



LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16th, 2025

5:30 P.M.

DOWNTOWN RENO LIBRARY 301 S Center St, NV 89501

Library Trustees:

Ann Silver, Chair

Tami Ruf, Vice Chair

Gianna Jacks, Trustee

Lea Moser, Trustee

Marie Rodriguez, Trustee

## Salute to the Flag - Led by Trustee Rodriguez

### 1. Roll Call [Non-Action Item]

- Present – Chair Silver, Vice Chair Ruf, Trustee Rodriguez, Trustee Jacks, Trustee Moser

### 2. Reports

#### a) Library Director Update [Non-Action Item]

- Chair Ann Silver announced Director Jeff Scott's resignation.

#### b) Spanish Springs Library Update [Non-Action Item]

- Ann Silver called for silence several times due to disruptions in the audience.
- Branch Manager Jana MacMillan shared a slideshow of photographs highlighting the many events, outreach opportunities, and classes taught at the Spanish Springs library. Some of these events included a visit from a social media influencer who was part of a photoshoot, and journalism students from UNR who picked Spanish Springs for their "Hug a Library" event.
- MacMillan highlighted the many ways libraries support the Washoe County community including being a fire evacuation site, voting location, early literacy initiatives, hosting story time and baby socials to help support socialization and family bonding. Toddler Time includes performances from local artists and are very popular events.
- MacMillan continued with programs geared towards older children and teenagers such as the Lego Robotics program and camps, coding programs, Dungeons and Dragons program, Thursday craft studio (which is also open to all ages), and the newly renovated Teens Only space which now features a gallery of teen artwork, board games, a gaming station, chalk art walls, computers, and space that facilitates easy interaction. Spanish Springs library also engages in outreach programs to local reservations and schools.
- MacMillan mentioned the structural problems the branch is now facing, and the need to replace the recalled flooring. She pointed out former Director Scott's successful efforts to obtain grant funding for the Teens Only space and renovations to the public meeting room.
- Former Director Scott also received a grant for new technology that has been installed at Spanish Springs to enhance meeting experiences. MacMillan hopes that the board members will visit soon and see the improvements that have been made.

- MacMillan detailed highlights of the Spanish Springs library such as the sensory garden which is enjoyed by patrons and staff of all ages. She further detailed the many ways that community members use the library; they read, complete puzzles, crochet and quilt together, utilize the public meeting room and private zoom room, attend book clubs, and participate in the many library events.
- MacMillan shared photographs of the cards, books, notes, and treats that have been shared by thankful patrons. She mentioned the 520 paper hearts that are in display at Spanish Springs, each with a note from a patron about why they love the library.
- MacMillan shared invitations with the board for the Spanish Springs Library's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration and encouraged community members to attend. The celebration will include the Eagle Wings Pageant Dancers, the dedication of a new plaque honoring Sarah Winnemucca for which her family will be present, an Indian Taco truck, and cake.
- Chair Silver asked for questions and thanked MacMillan for her presentation. DA Kaplan clarified that all board members can attend as long as they do not gather together or give the appearance of discussing library matters. Chair Silver confirmed she will attend.
- DA Kaplan asked for confirmation that 2a and 7b were to be pulled from the agenda. Chair Silver confirmed.

#### c) Marketing and Communications Team Update [Non-Action Item]

- Development Officer Jamie Hemingway and Library Assistant III Brad Bynum gave a brief overview of their department roles. Trustee Jacks left the board table.
- Bynum covered the duties of Marketing and Communications (MarCom) including posters, signage, social media, partnerships with local organizations, editing and approving branch-created communications, and the creation of the Explorer Magazine. All library marketing and communications adhere to journalism standards, AP style, and ADA standards. Bynum stressed that MarCom is a team effort, and their mission is to share clear and concise marketing with consistent branding, and to get patrons into the libraries to have a good time. All communications are reviewed on a weekly basis.
- Bynum detailed the Explorer magazine and how it promotes all branch events in one convenient format. The Explorer's cover currently features a local magician performing at the North Valleys library. Each issue features a "Meet the Librarian"

section that highlights a different staff member for each issue. Bynum explained how this feature allows the community to understand what Librarians do and gives staff an opportunity to share their branch programs.

