

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

<b>Name of Board/ Commission:</b> Library Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b> September 5, 2018 at the Main Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave.
<b>Contact information preparing summary:</b> Celia Seaton, 303-441-3106
<b>Commission members present:</b> Joni Teter, Juana Gomez, Joel Koenig, Jane Sykes Wilson <b>Commission members not present:</b> Tim O’Shea
<p><b>Library staff present:</b> David Farnan, Director of Library &amp; Arts Jennifer Phares, Deputy Library Director Celia Seaton, Administrative Specialist Shannon Kincaid, Teen Librarian Kathy Lane, Programs, Events &amp; Outreach Coordinator Wendy Hall, Carnegie Branch Librarian</p> <p><b>City staff present:</b> None</p> <p><b>Members of the public present:</b> John Sand, Kathy Dayhoff, Estella Cole, Jim Cole, Kathryn Barth, Dina Carson, Shey Castle, Mary McRoberts, Silvia Pettem, Chel Courtney, Phil Courtney, David Coward, Richard Clark, Ginger Hite</p>
<b>Type of Meeting:</b> Regular
<p><b>Agenda Item 1: Call to order and approval of agenda</b> <span style="float:right"><b>[0:00:06 Audio min.]</b></span> The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. and Teter noted the revised agenda (see <a href="#">handouts</a>). There was a nod of approval from the commission for this amended agenda.</p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 2: Public comment</b> <span style="float:right"><b>[0:00:35 Audio min.]</b></span> Teter welcomed the public in attendance and explained the schedule and public comment process. She invited the group to speak in succession.</p> <p>Dina Carson introduced herself as a local historian and researcher who has written more than 30 books on local history. “I need the Carnegie Branch Library; I am a regular.” She is “deeply disappointed” in the perceived lack of transparency in the decision-making process to cut back on this resource; no one in the Boulder Genealogical Society knew about it until last Thursday. Allowing no time for public input throughout the year and “giving a gag order to staff” feels “sneaky and underhanded.” Ms. Carson expressed frustration at the announcement to build new branches of the library when simultaneously “shuttering the one unique asset you really have in the entire library system.” She described the danger of the “numbers game” comparing visits to Carnegie vs. e-book rentals – even if the quantity is low, the quality is high. The reduced hours will mean a more crowded atmosphere with staff having to scramble, or divide their attention among several patrons at one time – this is problematic for patrons. Digitization is not a cure-all due to issues such as copyright. Public needing access to this collection include homeowners, those involved with mineral and water rights, as well as those who want to join lineage societies (e.g., DAR). “Whatever we have to do to get you fully funded we will help you do it, but let’s not cut the Carnegie in the meantime – let’s find another way.” Ms. Carson also noted that the Genealogical Society has an agreement with the library – “while you’re not violating the terms, you’re certainly violating the spirit by shuttering our collection at the same time.” Teter responded to let her know commission was only alerted to this news last Thursday, correcting the mistaken perception that it had been discussed by the commission throughout the year.</p> <p>Kathryn Barth, a preservation architect, has been grateful for the “good counsel and help” she has received from Carnegie staff for the past 29 years. Ms. Barth noted that the Library Commission meeting was taking place at the same time as the Landmarks Board meeting – this reduced the number of people able to show to speak (she feels these conflicts too common within the city.) She finds it “quite sad and quite distressing” that the historic resources are often the first to go when trying to fix financial downturns. Feeling digitization is not a solution due to the nature of the materials, Ms. Barth spoke to the special serendipitous nature of researching in the physical space as opposed to online. She beseeched the Library Commission to do what they can to prevent these cuts.</p> <p>John Sand lives at 620 Main St. in Gold Hill. Serving as a vice chair for the historical Gold Hill History Museum, he has relied heavily on Carnegie for research: “there is no other resource for us.” Mr. Sand remarked that the archivist position is essential to assist these special projects. Echoed the issues with digitization. Reduced hours will be problematic – he</p>

wonders how the staff will handle the “flood of people” by appointment. “Distressing” to see what’s been happening to the budget for Carnegie over the last couple decades. It has not kept up with the growth of other facilities in Boulder. “Please think very hard about cutbacks in personnel and access times. The proposal is disastrous.” Mr. Sand requests that Carnegie be at least sustained to operate at its current level.

Silvia Pettem, a local historian, reminisced about being present at the 1983 opening of Carnegie. “It was so full of promise,” Ms. Pettem remembers the excitement of being able to fill the space. She wished to echo tonight’s sentiments in protest of the cuts and thanked the group for the opportunity at public input.

