

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

Name of Board/ Commission: Library Commission	
Date of Meeting: December 2, 2020	
Contact information preparing summary: Celia Seaton	
Commission members present: Juana Gómez, Joel Koenig, Jane Sykes Wilson, Steven Frost, Scott Steinbrecher	
Commission members not present:	
<p>Library staff present: David Farnan, Director of Library & Arts Celia Seaton, Administrative Specialist Aimee Schumm, eServices Manager Anne Ledford, Youth Services Manager</p> <p>City staff present: None</p> <p>Members of the public present: Joni Teter, Carson Block (Carson Block Consulting)</p>	
Type of Meeting: Regular Remote	
Agenda Item 1: Review of Online Meeting Guidelines	[0:00:15 Audio min.]
Agenda Item 2: Reminder: Commissioners please log monthly volunteer hours Count Me In Boulder [0:01:22 Audio min.] The Commission logged their service.	
Agenda Item 3: Approval of agenda	[0:01:40 Audio min.]
The meeting was called to order and Gómez asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Being none, there was a nod of approval from the commission for this agenda. Gómez noted that the latest draft of the commission’s annual letter to City Council can be found in the handouts .	
Agenda Item 4: Public comment	[0:02:23 Audio min.]
None.	
Agenda Item 5: Consent agenda	[0:02:30 Audio min.]
a. Approval of November 2020 Meeting Minutes: Koenig moved to approve these minutes, Frost seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. Sykes Wilson abstained as she was not present at the November meeting.	
Agenda Item 6: Student One Program Update	[0:03:47 Audio min.]
Ledford, Youth Services Manager, updated the commission on the progress of the Student One Program (see relevant statistics in packet .) Briefly, Student One is the effort to increase library access to all Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) students within the county boundary by allowing student IDs to work as library database-only accounts. Goals mainly center around offering assistance with homework, enticing youth to the library, and eventually transitioning the students into creation of a full-fledged library account. This partnership is especially necessary at a time when many schools are finding their internal library funds and positions cut; school districts are increasingly reliant on outside groups, such as public libraries, to provide access to these databases.	
She welcomed questions. Gómez recommended a more apparent signifier on the website pointing to the portal link that specifically mentions Student One. She lauded the program’s efforts: “amazing numbers.” Sykes Wilson asked about a breakdown of demographics pertaining to age. Ledford explained that she is unable to provide those statistics as no birthdate is recorded in the registration. In response to Koenig, Ledford clarified that staff Gina Scioscia, instrumental in getting the program off the ground, continues to coordinate the Research Rendezvous.	
Ledford encouraged the commission to tout Student One when discussing library programs with the public. Commission thanked Ledford for her efforts and time spent updating the commission on this effort.	
Agenda Item 7: Technology Strategic Plan	[0:22:33 Audio min.]
Schumm, eServices Manager, introduced Block to present the first Technology Strategic Plan for the Boulder Public Library (see packet .)	

Sykes Wilson wondered about the impetus for the Plan, and the reason one had not arisen until now. Schumm explained how the Library's IT department has transformed over the past decade. While working collaboratively, the Library IT was always a separate structure and network from the City of Boulder's IT. The two groups have worked to remove duplicated efforts. eServices (as the Library IT is now known) now primarily relies on City IT to support all Enterprise-related hardware and infrastructure; eServices can thus more closely focus on library-specific technology. Now that eServices has evolved to a stage with appropriate bandwidth, the Plan was born.

Block: the Plan should provide a clear operational direction framework, "focused on high level strategic transformation and goals," as well as a "tactical action section" including continual assessments. With gratitude, he referenced the collaborative process with the broad representation of library staff who formed a planning team. Inspired by findings from surveys of the BPL staff and focus groups, Block noticed a striking "cohesiveness" and united "dedication to customer services... connecting and making a difference in people's lives." eServices was found to be a very appreciated (and sometimes "stretched") resource.

COVID provided an opportunity to ensure that the plan would be responsive and adaptable over time and circumstance. Carnegie staff retooled from a proprietary system for cultural heritage to open source, freeing the items from any proprietary structures for a more sustainable archive. The pandemic has made technology essential for work and for many library programs. Block: "harnessing" technology will remain relevant even after the pandemic has passed – future operations will likely embrace some digital services designed in the pandemic (curbside pick-up, virtual meetings, etc.) The Plan explores possibility of district as well. Commission feedback was then welcomed.