- The MarCom team is currently working on the summer edition of the Explorer which will focus on the Incline Village branch, celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> year. Bynum highlighted how libraries are community centers, and nearly all the branches have rotating art exhibitions. Bynum detailed the library's partnerships with local artists and organizations such as Bruka Theater, The Holland Project, and the Pioneer Center.
- Bynum continued with the ways in which the library engages with the public via social media. MarCom hopes to utilize their YouTube channel more in the future.
- Hemingway spoke about the Summer Reading Challenge and the efforts being made by the branches and the Friends of the Library. The reading log is available in Spanish and English. The challenge will be advertised in the summer installment of the Explorer magazine.
- Bynum mentioned the community partnerships that the library relies on including local art entities, PBS Reno, and NV Humanities. He asked the audience to follow the Washoe County Library System on social media and to look out for the next Explorer issue.
- Chair Silver thanked Bynum and Hemingway for their presentation. She expressed her appreciation for the Explorer magazine and requested more copies for the Chamber of Commerce.
- Trustee Moser asked about the publication date for the summer issue. Bynum said it is scheduled for June 1<sup>st</sup>.

### 3. Public Comment – Three-Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]

- Nicol Herris: Invited the board and community to come together to improve the library system. Called for strong leadership with clear and direct intentions.

- Valerie Wade: Expressed concern over former Director Scott's resignation. Questioned how the board will move forward and what will happen to the library system as a result.
- Joni Hammond: Questioned why the board was not part of the budget planning. Expressed concern over library culture and atmosphere. Mentioned alleged file on conservatives.
- Drew Ribar: Thanked Chair Silver for increasing public comment time and for comments at the BCC meeting. Expressed concerns about the library having an alleged list of their detractors. and appreciation for Scott's resignation. Called for the appointment of a director who resides outside the political spectrum. Spoke about the Book Mobile, funding, and the need for a new North Valleys library.
- Chair Silver called for a short recess to fix microphone issue. After two minutes, Chair Silver called for an additional 2 minute recess.
- Public comment continued at 6:36pm
- Cliff Nellis: Expressed support for libraries existing and hope that librarians would adjust to the new director. Stated he did not condone book banning, just relocation of children's books to adult sections. Called for library to invite conservative and traditionalist opinions. Thanked board.
- Alan Munson: Thanked board. Asked for books with perceived pornographic elements be moved to adult section. Appreciates what the library provides, just wants a few changes.
- Eithne Barton: Expressed appreciation for library activities and opinion that they are open and inclusive spaces for all. Needs of libraries are growing and surveys show high employee satisfaction. Called for the board to find ways to continue vital library services.
- Alan de Queiroz: Thanked board. Cited literacy survey amongst children and the library's impact. Listed the services libraries provide. Asked the board to keep the library budget as stable as possible.

- Maggie Babb: Expressed concern for local tensions and the resignation of Jeff Scott. Outlined events in other counties that seem to show a trend towards library scrutiny and budget reduction. Reminded board of Nevada's battle-born spirit and urged them to prioritize freedom of information and to support the library.
- Tar de Queiroz: Mentioned the trustee trainings and called for transparency from the board. Audited Jeff Scott's evaluation, starting with Section 1. Mentioned the strategic plan that was outlined in a past agenda packet.
- Rosie Zuckerman: Continued evaluation audit with Section 2. Expressed concern that Jeff Scott was not impartially evaluated. Mentioned detailed agenda packets and past budget breakdowns.
- Ryan Stark: Continued evaluation audit with Section 3. Mentioned detailed agenda packets. Questioned if there is any evidence that library funds were mismanaged. Expressed concern for trustee relationships with each other and emphasized their responsibility for Jeff Scott's departure.
- Ilya Arbatman: Continued evaluation audit with Section 4. Responded to board comments on the evaluation and emphasized Jeff Scott's work to educate the community about WC1. Called for the board members to resign.
- Naseem Jamnea: Noted misinformation about WC1, and questioned board members' effectiveness. Urged board members to support the library amongst the looming budget crisis.
- Carol Cooke: Thanked librarians. Expressed concern that board members did not fulfill their supervisory responsibilities with Jeff Scott. Shared positive library experiences and hope that the board will work well with the new director.
- Janet Butcher: Thanked board for fiscal guardianship. Outlined the backgrounds of a couple of the board members and their qualifications.
- Amy Pulver: Urged board to think strategically. Expressed concern for Jeff Scott's departure and the future of the library.

