

Approved Minutes

Regular meeting of the FCLS Board, April 3, 2024. Called to order at 9:30 AM in person and on Zoom at the Lander Library. Present: Board Members Carrie Johnson, Perry Cook, Kristen McClelland, Marta Mossburg, John Angst; Director Anita Marple; County Commissioner Mike Jones

Call to order and welcome to visitors and board members.

1) Approval of Agenda

Perry Cook motioned to accept the agenda with addition of 7 B: County Commissioner letter. Passed.

2) Approval of Consent Agenda

Perry Cook moved to accept Consent Agenda and March minutes with addition of new bills. Passed

A) Regular board minutes—March meeting

B) Record of Financial Statements & Actions

Wyoming Community Bank: \$471,467.60 (3-27-24)

Capital Investment Fund: \$332,758.82 (3-10-24)

Tax Distribution-March: \$26,163.95 (3-11-24)

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

LATC Grant payment of \$11,691.45 to Precision Dirt Works from FC Treasurer's LATC Account.

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

3) Correspondence

Email re: challenged book; emails re: Internet Use Policy proposed revisions

Carrie Johnson noted a letter from Amy Vincent about a bilingual book walk. Anita Marple said she will scan a letter from Taylor Jacobs and a dozen comments about Internet Use Policy into one document for the board.

4) Public Comment

Jan Francisco, Lander: She said her daughters love the library. However, when she took an interest in the books her daughters were reading, she discovered their addiction to pornography. Following that experience, she said her family could not trust public institutions as much. A recent book checked out by one of her daughters with an innocuous cover contained two sex scenes and a rape. She said that she doesn't think we need to ban books, but that more transparency is needed. She suggested a content rating system that ranked books 0-5 for language, violence and sexuality. Jan gave the board information about a rating system.

Shari Haskins, Riverton: She said the board asked the County Commissioner liaison too many questions and that it should know its role and responsibilities.

Lennie Poitras, Lander: She said her daughter was allowed to explore different library books and grew up just fine. She added that she thinks kids should be allowed to make decisions about what to read on their own.

Jane Lynn, Lander: She said that this discussion is not about books, but about taking away our institution of democracy. She said we are listening to one faction and that Anita Marple has been a proponent and defender of the library.

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Maggie Miller, Lander: She said she loves being a part of this community and knows pretty much everyone. She said restricting access to books in the age of the smart phone doesn't make sense. She added that she was not opposed to putting stickers on books indicating the type of content but that books should not be moved from the locations where Anita has placed them

Karen Wetzel, Lander: She said this discussion is not about Director Anita Marple, it is about the books. She said this is a public library and that several books that are in the children's library are not for children.

Mary Graf, Lander: She said she is a retired children's librarian from Vermont. She said that pulling out a piece of a book and inflaming it to represent all of the book would be akin to pulling one book off the shelf and saying it reflects the entire library.

Jim Massman, Lander. He said that he came to thank the board members for serving and to thank Director Anita Marple. He said that serving has not been nearly as much fun as board members likely thought it would be.

Amy Andersen, Lander: She said she was present to support Anita Marple in her role and was in disbelief concerning her treatment at the 4/2/24 County Commissioner meeting and their attempt to micromanage library operations. She said that she joined the Friends of the Library when she moved to Lander in 1989 and worked for the library for three years in the oughts. She said Anita Marple ranks at the top of directors and that she supports black parents, LGBTQ parents, native parents and children who have had different personal experiences. She said one way to help understand those struggles is to read about it in a book. She said some children in our community don't have support at home and turn to the library.

Patrick Neary, Dubois: He said one person's filth is another person's art and that society can't decide what morals are and questioned how the board could do so. He added that sometimes a loud minority can have an outsize impact.

Cody Beers, Riverton, President Fremont County Library Foundation: He said libraries have provided insight into multiple viewpoints for hundreds of years and that we must encourage our children to read everything they get their hands on. He said he once had a parent question my 30- year -old son regarding his fascination with Harry Potter books. He said it's because of those books that he reads over a 100 books a year. He said we must listen to both sides of issues and make up our mind. It's become a problem that we don't listen. He said he was offended by some of the things said in the County Commissioner meeting, including parts about the safety of the Riverton Branch. If a person needs to take a nap for a few minutes in the library, then so be it, he said.

