

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

Name of Board/ Commission: Library Commission	
Date of Meeting: January 10, 2018 at the Main Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave.	
Contact information preparing summary: Maureen Malone, 303-441-3106	
Commission members present: Alicia Gibb, Joni Teter, Tim O'Shea, Juana Gomez, Joel Koenig	
Library staff present: David Farnan, Director of Library & Arts Jennifer Phares, Deputy Library Director Maureen Malone, Administrative Specialist II	
Members of the public present: None	
Type of Meeting: Regular	
Agenda Item 1: Call to order and approval of agenda	[6:00 p.m., 0:00:00 Audio min.]
The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.	
Gibb announced the addition of a discussion on funding for restroom renovations under Agenda Item 4.	
Agenda Item 2: Public comment	[6:01 p.m., 0:01:44 Audio min.]
None	
Agenda Item 3: Consent agenda	[6:01 p.m., 0:02:00 Audio min.]
Item 3A, Approval of December 6, 2017 Meeting Minutes	
Gomez moved to approve the minutes, and O'Shea seconded. Vote 3-0, unanimous (Gibb and Teter abstained as they were not at the meeting).	
Agenda Item 4: Discussion on library funding	[6:02 p.m., 0:02:47 Audio min.]
a. Summary of Nov. 28, 2017 City Council Study Session	
b. Identify the information needed for commission to make a recommendation about library funding and governance for the Master Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teter sent some comments on the library funding memo ahead of the meeting (see handouts). • Gomez wondered who had input in the risk analysis for the different funding options (p. 6 of packet). Farnan replied that he has done the analysis; in essence, the main risks in proceeding with the option to form a district are: council rejects the plan, or the library does get a funding ballot measure, but loses the election, causing council to lose trust/faith in the library and decide to defund the library. • Teter recommended that staff also be prepared to address risks around the library as a district, the primary one being the funding and making sure that the cost of managing the library and the mill rate are well adjusted. Farnan explained that the library would immediately assume liability for PERA, and there would be a 10-12% increase in operating expenses to cover facilities, human resources, and attorneys. Teter encouraged staff to summarize this information somewhere for the public. • Gomez asked what the timeline for implementation would look like if the ballot measure to form a district should pass in 2020. Farnan replied that the library would have until early 1st quarter 2021 to establish financial control of the organization, establish a governing board, take over HR functions, and take control of all public relations. • Commission had a few questions around forming a district that Farnan suggested Jacqueline Murphy, Library Community Programs Senior Consultant at the Colorado State Library may be able to help answer during her visit at the February meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How soon after the vote passes would the money get distributed to the library? ○ Would there need to be a charter change in the same election as the ballot measure? Would we need to have the proposal for governance all worked out by the time of the election? 	