- Jennifer Cassaday: Expressed appreciation for libraries and concerns over the “extremists” in the community who want to dissolve the library system. Voiced disappointment in board member who attended the recent BCC meeting. Called for behind the scenes information to be shown regarding the board’s reasoning for their director evaluation scores and comments.
- Jennifer Cole: Librarian at South Valleys. Expressed support for Jeff Scott and asserted that high employee satisfaction was due to his leadership. Hopes the next director will shield and support staff in the same way.
- Cate Salim: Addressed concerns about board members. Questioned the evaluation process. Urged board to take concerns seriously and take action to improve.
- Colin Robertson: Thanked board. Spoke in support of libraries and library funding. Outlined resources available at the library and its fundamental place in the community. Urged the board to act as stewards of the library system in the absence of a director.
- Candace Powell: Mentioned misinformation regarding WC1 and the exit of Jeff Scott. Expressed hope that the board, library, and community can move forward and adapt.
- Kerry Williams: Reminisced about childhood experiences at the downtown library. Concerned with the current “toxicity”. Questioned why libraries are receiving backlash.
- Jnn Archerd: Expressed admiration for librarians who persevere through the current adversity and continue to serve the community. Raised concerns about layoffs and “anti-intellectual” forces at work against the library. Shared personal connection with the library.
- Laura Wade: Expressed support for Jeff Scott and his work as director. Mentioned the evaluation and requested a score-by-score reasoning from the board. Expressed appreciation for queer book selection at the library and urged board to maintain the library as a safe space. Mentioned board member who left during the Spanish Springs presentation.

- Jaisha Webb: Disheartened by Jeff Scott's resignation. Expressed admiration for his leadership. Urged board to find a new director who values diversity. Mentioned director evaluation and questioned personal bias of board members. Urged the board to reconsider evaluation questions. Mentioned board member who left during presentation.
- Krysta Flannigan: Mentioned director's evaluation and the negative board comments. Questioned board member bias and priorities.
- Bruce Parks: Requested the community to not hold the board responsible for Jeff Scott's resignation. Mentioned FOIA emails. Expressed support for board.
- Laura Wetherington: Thanked the board. Raised concerns about board member's political ties.
  - Chair Silver intervened and reminded Wetherington not to name board members specifically.
- Wetherington (continued): Called for trustee removal and for future evaluation comments to not be anonymous.
- Chair Silver called for a 5 minute break. Public comment resumed at 7:52pm.
- Vaungaylyn Zarcone: Concerned about Jeff Scott's resignation. Urged the board to declare their clear support for libraries and to create stability for the system.
- Nancy Carlson: Thanked board. Expressed concerns about library management. Mentioned WC1. Cited online article that stated libraries have become "unsafe".
- Virginia Larmore: Outlined board of trustee duties. Urged board to accept criticisms and prove they are supportive of libraries.
- Gail Townsend: Expressed support for public libraries and librarians, but voiced criticisms of the board and their treatment of Jeff Scott. Shared personal family connections and desire to stand with "the erased".



