

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
LIBRARY CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Chairman—Chad Scott (MBR 7)

Vice Chair—Michelle Dempsey (MBR 2)

MBR1—Nancy Bertels

MBR3—Aaron Malone

MBR4—Dorothy Denison

MBR5—Erik Palin

MBR6—Susan Hillman

ALT1—Camilla (Nan) Potts

ALT2—Sally Pollen



**AGENDA**

**ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS AND LIVE STREAMED**

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/11289539>

350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

**REGULAR MEETING**

**5:00 PM**

**AUGUST 12, 2024**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING

A. JULY 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

VI. STAFF REPORTS

A. Hugh Leslie – Recreation & Library Services Manager

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – (2 Minutes Per Person)

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Materials Submitted for Reconsideration

1. Identical; Ellen Hopkins

ISBN 978-1416950059

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Materials Submitted for Reconsideration

1. Red Hood; Elana K. Arnold ISBN 978-0062742353
2. Damsel; Elana K. Arnold ISBN 978-0-06-274232-2
3. Forever; Judy Blume ISBN 978-1-4814-1442-5
4. The Haters; Jesse Andrews ISBN 978-1-4197-2018-9

B. Decide if there should be limits imposed on the debate of questioned items during the meeting.

X. NEXT MEETING

A. September 9, 2024

XI. MEMBERS, STAFF COMMENTS

XII. ADJOURNMENT

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS AND TEAMS**

350 EAST DAHLIA AVENUE, PALMER

**REGULAR MEETING**

**JULY 8th, 2024  
5:00 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

A. Mr. Scott called the meeting to order at 5:13 pm

**II. ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

A. Present: Chad Scott, Michelle Dempsey, Nancy Bertels, Aaron Malone, Dorothy Denison, Susan Hillman, Camilla Potts, Sally Pollen

B. Absent: Erik Palin

**III. AGENDA APPROVAL**

A. Ms. Dempsey motioned to approve, Mr. Malone 2<sup>nd</sup> - unanimous consent.

**IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A. Mr. Scott led the Pledge of Allegiance

**V. BOARD INTRODUCTION**

A. Review of Establishing Ordinance and Codes

1. 4.05 GENERAL PROCEDEURES

- Mr. Scott went over general procedures and formation of the board.

2. OR 24-039

- Mr. Scott read OR 24-039 which outlines the ordinance forming the LCAC.

3. 2.71 CODE OF ETHICS

- Mr. Scott read chapter 2.71 of the Code of Ethics into the record.

4. LIBRARIES COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

- Mr. Scott read the policy on the Collection Development.

**VI. BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS**

A. Jillian Morrissey, Director of Community Development – Mr. Leslie read a statement from Ms. Morrissey – Explained the functions of Borough Staff and functions of the Committee. Addressed questions from the Chair & Vice Chair.

B. Hugh Leslie, Recreation & Library Services Manager – Mr. Leslie gave the Committee members copies of Robert's Rules of Order & Open Meetings Act information. Copies of contested books will be available as needed.

- C. Nick Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney – Explained the social media expectations, no more than 3 members of the committee can convene in one place at any time, communicate items they want to discuss directly with the staff. They cannot limit the time that citizens can speak, each person has a time limit (2 minutes).

#### VII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD/AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – 2 Minutes Per Person

- A. Mary Robinson – Ms. Robinson addressed the difference between censorship and intellectual freedom and hoped the committee would be able to tell the difference. Presented an example of a factual book.
- B. Kathy Kysar – Ms. Kysar quoted the bible, spoke to how she would address her own kids if they were reading the material that is being questioned.
- C. Jackie Goforth – Ms. Goforth expressed her discontent with the books being questioned. She plans to continue resubmitting books she feels are obscene to the committee.
- D. Karen Lewis - Ms. Lewis thanked the mayor and the assembly for creating this committee. Expressed her discontent with the questioned books.
- E. Linda Spohm – Ms. Spohm expressed discontent with the questioned books, noted children should be reading educational age-appropriate books.
- F. Mark Spohm – Mr. Spohm thanked the committee, expressed concern with using taxpayer money for things that could possibly harm children.
- G. Mary Ravetta – Ms. Ravetta expressed concern with the questioned books, spoke to personal experiences surrounding inappropriate material as a young person. Referenced Supreme Court case Section 204.
- H. Prudence McKinney – Ms. McKinney stated library staff should have broad discretion in providing materials to the public, they are trained to decide. Parents should teach their children how to use books like any other tool in their life.
- I. Heidi Deadmond – Ms. Deadmond thanked the committee, expressed concern with diluting the materials in libraries and censorship. She encouraged the committee to reference the 2003 Supreme Court case against the National Library Association.
- J. Karen Crandall – Ms. Crandall thanked the mayor and the committee, expressed concern that the service of parents limiting which books their child can check out is not known of widely. She opined Christian authors are being omitted from library collections.
- K. Loy Thurman – Mr. Thurman expressed his concern with others using the religious comments to confirm the inclusion of the questioned books. Spoke to how we should try to protect young people from the questioned books and those like it.
- L. Dave Johnson – Mr. Johnson expressed his concern with taxpayer money being spent on books such as those being questioned. Spoke on how it's the community's responsibility to protect children.

