CITY OF OREGON CITY
LIBRARY BOARD
WORK SESSION MINUTES

Meeting
Wednesday, August 24, 2022 at 5:00 PM

This meeting will be held online via Zoom; please contact dbutcher@orcity.org for the meeting link.

CALL TO ORDER

David Goldberg called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: David Goldberg, Nick Dierckman, Larry Osborne, Heidi Blackwell, and Cynthia Andrews were present in person.

Staff Present: Greg Williams, Library Director, Denise Butcher, Library Operations Manager, Gina Bacon, Adult Services Librarian, and Barratt Miller, Youth Service Librarian were present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Review and discuss potential updates to the Library's collection development policy

Greg Williams introduced the draft updates to the policy. Greg explained that in Oregon, administrative rules dictated the standards to be met to function as a public library and be eligible for funding. Greg stated that he included this information in the policy itself to be more straightforward.

Greg said in addition to the four American Library Association (ALA) documents that the Board had previously adopted, the policy update included the new interpretation of Library Bill of Rights as it pertained access to library services regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity, ALA’s challenge resources, and ALA’s diverse collections guidance. Greg said that the proposed collection development policy was in line with state mandated standards as well as national professional standards.

Cynthia Andrews spoke in support of the policy revision for clarity and ease of use.

Heidi Blackwell asked if there were any Libraries in Clackamas County (LINCC) specific components to the policy. Greg said that he had included some Oregon Library Association

(OLA) public library standards into the policy, regarding what every collection development policy should include.

Cynthia suggested that the term “preservation” be defined within the document for the sake of clarity between preservation and archiving and suggested defining library specific terms throughout the document for ease of citizen use. Greg thanked Cynthia for the feedback and asked the Board to note where they thought library professional jargon might be unclear to readers outside of the field.

Greg noted that the bulk of section two was retained from the previous collection development policy, albeit in a different order.

Greg highlighted the addition of materials of varying complexity to the selection criteria to support the Because Accessibility Matters collection. Greg stated that the policy now mentioned the selection of Spanish language materials for all ages and children’s materials in Russian. Greg asked if using the service area’s language demographics to inform the languages included in the collection, in keeping with OLA guidelines, would be something the Board would want in the policy. Larry Osborne asked for specifics on the threshold for making a new collection; Greg said there were three levels of standards and Greg would need to refer to the thresholds of each. Heidi asked if the census was the source of the language information. Greg said he would have to refer to the standards. Nick Dierckman asked why there were children’s materials in Russian but no adult materials in Russian. Barratt Miller said acquiring Russian language materials was challenging and, after English and Spanish, it was the most commonly spoken language in the service area. Gina Bacon said space limitations had to be taken into account when maintaining current collections, developing the adult Spanish collection, and creating additional collections.

David Goldberg asked how requests for materials in languages not held by the library might be handled. Gina discussed checking other LINCC member libraries’ collections and using Interlibrary Loan.

Barratt stated other member libraries had higher linguistic diversity in their service areas and their children’s collections were broader.

Greg noted the section about keeping borrowed vs supplied holds as equal as possible had financial and collection development impacts and expressed hope to have this encapsulated in the collection development policy.

Cynthia requested an explanation of LINCC be included in the document.

Heidi asked about the accuracy of the section placing final collection decisions on Greg. Greg stated that for the selection of library materials for inclusion resided with him, which he delegated to selectors, while the final authority to remove materials resided with someone else, and thought the wording as presented was accurate. Greg said it important to have this portion included so responsibility was clearly defined and standards were created.

Barratt stated that the policy as written ensured selection was the purview of library professionals.

Greg reviewed the removal process section and said specifics were added to the weeding process and what was done with withdrawn items, including: donation to Friends of the Oregon City Library for resale, donation to other nonprofits and schools within the county, and recycling. Larry Osborne asked if leaving open the final destination of the withdrawn items might provide more flexibility. Greg acknowledged the importance of making sure the items remained local due to the origins of funding and acknowledged he was comfortable adding "generally" to the language.

Greg highlighted the preservation section of the policy and said some repairs may be undertaken with consideration to the cost of repairs and the lifespan of the item. Retention of original packaging of Library of Things items was considered a preservation activity.

Larry and Cynthia noted that the existing language around donations was contradictory. Greg stated the intent was to ensure that the library could obtain materials from Friends of the Oregon City Library and selected donations while also ensuring donors knew donated items might not end up in the library collection. It was decided the section would be reworked for clarity.

Greg said Special Collections were determined to need individual sections outlining the purpose, collection criteria, and vision.

Greg said that the section on collection evaluation had been modified from the last version to reflect the OLA public library standards concerning collection evaluation.

Larry recommended the addition of "primarily" following "which" in the organization.

Nick asked if there would be a Lucky Day collection item not found in the general collection. Gina said that should not happen as Lucky Days supplemented high demand titles. Greg confirmed this was the case and said there had to be a balance between holdable copies of a title and Lucky Day copies. Cynthia suggested language modifications of "circulating/holdable" to the document.

Greg shared the Lucky Day collection was designed to promote access to high demand materials at the library of purchase. Barratt stated there were also digital copies available, staff were alerted when the hold-to-available copies ratio of a title exceeded a certain threshold so that they could purchase more copies, and patrons unable to physically visit the library due to disability and/or visual impairment qualified for unlimited free audiobooks through the National Library Service (NLS).

Cynthia suggested the addition of "underutilized" as a qualifier to the removal criteria.