- Jean Griffith: Expressed concerns about book banning, removal, and library antagonists. Questioned what detractors will push for with the new director. Urged the board to support his replacement.
- Paul Larson: Thanked MacMillan for her presentation on the Spanish Springs branch. Refuted earlier commenter's claims about book banning. Claimed library has a list of conservatives and his name is on it. Expressed support for the library.
- Heidi Young: Frequents the North Valley branch. Called for the board to fully fund the library and to not lay off staff or cut programs.
- Chris Knox: Thanked trustees and MacMillan for her presentation. Questioned whether Jeff Scott's evaluation accurately reflected his performance. Urged the board to act in alignment with the library's best interests.
- Vidd Gomez: Mentioned staff satisfaction survey and expressed disappointment in the board's perceived lack of support for the library. Questioned board's competency.
- Kaitlin Nichols: Expressed appreciation for the library system and its staff. Discussed WC1 and concerns about library funding. Urged the board to select a director who supports diversity, fights book bans, and is a champion of the library.
- Fred Myer: Commented on the library "culture" and expressed gratitude for Jeff Scott's resignation. Compared the current library situation to the presidential election and called for a "cleansing". Expressed support for the board.
- Trista Gomez: Expressed appreciation for libraries but concern about the books available to children. Thanked Chair Silver for her comments at the BCC meeting. Questioned library's funding needs.
- Jude Fliegler: Expressed appreciation for libraries and support for Jeff Scott. Addressed budget crisis and economic fears. Urged community and board members to avoid "scapegoating" and find solutions.
- Kate Fernandez: Expressed appreciation for the library and concern for the board's behavior.

- Penny Brock: Thanked Silver for her BCC comments. Addressed library budget and audit report. Called for more transparency.
- Andrew Maurins: Recalled panic when WC1 did not pass, and fears for future layoffs. Urged board and library staff to work together to find a solution. Sustainable library funding should be at the top of the board's priorities.
- Julie Ullman: Branch manager from South Valleys. Spoke about the library budget and shared that the library only receives 2% of the Washoe County budget. Asked for clarification on the board's solution to the current budget problems.
- Ryeanna Iverly: Addressed LGBTQ+ discrimination. Called for unity and open-mindedness. Requested final minute of time be used in silence.
- Deya Miranda: Shared that they use the library to read, be informed, do research, and that it is a safe place for them. Expressed appreciation for library staff. Urged board to understand library's importance.
- Valerie V: Thanked the board for their service. Spoke on Jeff Scott's resignation and referenced past comments about an alleged list of agitator names. Questioned board bias. Hopes the new director will be at the center of the community and reflect the needs and desires of everyone. Referenced FOIA emails.
- Chair Silver thanked speakers

#### 4. Board Comment [Non-Action Item]

- Trustee Moser thanked commentators and expressed her previous desire to have a relationship with Jeff Scott despite perceived obfuscation. Addressed the director's evaluation and clarified her intention to improve the libraries. Additionally, Moser clarified that she has visited all the libraries and is a 5<sup>th</sup> generation Nevadan who grew up with libraries. She outlined her professional history and urged community members to recognize why the board members were selected for this volunteer position. Called for emergency meetings to discuss the budget and said the audit was not provided to the board. Addressed the budget problems. Validated some commenter's fears regarding the future and emphasized that the board has the "right intentions" and is trying their best.