David Coward lives in Broomfield and is a member of the Boulder Genealogical Society. “Records are the lifeblood of the genealogical community.” Carnegie houses records of the Boulder Genealogical Society. He emphasized the breadth of Carnegie’s patronage beyond just family tree researchers; insurance companies need to access death status of clients, adoptees try to find birth parents or determine medical history, land and probate records are used to settle estate and water right conflicts. Spoke to the unusual nature of the genealogical research which can take unexpected turns and requires unrestricted access. It is “shortsighted” to cut off access already in existence “since we never know in advance what record will be important to which person.” “Like they say ... all politics [are] local, the same can be said of genealogical records.” Carnegie is a “jewel” for the community. Mr. Coward asks to please update the master plan to remove the cut back hours and reinstate the position. Teter corrected that the master plan does not call for cutting Carnegie.

Chel Courtney, whose family history goes back to 1874 Gold Hill, does a lot of research at Carnegie library and considers it her “second home.” Assisting others in their research, she well knows the internet’s limitations compared to Carnegie’s records. “What do you do when you have a large collection of artifacts or photographs” that you wish to bequeath – “the history of Boulder is dying” and Carnegie is an “amazing” local repository. “Fascinating treasure” that can’t be replaced.

Estella Cole introduced herself as a preservation architect on the Landmarks Board who has spent many hours at Carnegie. Ms. Cole stressed that it is the only place to find information for decisions about Boulder’s resources. Carnegie is a research library, not just another branch to borrow DVDs or a book. “You have to use the resources of Carnegie in Carnegie, and the way you find your way through is with the archivist and the staff.” She volunteers there weekly and observes people gain a “greater appreciation for this town they are living in.” Carnegie helps educate people on what “Boulder is really all about.”

Ginger Hite, resident of Table Mesa, spoke to the archivist position and questioned the protocol. “I feel the way she was treated is absolutely unacceptable.” Stated that it was untrue that the archivist was planning to retire, and she wants to be sure that the city knows.

Jessica Fasick, 1303 N. Franklin Ave., Louisville, CO 80027, preservation planner for the Boulder County Land Use Department [comment sent in by email]: “I am against the budget cuts to the Carnegie Library and I have three points that I’d like to make. First, I use the Carnegie Library consistently in my work as a preservation planner. I would not be able to do my job effectively without it. I work two blocks from the library and frequently find myself needing to dash over to find resources on a project I’m researching, often without much notice. The already-limited open hours of the Carnegie Library are burdensome and the idea that the hours might be further cut is very worrisome to me. Secondly, when I do make it over to the library during open hours, it is the staff that is the greatest resource. From experience, I don’t always know the questions I should be asking or what I should be looking for, yet the wonderful librarians always help me through it. Their collection knowledge is amazing and I can’t imagine that they will be able to best serve the public if one of their positions is cut. And lastly, I’m not sure how anyone from out of town would be able to use the Carnegie’s resources with the limited hours proposed. It would seem to be an embarrassment for a world-class city such as Boulder to not have these basic research necessities readily available to visitors. And those necessities are both the hours to visit the Carnegie Library but also the magnificent staff.”

Joel, addressing the public in attendance, noted that their “timing is impeccable” since the budget won’t be finalized until November and this public input is very helpful. Teter relayed that a council study session on the budget will occur the following week, but the next time for public comment will be Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> (first public reading of the budget) with a second reading planned for October 16<sup>th</sup>. Teter suggested a summary of these public comments be shared with council; Phares and Seaton agreed to email this to Teter by Friday.

Teter clarified to the audience that council’s concern stems from some long-term budgetary discussions regarding the “serious state” of imbalance between need and funding for the library’s budget. In background, the last time the library saw a downturn in revenues, there were citywide budgetary cuts. Between 2002 and today, city’s budget has increased accordingly as revenues have improved; the library’s budget, however, has remained flat. Staff numbers have in fact decreased from 92 to 75. Meanwhile, use and demand of library services has “skyrocketed.” Staff has been able to provide “exemplary service with no resources.” Key piece of the master plan speaks to the need for dedicated funding and this has

been the topic of two study sessions with council so far. On November 27<sup>th</sup>, a scheduled study session will lay out a variety of scenarios where the library can be funded in a “predictable, dependable” way. Teter spoke to the commission’s foreword in the MP pointing to the need for dedicated funding source. This likely means election in the community; “we will hold you to helping the effort.” Gomez emphasized that commission is on the audience’s side – “we want more library not less.” Farnan encouraged the audience to come to the council public hearing on October 2<sup>nd</sup> as this will be on the agenda; “it does make a difference” to have residents personally voice their concerns during public comment.

**Agenda Item 3: Consent agenda**

**[0:49:20 Audio min.]**

- a. Approval of August 1, 2018 Meeting Minutes: Gomez moved to accept the minutes, Koenig seconded, and they were unanimously approved.