- Teter suggested that staff create an online FAQ page with reference materials to help the public understand the differences in operations if the library were to form a district (the duties of a governing board, the budget, etc.). Gibb added that it would be good to include the cost of transitioning to a district.
- Teter wondered at what point staff and commission can no longer advocate for the ballot measure. Farnan replied that it would be from the moment council certifies the ballot. Teter suggested that staff should get out ahead of the ballot and have the conversations with the public while they can.
- Teter commented that the city will likely maintain an interest in the north building of the Main Library around planning for the future of the west bookend of the civic area, regardless of whether they give up control of the building. Farnan replied that he has meetings scheduled with the city's planning staff to discuss this and other relevant potential issues associated with separating from the city.
- Farnan asked whether commission has a preference between owning or leasing the buildings if the library were to separate from the city to form a district. Teter responded that she would want to know the financial implications of both options before making a recommendation. Gomez suggested that there might be an emotional component for the community if the city no longer owned the library.
- Gibb wondered what would happen to the North Boulder library funding if the library separates from the city. Farnan stated that he would suggest setting the mill rate in such a way that the district can pay the city back, and reminded commission that the goal is to become a great partner with the city.
- Teter recommended that staff also think about projecting where additional facilities might be needed to serve the people being brought in to the district, and the associated cost.
- Teter asked whether anyone in the finance department is looking at reallocating the general fund to stabilize library funding within the current city structure. Farnan replied that there is no new money, so the city would be faced with two significant hurdles: changing the charter to increase the mill levy beyond the current limit and adding an extra mill. Teter added that the city could also look at reallocating resources within the existing general fund or earmarking sales tax; it's important to look at all the options to have a complete picture of the needs and challenges.
- O'Shea commented that as staff and commission are readying to lay out a path to propose a district and exit the city in order to figure out the funding shortfall, they need to consider the benefit and the cost to the both options (staying with the city or leaving to form a district). There is an opportunity to engage our patrons, and ask the community if they want us to become a district because we're not being funded to the level we need to be to support their utilization; we need to consider how to sell the district option as a benefit to the voters and campaign to figure out who is going to support the initiative.
- Teter stated that community members are going to want to know why the city can't find \$3M for the library in a budget of \$326M; the library doesn't want to be in the position of making recommendations on where the money should come from, but if council does not want the library to exit the city, it is the city manager's responsibility to provide possible strategies within the budget.
- O'Shea asked what it is that the library wants to come away with – funding, autonomy, engagement with our constituents? Farnan replied that the question since commission's retreat has been – can the city afford to run the library that the community wants? Within the city, there has been no correlation between growth and success and funding; the library wants autonomy in terms of having better control over how it redistributes its money as well as transparency to the voters about how the library chooses to spend its money. O'Shea stated that it doesn't seem as tenable to get autonomy and budget from the city.
- Teter commented that at this point, only one-third of the city's budget is available for redistribution; the city is at the point where it can't tax people anymore, but there's no flexibility. It's hard to evaluate police against parks or human services against library. Typically, departments set their own goals through master plans and evaluate themselves against those goals; what's lacking is a process to go back and look at the whole set of departments and goals and budgets and evaluate based on what we know today to determine whether everything is funded at an appropriate level.
- Koenig stated that it seems like being autonomous would give the library a lot more flexibility in terms of the operations, and if staff didn't have the city overhang, they might do things differently. Farnan replied that he came to work here because he believes in the city's values, and he doesn't see that changing in any way; staff also likes the culture and is proud of working for Boulder.
- Teter asked if there would there be any reason to be in a district if the library had totally dedicated funding. Farnan said that's a hard question. Gomez then asked if it would be easier to get to dedicated funding than it would be to form a district. Farnan replied that that is *the* question, along with whether the city can afford to do it.
- Teter suggested that it might be worth asking Open Space and Transportation (departments that have dedicated funding) about their experience with the budget process to find out how much autonomy they really have over their own dollars.

- Farnan explained that the city is trying to change the metrics around determining success. The planning process the city has in place for the general fund has an element of hubris – departments plan out 10-20 years into the future, and the things that the library is putting in this master plan are really things that should have been done already. Farnan added that he’s not sure the current process is one that best serves the community or the library.
 - For the purposes of a marketing campaign, Teter asked whether we are looking to fully fund the library, or make it autonomous; the autonomy conversation is sure to lead into the territory of how the city is being run and whether the budget process makes sense, so it’s something to think about pretty carefully.
- c. Update on meeting with Boulder County Commissioners’ Office, Michelle Krezek commissioners’ deputy
- d. Analysis of risk for funding options
- e. Discussion of communication and outreach including possible Op-Ed
- Gibb explained that the Op-Ed was two-fold – it helps define what the library is trying to do, which is gain financial stability, and also provides the public with some background.
 - Commission reviewed the draft and discussed some suggestions for reworking it.
 - O’Shea commented that this Op-Ed should be considered the first element of the library’s marketing campaign; if the campaign becomes politicized, this Op-Ed will provide some important background information for the community. He offered to share the draft with some local influencers to get their initial reaction.
- f. Update on funding for Main Library restroom renovations
- Farnan shared that the City Manager is going to recommend to council on Feb. 20 that they allocate \$650k for restroom renovations at the Main Library. He asked commission to draft a new letter to send to council reiterating their support for the funding.

Agenda Item 5: Master Plan project update

[7:29 p.m., 1:30:00 Audio min.]

