

**CITY OF BOULDER  
BOULDER, COLORADO  
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS MEETING  
MINUTES**

<b>Name of Board/ Commission:</b> Library Commission	
<b>Date of Meeting:</b> June 7, 2017 at the Carnegie Branch Library, 1125 Pine St.	
<b>Contact information preparing summary:</b> Maureen Malone, 303-441-3106	
<b>Commission members present:</b> Alicia Gibb, Joni Teter, Juana Gomez, Tim O'Shea <b>Commission members absent:</b> Joel Koenig	
<p><b>Library staff present:</b> David Farnan, Director of Library &amp; Arts Maureen Malone, Administrative Specialist II Wendy Hall, Carnegie Branch Library Branch Manager</p> <p><b>City Staff Present:</b> Wendy Schwartz, Planning &amp; Program Development Manager</p> <p><b>Others Present:</b> Aaron Schonhoff, Joining Vision and Action (JVA)</p> <p><b>Members of the public present:</b> Paul Sutter</p>	
<b>Type of Meeting:</b> Regular	
<b>Agenda Item 1: Call to order and approval of agenda</b>	<b>[6:01 p.m., 0:00:00 Audio min.]</b>
The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.	
Gibb proposed moving Agenda Item 8F: Initial Analysis Summary of the Library Master Plan Community Survey after Agenda Item 5.	
<b>Agenda Item 2: Public comment</b>	<b>[6:02 p.m., 0:01:00 Audio min.]</b>
None	
<b>Agenda Item 3: Consent agenda</b>	<b>[6:02 p.m., 0:01:08 Audio min.]</b>
<p><b>Item 3A, Approval of May 3, 2017 Meeting Minutes</b> Gomez reiterated her enthusiastic support for Teter's comment on p. 3 under Agenda Item 7, regarding the Boulder Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA) proposal: "Teter commented that the recent effort around the Civic Area has been focused on activation and wondered how the theater space would be activated outside of scheduled performances."</p> <p>O'Shea moved to approve the minutes, and Teter seconded. Vote 4-0, unanimous.</p>	
<b>Agenda Item 4: Discuss options with Human Services for addressing needs of library patrons experiencing homelessness – Wendy Schwartz, Human Services planning and program development manager</b>	<b>[6:04 p.m., 0:02:49 Audio min.]</b>
<p><b>Commission discussion, questions, and comments included:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• O'Shea asked Schwartz for some historical context and trends with relation to homeless services in Boulder and how the library has factored in to the equation. Schwartz explained that public libraries everywhere are a place where people experiencing homelessness like to go due to their nature as a light-touch environment that is open to the public. Boulder has a variety of homeless services that began as a bunch of individual groups of people doing good work; the focus now of the Homelessness Strategy and the city's efforts in partnership with the county and local nonprofits, is to turn these individual groups into a system, to understand how people access services, who's falling through the cracks, who's not being set down the right path, and focus on getting people housed. Regardless of the services being offered, the library will continue to be a convenient place to go, where people feel comfortable.</li> <li>• Teter commented that it is important to focus on offering library services at the library and not cross the line into human services. The 3 main things that come up in complaints from patrons about the homeless are the smell, the</li> </ul>	

fact that people are in the bathrooms doing laundry and washing up, and that they have all their stuff with them. Teter suggested a few ways Human Services might be able to help address library needs around homelessness services, to help take pressure off the library and address the perceptual problems among patrons:

- Advocate for more restrooms in the Civic Area
- Develop a place for people to wash up and do laundry
- Find a place where people can store their personal belongings
- Gomez commented that the Capital Improvement Tax Renewal proposals for restrooms in the Civic Area have been negatively received by the citizen committee. Teter expressed her hope that commission might reiterate to council that they want restrooms on the ballot, and added that it would be great if Human Services would voice their support as well. Schwartz replied that Parks and Recreation has been leading the effort to investigate restroom options for the Civic Area, including the porta potty pilot. Schwartz then shared that the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless is available from 6-8 a.m., 365 days a year for people to shower, do laundry, have breakfast, check mail and use storage lockers. Teter wondered if the location of the shelter is a barrier for use. Schwartz responded that the Human Services Strategy is looking to prioritize community resources for people with higher needs that have been in the community a longer time, and the focus is to have a more intensive suite of services available day and night at Boulder Shelter for the Homeless. For the other 80% of the people accessing emergency homeless services, Schwartz explained that there will be a navigation path to help prevent people from entering the homeless services system, or at least reduce the time they are in the system, by helping them get back into housing.
- Teter wondered how people find out about the services available. Schwartz replied that Human Services is proposing to have two coordinated entrance points, the shelter and the navigation center, with the hope that everyone in the city will know where they are located and be able to direct people in need. Teter explained that library staff need to be informed about where to send someone who is bathing or doing laundry in the library's restrooms, and expressed that it would be helpful for Human Services staff to continue to represent the library's needs, since the library is perceived as unsafe by a significant portion of the community.
- O'Shea stated that the delineation between library services and human services is challenging, and expressed a hope for greater collaboration between the two departments, as well as some risk-taking on both sides; he suggested looking outside of what's working or not in Boulder and take lessons from what other communities are trying.
- Gibb asked whether there is anything in the Homelessness Strategy that specifically addresses the library. Schwartz responded that no matter how great the services that are being offered are, people will continue to go where they feel comfortable. Human Services hopes that a focus on people with the greatest barriers to housing will help people feel that they don't need to conduct daily activities in public facilities. Schwartz added that it's important to separate behavioral issues from homelessness, and have consistent rules and expectations in place that apply to everyone, in order to maintain safety and comfort for everyone in a public space.
- O'Shea asked how people know where to find services, when new to the homeless community in Boulder. Schwartz replied that there is a very strong social network, both through word of mouth and social media. O'Shea asked Farnan whether staff has explored strategies around communicating to the homeless community. Farnan explained that staff take great pains to identify changing services and circulate the information unofficially, but don't reach out to the homeless population via social media. Gomez asked whether there is a visual announcement of available services somewhere downtown, and Schwartz stated that there is a brochure that has been distributed to downtown businesses, but information is traditionally spread via word of mouth, and more recently through social media. Teter commented that it would be helpful to have something more formal to set a different expectation; currently, if someone has disruptive behavior, they get banned, and that's not the best solution.
- Teter stated that it would be great to have support from Human Services when identifying needs for the system or speaking to City Council. Gibb wondered whether Human Services would sign a partnership letter to council advocating for Civic Area restrooms, and O'Shea added that it would be worthwhile to clarify to council that restrooms would address a few different concerns. Schwartz said she would speak to her director about the letter.
- Farnan stated that library staff will be requesting to include the Main Library restroom renovation in the 2018 budget cycle.

**Agenda Item 5: Discuss proposal from Boulder Bridge House for summer case management services at the Main Library [6:55 p.m., 0:53:54 Audio min.]**

**Commission discussion, questions, and comments included:**

- Gibb read aloud a comment from Koenig (see [handouts](#)).
- Gibb stated that from previous discussions, her understanding was that Human Services is trying to narrow down the intake points, whereas the proposal from Bridge House would broaden the system. Schwartz agreed that staff wants to have limited coordinated intake points, but stated that there may need to be some form of outreach team in the community to reach people who may not have access to one of those centralized points.

- Teter commented that this is not the right proposal at the right time. All of the other case management locations, with the exception of the municipal court, are places that already provide homeless services, but to approach people at the library regarding these services could be considered profiling. Teter expressed her concern that there is already a big expectation for library staff to provide information about homeless services; to have someone in the library available only 3 hours a week will create confusion during the other 68 hours a week that the library is open. Teter suggested that there should be a more thorough conversation down the line about whether it makes sense to have a social worker at the library, but in her opinion, this crosses the line into human services and should not come out of the library budget.
- Farnan shared the pros and cons that staff prepared regarding the proposal:
  - Pros: addresses the issue of safety – staff indicated in the Master Plan survey that the library needs to be doing more to help the homeless and improve the perception of safety in the library; it would be a pilot program with a limited time frame
  - Cons: not mission focused; uncertainty about library’s capacity to expand the service to multiple days if successful; concern about profiling patrons; increases the perception that the library is a service point; 3 hours/week is not enough and would only create confusion and frustration for both staff and patrons
- O’Shea agreed that this may not be the right proposal, but expressed his support for exploring a broader strategy; Boulder is a smart and savvy community, and if we can’t try things, we’re never going to learn. Farnan agreed that staff needs to try something, but is looking for a solution that benefits the homeless as well as the library’s needs; Denver Public Library has no metrics about how their methods help the homeless. O’Shea commented that while he agrees that the solution should fit into the library’s mission and capacity, this is an opportunity for the library to be a thought leader and underscore certain values that we hold true for all patrons; issues such as mental health, access to and affordability of housing and nutrition could also apply to the elderly population or at-risk youth, but there is a stigma when it comes to the homeless population, and the library can do better.
- Teter stated that the issue of homelessness will need to be addressed in the Master Plan, so it will be critical have a discussion with Human Services in the late summer/early fall. Schwartz commented that the timing would work well since the implementation plan for the Homelessness Strategy will be more solidified by then. O’Shea suggested that with the disruption and displacement that will accompany the Civic Area activation, it is a good time to start thinking creatively about proposals for restrooms and places for intake services downtown.
- Gibb moved that at this time, the library chooses to pass on this proposal due to resources, funding and focusing on the main roles that the library plays within the community. Teter seconded. All in favor.