**Agenda Item 4: Summer of Discovery Recap**

**[0:37:20 Audio min.]**

Kincaid and Lane presented a summary of the Summer of Discovery’s “Libraries Rock.” The program opened to adults for the first time, which garnered a lot of interest and record-breaking registration statistics (see [handouts](#)). The affiliation with Gateway Park Fun Center proved beneficial along with major outreach to underserved populations through BVSD partnerships. Spanish speaking volunteers and staff assisted in facilitation. Lane indicated that this program was only made possible through generosity of Boulder Library Foundation. The BLF funds the Summer of Discovery; without its generosity, the library would be unable to deliver these free community programs. Next year’s theme is “Space: A Universe of Stories.” The intention will be to investigate inner space and outer space. Sykes Wilson commented that she appreciated the adult program; it held the entire family accountable for reading. She suggested not separating the adult and child registration tables as well as more general outreach toward the adults. Sykes Wilson also appreciated the intentionality of the booths at Summer Fest. She asked about any issues encountered with the rebranding of Summer Reading Program to Summer of Discovery. Kincaid didn’t hear any confusion, and people referred to it both ways – “not sure that anyone is too concerned with what it is called.”

The commission gave kudos for the success of this annual program.

**Agenda Item 5: Library 2019 budget update**

**[0:49:54 Audio min.]**

- a. Response to the budget to send to council

Farnan spoke to this unique year’s city budgetary request to recommend a 10% decrease and 5% increase. The given exercise was one of necessity as the city has a projected shortfall. There are no contracts with outside consultants or vacant positions, meaning that some staff positions were slated for potential reductions; all were spoken with. He was not trying to keep information from anybody, the leadership team was apprised only a few weeks before the commission found out. “We own every single one of the things on the list” but they were not aligned with the master plan goals. The increases are all in line with master planning goals: funding for an analysis of the north Boulder feasibility, a creative technologist position, increase for deep cleaning of furniture maintenance, and long overdue repairs. Reductions included the Carnegie archivist as well as some miscellaneous funds, and none were “taken lightly.” Teter: priorities should drive the budget, but the master plan is not tied logically to the budget. Teter described the process as “very un-transparent and very frustrating” – commission reviewed a budget in spring and sent council feedback that doesn’t appear to have been heard. City has been trying to reduce standard FTE positions. Koenig: is there a way for [commission] to become more involved, e.g., sitting down with the executive budget team as an advisory body? Farnan: that would be a change, but he has seen changes in process in his time at the library. Sykes Wilson asked about the next step. Teter: we have good relationships with council; they’ve been informed of our impending recommendation. Morzel had asked for specifics and Teter suggested updating the document provided in April and sending it along to council.

Ms. Pettem asked about the proposed branch in Gunbarrel. She lives in the mountains and Carnegie’s collection covers the entire region. “Why do we need two other branches when we are having such trouble keeping the Carnegie open.” Farnan: the capital costs are accounted for as this came as a vote in favor of the library, though the ongoing operating costs haven’t been committed to yet. Farnan clarified that this not a planned reduction – no vision desirous to close Carnegie exists; in fact, the master plan calls for increased services. Teter spoke to how districting (as well as dedicating property tax/sales tax) has been brought up to council; that will form part of the conversation in November. Farnan: the district is a hypothetical idea at this point, but some drawn maps will be used for the financial analysis. Geography goes out as far as Niwot - western portion gets a little “slippery” as some mountain towns have a lot of library card holders. Teter: 40% of cardholders are not City of Boulder residents, this is part of the logic behind having funding levels match the user base.

By Friday, commission will receive summarized public comment. Teter suggested the following introductory line to append to the updated memo: “Last April, we advised you about what we saw as the needs for library funding in 2019 and 2020. We’ve updated that to take into account changes in the 2018 budget and to take into account proposed cuts in the city’s 2019 budget.” She read her suggested language (see [handouts](#)).

Gomez moved to adopt the paragraph as drafted by Teter with the amendment of completing an introductory paragraph to be drafted by herself. Teter added a friendly amendment that this is part of a recommendation to council on the library's budget needs and we will include an updated version of our April 20<sup>th</sup> memo. Koenig seconded and there was unanimous approval for this letter to council.

**Agenda Item 6: Commission discussion of an op-ed for the Daily Camera about the library budget reduction [1:28:00 Audio min.]**

The group discussed a potential op-ed – Gomez volunteered to finalize by Friday. Farnan asked for a copy; Gomez agreed.