- a. Schedule for review of the draft Master Plan document
- Teter sent some comments on the Draft Master Plan Document Outline ahead of the meeting (see [handouts](#)).
- Gibb requested that staff include in the calendar any upcoming community involvement pieces. Phares replied that nothing has been scheduled yet, but those events will get added to the master calendar.
 - Teter recommended that staff reach out again to the Landmarks Board keep them in the loop and find out what particular interests they have in the Master Plan. Phares replied that staff plans to give them a memo that highlights their interests, which are primarily around the future of the Main Library north building.
 - Teter wondered whether the Arts Commission has any interest in the Master Plan. Farnan replied he has asked them about scheduling a joint meeting, but they have only shown peripheral interest in the north building. Phares added that staff can provide the Arts Commission with updates at their meetings.
 - Following the upcoming publication of the Op-Ed and given commission’s stance that this is a campaign, Farnan suggested that staff can do more to advertise the Library Commission meetings; if word gets out that there is discussion of separating from the city, that might become a piece of community engagement around the Master Plan.
 - Gibb wondered where the concept of a district would be included in the Master Plan. Phares replied that she envisions it being included in Part Five: Investment Priorities and Funding Options; if there is a recommendation from commission, it would also go in that section and be referenced in either the introduction or letter from the director.
 - Teter asked where the Master Plan will address the homelessness issue. Phares replied that it comes up in Part Two: Trends and Community Needs and also in Part Three: Goals and Commitments; she doesn’t have a vision for how exactly that piece will look, but it can be pulled together as staff and commission review the other pieces.
- b. Plan for Jan. 22, 2017 study session

Agenda Item 6: Review and update commission master calendar and tentative schedule for priority upcoming agenda items

[7:44 p.m., 1:45:14 Audio min.]

Teter sent some comments on the Master Calendar ahead of the meeting (see [handouts](#)).

Commission discussion, questions, and comments included:

- Teter asked what commission can say to the public now about when to anticipate completion of a North Boulder Library building, what the major steps are from here to there, and how they can get involved. Farnan replied that the earliest a building will open is the end of 2020; community engagement would begin with a broad discussion of the programming in the second or third quarter of 2018 at the earliest. Teter asked staff to add a project page to the BPL website. Phares replied that this can be done and there will also be an option online to submit questions and comments; commission meetings will be another opportunity for members of the public to receive updates and give input. Phares added that Antonia Gaona, the staff project manager, is keeping a list of community members that would like to stay involved and making sure they receive invitations to any public meetings.
- Teter asked where the homelessness discussion is on the calendar. Phares responded that it is listed under the February meeting as ‘commission / staff plan community dialogue’.
- Teter suggested bringing the Library Commission Master Calendar to the foundation’s executive committee to make sure that their items are listed in the correct months; any changes will need to be reflected in the agreement between the library and the foundation.

Agenda Item 7: Library Commission Update

[7:55 p.m., 1:55:35 Audio min.]

- a. Matters from the Commission
 - i. Review Library Commission Handbook
 - Teter sent some suggested edits ahead of the meeting (see [handouts](#)).
 - Koenig suggested spelling out under Article VI that proxies are not permitted when determining a quorum (p. 26 of [packet](#)).
 - Koenig recommended adding a statement in the Overview of the Boulder Library Foundation that two commissioners serve as members on the foundation board (p. 38 of [packet](#)).
 - Teter suggested having the city’s finance staff review the budget calendar (p. 37 of [packet](#)).
 - ii. Discuss recruitment of Library Commissioners
 - iii. Library Commission priorities 2018 letter to City Council
- b. Boulder Library Foundation update
- c. City project representative update
 - i. EcoDistricts
- d. Responses to patron emails from the Library Commission

Gibb shared that commission received a patron email after the meeting packet had been distributed (see [handouts](#)).

Koenig reported out on his meetings with individual City Council members.

Agenda Item 8: Library and Arts Director’s Report

[8:24 p.m., 2:24:47 Audio min.]

- a. BLF grant requests and 2018 grant budget
- b. New online meeting room reservation calendar and library notices available by text message
- c. Fake News or Sloppy Social Science?
- d. 2017 Q3 web use statistics

Commission discussed the February agenda item around planning the homelessness community dialogue. Phares stated that the discussion at the February meeting will be around determining the goal for the dialogue in order to inform who staff invites to participate and how the event is structured; she suggested having smaller discussions across several meetings on specific pieces of planning the event. Teter requested that staff reach out to Human Services to get an overview of services being provided at the new day shelter (beds, showers, storage, etc.). Gibb suggested creating a summary of the common homelessness-related questions received by staff and their answers – or having a staff member join the discussion at a commission meeting.

Agenda Item 9: Adjournment

[8:40 p.m., 2:41:05 Audio min.]

There being no further business to come before the commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Date, time, and location of next meeting:

The next Library Commission meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, February 7, 2018, in the Canyon Meeting Room at the Main Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, CO 80302.

Commissioner Gibb approved these minutes on March 7, 2018; and Jennifer Phares attested to it.