

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

Name of Board/ Commission: Library Commission	
Date of Meeting: June 3, 2020	
Contact information preparing summary: Celia Seaton, 303-441-3106	
Commission members present: Juana Gomez, Joel Koenig, Jane Sykes Wilson, Steven Frost, Scott Steinbrecher	
Commission members not present: None	
Library staff present: David Farnan, Director of Library & Arts Jennifer Phares, Deputy Library Director Celia Seaton, Administrative Specialist	
City staff present: None	
Members of the public present: None	
Type of Meeting: Regular Remote	
Agenda Item 1: Reminder: Commissioners please log monthly volunteer hours Count Me In Boulder [0:00:25 Audio min.] The Commission logged their service.	
Agenda Item 2: Approval of agenda [0:00:47 Audio min.] The meeting was called to order and Gomez asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Gomez mentioned that there were some additional updates for Item 6 as specified in the Commission Memo (see handouts.) There was a nod of approval from the commission for this amended agenda.	
Agenda Item 3: Public comment [0:01:38 Audio min.] None.	
Agenda Item 4: Consent agenda [0:01:53 Audio min.] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Approval of May 2020 Meeting Minutes: Gomez asked if there were any changes; hearing none, Frost moved to approve these minutes, Sykes Wilson seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. 	
Agenda Item 5: Information Updates [0:02:55 Audio min.] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Library Budget and Staffing – Farnan reported on the library staff lay-offs effective June 1st. He outlined the process whereby the department was asked to submit reductions for every offering, describing community impact for each, particularly in reference to underserved populations. Staff was tasked to examine everything “through a lens of equity,” specifically in regard to race. Services were then ranked in terms of priority. Department presented scenario of staff reduced by half to the executive budget team, who then examined the reductions. No feasible option whereby the library could still operate in any capacity with 40% reduction of staff. Sykes Wilson asked: was that 40% from pre-March or after the first round of lay-offs? Phares replied that the percentage represented an annual reduction, relative to January. Final reduction determined at ~13%. Monday morning at 8 AM, each staff member who was laid off, having furlough extended, or being asked to return on June 29th was contacted by supervisors. Phares provided numbers: 17 staff currently on furlough ready to return end of June. Extended furlough for 5 staff members through Sept 20th. Eight standard employees from various areas of the library were laid off. The Library also had to terminate employment of all temporary staff that had been on furlough (~50 staff, regardless of funding source). Total reduction for NPE and PE \$1,005,700 (\$642,000 was PE) which represents an overall 13% annual reduction of general fund portion of budget for library. In terms of FTE, 10.5 are to be held vacant. 8 FTE were BMEA, 2.5 were Management. Total FTE for library currently stands at 76.75 – about a 13% reduction in FTE. NPE funding impacted by loss of \$363,135. <p>In response to a query from Gomez, Phares clarified that with 10.5 FTE vacancy, the library has a staffed figure of 66.25. FTE reductions are considered one time for 2020, and the library will be submitting the same reductions for 2021 (so the same positions will be held vacant in 2021). Likewise, the acquisitions reduction is considered one time for 2020 and will be submitted for 2021 as well.</p> <p>Sykes Wilson asked whether the cuts seem “fair” across city departments. Farnan: disproportionate based on funding sources across departments, although the ~13% reduction from general fund source affected many.</p>	

Library is funded from general fund along with a small amount of property tax. Parks and Recreation has special sales tax income and had to make deeper cuts. Police and Fire, deemed essential services, did not have to make cuts as deep as Library. So, while the actual amount varies from department to department, the general fund cuts were universal. The number of library staff laid off was a higher figure than other departments; that reflects the service element of the library. Phares clarified that 10 staff have been recalled for work for Boulder County with the COVID call center. No other department was able to redeploy as many staff members to this service, which required professional staff with skills of confidentiality, bilingual ability, and exemplary customer service skills.

