

Boundary County Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date: July 20, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Bonners Ferry Annex Building

6566 Main St. Bonners Ferry, ID

Regular Meeting

Call to Order: 10:00 a.m.

Members present: Bob Blanford, Aaron Bohachek, Lee Colson, Wendy McClintock.

Members Absent: Ken Blockhan, Jr.

Public Comments:

- Steve Fiorivanti talked about wanting to do the right thing for our children. He referenced a film entitled "The Sound of Freedom" and talked about the connections between Hollywood and child sex trafficking.
- Faye Almond said the policy committee was put together to create a policy. She said she doesn't want pornography in the library.
- Adrienne Norris objected to the Supreme Court ruling language on the materials reconsideration form.
- Greg Lamberty talked about the connection between pornography and violent sexual encounters.
- Mary Esther Wilson asked the board to consider the universally accepted rating system in movies and video games, and to place books in relevant sections according to a similar rating system.

Approval of Agenda: no changes

ACTION Item: Approval of minutes:

- **November 17, 2022** Motion to approve: Bob Blanford. Second: Lee Colson. Unanimous approval.
- **December 8, 2022** Motion to approve: Lee Colson. Second: Wendy McClintock. Unanimous approval.
- **Jun 15, 2023** Motion to approve: Bob Blanford. Second: Lee Colson. Unanimous approval.

Director's Report:

- Summer programs are running smoothly.

Review of June Financials

- No questions or concerns were expressed.

Boundary County Library Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 7-20-23

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ACTION Item: Review and approval of proposed budget for 2023-24 budget year

- Motion to approve budget proposal for 2023-24 budget year: Lee Colson
Second: Aaron Bohachek
In Favor: Bob Blanford, Aaron Bohachek, Lee Colson, Wendy McClintock
Opposed: None

ACTION Item: Material Consideration for “*Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*”

Public Comments:

- Adrienne Norris: Filed the reconsideration request. She said there were 31 statements and 341 words inappropriate for minors. The book contains obscenity and, in her opinion, does not meet the Miller test bar for community standards as defined by code. She recommended removal of the book or moving it to the adult section of the library. Mrs. Norris chose to read the offensive language out loud and a break was taken so a visibly disturbed individual could excuse themselves. When asked if it was necessary to read all the offensive passages out loud Mrs. Norris said that it was.
- Linda Florivanti: said the book was completely offensive to her being and she considered it pornographic.
- Riland Lewis: As a fifteen-year-old Ms. Lewis said she had a unique perspective on the situation. A brightly colored book close to the children’s section was going to draw attention, and even a content warning would only serve to entice young people. Ms. Lewis said this was child endangerment.
- John Suza: talked about watching ‘R’ rated movies and said the profanity he saw in this book was worse.
- Beth Ashworth: read the book and talked about cutting through the foulmouthed character to the heart of the story - a teenager coming to grips with a friend, also a child, dying of cancer. The story speaks to the main character’s realization of his own selfishness and regret that he failed to capture the dying girl as herself, though he was able to make her laugh. Ms. Ashworth said there was great value to the book and that focusing on the foul language missed the point of the story.
- Greg Lamberty: spoke to the sinful nature of the content. He said we are all souls in bodies and that harm to the mind transfers to the soul.
- Doug Nowak: Shared his experience leading soldiers in the US Army. He related a personal story of one of his soldiers who was abusing his children. The individual used inappropriate media as a tool and a weapon to assist in the abuse, Nowak said. He talked about mental health issues caused by addiction to certain types of media.
- Mary McFarlane: talked about being a lifetime library user and supporter, but expressed concern over YA content considering her 7 year-old is reading above grade level and is reading books in the YA section.

Discussion:

- Lee Colson: Spoke about how funny he found the book. The characters and statements are realistic, he said. Anyone who has hung around with teenage boys has met someone like Earl. As an award-winning book that became a major motion picture, the book is a good fit for older teenage and new adult readers. These readers are an underserved and hard-to-reach audience, Colson said. He also talked about his support for the freedom to read, a movement that seeks to keep access available to literature.
- Aaron Bohachek: talked about the need to balance access and keeping questionable content from minors. He said the board needed to be mindful that the local community was more conservative than other similar communities when considering standards. Bohachek questioned Director Lynn Silva and former director Sandra Ashworth about the specific classification for YA books. Ashworth said that originally the section was upstairs and meant locally for older teenagers, though nationally the classification begins as low as 12 years old. Silva said that there is a movement in libraries to create a 'New Adult' section meant for 18 year old and up readers that might be more appropriate for this book.
- Bob Blanford: Said he felt it was appropriate to move the book upstairs, and to look into making a 'New Adult' section.

Motion to explore creating a 'New Adult' section upstairs and direct Library staff to create a rating rubric for the YA section and audit the downstairs shelves, remove 'Me and Earl and the Dying Girl' from the YA section and move it to a suitable place upstairs: Aaron Bohachek

Second: Lee Colson

In Favor: Bob Blanford, Aaron Bohachek, Lee Colson, Wendy McClintock

Opposed: None

ACTION Item: Adjournment of meeting: Motion to adjourn at 11:21 a.m.: Aaron Bohachek

Second: Lee Colson

In Favor: Bob Blanford, Aaron Bohachek, Lee Colson, Wendy McClintock

Opposed: None

Approved: _____

Date: _____

Wm Lee Colson
8/25/23