

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the  
Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library  
Board of Trustees**

**Call to Order:** A meeting of the Alpena County Library Board of Trustees was called to order on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 4:00 pm. by President Joseph Garber.

**Present:**

Board of Trustees: Joseph Garber, Dustin Budd, Michelle Cornish, Lauren Mantlo, Quintin Meek

Staff: Debra Greenacre, Jessica Luther

Friends: Brenda Rae

**Approval of Agenda:** It was moved by Cornish with support from Budd to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** It was moved by Meek with support from Cornish to accept the minutes from the January 17, 2024, regular meeting. The motion passed.

**Financial Reports:** The Financial Reports were reviewed. Garber directed it to be filed as presented subject to final audit.

**Review and Approval of Bills:** It was moved by Cornish and supported by Budd that the bills as presented be approved. The motion passed.

**Director and Leadership Team Report:** The written report was reviewed. Greenacre added that she is working with the Leadership Team on strategic planning and the millage renewal.

**Friends of the Library Report:** Rae shared that the Friends contributed \$1,000 towards the purchase of a new snowblower. She added that they are working on establishing a permanent used bookstore at the Library and researching other fundraising opportunities.

**Public Comment:**

Sara Grochowski, Alpena, former Youth Services Librarian, expressed her concerns that the Board of Trustees would consider moving or banning books within the library collection. She stated that the responsibility of determining what a child is allowed to read lies with that child's parents. She encouraged the board members to review the Trustee Manual provided by the State of Michigan and provided letters from members of the public unable to attend the meeting.

Julie Byrnes, Alpena, stated she is a representative of the group "Save the Alpena Children." She stated she submitted a letter on behalf of the group declaring they were challenging the location of *All Boys Aren't Blue* in the teen room and was not contacted by the director for a meeting to discuss the proposed challenge as stated in the existing policy.

Abigail Platt, Alpena Community College student, expressed the importance of diversity in the books that are provided in the library.

Shaelyn Lampinen, Alpena Community College student, expressed her opposition to banning books within the library and the importance of having the library as a safe space.

Nicole Cuddie, Alpena, stated that equitable access to all information is essential to having a community of critical thinkers. She added that it is the responsibility of the parents and caregivers to determine what is appropriate for their children to have access to.

Seth Golson, Alpena, spoke against banning books and Nazis.

Pat Manning, Alpena, stated that the First Amendment guarantees freedom of religion and freedom of speech.

Doris Feys, League of Women Voters of Northeast Michigan, shared the League's position on public libraries. Public libraries support our First Amendment right to intellectual freedom and expression by playing an important role in facilitating free and open access to information. Individuals should be trusted to make their decisions about what they read and believe. Removing and banning books from public libraries is a slippery slope to government censorship and the erosion of our country's commitment to freedom of expression. Library staff, operating within the standards of the American Library Association, should make professional decisions about selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of resources, services and technologies without political interference.

Tim Kuehnlein, Alpena, expressed his thanks to the library staff and board for their work as public servants and encouraged them to remember their public duty. He stated the need to be conscious of the slippery slope of censoring library materials.

Michael Kramer, Alpena, expressed his feelings that there is an issue with pornography within the library.

Denise, no last name or residency given, expressed her opinion that the book *All Boys Aren't Blue* is too explicit and should be moved to the adult collection.

Nonie Muller, no residency given, stated that she does not think the library should be exposing youngsters to these types of books, referring to *All Boys Aren't Blue*. Ms. Muller read a brief portion of what she found offensive in the book.

Shawn Sexton, Alpena, co-founder of PFLAG-Alpena, Department Chair of the Alpena County Community College English Department, and former Alpena City Council Member expressed his opposition to banning books and stated that book banning is not about the book itself but about banning

ideas, he advised those not wanting to read books like *All Boys Aren't Blue* to not read it. He stated that books about the lived experiences of people of color and LGBTQIA+ save lives.

Shelby Ryan, Alpena Community College student, stated that banning books is dangerous and having access to books like *All Boys Aren't Blue* could save teens from abuse or help them identify when they are being abused.

Taylor Oliver, Alpena, stated her request that all sexually explicit material be moved to the adult section. Ms. Oliver read a portion of *All Boys Aren't Blue* that she found to be offensive.

Sarah Waters, Alpena, expressed her agreement that censoring library materials is a slippery slope. She states that it is her right as a parent to determine what her children have access to and should not be determined by others.

Kara LeMonds, Alpena, expressed her opposition to censoring books in the library. She stated that books like *Boys Aren't Blue* provide a voice to members of marginalized communities.

Traci Collins, Wilson Township, stated that she did not request that *All Boys Aren't Blue* be banned, she requested that items with certain content not be pushed on children or promoted to children. She would like those books to be moved to the adult section.

Mark Hunter, Alpena, suggested the board look at the effects of these discussions on the library being considered a safe space for all. He referenced the Alphabet Soup LGBTQ+ group that was objected to at the November 2022 board meeting disbanding. He expressed his disappointment with the administration of the library and a lack of transparency regarding these matters. He stated the need to promote what the library is currently doing to keep young people safe and double-checking that governmental guidelines regarding access to the internet are being followed.

