

Special Meeting

March 17, 2020

Library Board of Trustees

Mountain Home Public Library

790 North 10th East – Mountain Home, ID

Chairperson: Bonnie Sharp

Vice Chair: James Green

Secretary/Treas: Mary Ellen Hale

Clerk for the Board: William Lamb

Board Members Present: Trustees Bonnie Sharp, Mary Ellen Hale (via phone), James Green, Rich Sykes, Brad Fesperman

Excused: Matt Bundy, Council Liaison

Others Present: William Lamb, Library Director; Nina Patterson, City Clerk; Geoff Schroeder, Deputy City Attorney

Roll Call – Chair Sharp called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and a quorum was established. Chair Sharp welcomed Brad Fesperman as the newest Trustee.

New Business –

A. **Action Item: Cure open meeting law violation**

Deputy City Attorney Geoff Schroeder was present and discussed a violation of open meeting law and while in his opinion, there was no ill-intent, the Board needed to take action to correct the violation. Mr. Schroeder noted that the powers to close the Library lie with the Board of Trustees and the Director's notification needed to trigger action for the Board.

The violation is that 3-members of the governing body engaged in deliberations via email in response to Director Lamb's notification of library closure. Once the Director provided notice of a pending Board meeting to discuss the closure, it constituted 'pending action' before the Board and the continuing emails back and forth after that notification is where the violation occurred.

Trustees and Mr. Schroeder had a discussion regarding how to cure the violation.

Trustee Hale made a motion that the Board acknowledge a violation of open meeting law occurred and that Trustees have disregarded any deliberations that have occurred via email.

The following vote was recorded:

Trustee Hale	AYE
Trustee Green	AYE
Trustee Fesperman	AYE
Trustee Sykes	AYE
Trustee Sharp	NAY

The majority of the vote being in favor, the motion carried.

B. Action Item: COVID-19 Closing Approval

Director Lamb advised he wanted it known that he takes ownership for the controversy regarding the closure of the Public Library. In his opinion, he has the authority to close the Library in the interest of public safety, pending Board approval of the duration of a closure.

Lamb went on to explain that there were multiple criteria points he used to make that decision, including:

- CDC/Whitehouse Guidelines
 - o Avoid social gathering of more than 10 people.
 - MHPL averaged 322 visits per day in February.
 - o Older people are particularly at risk of the coronavirus.
 - MHPL has a large patron base of elderly.
- Local School District and Area Library Closures
 - o Mountain Home School District #193 and Richard Mckenna Schools have closed. Area libraries have closed including the Glenns Ferry Public Library.

Lamb continued that the Mountain Home Public Library has an obligation to protect the Library staff and the community it serves, and, in his opinion, the Board should approve the closure as keeping the library open has the potential to do more harm to our community than good.

Trustees and Lamb discussed potential service offerings and how staff would be working during the closure. Lamb explained that Library staff would continue to report to work and there were multiple internal projects that were being worked on that are difficult to accomplish during normal times. Additionally, Director Lamb and Staff are looking at various modified and/or limited service offerings that could be provided to the community in some capacity. At this point, there are on-going discussions about providing some type of curbside pickup service but there are logistics to work out regarding maintaining distancing recommendations. Additionally, Wi-Fi capacity has increased out into the parking lots and the patio areas.

Trustee discussed having a generic list of what staff worked on during the closure days to ensure there were no questions about what staff were doing during the closures.

Trustee Sykes made a motion to close the Library thru April 5th with staff working on internal projects and maintaining a list of what was accomplished; and researching and where possible, implementing modified services to the community. Seconded by Trustee Green. Motion carried.

Adjourn –

With no further business to come before the Board, Trustee Green moved the meeting be adjourned at 7:20 p.m. Seconded by Trustee Sykes.

William Lamb, Library Director
and Clerk of the Board

Bonnie Sharp, Library Board Chair