Steinbrecher: at some point, the budget will hopefully revive. But going forward, what does that mean in terms of rebuilding your staff, “difficult proposition.” Also curious about the North Boulder library project – will there be enough money to staff the building once built? Farnan replied that if the library is able to reopen any branch within the next year and a half, he will be extraordinarily surprised. Considering the call center redeployment, there are 10 staff there that can run one branch location. If the economy looks better in the future, the library would request to reopen a branch and recall these staff. Meadows branch identified as the location with best potential – easiest access for drive up carry out service and two large rooms for properly distanced computer stations.

Sykes Wilson asked if this is dependent on funding or public health? Farnan: all reductions are based on budget and not on public health.

Regarding the north Boulder branch, he is pleased that plans for construction to be finished by 2022 (by which point hopefully the economy will have recovered). Number of partnership ideas to assist in completion of the project.

- b. Library Reopening: report on successful contact free carryout and next phase of service resumption. New patron holds resumed on Monday, June 1st. Public appear extraordinarily respectful with social distancing practices. Returns will start to be accepted June 15th. Courier service will resume transporting materials throughout the Flatirons Consortium. Materials currently quarantined for 72 hours (7-day delay in the “churn” of materials), per Boulder County Health regulation. Looking forward to Phase 3, Farnan has heard that the state is likely to lift sanctions by July (by which point restrictions will be under the purview of local government).

Steinbrecher wondered whether it would be optimal to receive all returns in that two-week window. Farnan responded that due dates for items currently checked out have been extended until June 30th; with the library’s elimination of late fines, returns required in the case of another patron has placed a hold on said item. The restricted schedule of returns should help limited staff safely process and quarantine materials.

Gomez wondered whether there would be a need for materials that wouldn’t otherwise exist in the budget. Farnan replied that review with the City’s Facilities and Management (FAM) team has favored a closed stack scenario; FAM has assisted in planning for sanitizing computer stations, implementing air filters to ensure clean air, and providing adequate staff distancing measures. Some materials such as personal protective equipment and plexiglass guards were not originally budgeted; however, these necessary purchases are being coded as COVID expense for audit, with possible future reimbursement from FEMA.

Farnan noted that the extraordinary culture of the library has been preserved in the remaining staff who have been working hard at reconfiguring the library services within this new more virtual environment with inspiring comradery.

Agenda Item 6: Library Commission Update

[0:57:02 Audio min.]

- a. Items from Commission
 - i. Outreach to Council Members – staff and commission reviewed letter drafted by Koenig and provided feedback as requested.
 - ii. ALA – Engaging Library Supporters During COVID-19 Pandemic – ongoing webinars
 - iii. Scheduling a tentative July 2020 Library Commission Meeting – traditionally, July is taken off. However, due to March and April meetings being removed from the calendar this year due to the COVID crisis, commission decided to convene on July 8th.
- b. Updates from Commissioners in other venues
 - i. Boulder Library Foundation (BLF) update
 - HALO Foundation Update: Sykes Wilson relayed that the foundation has so far raised \$12,812 and distributed \$4,813. Together with matching grant and the foundation’s initial contribution, \$30,811 funds remaining. Considering the recently lay-offs, reevaluation of the requirements for eligibility and amount currently underway. No

BLF meeting in June.

Steinbrecher offered to forward an article concerning fundraising in a virtual world which Phares will relay to BLF. He also broached the idea of BLF funding some sort of morale booster for staff (e.g., a reopening party). Sykes Wilson will pass along this idea.

- ii. Joint efforts with Library Champions – forthcoming email and letter writing campaign aimed at retaining focus on the importance of library both to council and the public at large
- c. Update on emails and phone calls to Library Commission – see [handouts](#).

Agenda Item 7: Library and Arts Director’s Report

[1:26:18 Audio min.]

- a. Report on 2019 Inclusivity Campaign
- b. 2020 Summer of Discovery Program
- c. Security Services
- d. Online Survey – In response to Koenig’s query, Farnan clarified that these results would be relayed to public via newsletter and webpage.
- e. Update on NoBo – public art planning going forward.

Agenda Item 8: Adjournment

[1:48:35 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, July 8, 2020, through a virtual setting.

Commissioner Gomez approved these minutes on July 21, 2020; and Celia Seaton attested to it.