

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WASHINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
January 22, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Carolyn Witt, who led the Pledge. Members present included: Leanne Gisburne, Doug Holdmeyer, Jamie Holtmeier, Katie Schonaerts, Barbara Volmert, Sue Wehmueller, Carolyn Witt, Gretchen Pettet, Chad Briggs, and Joe Holtmeier. Also in attendance were Antjea Wolff of the Missourian, City Administrator Darren Lamb, Ward 3 Councilmember Jeff Patke and Mike Ninness.

Doug moved that the agenda be approved. Motion seconded by Katie and the motion carried. Sue moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Doug. Motion carried.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT: The Friends are sponsoring Family Reading Night on March 1, 2024, as well as providing funds for two other library projects.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Statistics and Collections: November and December 2023 statistics are provided. Circulations were up 2% and about 40 passports were processed in November and December each. The staff has been experimenting with the new camera. Passport photos will be able to be taken here for \$15 a photo.

Facilities: The new HVAC had its first big winter test recently. It was able to keep up, mostly. However, the front door opening and closing in zero-degree weather was a little too much to keep the desired temperature from falling. The result during the coldest weather was a couple of degrees colder than the desired target. The vestibule heaters were turned up to counteract this heat loss.

Technology/Communications: The turnover for the new public computers has been started by NOC. The new computers work better, are faster, and provide more stability than the older ones.

Programs:

- The Winter Reading Challenge continues through the end of February.
- To celebrate the 100th anniversary, Ruth is leading the organizing of the picture gallery in the children's area and Nelson is putting together a history of the library including the most popular books of the library's opening month of 1924.
- The Missouri Book Festival committee met last week. They are targeting a March 1 launch of the festival website and vendor request form. We are working with Scenic Regional on a large (\$10-15k) grant.

November-December re-cap:

- FBI agent Katherine Schweit, "Stop the Killing" on Nov. 16
- Turkey Bingo on Nov. 22
- Art of Charcuterie, Dec 5
- Reindeer round-up, Dec 29th

Upcoming Events:

- Big Blue Bash for kids – Wed. Jan 31 at 4 pm.
- 10 Decades / 10 books reading challenge starts Feb 1.
- Great Decisions starts Wed. February 7 @ 1 pm and runs for 8 weeks.
- Wanderlust Chocolates: Chocolate Making, Tues Feb 6 @ 6 pm (registration begins Jan 29).
- Dan O’Neill, “Crazy but True St. Louis History,” Thurs Feb 15 6:30 pm, Friends of the Library Author Event.
- Kerry Branson & Malcolm Tanner, “Descendants of Evil”; Thurs Feb 15 @ 6:30 pm.
- Craft Swap, Tuesday Feb 20, 6-8pm.
- Jumpin’ Jubilee, Thurs Feb 29, 4-6pm
- Family Reading Night will be Friday, March 1 (Ruth McInnis is organizing the children’s crafting area and the Friends of the Library are a sponsor).
- The kickoff for “This Community Reads” will be in the ECC Auditorium, Friday March 1, at 7pm. The book is entitled *Give ‘em Hell, Harry*.

Katie moved that the director’s report be accepted, seconded by Leanne. The motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Nelson invited citizen Mike Ninness to make a statement concerning the public’s use of the library. Mike’s main concern was to urge the board to prevent any action that would limit the use of the library to all citizens. He wished to be a voice for the people that he feels do not have a voice. Jeff Patke followed by noting that some of his constituents have expressed concern to him over safety issues with the library. Nelson acknowledged that there have been safety issues in the past. Discussion followed.

Darrin noted that previously the City and Board concluded that a revision of the behavior code would be beneficial. He emphasized that everyone would be abiding by the same rules.

Nelson reviewed the new conduct policy with those present reminding everyone that the city and attorney have reviewed the policy as well.

The following rules have been added or expanded:

- Patrons may not create a disturbance in any matter that interferes with people’s ability to use the library or staff’s ability to do their job.
- Sleeping for any extended period of time is not permitted inside the library or on the library grounds. Using blankets or bedding in the library is prohibited with the exception of small children.
- Leaving belongings unattended for an extended period of time (30 minutes) inside the library or on the library grounds, is not permitted.
- Monopolizing library space, equipment, or outlets to the exclusion of others will not be permitted.
- The library allows patrons to bring in covered drinks and light snacks, which may be consumed in areas away from computers. Patrons must dispose of trash in proper receptacles.

- Patrons may not misuse restrooms for bathing or shaving, soiling surfaces or facilities, or using restrooms for an extended length of time.
- Patrons must wear clothing that covers both the upper and lower torso of the body. Any state of undress, including lack of shoes, will not be permitted.

Nelson and Carolyn agreed that the new points in the behavior policy will be printed and made accessible to the public and both feel the new rules will give guidance and direction for the staff and patrons. Carolyn reminded the board that the police is more than willing to support the library and also thanked Darren for attending the board's meeting to give the City's support.

Gretchen suggested Nelson add a section in his director's report on any behavior issues that occur during a given month. Nelson agreed.

Lastly, Carolyn noted that in today's world the library is more than books, it is managing information in both books and in the air over the internet. It is a place to go for information to improve ourselves. The new policies will not prevent people from using the library.

There being no further business, Leanne moved that the meeting be adjourned. Katie seconded the motion, which carried.

NEXT MEETING: February 26, 2024