Gómez felt that the summary was "very general" – she would love more specifics. Block agreed to a finer delineation of programs and databases.

Sykes Wilson noted the "unseen" advantages of technology which might permit Patron Services more time to assist patrons if aided by a technological process.

Steinbrecher advised "toning down the tech jargon" in the Plan to make it more accessible for the average reader, perhaps adding imagery to enhance the message.

Frost, in reviewing the findings, wondered whether BLDG61 is perhaps better suited under the Programs Events and Outreach as opposed to eServices. Staff agreed that this is a "very grey line" since both support technology in the community. A potential shift in the workgroup structure is currently under discussion.

Gómez advocated outreach to the Latinx community. Spanish offerings are great but need looms large for greater technological literacy. Concerted outreach and education could help communities learn these tools. Block agreed with Gómez's suggestion, digital inclusion is "an area ripe for partnership" between eServices and library staff. Schumm noted that the City Manager's equity office provided beneficial feedback to this Plan. She referenced partnerships to provide grants to underserved communities between BLDG61 and "I Have a Dream" Foundation, closely partnering with schools in primarily Latinx communities to provide devices and connectivity, and many staff actively learning Spanish to assist in this divide.

Steinbrecher spoke in support for the disability community – much technology is involved in those populations. He defers to Schumm to determine what tools might make the most sense for the Library to incorporate.

Commission raised the proposal of adding closed caption services to the Zoom tools used for the monthly meetings. Block agreed that this would be a great addition of accessibility, noting his recommendation that IT look into free or low-cost third party closed captioning that can be linked to the existing Zoom license.

Block expressed "delight" at the level of engagement evidenced by this commission. He is excited by the willingness and desire to relay this document to the public. Schumm and Block thanked commission for its thoughtful feedback; commission thanked them for their hard work bringing this Plan to fruition. Further input is welcomed.

Agenda Item 8: Library Commission Update

[1:20:43 Audio min.]

a. Items from Commission

- i. Finalize annual letter to City Council about priorities – see [handouts](#) for draft version. Gómez will incorporate discussed adjustments for the final version. Frost made the motion to approve the letter with its discussed amendments for transmission to City Council. Koenig seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.
- ii. Ongoing outreach efforts – Steinbrecher had "a good conversation" with City Council Member

Sam Weaver in the middle of November. Weaver impressed Steinbrecher as a “big supporter of the library,” though “concerned about move to library district.”

However, Weaver is not clear on what the preferred suggestion for disposition of library assets is by the advocates or the current Commission, as well as the potential justifications for one preferred option over others even after hearing from the consultant and reading their report. Generally, what he is most skeptical of is the identification of the problem, and some of the critical plan details. The concerns that he has are also political given the many competing funding needs in our community, and the fact that any additional revenues must come from a new tax, which is always a difficult sell to voters in times like these.

Frost and Gómez remembered that City Council had already employed a consultant who presented at length to council in the past and answered questions about such things as library assets.

Sykes Wilson met with Council Members Brocket and Wallach. Wallach seemed to understand the thought process behind the need for independent, sustainable funding; they spoke at length about Boulder’s post-pandemic recovery. Wallach approved overall of the district idea and noted it may be mostly about “timing” at this point. Brockett advised advocating for the district to be on council’s 2021 work plan in the annual letter. Frost has a scheduled meeting with Council Member Friend but may join for an earlier conversation that Gómez had planned. Gómez plans to speak with Council Member Joseph next week. Koenig will be reaching out to Council Member Young. Frost plans to follow-up with Council Member Yates.

Joni Teter and Gómez plan to soon start contacting Boulder County Commissioners.

Gómez: fellow commissioners should encourage apt connections to apply for the Library Commission’s 2021 recruitment; she herself is actively “tapping” good candidates.

- b. Updates from commissioners representing the Commission in other venues (verbal)
 - i. Boulder Library Foundation (BLF) update (Sykes Wilson/Koenig) – Koenig: last meeting saw approval of the budget, with no changes from the Library’s requested funding.
- c. Update on emails and phone calls to Library Commission

Agenda Item 9: Library and Arts Director’s Report **[1:59:35 Audio min.]**

- a. North Boulder Branch Library – currently out to bid, final estimates came “well within” budget.
- b. Update on current library Services – see [packet](#).

Agenda Item 10: Adjournment **[2:17:02 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, January 6, 2021, through a virtual setting.

Commissioner Gómez approved these minutes on January 6, 2021; and Celia Seaton attested to it.