

Bozeman Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 15, 2025
Minutes

Attendance Library Board Chair Stewart Mohr; Trustees Mike Long, Ken Spencer, Pam Henley (via Zoom); Bozeman Public Library (BPL) Director Susan Gregory; Assistant Director Kit Stephenson; Administrative Assistant Lauranna Cossins; Department Heads Carmen Clark, Ben Nielsen, Ellie Newell, Sarah Widger; City Commissioner Jennifer Madgic; Library Foundation Director Janay Johnson (via Zoom) Interim City Manager Chuck Winn.

Not Present: Trustee Mike Redburn

Call to Order Meeting was called to order by Trustee Mohr at 4 pm.

Public Comment – No Public present, therefore no comment.

Approval of the Minutes

Action Trustee Spencer moved to approve the minutes from the November 20, 2024, Library Board meeting. Trustee Long seconded. There was no further discussion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as submitted.

Action/ Discussion

City Update – Chuck Winn, Interim City Manager

Winn began by saying that the City administration and the City Commission are very proud of the Library and very proud of the Library’s staff. The Library has always been extraordinary and it's become even more amazing with the recently renovated spaces and new services. The Library is a source of pride in the community.

Winn talked about the City Directors Team that meets regularly with the City Manager to work on issues and said that Gregory has gone above and beyond to collaborate and be a part of the team. “We have a very collaborative relationship with the Library”. Board Chair Mohr commented that “Susan must work in two worlds, and I think she does a very good job of that. She works to be an integral part of the City community and the City Directors’ community, while formally she reports to and is responsible to the Library Trustees.”

Trustee Mohr asked about the status of the City Manager position. Winn replied that a search date is currently unknown and the future shape of the City government will be based on the results from the recently appointed Local Government Study Committee. The group has two years to do their work and make a recommendation that would need to go on the November 2026 election ballot for the voters to decide.

Winn said that westside Library branch discussions are still happening. What that project would look like and when it would occur is unknown but the need for a Library branch on the west side of town is understood. A future community center is not completely off the table, but likely to occur in phases over a period of years. It would be cost prohibitive to try to build a multi-department community center all at once.

Staff Day, March 12th – Gregory, Stephenson

Gregory and Stephenson discussed the need for a Spring Staff Training Day that would include more safety training for Library staff. They requested that the Board give permission to close the Library on March 12th for staff training.

Action Trustee Spencer moved to approve library closure for March 12, 2025, for Library staff day. Trustee Long seconded. The Board voted unanimously to approve.

Early closing for Montana Library Association Conference event, March 26th, 2025 – Gregory, Widger

Gregory said that the Bozeman Public Library is hosting the Montana Library Association Annual Conference this year. We will host a reception at the Library on the evening of March 26th for conference attendees. We will also host the Montana Book Awards in the Library Community Room following the reception. We are asking to close the Library at 5 pm on that day in order to prepare for the event. The Library would normally be open to the public until 8 pm.

Action: Trustee Long moved to approve early closure of the Library on March 26th, 2025, at 5 pm. Trustee Spencer seconded. The Board voted unanimously to approve.

Discussion of a request received by Library Board Chair from construction project manager

The construction manager for a new development project on Wallace Street contacted Mohr and said that he was gathering information for a preliminary cost estimate. He was looking for parking space to park supplies and equipment, as well as parking for their staff. He said that it would be for an extended length of time and it would be for a fair number of parking spaces. Mohr heard him out but let him know it was unlikely we could accommodate such a request given the demands already on the Library's parking lot. Our first concern is to provide as much parking as possible for Library patrons.

Correspondence – Gregory highlighted the comments from the public received this month.

Patron requested a book drop on the west side of town.

A thank you note was received from the Bozeman hospital for Teen blanket donations.

Patron requested that we install EV chargers here at the Library.

Patron wrote, "The Library should be open 24hours a day."

Reports

Director's report - Director Gregory provided her report to the Library Board prior to the meeting. Highlights were reviewed. Gregory asked the Trustees to let her know if they had any questions.

Gregory offered thanks to Jon Henderson, our Assistant City Manager, for help with a Library Board request for more details regarding City facilities planning. Henderson provided the City Capital Improvement Plan for this year regarding the Library and the results of a facility condition report.

Department Heads' Highlights – Department reports were provided to the Board prior to the meeting.

Assistant Director Stephenson provided a brief update regarding the status of the Children's Department renovation project. An RFP was issued and we received 8 submissions from architecture firms. A team of City Facilities staff and Library staff will review the submissions and request interviews from the finalists.

Library Friends & Foundation- Foundation Director Johnson was out of state and attended via Zoom. She said that the Foundation would like to do a feasibility study this year regarding a westside Library branch. "We would hire a consultant to talk to some of our donors and prominent people in the community to assess how much we might be able to raise privately for a Library branch."

There being no further business, Chair Mohr adjourned the meeting at 5pm.