**Agenda Item 7: Library policy review and update [1:31:40 Audio min.]**

- a. Approval of Carnegie Library for Local History policies – Hall was present and available for questions.
- P. 23 - Teter wondered whether the digitized pieces should be included. Hall: criteria had not yet been decided; at this point, the digitized records are not being considered part of the collection. Signaling to people that digital is something we are willing to accept might be a good idea per Teter. If approved, then digital collection (non-physical materials) will be added to this policy.
  - Teter noted that if budget cut goes through, Attachment B would have to be updated.
  - Teter asked Hall when the website (presented to the commission at the June meeting) will be up. Carnegie's webpage is projected to go live in October 2018 during National Archives Month. Some bugs still need to be worked out of the webpage's system.
  - P. 27 - Gomez wanted to clarify that laptops are acceptable way to take notes. "Anything that will leave a permanent mark is not allowed when taking notes" – this phrasing will be added for clarification.
  - Teter raised the question about "non-current businesses" in Attachment E and the need to signal to current businesses that we want to capture their documentation. Hall: majority of companies now do everything online so there aren't very many physical things to collect. Teter spoke to the potential importance of periodic snapshots of webpages (e.g., EPA's, before revision by current administration).
  - P. 28 - Gomez questioned the "keep voices low" piece as appearing antiquated; Hall referenced the special nature of research libraries and need for concentration. This made sense to the commission.

There was a discussion around the need for planning regarding increased storage space for Carnegie. This work item should be part of the facilities master plan update. The current Carnegie collection was created through a collaborative effort with local Boulder historians (Genealogical Society and Historic Boulder) and future planning efforts should include this constituency. Teter moved to accept the revised policies, Gomez seconded, and all were in favor. Teter thanked Hall.

- b. Review of policy schedule changes – revision of the internet safety policy moved to later in the year to accommodate staff participation. Sykes Wilson wondered about being gone during the 2019 retreat and possibly moving the retreat to an earlier date. Farnan imagined that much will be "in the air" during the period from November 2018 to January 2019. He suggested a retreat as early as March or April. Seaton will poll the commission on a mutually agreed upon date. Teter also brought up need for a special meeting in November 2018; Seaton will check the staff calendars to see which date can align with the commission's.

**Agenda Item 8: Debrief meeting with Planning Board on the Library Master Plan [1:59:44 Audio min.]**

Teter was pleased to hear the voices of library advocates on the Planning Board. Koenig agreed.

**Agenda Item 9: Library Commission Update [2:00:00 Audio min.]**

- a. Items from Commission
- i. Commissioner update on outreach to stakeholders
    1. Debrief meetings with City Council members- all positive
    2. Discuss Seter & VanderWall legal memo - postponed
    3. Debrief/discuss meeting with EveryLibrary – Patrick Sweeney strong resource in assisting library funding.
    4. Review discussion making/election timeline
    5. Discuss campaign budget estimate - Joel spoke with Tim Plass who has assisted with some successful campaigns; Plass's estimate was \$20-30 thousand for the campaign itself with polling requiring ~ \$20 thousand additional. Polling should happen "sooner rather than later."
- b. Boulder Library Foundation update
- i. Discuss Commission request to BLF for participation in library advocacy – this is an agenda item for the October meeting. Current website is transitioning away from Ramblin Jackson - Isaac Andrus is looking at alternate hosting platforms.

- c. City project representative update
  - i. EcoDistricts - none
  - ii. Civic Area East Bookend – none.

Gomez debriefed her experience volunteering with Book Rich Environments, Friday night dinner at a housing site Held at the housing site west of 30<sup>th</sup> and south of Kalmia. Boulder Food Rescue provided salads and dessert. A roomful of books separated by age (in recent years these have been used copies, but this year all brand-new books were displayed.) Some Spanish language books, mostly appreciated by parents. REFORMA gave a small grant – Aztec dancing group kept moving into the night.

- d. Responses to patron emails from the Library Commission – none.

**Agenda Item 10: Library and Arts Director’s Report**

**[2:29:05 Audio min.]**

- a. North Boulder branch library project update – Farnan reported that the larger public engagement has wrapped up although surveys are still being received from the public. The architect’s report will likely be shared next month. Meetings with developer in the next few weeks to update parking and square footage needs.
- b. JLF update – Farnan invited the commissioners to attend events during the programming over the upcoming month. The content is as amazing as the logistics tend to be hard. Farnan sent the organizers an email requesting compliance to achieve the matching funds.

**Agenda Item 11: Adjournment**

**[2:41:30 Audio min.]**

There being no further business to come before the commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned.

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

The next Library Commission meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, October 3, 2018, in the Reynolds Meeting Room at the George Reynolds Branch Library, 3595 Table Mesa Dr., Boulder, CO 80305.

Commissioner Teter approved these minutes on October 3, 2018; and Celia Seaton attested to it.