Nick asked if the county had a collection development policy as LINCC purchased the digital collection. Gina explained that due to budget size, the number of titles that could be purchased was limited and selecting materials with high demand in physical format was the primary selection criteria.

Nick asked if Oregon City Public Library (OCPL) contributed funds to purchase digital materials. Greg said yes. Nick asked how that was allocated. Greg stated that it was currently determined 50% by population served and 50% by the number of ebook circulations. Greg said there were a variety of opinions on how the digital collection should be curated and funded.

Greg stated that the new policy streamlined the questions asked of the person submitting a request for reconsideration of material; it asked if the person had read the entire work, read the whole collection development policy, and what part of the collection development policy the person thought the work violated.

Greg asked for the Board's thoughts. Nick Dierckman expressed favor for the outlined document, expressed interest in seeing how it worked should an official challenge be made, and expressed a concern that patrons might sidestep the challenge process and go to City Council with their concerns.

Greg said that the first step in the revised reconsideration or challenge process was to talk to Barratt Miller or Gina Bacon about the material of concern. After a meeting, the patron could proceed with filling out the challenge form.

Larry asked if the intent was to make the policy a PDF. Greg said it was and the policy was also available as webpage.

David expressed concern about listing the policy appendices as it might have the appearance of creating a barrier and suggested using "library's collection development policy" instead. Greg asked if "entire collection development policy" would work. There was general assent.

Nick asked if talking to Barratt or Gina was discoverable or specified in the policy. Greg stated that this step would be included in the reconsideration request form as a prerequisite to submitting the form.

Heidi asked if the policy included a timeline. Greg stated that there was none specified and acknowledged much of the process was dependent on the patron and patron response time was widely variable. Barratt agreed. Greg stated that he would add to the policy a timeline for an initial library response.

David Goldberg departed the meeting.

Greg said that following a request for reconsideration, he would respond in writing to the individual. If the requesting patron was not satisfied with the explanation, they could submit a written request to the Library Board.

Greg stated that step six of the process was added because determining if an item was consistent with the collection development policy likely only needed to be determined once. Greg said if an item was challenged more than once in a 24-month period, he would inform the patron(s) submitting the requests of the prior recommendation by the Board and would inform the Board the item had been challenged again.

Heidi asked if it would be simpler to finalize material decisions based on the version of the collection development policy in practice when the request for reconsideration occurred rather than on a timespan. Greg stated that the time component was to account for changes in Board interpretation of policies. Barratt said that this wording was based on best practice recommendations from school library journal articles.

Nick asked if the Board would be notified of any challenges. Greg said he would notify the Board and it would go into the Director's Report.

Greg noted the policy also stated that materials going through the reconsideration process would remain an available part of the collection during the process. Greg said if multiple reconsideration requests were made for the same item before the Board had reviewed it, the requests would be addressed as one request.

Heidi asked if the person submitting the challenge would be notified of the discussion about the material's inclusion on the Board's Agenda. Greg said he would notify the person submitting the challenge when it would be discussed and they and other members of the public could speak during the Public Comment portion of the meeting. Larry asked that if multiple requests for reconsideration were submitted and the reasons differed between them then all reasons given be addressed. Greg agreed consolidation was reasonable. Barratt pointed out that the execution of this would also depend on the timeline of when challenges were submitted in relation to the Board packet's distribution.

Greg stated that some of the guidance suggested the creation of a reconsideration focused subcommittee and having Board members read challenged material in its entirety and asked if that was something the Board was interested in. Larry expressed support for the Board to read the challenged material in its entirety and noted that it might prove difficult to share a limited number of copies of a work between the Board in advance of the meeting. Heidi expressed a desire for language around Board members to make informed decisions and supported accelerated access to challenged materials for Board review. Cynthia suggested wording of "reviewed." Cynthia expressed a desire to have the whole Board face material challenges together. Nick expressed a belief that the low number of challenges did not justify a subcommittee.

Barratt asked if keeping a subcommittee on as an option rather than a requirement might be helpful. Nick expressed support for this option. Cynthia reiterated a belief that the Board should face challenges as a whole.

Greg stated that there was no Municipal Code or Board Bylaw specifying the Board's place in the challenge process and that this meant this would have to be specified.

Greg stated that this presented two avenues of review: one where final decisions rested with the Library Board and one where final decisions rested with the City Commission. Greg suggested that if the Commission route was taken, that only Board decisions to remove material from the collection be routed there. Greg said that ALA guidelines were for governing bodies to make removal decisions.

Nick expressed support for the Library Board to have the final say on challenges out of consideration for representation of the unincorporated service area. Gina voiced support for this position and recognized the focus of the Board members on Library matters.

Greg said he would discuss changing the Board Bylaws with David Goldberg for future submission to the City Commission. Greg recognized that this would also be an opportunity to present other revisions to the Bylaws, including meeting requirements, and asked the Board to ponder other changes they might wish to make.

Greg stated that in the draft policy if an item was removed from OCPL's collection, the decision would only be for OCPL's copies and not copies owned by other LINCC libraries. Patrons would still be able to put the item on hold and check out copies owned by other LINCC libraries. If a title was removed from the collection and was currently checked out, that item would continue its normal circulation until it was returned. Copies of titles removed from the collection could be donated to other LINCC libraries. Nick asked if that needed to be included in the policy. Greg and Gina spoke in favor of including it for the purpose of transparency. Cynthia spoke in favor of including it.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Cynthia Andrews adjourned the meeting at 6:44pm.