



**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2022
4:00 P.M.**

The Board met in regular session in a hybrid format via Zoom webinar and in person.

Chair Ghilieri called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

1) ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Frank Perez, Amy Ghilieri, Lea Moser, Ann Medaille

Board Members Absent: None

County Staff Present: Library Director Jeff Scott, Assistant District Attorney Herbert Kaplan, Assistant County Manager David Solaro

Public Present: Bruce Parks, Paul White, Earl Jones, Janice Jones, Valerie Fiannaca, Reva Crump, Rene Resent, Janet Butcher, Stacey Purell, Victoria Mayer, Bruce Foster, Marsha S., Steve Phillips, Thea Phillips, Dennis McCloy, Wayne Gordon, Gary Butcher, Ray Edward, Zoe S., Alan Munson, Mary Jones, Craig Newton, unnamed individual

2) PUBLIC COMMENT

Bruce Parks, Paul White, Earl Jones, Janice Jones, Valerie Fiannaca, Reva Crump, Rene Resent, Janet Butcher, Stacey Purell, Victoria Mayer, Bruce Foster, Marsha S., Steve Phillips, Thea Phillips, Dennis McCloy, Wayne Gordon, Gary Butcher, Ray Edward, Zoe S., Alan Munson, and an individual who did not provide his name, spoke in opposition to hosting Drag Queen Story Time events in public libraries.

The opposed speakers shared concerns regarding:

- a belief that public libraries and their representative staff should strive to conduct business in a politically neutral manner in order to best serve constituents, and to avoid programming with controversial or politicized topics;

- a belief that drag queen events often involved adult-oriented themes that were not appropriate for minors;
- the potential impact of exposing young children to issues of sexuality or gender identity;
- personal religious or moral opposition to LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning) topics or culture;
- disapproval of the caricatured or exaggerated style female impersonators often used to portray women, or the fact that their stage personas could have been originally created for the purposes of adult entertainment;
- fears that public libraries might no longer be a safe place for children and families;
- the ways in which the Library System's overall goals of celebrating diversity and being more inclusive of minorities had resulted in programming that offended other populations;
- questions as to why the Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) had cancelled three meetings over the summer;
- a belief that the Library Trustees' decisions were influenced by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) since the Trustees were appointed to their roles rather than being elected by the citizens of Washoe County; and
- a photograph shown on Ms. Ginger Devine's public Facebook page showing Ms. Devine in a revealing, adult-themed outfit, which the commenter opined was evidence Ms. Devine was not an appropriate role model for children.

Mary Jones spoke in support of the Library System's efforts to create programming that celebrated Washoe County's diversity, including minorities. She mentioned popular films in which male actors impersonated women, and she fondly recalled attending comedic drag shows as a young adult. In response to the question regarding cancelled meetings, Ms. Jones noted the Board's bylaws required at least three Trustees be present to constitute a quorum. Only Chair Amy Ghilieri and Vice Chair Frank Perez had remained after one Board member resigned due to health issues, and terms expired for the remaining two Trustees. A quorum had simply not been possible until at least two of the three vacancies were filled.

3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

a. Approval of Minutes from the Library Board Meeting of May 18, 2022

On motion by Trustee Lea Moser, seconded by Trustee Frank Perez, which motion duly carried, the Board approved minutes from the May 18, 2022 meeting. All in favor, none opposed.

4) OLD BUSINESS

None

5) NEW BUSINESS

a. **For Possible Action: Election of Chair for Library Board of Trustees for Fiscal Year 22- 23**

Director Jeff Scott spoke about the Board election for Chair and Vice Chair and selection of a liaison to the Friends of the Washoe County Libraries. Frank Perez nominated Amy Ghilieri for Chair. On motion by Trustee Lea Moser, seconded by Trustee Ann Medaille, which motion duly carried, the Board approved the election of Amy Ghilieri as Chair. All in favor, none opposed.

b. **For Possible Action: Election of Vice Chair for Library Board of Trustees for Fiscal Year 22-23**

Amy Ghilieri nominated Frank Perez for Vice Chair. On motion by Trustee Moser, seconded by Trustee Medaille, which motion duly carried, the Board approved the election of Frank Perez as Vice Chair. All in favor, none opposed.

c. **For Possible Action: Appointment of One Library Board Trustee as Friends of Washoe County Library Liaison**

Director Jeff Scott discussed selection of a liaison and a backup liaison. Chair Ghilieri was chosen as the Board's primary liaison, with Vice Chair Perez to serve as a backup liaison.

d. **For Possible Action: Approval of Library Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule / Service Team Presentation Cycle 2022-2023**

On motion by Chair Ghilieri, seconded by Vice Chair Perez, which motion duly carried, the Board approved the Library Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule / Service Team Presentation Cycle for 2022-2023. All in favor, none opposed.

e. **For Possible Action: Approval of Library Board of Trustee Bylaws for Fiscal Year 2022-2023**

Chair Ghilieri stated the Board still needed a fifth Trustee and asked Director Scott about plans to fill the vacancy. Director Scott replied that the process would move forward within the next week or two. On motion by Vice Chair Perez, seconded by Trustee Medaille, which motion duly carried, the Board approved the bylaws for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. All in favor, none opposed.

