

Phillips Public Library Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
September 28, 2023

**Trustees present (in person or via zoom):**

Galen Azbell (zoom), Brian Ernst, Meredith Hueckman, Bruce Marshall, Marc Peterson, Kristi Speer, Becky Steinbach, Beth Tenut, Laura Tomaszewski (zoom), Brittany Weisrock

**Trustees absent:**

Jenny Markle

**Staff present:**

Rebecca Puhl, Jody Eckert (zoom)

**Call to order/establishment of a quorum**

Meeting opened by Brittany at 5:30 p.m.

**Public Comments**

1. Joe Fox: regarding his concerns over Flamer (language, sexually explicit), requesting it be moved to the adult section.
2. Lynn Boers: regarding her concerns over Flamer (pornography).
3. Patti Nutt: regarding establishing truths and absolutes.
4. Shirley Smith: in support of keeping Flamer in the YA so they can learn and experience through books.

**Comments on questions from the public submitted at the previous meeting**

- None submitted.

**Communication and Correspondence**

All correspondence submitted to the board via email prior to the meeting.

**Approval of 9/7/2023 minutes (regular August meeting)**

Motion made by Bruce.

Seconded by Meredith.

To approve the September 7, 2023, minutes as submitted.

Motion carried.

**Reports:**

**1. Treasurer's Report**

Report provided. No action needed.

**2. Director's Report**

Becky provided comments on her written report. No action needed.

**3. Staff Meeting Minutes**

Report provided. No action needed.

**4. Circulation report**

Becky offered various graphs. No action needed.

**Unfinished Business:**

**1. Discussion/Action on Library Building Project**

- Received update that switching from rolling to stationary bookshelves averages approximately \$100 savings per shelf.
- Will continue looking for seating options for joint use by parents and children.
- Will start assembling a list of local contractors for custom desks and shelves for the library staff areas.

**2. 2024 Budget update**

Becky attended the city's budget meeting on September 26.

**3. Discussion/Action on Library Friends Group**

- Becky has a list of people interested (around a dozen or so).

**4. Discussion/Action on Library Mission/Future/Survey**

Discussion was had regarding the Library Mission Statement, confirming it correctly represents our discussions.

Motion made by Bruce.

Seconded by Kristi.

To adopt the mission statement as drafted.

Motion carried.

Discussion regarding survey, including format of questions and frequency (12 questions, one per month). Goal to start January 2024. We will keep fine-tuning questions.

**5. Discussion/Action on challenged materials policy/procedure**

Discussion regarding the Challenged Books policy as presented.

Motion made by Marc.

Seconded by Beth.

To adopt the challenged books policy as presented.

Motion carried.

**New Business:**

**1. Approval of August 2023 Bills**

Motion made by Beth.

Seconded by Meredith.

To approve the September 2023 bills as presented--\$2,826.26 above the line and \$0.00 below the line.

Motion carried.

## **2. Discussion/Action on misinformation in children's literature**

Discussion: Rebecca P. expressed concerns over the truth or lies in the books available to children in the fiction section. Being that they are in the fiction section, the books will stay where they are without monitoring.

## **3. Discussion/Action on challenged book**

*Flamer* by Mike Curato

Discussion: Beth: concerns about bullying context. Galen: response to bullying interetation. Meredith: concerns about the suicide attempt, sexual explicitness, foul language. Rebecca P.: explained criteria for shelving between YA and New Adult. Brittany: explained why a different book, "Court of Mist and Fury" was shelved in the New Adult instead of YA. Galen: gave comparison of other classic books also having inappropriate language. Rebecca P.: explained desire to keep it in YA as it fits that criteria with the age of the protagonist, etc.. Brittany: expressed thought that youth will screen for themselves. Bruce: concerns about presentation of the sexual explicitness and vulgarity. Becky P.: 14 libraries in the MORE system have in their collections, and 10 more libraries have it on order. Marc: offered support to YA being the correct classification; Brian: agrees it is for YA, but not appropriate for our library. Kristi: concern over the volume of obscenities and other dirt far exceeding the good (Kristi). Brittany: life is dirty. Galen: the language is integral to the telling of the story.

Motion made by Bruce.

Seconded by Brian.

To remove the book from the collection on the basis of obscenity, an exception to the 1st Amendment.

Further discussion: Becky S.: the book is to support people who are experiencing similar situations. Brittany: similar sentiments of support. Marc: clarified this motion would only remove the physical copy from our shelves, with the material still being available to be requested through the MORE system.

Roll Call Vote:

Galen Azbell: Nay

Brian Ernst: Aye

Meredith Hueckman: Aye

Bruce Marshall: Aye

Marc Peterson: Nay

Kristi Speer: Aye

Becky Steinbach: Nay

Beth Tenut: Aye

Laura Tomaszewski: Nay

Brittany Weisrock: Nay

**Motion failed.**

## **4. Time for reading of questions from the public for comment at the Oct. meeting**

Question from Lynn Boers: can we receive a copy of the challenge report which is presented to the board members? Answer. Once the meeting happens, the report is public record.

Briefly discussed. At the next meeting, we will address open record laws, as they apply to our meetings and materials.

**5. Other new business to add to the agenda for the next meeting**

Discussion regarding ideas for names of sections in the YA collection.

**6. Set date and time for next meeting**

The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 2, 2023, at **5:30 p.m.**, in the Library community room. A zoom link will be provided.

**Adjournment:**

Motion made by Galen.

Seconded by Brian.

To adjourn.

Motion carried.

Brittany adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi Speer