David Golson, Alpena, shared his opinion that *All Boys Aren't Blue* as a wonderful book and that the author included a content warning within the opening pages of the book.

Jen Myers, Presque Isle County, shared that she is not asking that a book be banned but that there be some sort of regulations put in place to limit the access to certain types of books.

Duffy Gorski, Alpena, expressed his opinion that library cards be restricted for children to allow them to only check out books with parental permission.

Bridget Hollinshead, Alpena, spoke in support of keeping *All Boys Aren't Blue* in the teen section.



### Old Business:

- A. **Bylaws:** A revised copy of Board Bylaws was presented to the Board. It was moved by Cornish with support from Meek to adopt the bylaws as presented. The motion passed. A copy of the bylaws is attached to the minutes.
- B. **Collection Development Policy:** A revised copy of the policy inclusive of the edits by Foster Swift was presented. Garber requested the trustees review the policy and send any feedback to Greenacre and Luther in advance of the March meeting. Budd expressed concern that the attorney from Foster Swift is working on the current Michigan Freedom to Read Act. He requested that Greenacre and Luther share a copy of the draft legislation with the board if available.
- C. **Millage:** Three options for ballot proposal were presented to the board. It was moved by Budd with support from Cornish to adopt Option 3. The motion passed. A copy of the proposal is attached.

### New Business:

- A. **Election of Officers:** Meek, with support from Budd, presented the following slate of officers for 2024.

**President:** Joseph Garber

**Vice-President:** Dustin Budd

**Treasurer:** Quintin Meek

**Secretary:** Michelle Cornish

Roll Call Vote:

Budd: Yes

Cornish: Yes

Garber: Yes

Mantlo: Yes

Meek: Yes

The slate of offices for 2024 was approved.

- B. **Private Event in the Stillion Room:** It was moved by Budd with support from Meek to allow the requested event to be held in the Stillion Room.
- C. **Other:** Meek requested that the board determine how to address the comments and concerns made during the meeting for the March meeting.

### Public Comment:

Diane Bauer, Alpena, expressed her appreciation to the board for listening to the public comment. She stated it was very difficult to hear what was being discussed. She requested that the meeting materials be made available to the public.

Michael Kramer, Alpena, wished to clarify that he is not asking for any books to be banned but feels those with objectionable content be moved to the adult collection.

Traci Collins, Wilson Township, requested an update on her request from the January meeting regarding the number of reconsideration requests received and the outcome of the requests.

Dorothy Boyk, no residency given, asked for the book *All Boys aren't Blue* to be moved and would like to know who determines where books are placed within the library.

**Other:**

Greenacre will coordinate with the Library's IT Specialist to post meeting board meeting materials on the website in advance of all future board meetings.

Greenacre and Luther will contact the Library's attorney to determine what information regarding reconsideration requests can be released within the guidelines of the Library Privacy Act.

**Adjournment:** Garber declared the meeting adjourned at 5:39 pm. The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 4:00 pm.

**Respectfully submitted,**



**Michelle Cornish**  
Secretary



**Jessica Luther**  
Recording Secretary

## BYLAWS

### ALPENA COUNTY GEORGE N. FLETCHER PUBLIC LIBRARY

#### ARTICLE I — ESTABLISHMENT

Section 1     Name. The Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library was established by virtue of the provisions of the County Libraries Act, 1917 PA 138 (MCL 397.301 et seq.) (“PA 138”).

Section 2     Annual Review. These Bylaws are rules governing the internal affairs of the Library. The Bylaws will be reviewed periodically at the discretion of the Library Board.

#### ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1     Board. The library board of the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library shall consist of five (5) trustees appointed by the Alpena County Board of Commissioners pursuant to PA 138, each for a five (5) year term. (“Library Board” or “Board”). Unless otherwise provided in PA 138, a trustee shall hold office until a successor is elected and qualified.

Section 2     Vacancies. If the office of a trustee becomes vacant, the County Board of Commissioners shall appoint a replacement for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 3     Individual Authority. Trustees have no authority as individuals, apart from that specified in these Bylaws or applicable law, but rather exercise their authority collectively with Library Board action.

Section 4     Attendance. Appointment to the Library Board is a privilege freely sought by the nominee. It carries with it the responsibility to participate in Library Board activities and

represent the patrons of the Library. Attendance at Library Board meetings is critical to fulfilling this responsibility. A trustee who cannot attend a meeting bears the responsibility of notifying the Chairperson and Director concerning this absence. Any Trustee may be removed after three unexcused absences.

### **ARTICLE III – POWERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Section 1 Authority. The Library Board may exercise all of the powers granted to it by PA 138, federal law, and other Michigan law. If permitted by law, the Library Board may delegate such powers to the Officers of the Board and/or the Library Director as it deems necessary.

