

# **MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH LIBRARY BOARD**

**Chairperson** – Georga Knazovich - Wasilla  
**Vice Chair** – Susan Pougher - Palmer  
**Secretary** – Kathy Kysar - Sutton

**Big Lake** – Katherine Cross  
**At Large 1** - Naomi Sweetman  
**Willow** – Vacant

**Talkeetna** – Mary Fischer  
**Trapper Creek** – Virginia Robson  
**At Large 2** – Martha Kincaid

## **AGENDA**

### **REGULAR MEETING Sutton Library and Zoom**

**September 12, 2023  
1:00PM**

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM
- III. AGENDA APPROVAL
- IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- V. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING
  - A. August 8, 2023
- VI. BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS
  - A. Hugh Leslie
  - B. Librarians
- VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD/AUDIENCE PARTICIATION – 3 minutes per person
- IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
  - A. Palmer Library
- X. NEW BUSINESS
  - A. Challenged Materials Review Process
  - B. Member Comments Protocol
- XI. ADVOCACY
- XII. CORRESPONDENCE
- XIII. MEMBER COMMENTS
- XIV. NEXT MEETING
  - A. October 10, 2023 – Wasilla Library and Zoom
- XV. ADJOURNMENT

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At Large 2 – Martha Kincaid  
Talkeetna – Mary Fischer  
Trapper Creek – Virginia Robson

## REGULAR MEETING

### Willow Library and Zoom

**August 8, 2023**  
**1:00PM**

A. Call to order by Chairperson Knazovich at 1:01 PM.

The Quorum was established with members Chairperson Knazovich, Member Robson, Secretary Kysar, Member Sanford, Member Cross, Member Kincaid, Member Fischer, and Member Sweetman.

The approval of the agenda was moved by Member Fischer, seconded by Member Robson.

A. May 9, 2023

The minutes of May 9, 2023, meeting has corrections to be made before approval.

A. Mr. Hugh Leslie informed the board of First Amendment Auditors and how they film borough employees at work. The borough attorney believes that libraries are protected spaces and patrons cannot be filmed in the library due to Alaska statute chapter 25 Public Record Disclosures, Sec. 40.25.140 Confidentiality of library records. The First Amendment Auditors have been to the Wasilla and Palmer libraries. There is one additional book challenge, *Sold* by Patricia McCormick, in Big Lake. A committee will be formed to make a recommendation regarding the book. Member Fischer asked about the status of the previous book challenge, *Let's Talk About It*, and Mr. Leslie responded that Patron Goforth appealed the committee's decision to the Community Development Director, Mr. Phillips, who supported the committee's recommendation, and the book is back on library shelves. Chairperson Knazovich questioned why library board members were not allowed to attend the last meeting. Mr. Leslie explained that his concern was that Patron Goforth would object to the meeting being in violation of the Open Meetings Act which would then force the board to go through the entire process again. There was a FOIA request made for all borough emails regarding *Let's Talk About It*.

B. Librarians

**Julie Mitchell from Willow.** 140 children signed up for summer reading program, and 40-75 showed up each week. 52 children turned in reading records which added up to 1,100 hours during the 8 weeks of the summer reading program. Storytime starts in September, as well as a mentoring program for kids, community seminars, and mystery book club. This Friday, they are working with Willow Farmer's Market to have a back-to-school giveaway for kids.

**Member Fischer reported for Talkeetna.** The summer reading program was successful. Back to School Supplies is this week. Strong Women and Gardening Club meet regularly.

**Marita Crosby from Trapper Creek.** 15 children were in the summer reading program. Tomorrow is the last day and there will be tie dying of t-shirts. After school program begins in September. The home school delivered school supplies. The following week, the home-schooling preschool program will begin, and the afterschool program will begin the first of September. Adult craft program will begin in October.

**Juli Buzby from Sutton.** The summer reading program went well, and the preschool numbers were higher than normal. Teen program had good attendance, and they held their end-of-summer barbeque last weekend with about 100 people in attendance. Preschool programming is ongoing, but other programming is finished until after Labor Day. There is currently one book in the Sutton Library being questioned by a patron.

**Zane Treesh from Wasilla.** They had 799 summer reading participants. The library circulated 26,000 items in June and over 24,000 in July. They added a half-time position in July with the main duties being book drop, shelving, and helping with the holds. The Unaccompanied Minors Policy will be enforced more strictly as school begins. They currently have two different book challenges. Wasilla Library's legal team determined that the library is a limited public forum and patrons cannot be filmed without their permission.