- Trustee Jacks thanked commentators and echoed Moser's sentiments about the board being strong and supportive. Shared her respect for her fellow board members.
- Trustee Rodriguez shared her frustrations with the budget and her fellow board members' comments on the director's evaluation. Expressed her concern that her colleagues were not following HR's instructions to evaluate for the three-month period only and to base their scores on "legitimate reasons". In her view, the evaluation does not accurately reflect Jeff Scott's work besides the lack of budget clarity. Outlined the ways in which Scott was present and engaged with the community and employees, citing the high scores on the employee satisfaction survey. Emphasized role of intellectual freedom regarding books being available in public libraries. Expressed sadness that Scott resigned without giving the board a chance to share ways he could improve. Shared she felt he was doing well overall. Asked if his resignation could be rejected by the board. DA Kaplan responded that it cannot. Rodriguez emphasized that if she could reject the resignation, she would.
- VC Ruf thanked the public for voicing their opinions. Mentioned that all comments that were sent via email and forwarded by the library's Administrative Assistant were read by her. As the only librarian on the board, Ruf assured the public that she is confident the board will find an appropriate director. Expressed appreciation for library staff and encouraged them to come to her with any questions. Clarified board members' commitment to libraries and her personal goal to keep the libraries open and fully staffed.
- Chair Silver appreciated constructive feedback. Shared she was caught unawares by Jeff Scott's resignation. Clarified open meeting law. Shared again that Scott's resignation was unexpected. Emphasized that the outcome of the meeting had he not resigned is unknown. Called for more frequent meetings to address the budget and prevent layoffs. Expressed desire to see the library system thrive and urged the public not to be afraid. Thanked the public for their candor but assured them they are in good hands.

## 5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Meeting minutes approved unanimously.

## 6. Old Business

- None

## 7. New Business

### a. Recognizing National Volunteer Month Honoring Library Volunteers with Report [Non-Action Item]

- Jamie Hemingway shared that she worked with Jeff Scott to get the volunteer program up and running after a hiatus. Passed out a list of award-winning volunteers, including those that earned the President's Volunteer Service Award. Outlined volunteer support areas which include helping patrons, shelving books, cleaning shelves/computers/tables, marching during parade appearances, and assisting with clerical work. Expressed gratitude for all the library volunteers.
- Hemingway and Brad Bynum read the list of award-winning volunteers from each branch and passed around photos of volunteers for recognition.
- Hemingway read the recognition for volunteer week passed by the BCC; April 20-26<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers will be celebrated at their home branches. Thanked volunteer coordinators for their hard work.
- Chair Silver thanked Hemingway and Bynum for their presentation. Trustee Moser asked about the organization of the handout regarding volunteer numbers and names listed. Hemingway clarified that they combined current and award-winning volunteers to highlight those that had not been honored in the past.

### 7. 90-day performance evaluation of Washoe County Library Director, Jeff Scott, to include: an update on the results of the 90-day performance evaluation feedback survey by Washoe County Human Resources, an update on accomplishments by Library Director Scott, and a discussion by the Library Board of Trustees on the job performance of Director Scott and possible action including, but not limited to, corrective action plan, reduction in pay, reprimand, endorsement, engagement, retention, dismissal if necessary, or 'no action'. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

- Canceled due to resignation.

## 8. Public Comment – Three-Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]

- Ilya Arbatman: Spoke on fascism and concern that the board would "capitulate to extremists". Mentioned Chair Silver's comments at the BCC meeting regarding

the library budget. Urged the board to consider the consequences of their actions.

- Chair Silver expressed that she did not appreciate the personal attacks.
- Artman continued to express concern for the library's future. Urged the board to be concerned by some of the public comments.
- Gail Townsend: Continued her earlier comment. Addressed Scott's evaluation and expressed the opinion that it did not accurately reflect his work. Expressed hope that the new director will be a competent professional librarian who will not "cave to the opposition". Questioned if the board truly supports the library system and wished them luck going forward.
- Cate Salim: Expressed shock over Scott's resignation. Shared she has been a Washoe county employee for 25 years and experienced the budget crisis of 2008. Understands the fear so many employees are facing. Attends every board meeting and expressed appreciation for the presentations and how much she learns each time. Appreciated the hard work of library staff. Hopes the board will hire a new director who appreciates librarians.
- Naseem Jamnia: Thanked Trustee Rodriguez for her support and Chair Silver for requesting additional meetings. Urged board to listen to librarians and work with them to fully understand what happens behind the scenes. Hopes they choose a new director with librarian experience.

## 9. Staff Announcements [Non-Action Item]

- None.

## 10. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 9:27pm