

## **City of Milton-Freewater Library Board Meeting Minutes**

The Library Board of the City of Milton-Freewater met Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the Monahan Room of the Library, 8 SW 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Milton-Freewater, Oregon.

The following members were present: Tricia Perez, Randy Reese, and Judy Piper

Staff members present were: Library Director Lili Schmidt and City Manager Chad Morris

Citizens present were: None

No press members were present.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** Minutes were sent to all board members but were not discussed or approved by the Library Board.

### **UPDATES:**

Library Director Lili Schmidt introduced Board members, Tricia Perez, Judy Piper and Randy Reese to the new City Manager Chad Morris.

Schmidt and Morris detailed their discussion from the previous day about the pending Library Fine-Free Policy. Schmidt has wanted to stop charging fines to library patrons for overdue books for some time. The Board members also agreed that charging fines can cause undue burden on families of lower income and Morris said in his experience working with the library in Niceville, Florida, it tends to discourage people to bring the items back to the library. In the proposed policy patrons would still receive overdue notifications by mail or email and would still be billed for items lost or damaged beyond use. Schmidt and Morris agreed that prices of lost/damaged items should be comparable to current replacement costs (i.e. a book that is brand new would cost \$25.95 to replace, but a 5 year old book may only cost \$8.00 to replace) with an additional percentage added for processing costs of new item. Schmidt said some lost books may not be replaced at all, but Morris stated that all books are replaced, just not necessarily with the same title, so costs charged to patrons for lost books should be adequate enough to replace the item with a newer book. As part of the new policy Schmidt would like all bills for lost/damaged items to be removed from the system after 10 years. Members agreed that seemed fair.

Schmidt asked the Board to read through the policy rough draft after the meeting and to offer any thoughts or changes via email. Perez suggested adding that patrons cannot replace the lost/damaged item themselves and Schmidt agreed that was missing from the rough draft. Reese said he liked the policy. All members present and Morris are supportive of a fine-free library policy; we will continue to work on specific details, rolling scale for charges to lost items and see what needs to be brought to City Council for approval.

Schmidt gave Board members a brief update of the Summer Reading statistics so far. As of July 24<sup>th</sup>, there are 170 Adults, 48 teens, and 263 children ages 0-12 enrolled in the programs. Perez (a middle school teacher) said that middle schoolers and teens are notoriously hard to engage in activities and offered suggestions for the Fall. Teen programs can be advertised by sending a Google Doc with our event flyer in it and teachers can send that out to all students quickly. Events can be added to the Friday announcements at the school on the day the event to remind students about it. These are very helpful ideas and a good way to reach that middle-age group of kids. Events for School Aged kids is lower than usual, but Preschool story time numbers are high; averages of 40-70 people attend those each week.

Board members were given a sheet with circulation statistics from Jan 2020-to June 2024. A sharp increase of nearly 1000 MORE check-outs than average occur in June and July of every year as Summer Reading kicks off.

It is the busiest time of the year at the library. Also given to board members was the June 2024 circulation numbers by category of book. This spreadsheet details how many books of each section (Adult Fiction, Juvenile Graphic Novels, Board Books, etc) are checked out each month. Juvenile Fiction (471) and Picture Books (436) are the library's highest-circulating items in the summer.

Other conversations include Piper asking if the Library Board can now be involved in budget creation for the Library. Stating in years past this was not allowed. Piper feels the Board needs to be involved more to with the budget to support the Library Director. Morris said the Board was an advisory board to the Director, City Manager and City Council and they are welcome to be involved in the budget creation, but that doesn't necessarily mean that he or City Council will agree with their advisement on the issues.

### **Action ITEMS:**

No action items for this meeting.

### **Recommendations:**

Next meeting will be Sept 26<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm.

### **Board ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

None at this time

There being no further action or discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes by Lili Schmidt

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Board Members