**Beth Skow from Palmer.** Summer reading program numbers were down. They are still trying to figure out how to manage the building with the library being on two levels. There are security problems with monitoring who is in the building because it is a shared space with other businesses. A First Amendment Auditor visited the library when there weren't any children present. He was given a tour, took pictures, and left, saying that they did a great job. Architectural meetings are to take place August 16, 6-7pm at the Depot, and library board members are invited. It will be a workshop with Angie from Wolf Architecture, who designs libraries. The old building has tested positive for mold, so some items have been removed and fogged with straight vinegar, as recommended by experts.

**Cassidy Drake from Big Lake.** There were 284 children in the summer reading program with 40-80 participants each week. Paige Moore took over for Peggy, who retired on July 20. A new custodian, Priscilla, started in July and is doing a great job. Nicole is the new on-call person, taking over Paige's previous position, and she comes with 14 years of experience in school libraries in Nebraska. They gave away 26 bikes and scooters with accompanying helmets and locks for their summer reading program. They currently have 3 volunteers but will be down to 2 by the end of August as one of them goes back to college. In May, the Susitna Rotary Club weeded the library's flower boxes and planted flowers for the United Way Day of Caring. They have been awarded a grant through ALA to make accessibility improvements to the building, including automatic door openers for the bathrooms and, possibly, extra pads to expand the heated sidewalk. Two books were challenged in June, and one is being taken to the MSBLB. Cassidy will be out of the library for a while this fall due to surgery.

VII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD/AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – 3 minutes per person.  
No persons to be heard.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Palmer Library. Beth Skow emphasized the difficulty of having items in 3 different places.

B. Book Banning Concerns. No concerns stated.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

X. ADVOCACY

No advocacy.

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence.

XII. MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Fischer encourages all librarians to let the board know how they can be supported.

Member Kincaid commented that the trend of defunding libraries is moving across the United States. She stated that it was in the news that Missouri and Montana cut ties with the American Library Association because the new ALA president announced that she's a Marxist. Member Kincaid asserted that the new president says, in her own words, "My goal is to change through the libraries." She also said that a mustreadalaska.com survey showed that 50% of Alaskans support pulling funding from public libraries. She stated that Arkansas is trying to put forth a new bill that would criminalize librarians for providing harmful books to minors, and the state of Alaska has criteria for that. She pointed out that Red Bull's marketing campaign made them a 1-million-dollar industry and that libraries need to do something to come against the trend that she previously described. She stated that the Juneau librarian is having drag shows come in. She then referred to the Sound of Freedom movie and Tyson Wright, Director of Outreach for Operation Underground Railroad, where she learned that 80% of sex trafficking is done by family members and intimate partners and that within 72 hours of leaving a rural village,

113 coming to urban areas, vulnerable young people are targeted with a place to stay. Then, she  
114 quoted, "Keep in mind that ALA is to libraries what Google is to the internet." She stated that  
115 librarians and the board are gatekeepers and children are vulnerable.

116 Beth Skow responded to Member Kincaid by stating that librarians are instructed not to engage  
117 with people protesting books, not to defend themselves. She also stated that the books that were  
118 challenged at the schools are now being challenged in the public libraries, with the difference  
119 being that those books that were in children's hands in school libraries are in the adult section  
120 in the public libraries. Member Kincaid suggested that we do a marketing campaign to educate  
121 the public. Zane Treesh commented that for the Wasilla Library, they have a media policy for  
122 the directors and staff that states that they must refer media or a member of the press to City  
123 Hall. Member Robson commented that we, the board, can't just run a media campaign without  
124 borough approval. Member Kincaid suggested that an article be run in the *Make a Scene*  
125 magazine about all that libraries have to offer. Julie Mitchell suggested that board members  
126 speak at assembly meetings.

127 Member Kincaid asked the librarians if they are filing police reports when they get harassed.  
128 Julie Mitchell replied that they are instructed not to file a report unless they specifically feel  
129 unsafe. Member Fischer, a former prosecuting attorney, suggested that they let the police know  
130 what's going on with just a phone call, not a formal police report, to prevent the police from  
131 being blindsided when something does happen.

132 XIII. NEXT MEETING

133 A. September 11, 2023, in Sutton and via Zoom

134 XIV. ADJOURNMENT

135 Chairperson Knazovich moved that we adjourn, seconded by Secretary Kysar.

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139 Georgia Knazovich, Chairperson

140 Attest:  
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143 Kathy Kysar, Secretary  
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