6) REPORTS

a. Library Director's Report

Director Scott reviewed the September strategic plan update. He spoke regarding progress with the book mobile and determining its stops. He mentioned KUNR, KOLO TV, and other opportunities for book lists in the community and media, as well as discussing subscription services, homebound services, and Author Talks. He described current and future projects including the book vending machine for Cold Springs; delivery was expected in December or January and a kickoff event would be held in February 2023.

Providing welcoming spaces, another goal of the strategic plan, had led to enhancement of Washoe County Library System spaces through renovations, creation of additional meeting spaces, new furniture, and equipment. He touched on completed projects at the South Valleys Library and Spanish Springs Library, and thanked County Commissioners Vaughn Hartung and Bob Lucey for the special district funds provided to support the projects.

Director Scott shared that almost all Tacchino Trust funding had been expended and the related projects completed. Upcoming projects consisted of planned Sierra View and Senior Center Library renovations; the Sierra View renovations would commence on September 30, and that branch would close on October 17 for construction. Fiber internet to Gerlach was expected to be complete by September 23, and all library branches would be upgraded to fiber internet and speeds increased.

Director Scott discussed the Downtown Reno Library elevator and family restroom plans, and he noted workforce training and creating virtual space opportunities for the post-COVID environment were additional goals. Lifelong learning activities were being planned to improve the welfare of and provide more resources for learners and seniors in Washoe County, which would also be another way to celebrate Washoe County's diverse community.

b. Spanish Springs Library Report

Spanish Springs Library Branch Manager Jana MacMillan reviewed the branch report and detailed activities at the Spanish Springs Library between February and September 2022, including the Get to Know Your Library project, a video series interviewing staff members. Ms. MacMillan welcomed new Library Aides, Anakin and Andrew.

c. Youth Library and Library Events Presentation

Beate Weinert discussed the summer reading program's theme, 'Oceans of Possibilities', author talks, and other events, projects, and celebrations focused on serving Washoe County's diverse community and expanding opportunities for inclusion. Judy Hansen reviewed teen events and programming for adults.

7) STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Debi Stears, Collections Development Manager, explained the State of Nevada had provided special funding for public libraries, and most of those funds received by Washoe County Library System would be used for the Libby application.

8) PUBLIC COMMENT

Craig Newton discussed law enforcement and prison systems, child molesters, and murder. He felt libraries were condoning immoral activities.

Public commenter Zoe S., participating remotely via Zoom, said programs like Drag Queen Story Time were beneficial for many children, and no one was forcing the opposed families to attend such events. She suspected many of the commenters protesting the Drag Queen Story Time events were older than 50 years of age.

Several individuals interrupted loudly, rendering the remainder of Ms. S's comments inaudible. The offending speakers were reminded that individuals who spoke out of turn, interrupted others, or otherwise disrupted the meeting could be asked to leave.

Bruce Parks reiterated his disapproval of Drag Queen Story Time events and indicated he thought the Board may have violated open meeting laws.

Gary Butcher felt Ms. S's observation regarding the ages of the protestors was offensive. He commented that Washoe County needed to elect different County Commissioners.

Janet Butcher repeated her opposition to Drag Queen Story Time events in public libraries.

Julie Newman thought the Library Board might have violated its own bylaws.

Valerie Fiannaca felt insulted that individuals over 50 had been referred to as 'seniors', and indicated that her children and grandchildren were also opposed to Drag Queen Story Time events.

9) BOARD COMMENT

Vice Chair Frank Perez was impressed with staff who ran the daily operations at the Spanish Springs, Downtown Reno, Northwest Reno, and North Valleys branches. He expressed appreciation for work being done to expand access into areas within the County which had been underserved and said he was excited to hear about the programming planned for teens and youth. He thanked Library System employees and asked them to keep up the good work.

Chair Amy Ghilieri welcomed the new Trustees, mentioned a recent plant sale which had been held at the Sierra View Library, and commended staff member Bonnie regarding the plants she had raised.

Vice Chair Perez added that he wished to recognize former Trustees Wayne Holland, Zanny Marsh, and Jean Stoess for their hard work and service to the Library Board and the community.

10) ADJOURNMENT

Chair Amy Ghilieri adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Pending Board Approval