



Library Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, July 20, 2023

Via Zoom

MINUTES

Members Present: Adam Groves, Quyen Aoh, Kara Murphy, Mary Ann Tempestini

Members Absent:

Others Present: Sheryl Thomas, Deana Cooper, Diane Chido, Doug Smith, Annie Rosenthal, A. J. Rao, TJ

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Vice President at 12:02 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – July 15, 2023

Motion to approve by Quyen, second by Adam. Minutes pass.

3. Library Reports

a. Report of Director

Complete report was in agenda. Sheryl asked if there were any questions.

b. Statistical and Other Reports-Sheryl

Statistics provided in agenda and reviewed

c. Review of Financial Report- Deana

Financial report provided as attachment, No concerns at this time. Working on 2024 departmental budget.

d. Review of District Consultant

No report

4. Board and Committee Reports

a. Report of County Council Liaison

Liaison absent from meeting. No report

b. Report of ERLF- Diane Chido

Foundation meeting planned for next week. Posted three positions for hire a Director and two part time positions. Advertising for positions is available and please share.

c. Report of Friends of the Library

No report

5. Unfinished Business- None

6. New Business

a. Election of New Officers

Sheryl recommended waiting to elect officers until vacant board seats are filled. Board decided to elect interim-officers until October nominations and voting in November effective January 2024.

Adam nominated Quyen for President. Kara second. Quyen nominated Kara for Vice-President, Adam second. Kara nominated Adam for Secretary. Quyen seconded. All new officers passed.

b. Recommendations for current vacancies.

Vacancies were discussed by district. Any recommendations can be submitted directly to the council member or can be compiled and sent to the Library. The Library would submit all recommendations at once. Currently, the Library sends out reminders to the Council office informing them of terms near expiration. It is the responsibility of the council member to add appointment recommendations to the County Council Agenda. Kara put on record that board members Conway, Barthelmes and Knuth resigned due removal of Pride display from Blasco Children's Library.

c. Library display policy

Quyen asked if there is a current library display policy. Sheryl responded that is currently not a display policy. However, when one is complete we will bring it to the board for review as we do all policies. Kara asked about the Collection Development Policy and its request for consideration and wondered if this policy reflected displays? Sheryl responded that this policy is for collection specific, however, a display policy would have similar provisions. Sheryl explained current process of creating policies (finding a similar policy within and reaching out to outside libraries to learn what policies they have on the subject).

The subject of last month's Pride display re-location decision was brought up for discussion.

Sheryl referred to County statement regarding display but did inform board that displays are moved and re-adjusted throughout the year. They may stay up for a month or are moved based on circulation. This display was to be re-located to allow promotion of Summer Reading Program. The Pride display was still be in place and visible. The relocation was not in any way meant to marginalize a specific community.

Kara indicated that it was reported that the display had received a public complaint and this initiated relocation request. She asked how complaints are tracked and considered.

Sheryl responded that complaints are handled based on content of complaint. Some are via phone, comment cards, in person or email. Written and electronically submitted complaints can be tracked but majority of the complaints come to the library verbally. Unless complaint escalates or becomes an incident, typically they are not recorded.

Quyen asked question of why the complaints weren't brought to board?

Sheryl responded that historically, all complaints are handled internally by Library employees.

Kara wondered why an Advisory Board wouldn't be used for complaint discussion?

Sheryl reiterated that historically complaints are handled by Library staff as that is what they are hired to do on a daily basis. The advisory board's role is to bring community information and feedback from the district and your council member to help provide the library feedback on how the library is doing in your district.

Advisory board expressed concern that dialogue was shut down following concerns of display relocation/removal hitting the media. County statement said display was asked to be relocated due to a number of complaints.

Sheryl- Board meeting occurred before display event therefore no discussion would've happened at previous meeting.

Quyen- reported that did request special meeting after incident and were not granted. Disheartened that they were not used for advice or shed some light as voices in the community. Asking for clarification on bylaws on special meeting consideration.

Sheryl- appreciated and respects their concern and is here to listen to questions, comments today.

Adam- discussed value of children’s library and main display to his family. Gave an example on how he had to work outside his comfort zone when his child chose a book to read with a topic he was not ready to discuss. Felt the removal was suppression and prioritized one groups viewpoint over entire community. What changed this year in comparison to last year?

Sheryl- happy to hear his family enjoys the library. Sheryl referred back to County statement; promote access and opportunity regardless of feelings and belief. Intent wasn’t to make display “less visible,” but to promote the Summer Reading program that promotes reading and the reduction summer slide. No books were removed from collection. No ill intent to marginalize a group.

Quyen- recognizes there was no ill intent; however, impact is what we are seeing regardless if it was not intended to marginalize anyone. Caution library that display movement such as this can be seen as micro-aggression. Consider this with future displays and changes.

Sheryl- reminded board the library had multiple pride displays throughout the rest of library in addition to multiple Pride programs that went on throughout the month at all library locations. Anyone looking in could see that the library celebrated all the diversity of its community.

Kara reminded board that display was re-located due to complaints. Asked for number of complaints.

Sheryl agreed to try and gather what she could, though verbal are not always recorded and tracked.

Quyen asked for any previous incidents where a diversity display was relocated.

Sheryl will review past moves and see if any apply.

County Statement in regard to the library being a neutral place. Question asked in how library defines neutrality.

Response- Library view on neutrality would be having access to information on all topics and multiple viewpoints.

Kara- Revisited topic on a couple occasions. Thought it would be beneficial to see how other libraries record and handle complaints.

Sheryl – libraries love to share information and will do what she can to get other library feedback. How do libraries define a complaint and what they would track..

d. Changing of meeting time

Quyen request revisit of meeting time. Sheryl responded that time and day has historically been the same for years. Most likely chosen during the lunch hour for others to attend.

Quyen-Evening possibility?

Sheryl- since Library staff attend meetings, Admin. Business hours needed.

Kara- recommended revisit time once new board members appointed.

Sheryl- if location and time change, need to publish for the public.

7. Adjournment

Motion by Kara, second by Adam to adjourn the meeting at 12:56 p.m.

8. Appendix

- a. **Announcements – Next meeting will be August 17 at Millcreek Branch.**
- b. Public comment- None
- c. New Articles- see agenda