#### VIII. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. Score Card Utilization

- 1. Mr. Scott read score card items into the record. Mr. Scott asked if it was an all or nothing rubric, Mr. Spiropoulos answered that the items are just items to consider. Ms. Denison asked if the items on the list were to be based on one's opinion, Mr. Spiropoulos confirmed it was one's own opinion. Ms. Dempsey asked if they were allowed to use other laws to consider the book along with the score card.

Mr. Spiropoulos answered the law for the suitability for minors under 16 for the state is already included in the score card and there is no law in the Borough.

B. Book Selection Process

1. Mr. Scott asked Mr. Leslie to describe the process of how the books get selected for reconsideration, Mr. Leslie outlines the process.

C. Book Review Voting Process

1. Mr. Scott reviewed voting process with the committee. Mr. Leslie answered technical questions from the committee.

D. Meeting Frequency

1. Ms. Dempsey moved to approve having meetings once a month on every 2nd Monday, Ms. Denison 2<sup>nd</sup> – unanimous consent.

E. Materials Submitted for Reconsideration

1. Identical; Ellen Hopkins ISBN 978-1416950059
  - Mr. Scott moved to review book, no 2<sup>nd</sup> - unanimous consent.
2. Red Hood; Elana K. Arnold ISBN 978-0062742353
  - Mr. Scott moved to postpone to next meeting, no 2<sup>nd</sup> - unanimous consent.
3. Damsel; Elana K. Arnold ISBN 978-0-06-274232-2
  - Mr. Scott moved to postpone to next meeting, no 2<sup>nd</sup> - unanimous consent.

IX. NEXT MEETING

- A. August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

X. MEMBERS, STAFF COMMENTS

- A. Ms. Bertels – Questioned how the committee will know if each copy of the books are in good condition?
- B. Ms. Hillman – Noted this will be an adventure.
- C. No other comments

XI. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Mr. Scott adjourned the meeting at 7:07 pm



# Matanuska-Susitna Borough

## Community Development Department

### Library Material Staff Report

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**Title:** Identical

**Author:** Ellen Hopkins

**Libraries where this material is shelved:** Trapper Creek, Willow, Sutton

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#### **Is the material in good condition or appearance?**

- Sutton: Checked out and staff was unable to verify at the time of this report
- Trapper Creek: Good condition
- Willow: Used, fair to good condition

#### **Is the topic of the material a priority for the collection?**

Identical is shelved in the Young Adult (YA) sections at all three libraries. Young Adult collections are responsive and tend to reflect the age and stage of life of the intended reader. The book, Identical, addresses abuse from the perspective of a minor. Addressing the issue of domestic violence and abuse has been reported as a priority for the Mat-Su residents and throughout Alaska through a variety of governmental and non-governmental sources.

#### **Is the format of the material a priority for the collection?**

The material is a book format. Books make up the majority of inventory in all five of our public libraries.

#### **Has the material been used frequently by patrons?**

This factor depends on the library due to the collections size, the size of the library and length of time one patron maintains the book.

- Sutton Library has shelved the book since May of 2010 and it has been checked out 15 times. This is a medium rate of check out for a YA collection in a library of Sutton's size.
- Trapper Creek Library has shelved the book since October of 2008 and it has been checked out 14 times. This is a medium rate of check out for a YA collection in a library of Trapper Creek's size.
- Willow Library has shelved the book since September of 2008 and it has been checked out 27 times. This is a medium rate of check out for a YA collection in a library of Willow's size.

#### **Is the material factually accurate?**

This book is a work of fiction and not a resource material.