**Agenda Item 6: Initial Analysis Summary: Library Master Plan Community Survey | Draft [7:21 p.m., 1:20:35 Audio min.]**

**Commission discussion, questions, and comments included:**

- Gibb read aloud a comment from Koenig (see [handouts](#)).
- Teter asked for clarification on the subcommunities mentioned in the analysis, explaining that in the context of a possible North Boulder Branch, it would be helpful to understand who we are serving and how we are serving them; she thinks the group of residents east of Folsom and north of Valmont would fall into the sphere of North Boulder service (see subcommunity map in [handouts](#)). Schonhoff replied that respondents self-identified their community in the survey, and no map was provided, so he can’t say exactly where people are from.
- Farnan explained that the trend of people 65 and older valuing library services at a lower rate is a national trend, despite their usage numbers being quite good; this age group had high participation in the survey, but accounts for less than 10% of Boulder’s population, so they have a disproportionate representation in the survey results.
- O’Shea commented that there is a significant gap in those who support the library by advocating for the library and those making monetary donations (p. 66 of [packet](#)), and stated that it would be helpful for the Library Foundation to see the monetary and time donations broken down by gender, age, and neighborhood to measure against actual giving and campaigns.
- Farnan wondered what will be done with the responses to open-ended questions, and added that he is interested in the message that resonates with people that value the library highly to generate stronger allegiance and desire to give money or time, rather than trying to convert non-library users into users.
- Teter asked Schonhoff to elaborate on why they should care about the items he identified as being statistically significant.
- O’Shea asked Schonhoff to provide some guidance about what commission can glean around the desire for new facilities in Gunbarrel vs. north Boulder. Schonhoff stated that the Gunbarrel community scored lower on how the library is meeting their needs and made it clear how much they want to allocate towards a new library; north Boulder rated the library as serving their household quite well, though respondents who primarily use a branch library chose to allocate more towards a new library than those that use the Main Library. Teter asked Schonhoff to include a geographic breakdown of how people allocated operating funds, in addition to capital funds.

- Farnan noted that the demand in north Boulder for a new library is in comparison only to Gunbarrel, and wondered whether it would be relevant to look at the demand in relation to the other neighborhoods. Schonhoff replied that there is a large swath of the north to northeast side of Boulder that feels underserved by the library.
- Teter wondered how Schonhoff will relate the focus group information to the survey information. Schonhoff responded that he will include anecdotes from the focus groups into the recommendations.

**Agenda Item 7: Discuss the commission’s interest in the future North Boulder Branch Library project being included in the Capital Tax Renewal ballot item [8:02 p.m., 2:00:40 Audio min.]**

