerns regarding safety at the Library. Ms. Perez said she encountered “unpleasant events” at the Library including seeing an intoxicated individual outside of the Library and someone threatening Library Staff. She recommended that the Library develop better measures to ensure patrons feel safe.

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

III.a. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (NOVEMBER 9, 2023).

(5:46:28) – Chairperson Knight introduced the item and entertained changes, comments, and a motion.

CARSON CITY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES (LBOT)

**Minutes of the
December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting
Page 2**

(5:46:46) – MOTION: Trustee Lucas moved to approve the November 9, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Trustee Markle seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Vice Chair Olivas abstaining, as he was not present during the November 9, 2023 meeting.

IV. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION - LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES BUSINESS

IV.a. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION - DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A PROPOSED 2024 CARSON CITY LIBRARY CALENDAR.

(5:47:20) – Chairperson Knight introduced the item and referenced the Staff Report and the Carson City Library Calendar 2024, both of which are incorporated into the record.

(5:47:46) – Ms. Holt noted that the Library will be open on the following holidays:

- Martin Luther King Day, January 15, 2024
- Presidents’ Day, February 19, 2024
- Nevada Day, October 25, 2024
- Veterans Day, November 11, 2024

(5:48:33) – She stated that the Library will be closed on the following holidays:

- Memorial Day, May 27, 2024
- The 4th of July
- Labor Day, September 2, 2024
- Thanksgiving, November 28, 2024
- Christmas Day

(5:49:21) – Ms. Holt said that remaining open on certain holidays created an “incredible” turnout. Chairperson Knight commented that it was nice to hear that the Library was getting traffic on holidays.

(5:51:19) – MOTION: Trustee Markle moved to approve the 2024 Carson City Library Calendar as presented. Trustee Nichols seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

IV.b. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY - PRESENTATION OF AN ANNUAL UPDATE TO THE 2019 THROUGH 2024 CARSON CITY LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN, BY THE CARSON CITY LIBRARY CONSULTANT DR. FRED STEINMANN.

(5:51:48) – Chairperson Knight introduced the item. Dr. Fred Steinmann, Carson City Library Consultant, provided background on the Annual Update to the 2019 through 2024 Carson City Library Strategic Plan, which is incorporated into the record. He presented the Annual Evaluation and Update No. 3 Carson City Library Strategic Plan, which is incorporated into the record.

(6:05:20) – Ms. Holt thanked Dr. Steinmann for his presentation and said that the Strategic Plan had actively engaged Staff and created a “significant” shift in organizational culture. Chairperson Knight entertained Trustee comments.

CARSON CITY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES (LBOT)

Minutes of the December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting Page 3

(6:07:04) – In response to Vice Chair Olivas’ question on safety, Ms. Holt stated that the issues brought up during public comment were “a reality of working in a public facility.” She said that Staff acknowledged the issues and weekly meetings were held. Ms. Holt added that the winter season often creates more “shenanigans” including intoxicated individuals visiting the Library, people sleeping outside of the Library, and people using the Library bushes as a bathroom.

(6:11:11) – Trustee Nichols expressed concerns about patron safety and referenced the Strategic 2023 Priority Goal #3 listed in the Strategic Plan, which involves access and comfort improvements, and said that the Library can’t “be welcoming if people don’t feel safe.” She recommended expanding the goal.

(6:12:16) – Trustee Markle inquired about the City’s response to the issues being faced by the Library. She added that the concerns were “not just the Library’s problem” but rather a community problem. Trustee Markle stated that the City should be informed that citizens were feeling unsafe.

(6:13:24) – Ms. Holt confirmed that the City was aware of the issues and recommended that Library patrons speak in front of the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to inform them of their experiences. She stated that she was open to “doing anything” within the Library’s capacity to ensure patrons felt safe but some issues were out of the Library’s control.

(6:19:05) – In response to Vice Chair Olivas’ question, Ms. Holt confirmed that the Library has ongoing training for Staff including active shooter training sessions with law enforcement. She mentioned that Staff attended a keynote session on de-escalation at the Nevada Library Association Conference in November 2023. Ms. Holt said that Staff were actively reading a book called the *Library’s Guide to Homelessness* and added that Staff will receive training from the author of the book.

(6:22:58) – Ms. Holt noted that one of the challenges of working in a Library is “dealing with conflict within the confines of one’s own comfort level.” She responded to clarifying questions regarding the restrooms and sweep schedules at the Library.

(6:28:04) – In response to Chairperson Knight’s question, Ms. Holt stated that the Library offers individuals a community resource guide titled *How Do I* which provides information on resources for food assistance, shelter, showers, etc. She noted that Staff are expected to familiarize themselves with the guide.

(6:30:02) – In response to Chairperson Knight’s question, Ms. Holt said that the Library was working toward bringing on non-library staff within the Library to address the issues. In response to Trustee Nichols’ question, Ms. Holt said that Washoe County Library did not have a security guard.

(6:31:55) – Trustee Markle said she felt some of the issues taking place at the Library were due to the restrooms being located “right inside the front door.” She added that the presence of a security guard at the Library may not be “considered welcoming.”

(6:33:43) – Chairperson Knight entertained public comments.

CARSON CITY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES (LBOT)

**Minutes of the
December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting
Page 4**

PUBLIC COMMENT

(6:34:10) – Mr. Singer suggested that the Library provide flyers for individuals in need directing them to resources.