Cady Shoutis, Lander, retired elementary school librarian: . She said we need to keep welcoming people of all stripes. She added that she was very supportive of the board following a well written policy that is already in place and Anita Marple's leadership.

5) Reports Roundtable

A) Commissioner Update:

Commissioner Mike Jones said that our tax base is down. He added that it probably won't lower our values, but it will keep them from going up. We probably will be down about 20 percent. He said to meet

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the 12 mill rate the Fremont County budget will have to supplement it. He added that the library should expect the status quo.

B) Director's Report:

Anita Marple highlighted that the FCLS is partnering with the League of Women Voters to host several community conversations surrounding "Democracy Under Construction." She said each library will host one throughout the election season. Democracy Under Construction is a collection of essays, speeches, etc., from both historical and modern figures of national and Wyoming significance. She said the discussion series will help disseminate information about candidates and their positions and that the book is downloadable as a pdf. She said we'll also be getting more physical copies and hoping to make a few audio files.

Anita Marple said that the advertising budget for County 10 is a foundation grant. She said that there was a staff training day on 4/1/24. Everyone read a book by Ken Blanchard called "Legendary Service." She said it was a very practical guide for how to care for the people who walk in the library and for one another.

C) Budget:

Anita Marple said knowing what Commissioner Jones said is helpful to the budget process and that a lot of the heavy lifting is almost done. Carrie Johnson asked whether it would be done by May 1 for the May 14 budget hearing in front of the Commissioners.

Board agreed to meet at Riverton Branch on May 8 at 1 PM for a budget meeting.

6) Unfinished Business:

A) Strategic Planning process recommendation.

Marta Mossburg said she'd like more information on the cost of facilitator-led strategic planning. Kristen McClelland said she has stats from Wyoming State Library. Anita Marple said she would inquire about the cost.

B) Revision to Challenged Materials Appeal process—discussion.

Carrie Johnson said she thinks it's imperative that every challenge that comes out needs to be filled out appropriately. She said we need to be more diligent about asking the challenger to complete the form fully and that it is important to have a conversation with a librarian first because we should be building relationships with patrons. She said she did not want it to be too easy to fill out without first discussing it with a librarian.

Kristen McClelland and Marta Mossburg said the form is onerous to fill out and that it does not make sense in this day and age to make people fill out paper forms at the library when they might not be available during library hours and when it is simple to make it available online.

Perry Cook recommended having a fillable online form for patrons which the librarians could then use to reach out to people and have a discussion.

Kristen McClelland said a main theme of the discussion today is that people don't want to get rid of books, but that we want kids to be safe and we want everyone to feel welcome. She recommended that instead of looking at all the books – mostly in YA and children's sections— why don't we take the books that people are upset with and place them in the adult section. She said we could put it on the library card system and address it as an age appropriateness issue for parents. They would have to sign off for their children to access those books. She said that way no one would be denied access and parents would have control of their children's reading habits. It doesn't shut anyone off. Because we have no control over the

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digital, parents would have to monitor that collection separately. She said it would make book challenges a non-issue as parents would be in charge and everyone would be protected.

Anita Marple said she did not see a reason to change the current system, which has worked for decades. She said we're talking about circulation policy, not appeals.

John Angst said we're having a discussion which needs action. Stasis or motion or tabled. The conversation is actionable. Carrie Johnson tabled the discussion to get back to the appeal question. Perry Cook motioned to accept the new draft policy for appeals and then withdrew it as Anita Marple said it was a draft that needed more input. Carrie Johnson asked board members to send Anita Marple suggestions as soon as possible.

C) Location of Tricks by Ellen Hopkins

Anita Marple said six staff members were involved in this discussion. Each participant had read the book and was encouraged to do his or her own investigation. Consensus of the book was to keep it YA. She said that they also discussed ways to label it or create a mature section. The decision is to leave it in the YA section.

7) New Business:

A) County 10 agreement Kristen McClelland motioned to approve the plan and to address advertising in the strategic planning process. Passed.

B) 4/2/24 County Commissioner letter to FCLS Board agreed to meet April 17, 2024, at 1 PM at the Lander Library to address issues in the County Commissioner letter.

8) Action Items Update:

Action items include budget, challenge appeal procedure and Internet Use Policy.

Carrie Johnson adjourned the meeting at 11:40 AM.

Next regular FCLS Board Meeting: Wednesday, May 1, 9:30 AM in person at Riverton Branch or on Zoom.