



**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023 | 4:00 PM  
NORTHWEST RENO LIBRARY**

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

Chair Amy Ghilieri called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**1) ROLL CALL**

**Present:**

Amy Ghilieri	Chair
Frank Perez	Vice Chair
Lea Grace	Trustee
Ann Medaille	Trustee
(Vacant)	Trustee

**Absent:**

None

**County Staff:**

Jeff Scott	Library Director
David Solaro	Assistant County Manager
Brandon Price	Deputy District Attorney

**2) PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following members of the public spoke about their opposition to Drag Queen Story Time (DQST) events: Janet Butcher; Nichelle Hull; Cesar & Krystal Minera; Stacey Piro; Carmen Quinones; Bruce Parks; Darla Lee; Katherine Clemons; Cliff Nellis; Manuel Sanchez; Alan Munson; Bruce Foster; Debbie Mardon; Sandee Tibbett; Brandon Thompson; Bryan & Lucy Canton; Erika Ronquillo; Jesus & Kimberly Sepulveda; Rina Zecena; Emiliano Pasiulas; Daniela, Nayelli, & Diana Rodriguez; Alexa & Ashlye Ibarra; Aylin Jiminez; Samantha Duron; Griselda Papilla; Trevor Robinson; Britney Keife; Elizabeth Mena; Yvette Pasillas; Nestor Herres; Valerie Fiannaca; Lacy Salo; Roxanne (last name not given).

Reasons cited by the above commenters for their opposition of DQST events included:

- Concerns that DQST events were adult in nature and inappropriate for children or public libraries
- A desire to see individuals other than drag performers leading story time events
- Religious or moral beliefs opposing LGBTQ+ themes; desire for a return to traditional values
- Fear that DQST events exposed youth to sexualized themes or content
- Belief that only parents/families should teach their kids about sexuality/gender
- Concerns that such events would cause gender confusion or loss of innocence in young children
- Opposition to the use of public facilities to host events of a controversial nature
- Doubts regarding the value or educational benefit of DQST programming
- Belief that the events could distract children from learning or that libraries should focus on core educational subjects (such as math, science, and reading) rather than social issues

Stacey Piro and Valerie Fiannaca wanted to be able to email concerns and comments regarding DQST events to the Trustees. Ms. Fiannaca believed each Board member should have their own email address. Ms. Fiannaca also spoke positively regarding non-DQST-related library services but added that she did not appreciate the library website's celebration of diversity and the LGBTQ+ community.

In addition to comments regarding his opposition to DQST events, Bruce Parks thanked the Board for approving revisions to the March 2023 meeting minutes.

The following members of the public spoke in support of DQST events: Sarah DePaoli; Nicole Obritsch; Rebecca Allured (who spoke on her own behalf as well as reading a statement written by her friend, Angela [last name not provided]); Wayne Holland; Edwin Luyngar; Kari Buccambuso; Sheena (last name not provided).

Reasons cited by the above commenters for their support of DQST events included:

- Appreciation for the general creativity and diversity of library programming available
- Compliments regarding the libraries' passionate, dedicated, and welcoming staff
- Gratitude for efforts to celebrate diversity, inclusiveness, and acceptance
- Increased awareness of social issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community, including children & families
- Evidence that DQST events helped teach children to treat others with dignity, respect, and kindness
- Belief that libraries were public spaces meant for everyone, including minorities
- Appreciation that events were conducted in a safe environment with positive role models and the support and encouragement of families

### **3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

On motion by Vice Chair Perez), seconded by Trustee Medaille, which motion duly carried, the Board approved the minutes of the April 19, 2023, Library Board of Trustees Meeting. All in favor; none opposed.

### **4) OLD BUSINESS**

None

## 5) NEW BUSINESS

### a. **Presentation: Memorial for Trustee Jean Stoess** [Non-Action Item]

Director Jeff Scott presented a memorial for Trustee Jean Stoess.

### b. **Presentation and Discussion: Washoe County Library Strategic Plan Update** [Non-Action Item]

Director Jeff Scott reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was provided in the Board packet, regarding updates to the Strategic Plan.