(6:35:35) – Mr. French stated that placing lights in the parking lot was “very important” and said it was the City’s responsibility to install them. Mr. French recommended hiring a security guard that was “dressed discreetly” but was still recognizable for assistance. He also suggested that the Library communicate with parents to better understand their concerns.

V. INFORMATION ONLY - LIBRARY DIRECTOR REPRESENTATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

V.a. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY: ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS OF LIBRARY DIRECTOR CONSISTING OF REPORTS CONCERNING GENERAL FUND, GIFT FUND, GRANTS, STAFFING UPDATES, PROGRAMMING AND OUTREACH EVENTS FOR DECEMBER 2023, AND UPDATES ON CARSON CITY LIBRARY ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES SINCE THE PREVIOUS REPORTS.

(6:42:39) – Chairperson Knight introduced the item. Ms. Holt entertained comments and questions regarding the General Fund and Gift Fund reports. She reported on the following:

- The Senior Library Assistant, the Library Clerk, and the Deputy Library Director positions were still open
- Symphony Youth Chorus performed at the Library on December 5, 2023
- The Library’s Annual Gingerbread House Building Competition was held on December 8, 2023
- The Winter Reading Challenge Kick-Off Party was scheduled for December 16, 2023
- Staff had been “extremely efficient” while the Library’s Programming and Outreach Coordinator was out
- A Paint an Ornament craft event will be held December 19, 2023
- Storytime with Monica the Elf was scheduled for December 20, 2023
- A Diamond Art Coasters craft event was scheduled for December 29, 2023
- A Hibernating Woodland Creatures Scavenger Hunt would be held throughout the entire month of December

VI. INFORMATION ONLY

(6:49:11) – Chairperson Knight introduced the item. Trustee Nichols suggested creating a future agenda item on the safety issues occurring at the Library. Chairperson Knight added that the item should provide an overview on current de-escalation practices and resource guides provided to Staff. Additionally, she said that the item should offer examples of training and outcomes.

(6:51:20) – Trustee Nichols requested that the item be “a little bit broader” because of the possibility “that there’s somebody who has a home who sleeps there and gets drunk or goes behind the bushes.” She stated that there was a big difference between the issues being faced by the Library and what other City facilities deal with.

(6:52:59) – In response to suggestions from Chairperson Knight and Trustee Nichols, Ms. Holt confirmed that the future agenda item would report on Library Law, would go over the issues being faced by the Library, and would

CARSON CITY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES (LBOT)

Minutes of the

December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting

Page 5

provide an outline on the Library's internal processes and responses.

(6:53:26) – Trustee Markle requested more information on the lack of lighting in the parking lot and inquired if the City planned to address it. Ms. Holt noted that the City was aware of the lighting but she was unsure if the City had plans to address it.

(6:54:57) – Chairperson Knight stated that the Board needed to discuss state budgets and requested that an item be placed on the January 11, 2024 meeting agenda to devise a plan.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

(6:56:19) – Chairperson Knight entertained public comments. Mr. French encouraged the Board to gain a better understanding on the safety concerns. He mentioned finding “a way to include the Sheriff without having more people hide in the Library from the Sheriff.” Mr. French told the Board to brainstorm solutions to the safety issues and recommended that the Board communicate with the BOS.

VII. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION – ADJOURNMENT

(7:00:00) – Chairperson Knight adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The Minutes of the December 14, 2023, Carson City Library Board of Trustees meeting are so approved this 22nd day of February 2024.

Subject: Concerns and Suggestions for Improving Our Public Library

Dear Board Members,

I commend the library for its excellent kids' story time and the engaging Lego club. The positive experiences provided by these activities are truly appreciated by families like mine.

However, I would like to bring to your attention some concerns that, as a concerned parent, worry me and potentially impact the well-being of families visiting the library.

a. Safety Concerns in the Parking Lot:

Unfortunately, the parking lot poses safety risks for children. Inadequate lighting and the absence of a sidewalk from the vehicle to the entrance raise concerns. Additionally, there have been instances of homeless individuals consuming drugs in the bushes and darker areas, creating an unsafe environment.

b. Restroom Conditions:

The current restroom facilities are a significant worry for parents. We urgently need locked family restrooms, similar to those in airports. Recent incidents involving needles, blood on the floor, and inappropriate use of facilities, such as someone taking a shower in the sink, compromise the safety and cleanliness of the space for families and children.

c. Hygiene Facilities for Children:

Children lack proper facilities to wash their hands, and stepstools are needed to assist them in using the facilities safely.

Impact on Community: We are grateful that our public library is open to everyone in our community. However, due to the mentioned concerns, some families are choosing to avoid the library. Regrettably, this has led to families moving to neighboring cities with more secure alternatives, such as bookstores like Barnes and Noble.

Critical Role of the Public Library: The public library plays a crucial role in maintaining a healthy and vibrant community. By addressing these concerns, we can ensure a safe and welcoming environment for young families, thereby contributing to the overall well-being of our community.

In summary, urgent improvements are needed at our public library to address safety concerns raised by concerned parents. Proposed solutions include the installation of a safe sidewalk around the parking lot to protect children from vehicular hazards, enhanced lighting to prevent illicit activities, particularly drug consumption, sheriff patrols in both the parking lot and restrooms, and the addition of family-friendly restrooms with a secure key deposit system. These measures aim to create a safer and more welcoming environment for all library visitors, ensuring the well-being of our community's families.

I kindly request the board's attention to these matters and hope we can work together to implement positive changes for the benefit of all library visitors.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lior Singer