#### **Has the material been superseded by a new edition or a better source?**

N/A

#### **Is the material relevant to the needs and interests of the community?**

Alaska is ranked #2 in the highest number of child abuse cases per 100,000 people under the age of 18.

**Can the material be easily borrowed from another source?**

It is available at all the Borough libraries through our participation in the State Library Catalog as well as an E-Book through the Alaska Digital Library.

**What is the literary, artistic, scientific, political, or educational merit of the material.**

This Young Adult book addresses the difficult issues of abuse from a minor’s perspective.

**Does the material have positive review(s) in one or more appropriate professional journals?**

Reviews are typically done in professional journals soon after the publication of the book. Identical was initially published in August of 2008. Staff could not find a record of a review in a professional journal without having to have a subscription to the journal.

**Does the material have positive reviews from critics, patrons or staff members?**

Source	Editor Rating	User Rating	# of reviews	Notes
<a href="#">Amazon</a>		4.5 stars	1,384	
<a href="#">Barnes &amp; Noble</a>		4.6 stars	644	
<a href="#">Common Sense Media</a>	4 stars		37	Suggested 15+
<a href="#">Goodreads</a>		4.3 stars	4,130	
<a href="#">Kirkus</a>	Starred Review*			* “...book of exceptional merit and outstanding writing...”
<a href="#">YA Books Central</a>	5 stars	4.9 stars	13	

**Are there sufficient materials available on the same subject?**

There are many nonfiction books and resources available on the subject of abuse.

**Does the material have a reputation and/or significance of the author, publisher or producer?**

Ellen Hopkins has won dozens awards for her literature and is a #1 *New York Times Bestseller*. She has won for Identical:

- Pacific Northwest Young Reader's Choice Award Master List
- Joan F. Kaywell Book Award - Honoree (Florida)

**Has the Mat-Su Borough School District’s (MSBSD) Library Citizens’ Advisory Committee (LCAC) reviewed this material?**

Yes, the MSBSD LCAC reviewed the book on February 8, 2024 and recommended the book be removed from the school library system. The totals for the vote included:

- Retain at all libraries: 0
- Retain only at high school libraries: 3
- Retain only at middle and high school libraries: 0
- Remove from all school libraries: 7
- Abstain from voting: 1

The MSBSD Board voted to remand the book to the Administration for a decision. The Administration determined that the book “Identical” would return to all nine high schools, four middle schools and a correspondence homeschool program libraries.



**Matanuska-Susitna Borough  
Community Development Department  
Library Material Review Score Card**

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**Title:**

**Author:**

**Date:**

**Reviewer Name:**

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***Evaluation criteria:*** *The committee should consider the following acquisition and weeding criteria as applied to the challenged material.*

- Is the material in good condition or appearance?
- Is the topic of the material a priority for the collection?
- Is the format of the material a priority for the collection?
- Has the material been used frequently by patrons?
- Is the material factually accurate?
- Has the material been superseded by a new edition or a better source?
- Is the material relevant to the needs and interests of the community?
- Can the material be easily borrowed from another source?
- Does the material have literary, artistic, scientific, political, or educational merit?



- Does the material have positive review(s) in one or more appropriate professional journals?
- Does the material have positive reviews from critics, patrons or staff members?
- Are there sufficient materials available on the same subject?
- Does the material have reputation and/or significance of the author, publisher or producer?

***Suitability for Minors under 16*** (answer yes or no):

1. Does the material depict the following actual or simulated conduct?

- sexual penetration;
- the lewd touching of a person's genitals, anus, or female breast;
- masturbation;
- bestiality;
- the lewd exhibition of a person's genitals, anus, or female breast; or
- sexual masochism or sadism

Yes       No

2. Would the average individual, applying contemporary community standards, find that the material, *taken as a whole*, appeals to the prurient interest in sex for persons under 16 years of age?

Yes       No

3. Would a reasonable person find that the material, *taken as a whole*, lacks serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value for persons under 16 years of age?

(Note: Mark "Yes" only if the book lacks all of them)

Yes       No

4. Does the material depict actual or simulated conduct in a way that is patently offensive to the prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable for persons under 16 years of age?

Yes       No

**COMMENTS** (this may include anything related to the challenge or notes about factors contained in the above evaluation and suitability criteria):

**SUGGESTED DISPOSITION:**

- Keep the book where it is
- Reshelve the book to the young adult section
- Reshelve the book to the adult section
- Remove the book from the library
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS/REASONS REGARDING SUGGESTED DISPOSITION (if any):**