**Commission discussion, questions, and comments included:**

- Teter expressed concern about the timing of being included on a November ballot item, particularly since the library has said they would continue the Master Plan community engagement process through September and come back to the community before making any decisions; the library needs to determine the what/how/when for services in north Boulder before getting backed in to a specific proposal.
- Gibb commented that it’s unknown whether the tax will continue to come up for renewal every 5 or 7 years and wondered how the tax renewal would fit into the funding cycle. Teter explained that the existing capital improvement process will remain in place with the addition of the tax, so the question becomes how to get to the top of the priorities list in the internal city conversation.
- Farnan stated that commission needs to decide by the July retreat whether they would like to move forward with the ballot initiative without having had a chance to properly vet it with the community.
- Gomez asked whether there is a term limit for when the library would need to use the money, if the ballot passes. Farnan replied that the library would have to act within 5-10 years; if the project comes in under budget, the money might go back into the contingency fund or to expand the scope of another project.
- Farnan stated that if the library should decide to withdraw from the ballot, it will strike the citizen committee and community as odd if a north Boulder branch is then made a priority in the Master Plan.
- Farnan shared that he had proposed the possibility of swapping the property at 19<sup>th</sup> and Violet for another city property, but was unable to pursue the discussion before the tax renewal process began. Gomez commented that there are already three libraries along Broadway, and there are other spines farther east in Boulder that should be considered when determining the location of a new branch.
- O’Shea wondered how much leeway there would be to adapt the proposed plan once funds are allocated, and Teter replied that the library is bound to this plan for this election. Farnan explained that a community center with a library as an anchor was identified as one of the number one priorities from the 1988 subcommunity plan, the library picked it up in the 1995 Master Plan, and the property on Violet was donated by Safeway in 1994. O’Shea observed that the library would be building something that is dated in terms of plan, fit and community.
- O’Shea wondered why the city is eager to buy a stale design and plan, when the library is right in the midst of the Master Plan process. Teter replied that a decision was made to take projects that are on the books now, and Farnan added that the north Boulder proposal, as it is, received full support from the citizen committee, with no requests to scale back or revise the project.
- Farnan commented that the library would be taking a risk by deciding not to go on the ballot. Teter replied that they would also be taking a risk by using their one shot to get a facility, and added that she is concerned about the long-term sustainability of financing; the senior budget team doesn’t recognize the value of the library, and we need to be able to present what the library of the future looks like and make the case that we need a ballot for the funding needed to make it a reality. Teter suggested that now would be a good time for commissioners to have conversations with council members.
- Farnan commented that commission will need to state clearly in a letter to council their reasons for backing out of the ballot if that’s what they decide to do.
- Teter asked Farnan whether the lack of flexibility on the plan is coming from staff’s commitment to the citizen committee’s recommendation, or if it is a requirement of the bond council; if not a requirement, commission should be able to say we want this amount of money to do planning for a north Boulder branch, knowing it’s a near-term priority.

**Agenda Item 8: Library Commission Update**

**[8:42 p.m., 2:41:20 Audio min.]**

a. Matters from the commission

i. Update on letter to City Council about the Capital Tax Renewal

Commission agreed that it’s not necessary to send a letter to council regarding the BCPA proposal, and decided instead to send a letter re-emphasizing the need for restrooms in the Civic Area. Farnan suggested that commission also weigh in on the restroom proposals from Facilities and Asset Management and Parks and Recreation. O’Shea and Gomez will draft the letter.

- b. Boulder Library Foundation update  
Regarding the Draft Corporate Member Guidelines (pp. 18-19 of [packet](#)), Teter wondered where the foundation plans to draw the line for approving or rejecting sponsorship offers. Gibb replied that the foundation is still working through this, and Farnan added that the city manager and city attorney have the ability to reject any sponsorship.
- c. City project representative update
  - i. Central Broadway Corridor Design Framework
  - ii. Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan  
Teter wondered if there was any feedback on how commission's comments were incorporated into the plan. Farnan replied that the language got pared down significantly, and he does not believe the comments were incorporated; Gunbarrel is not considered an urban area in the new comp plan, so there will be some hurdles to overcome if the library decides to provide services out there.
  - iii. Boulder's Civic Area
  - iv. Canyon Complete Streets
  - v. Eco-Districts
- d. Responses to patron emails from the Library Commission

**Agenda Item 9: Library and Arts Director's Report**

**[8:58 p.m., 2:57:00 Audio min.]**

- a. Jaipur Literature Festival update
- b. Boulder Historical Society contract
- c. 2017 Summer Reading Program
- d. Environs: Landscapes of Imagination @ Main Canyon Gallery
- e. Community Partnership Manager
- f. Initial Analysis Summary: Library Master Plan Community Survey | DRAFT
- g. Review service enhancement: add hold pick-up permissions for family members
- h. Timing of Main Library north building reuse study
- i. Draft agenda for July 15, 2017 Library Commission Retreat
- j. October 2017 Study Session  
Commission agreed to schedule a study session on Monday, Oct. 16 to review progress on the Master Plan in preparation for a possible study session with City Council in late November.

**Agenda Item 10: Adjournment**

**[9:04 p.m., 3:03:22 Audio min.]**

There being no further business to come before the commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

**Date, time, and location of next meeting:**

The Library Commission Retreat will be held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, July 15, 2017, at the Open Space and Mountain Parks Department offices at 66 S. Cherryvale Rd.

The next Library Commission meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 2, 2017, in the Canyon Meeting Room at the Main Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, CO 80302.

Commissioner Gibb approved these minutes on August 20, 2017; and Maureen Malone attested to it.

An audio recording of the full meeting for which these minutes are a summary, is available on the Library Commission web page at <http://boulderlibrary.org/about/commission.html>