

Provo City Library Board of Directors

Wednesday, September 14, 2022
4:00 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE

LIBRARY BOARD

Karen Salmon (Chair)
Megen Pecto
Rebecca Burton
Cindy Gagon
Julie Nichols
Jen Bruton
Alyssa Hansen
Jenny Spadafora

ABSENT

Dave Shipley
Ally Condie

LIBRARY STAFF

Carla Gordon (Director)
Amy Limón
Breanne Gilroy
Ann-Marie Marchant
Joella Bagshaw

GUESTS

none

Meeting began at 4:00 p.m. in the Library Board Room.

MINUTES

1. Welcome - Karen Salmon
 - a. Approval of Minutes from May 11 and June 29 minutes. Megen Pectol. motioned to approved the minutes, and Julie Nichols seconded the motion. We should start by introducing ourselves.
 - b. Board Member's Reports
 - i. Jen Bruton's preschooler goes to Sunrise Preschool and said that the library people visited them at their school and said it was the best activity they've ever had. She asked how this is coordinated? Carla answered that we contacted several preschools and set up monthly visits to them and we have a grant to get books specific for the preschools
 - ii. Alyssa Hansen said that the Harry Potter event for adults was very fun, as well as the adult side craft kits were great to do as a family. Carla mentioned that those have been very popular.
 - iii. Jenny S said that her daughter also loves those craft kids. She also loves that we are so interactive and not so much a quiet study

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place. She mentioned the builder boxes and how they check those out every time. She also loves the Attic exhibit right now with all interactive art projects.

- iv. Megen P said that the newsletter in the emails have been really helpful for staying in the loop, as well as social media because then she can share with friends. She also mentioned the United Way garden help that Carla and Ann-Marie helped with.
- v. Karen S said that she went to a library in Phoenix and they do a seed program. Carla mentioned that we are working towards that but we are in the research phase. If we had consistent volunteers to run it, we could keep it going because it time consuming. Karen attended the big retirement event for Gene and that was fun.

2. Library Director's Report

- a. Carla went through a handout
 - i. Report on library events in July & August (see handout)
 - ii. Talked about upcoming programs in September & October. (see handout)
 - iii. Library Updates (See handout)
 - iv. Volunteering Opportunities for the board (see handout)
- b. Carla went over the annual report (see board packet). We will be sending this out to everyone we have emails for (patrons) so that the community can have an idea of what we're doing.
- c. There are still more seats about the Project Read spelling bee. Jenny S would like to come and Alyssa would maybe like to come.

3. Action Items

- a. Election of a vice chairperson - Carla explained that the vice chair will become the chair when the current chair is done. Jen B nominated herself and Cindy G immediately motioned that that she would also nominate Jen B. Julie N seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously that Jen Bruton will be the vice chairperson.
- b. Vote on renaming the Attic to the Gene Nelson Attic - Karen explained that this is not new news because the board has talked about this and it was announced at Gene's retirement party that the attic would be named after him. Megen P motioned that we rename the attic and Julie N seconded

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the motion. The board voted unanimously that the attic will now be the Gene Nelson Attic. There will be a new sign above the exhibit welcome desk and a plaque that has information about Gene.

4. Discussion Item

- a. Proposal Regarding Abraham O Smoot Statue - Karen S reminded the board and new members that in our March 2022 board meeting, students from BYU came and gave a presentation about the statue and proposed a new plaque next to the statue acknowledging that he was an enslaver and mentioning the individuals were enslaved. Karen mentioned that the subcommittee appointed met with members of the Smoot family that has done research on this subject. Jen B summarized the students' presentation - that research has found that there were four individuals enslaved to Smoot. The students' proposed that the library have a new plaque or a separate plaque that acknowledges this part of Smoot's history. The family's presented that they know and acknowledge the family's history but their research contradicts the students' research. Jen summarized that the subcommittee proposes to have a statement from the Smoot family on the library website and want their research available to the public, but the research is incomplete and they are still working on it. The family has been working on digitizing documents to have them available to the public. Karen S added that it seems like it is still not clear whether or not the actually enslaved anyone, though it is clear he had a lot of dependents. Jen suggests that we have a link to biographies and more information about Smoot that are available at the library. Karen added that the question of whether or not Smoot was an enslaver is not relevant to what Smoot did for the library. She would feel fine leaving things as they are since there is still more research to be done. The smoot family is not trying to hide their past, and the library is not trying to hide it either, and Karen reminded the board that it is not an action item, just a discussion item. Julie Nichols mentioned that you can find faults with everyone in history. Jen B added that her discomfort with it is in the contradicting evidence, not necessarily whether or not we need to acknowledge this history. It's important to her whether or not these individuals mentioned were free to stay with Smoot or were enslaved by him. Alyssa H stated that she believes that when we are discussing these things, it's important

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to make the distinction of where our discomfort lies. She did not know that slavery was legal in Utah at the time. Karen S also mentioned that if the library does anything, it may set a precedent for other individuals we have on the library's walls. Carla will send out all the information that the students presented as well as the family. Jen mentioned that she thinks it would be great if the students' and family's research could be published and be available in the library. Carla mentioned that the family would like to have the individuals recognized but they are not sure what is the appropriate action or place for doing this. The board is invited to think about this issue and it will be an action item on our November agenda.

- b. Basement Creative Lab Policy - Carla updated the board on this policy because we will be making a change to this policy that we will vote on in our November meeting. As of now, the Basement Creative Lab can only be used by Provo residents. Orem residents can get a library card, and we have non-resident cards available, but only Provo residents could use the lab. We made this policy because we anticipated that the lab would be busier than it is. We would like the lab to be used more, so we would like to change the policy to make the lab available to anyone that has a library card with Provo. Carla went through the policy and pointed out specifics of the policy. Megen mentioned that people just don't know about it. The hours are difficult, the door is closed, and communication with them is spotty. Carla mentioned that we have promoted the lab a lot. We put promotions about it in the emails, though not everyone on our email lists have are Provo residents. Jen asked if we have promoted it to schools? Carla answered that it's difficult because you have to be 13 and older, with parental permission. Erika is not here, but she plans to do more lab projects for families down in the lab. Karen suggested that the door needs to be better and more welcoming. We may be able to put a window in the door, and we need to better streamline the use of the space. We don't charge people for extra time on the computers anymore, so that change will need to be made as well.

5. Julie N motioned to adjourn the meeting, Alyssa H seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.