

Keene Memorial Library Board Meeting  
Municipal Building-2<sup>nd</sup> Floor in the City Council Chambers  
400 E. Military, Fremont, NE  
6:30 P.M.  
May 15, 2023  
Minutes

Held at the Municipal Building – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Council Chambers and Board President Linda McClain called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**Roll Call**

The following members were present: Becky Pence, Amanda Moenning, LeAnn Rathke, and Linda McClain. (Ryan Fiala arrived at 6:42 pm)

Also present were: Library Director Laura England-Biggs, City Council Liaison Sally Ganem and City Attorney Travis Jacott. Dorlissa Beyer recorded the meeting minutes.

**Notice of Meeting and Agenda**

The meeting was preceded by publicized notice in the Fremont Tribune and the agenda is posted in the East Office of Keene Memorial Library, temporarily located at 925 North Broad Street, online at [www.fremontne.gov](http://www.fremontne.gov) and distributed by email. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted continually for public inspection and is located near the entrance of the meeting room.

**Agenda**

Motion to adopt current agenda for May 15, 2023 regular meeting. Board Member Rathke moved, seconded by Board Member Pence, to adopt the agenda for May 15, 2023 Library Board Meeting. Ayes: Pence, Moenning, Rathke, and McClain. Motion carried 4-0 with one absent.

**Reading of Minutes**

Board Member Moenning moved to dispense with and approve the April 17, 2023 board minutes, seconded by Board Member Rathke. Ayes: Pence, Moenning, Rathke, and McClain. Motion carried 4-0 with one absent

**New Business**

The Board and members of the public heard a Staff Report from Children’s Librarian Justine Ridder on the process followed for ordering library materials which was included in the board packet as an attachment.

No action taken.

The Board discussed draft policies for review covering Display and Collection Development/Selection which were included in the board packet as an attachment. Board President McClain opened public comment. Community member Scott Preston got up to speak and also presented a document for the record (attached). Motion to receive the document was made by Board Member Rathke, seconded by Board Member Moenning. Ayes: Pence, Moenning, Fiala, Rathke, McClain. Motion carried 5-0.

City Council Member Paul Von Behren also spoke.

With no additional speakers present, Board President McClain closed public comment.

No further action taken.

## **Reports**

### **Library Director's Report**

Month in Review

No action taken.

### **Statistics (attachment)**

No action taken.

### **Expansion Project Update**

No action taken.

### **Friends of the Library Report**

No action taken.

### **Finance-Library Expenditures Reports for April 2023 (attachment)**

No action taken.

## **Adjournment**

With no further business, motion to adjourn was made by Board Member Pence and seconded by Board Member Moenning; Time: 7:41 p.m. Ayes: Pence, Moenning, Rathke, Fiala and McClain.

Motion Carried 5-0

Next Regular Board Meeting – **June 19, 2023 Municipal Building 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, location to be determined**

Prepared by Laura England-Biggs, Library Director

Signed by Amanda Moenning, Library Board Secretary

- 1) Section 12.3 - Why strike the word "citizens"? If it's because of a lack of interest or use, then I would say there is no harm in retaining it in the policy and could be used as a tool to engage the citizenry. Also, it is unclear to me how a "community-based organization" is defined.
- 2) Collection Development Policy Introduction: "Responsibility for a child's use of the library materials lies with his or her parent or guardian." I would like to know how our large immigrant community is supposed to do this, with their limitations when it comes to mastery of the English language. This passage assumes privilege that not all children have.
- 3) Collection Development Policy Introduction: "The Library Bill of Rights will be the foundation of the Collection Development process." The Library Bill of Rights is written by the American Library Association and is in no way designed to represent the community standards of Fremont. This sentence should be removed.
- 4) 15.3.1 – Pertaining to reviews - If we have such a strong belief in the selections made by our vendors, it seems to me that the existence of a positive review should not have any impact on whether or not to order a book. Also, how can we be assured that these journals and reviews represent a variety of viewpoints? The truth is that you can pretty much find a positive review for almost any book ever written, to justify its inclusion in the collection.
- 5) 15.3.1 – Pertaining to literary honors - How do you define a "significant literary honor"? With the proliferation of the internet and online organizations generally, there are all sorts of organizations which award books with honors. How do you ensure that the literary honors represent all viewpoints?
- 6) 15.3.1 - "Contents that are timely, *accurate*..." - What does accurate mean? Who determines what accuracy is? Many things considered to be "accurate" at some point in time have been found to be incorrect later on, and vice versa. The word should be removed.
- 7) 15.3.3 - This section does not include the upper age bound of the YA section, and does not mention the lower age bound for the adult section. The section beginning with the word "However" has no place in a section about selection criteria, and should be removed, as it removes any and all responsibility from the library director and staff about the materials found in the books. 15.3.3 need only outline the Juvenile, YA, and Adult age ranges.
- 8) 15.5.1 - Why would the selection criteria and the Library Bill of Rights be provided at this point if they didn't have the intended purpose of discouraging a challenge to the material? This section appears to be an admission that these items are designed to prevent challenges to material. Nothing other than a reconsideration form need be provided if informal discussions have been unsatisfactory.
- 9) 15.5.3 - This section basically says that if a book made it into the library, it gets to stay, no matter what. How could material possibly be selected if it didn't meet selection criteria in the first place?
- 10) 15.5.7 - This section should be stricken completely. The library does not have oversight of the library board, so anything pertaining to rule setting during library board meetings should be written in the city municipal code and not the library policies.
- 11) 15.6 should be removed completely, as should everything in the appendix that is referenced. The ALA was founded as a noble and good organization, but Judith Krug, beginning in 1965, took it in a vastly different direction over her 40 year career. The ALA has no interest in protecting children and we need to sever ties with it. Ms. Krug herself was quoted as saying, "Blocking material leads to censorship. That goes for pornography and bestiality, too. If you don't like it, don't look at it... Every time I hear someone say, I want to protect the children, I want to pull my hair out." The organization – which is now led by a Marxist – can no longer be trusted...and hasn't been able to be trusted for years. It is a shame that we rely on it so heavily.

Additional Notes – I'd like to see a section that forbids the purchase of materials with explicit and detailed descriptions of sexual acts or visual or visually implied depictions of sexual acts or simulations of such acts. This would be specifically for books detailed as being for the Juvenile or Young Adult sections by the publisher or vendor and would not apply to books purchased into the adult section. Any sexual education books for young people that might fall into these categories could be exempted, but would be required to be cataloged in the adult section.

I don't believe this basic protection should be difficult or controversial.

Overall, I find that this first draft appears to remove as much responsibility from the director and staff as possible, while leaving no real recourse to challenge a book. Since a book apparently only has to meet the selection criteria to remain in the collection, then writing the selection criteria in the most general way possible only serves to ensure that nothing will ever really be removed...which is a goal that the ALA would likely applaud.

Submitted by:

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5/15/2023