Topics discussed or reviewed included:

- Book machines
- Sierra View Library renovations and planned reopening scheduled for April 27, 2023
- Funding plans for Senior Center renovations
- Zoom room grants awarded to the Library System
- New flooring for the Spanish Springs and Sierra View branches
- Nevada Library Association (NLA) Legislative Day (March 9, 2023)
- Library System hiring updates & staff responses to the Washoe County Best Places to Work survey; best places for working parents; workforce development
- Lifelong Learning senior fair events at the Northwest Reno, Sparks, and South Valleys branches
- Incorporating the Library System's goals of celebrating diversity with Women's History Month

Trustee Perez asked Director Scott which libraries had zoom rooms. Director Scott believed all branches had a zoom room except for Northwest.

### c. **National Library Week Proclamation** [Non-Action Item]

Library Director Jeff Scott read a proclamation received from the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners for National Library Week.

## 6) REPORTS

### a. **Library Director Update by Jeff Scott**

Library Director Jeff Scott reviewed the Library Director's Update, a copy of which was provided in the Board packet, and briefly discussed topics including the upcoming 'soft launch' reopening of the Sierra View Library, book machines due to arrive within the next two weeks, the approval of the budget for the new fiscal year, and anticipated review of applications for the Library Board of Trustees Vacancy by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners (BCC). Director Scott noted the review was expected to be on the agenda for the BCC meeting on Tuesday, April 25.

**b. Northwest Reno Library Report by Robin Posniak [Non-Action Item]**

Librarian I Robin Posniak reviewed a PowerPoint presentation to the Board, a copy of which was included in the Board packet.

Topics discussed or reviewed included:

- Renovations recently made to the Northwest Reno Library; repairs made to the roof; damage to more than 300 books
- New and returning programs at the branch, including programs available on weekends; attendance
- STEM activities, including holiday gingerbread homes and a life-sized Candyland
- Early voting activities at the branch; 5,245 in-person votes cast and 1,995 ballots dropped off
- Summer reading challenge for 2023
- The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Verdi branch location
- Staff updates, including recent retirements, promotions, hires, and vacancies; volunteers

Chair Amy Ghilieri inquired regarding the types of activities done by volunteers. Mr. Posniak explained branch volunteers often assisted with tasks such as shelving, processing missing or hold lists, and cleaning.

**c. Reference and Technology Team Report by Toni Farris [Non-Action Item]**

South Valleys branch Librarian Toni Farris reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was included in the Board packet.

Topics discussed included:

- Community Resources Week and dementia-friendly nature walks at Idlewild Park, offered in collaboration with the Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation every Tuesday from 10:00 to 11:00 AM
- The Community Resources Center, a collaborative effort by multiple local non-profit organizations, and the Northern Nevada Veterans Resources Center, which was dedicated to veteran homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing of homeless veterans
- The Solace Tree, another non-profit resource which provided youth grief support for children, teens, and their family members; free services available included peer support groups and grief workshops
- The availability of Nevada 'talking books', and positive feedback from the community regarding Resources Week activities

**7) STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Library Collection Development Manager Debi Stears discussed an additional \$4,000 for new materials.

Trustee Ann Medaille inquired regarding emails mentioned by public commenters and stated she had not received anything. Director Jeff Scott indicated he would follow up to find out what the cause might be.

Vice Chair Frank Perez stated it was important to respect opinions being shared, but also important to do whatever possible to prevent the possibility of altercations at Library Board of Trustees meetings. He opined the behavior he had observed during the meeting had been unacceptable on both sides and hoped

there was a plan in place in case things ever escalated further. He also noted there had been many Spanish speakers present during the meeting and thought it might be valuable to consider offering translation services so the public could voice their opinions. He concluded that he was pleased with the progress regarding the Strategic Plan, which he followed closely, and he looked forward to hearing about further plan updates in 2024.

Director Scott provided brief clarification regarding the years covered by the Strategic Plan, noting it would be in place from 2022 through 2025.

#### **8) BOARD COMMENTS**

None

#### **9) ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Ghilieri adjourned the meeting at 6:51 PM.