Section 2 Budget. The Library Board shall have the exclusive control of the budget of the Library. The fiscal year of the Library shall be the annual period commencing January 1 and ending December 31. The Library Board shall prepare and make available an annual budget. The adoption of the Budget will take place at the December meeting.

Section 3 Audit. The Library Board shall obtain an annual audit by an independent certified public accountant selected by the Board, all in accordance with Michigan law. The Library Board may authorize an audit of the Library Fund to occur at the same time and along with the audit of the County's funds generally. The Library Board will choose annually between an independent audit or one with the County.

### **ARTICLE IV—OFFICERS**

Section 1 The officers shall be a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer.



Section 2 Officers shall be elected by the Library Board at the regular February board meeting and shall serve a term of one (1) year. An officer shall serve until the appointment of a successor.

Section 3 The Library Board shall fill vacant offices by appointment, except for the office of Chairperson, in which case the Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the office for the remainder of the unexpired term. A successor Vice-Chairperson shall be appointed to fill the vacancy so created in that office.

### **ARTICLE V – DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS**

Section 1 Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings, appoint committees, authorize calls for any special meetings and generally perform the duties of a presiding officer. Acts as the Board’s chief liaison with the Director.

Section 2 Vice-Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson. In the case of the resignation, disability or death of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume the office for the remaining term.

Section 3 Secretary. The Secretary of the Library Board shall ensure that minutes of the Library Board meetings and other library records are kept in accordance with Michigan law. In compliance with any requirements of state law regarding the holding of meetings, the Secretary shall issue notices of all regular meetings, and of all special meetings, and shall have the custody of the minutes and other records of the Library Board. With the approval of a majority of the Library Board and if permitted by law, the Secretary may delegate any of these responsibilities to the Library Director or designated staff member.

Section 4 Treasurer. The Treasurer shall control expenditures from the Library Fund through a system of vouchers presented by authorized personnel. The Treasurer shall work with



the County Treasurer to ensure that the Library Fund is being maintained and the moneys received by the Library are deposited into the Library Fund. A record of all moneys received or deposited to the Library Fund, and all disbursements, sales and transfers from the fund shall be kept by the Treasurer, and reported monthly to the Library Board at its regular meeting. In addition, the Treasurer shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed for him or her by state or federal law and these Bylaws. With the approval of a majority of the Board and if permitted by law, the Treasurer may delegate any of these responsibilities to the Library Director or designated staff member.

## **ARTICLE VI —MEETINGS**

Section 1      Regular Meetings. The regular meeting of the Library Board shall be held each month, the date and time to be set by the Board at its regular meeting in December. Within ten (10) days following the December meeting, a notice shall be posted in a public place at the Library setting forth the dates, times, and places of all regular meetings scheduled for the ensuing year. If there is a change in the schedule of regular meetings, there shall be posted within three (3) days after the meeting at which the change is made, a public notice stating the new dates, times, and places of its regular meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267 (“OMA”). Regular board packets, including the agenda, minutes, and other special items, should be delivered to board members no later than five (5) days before the regularly scheduled board meeting.

Section 3      Annual Meeting. The annual meeting, which shall be held for the purpose of the electing Board Officers and shall be held at the time of the regular board meeting in February of each year.

Section 4 Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called at the request of any two (2) trustees or the Chairperson. Notice shall be provided at least eighteen (18) hours in advance as provided for in the OMA.

Section 5 Quorum. A quorum for the transactions of business shall consist of a simple majority of trustees appointed and serving.

Section 7 Agenda. Order of business for regular meetings shall be (unless otherwise approved by the Library Board):

- Call to Order
- Approval of Agenda
- Review and Approval of Minutes
- Financial Reports
- Directors' Report and Leadership Team Report
- Friends of the Library Report
- Public Comment
- Old Business
- New Business
- Public Comment
- Adjournment

Section 8 Board Action. An affirmative vote of a majority of all trustees present shall be necessary to approve any action by the Library Board, unless otherwise provided by law.

Section 9 Roberts Rules. Situations not covered by these Bylaws or the Library Board policies shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order, latest edition.

## **ARTICLE VII—LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

Section 1 Appointment of the Director. The Library Board shall appoint a library director with appropriate professional and personal qualifications who shall be the administrative officer for the Board.

Section 2 Duties. The Library Director shall be responsible to the Board for carrying out its policies; for specifying duties of other employees and recommending persons for appointment; for supervision of staff; for care and maintenance of Library equipment and property; for selection, acquisition and organization of books and other Library materials; for the Library's public relations; and any other duty lawfully delegated by the Board.

The Library Director shall also be responsible for keeping the trustees informed of matters related to the Library or to themselves as trustees; for preparing a preliminary draft of budget and annual reports for Board approval, and for assisting the Board with its decisions on policies, budget and other such matters.

Section 3 Attendance at Board Meetings. The Library Director or the Library Director's representative shall attend all meetings of the Board unless otherwise directed by the Library Board Chairperson.

#### **ARTICLE VIII-- COMMITTEES**

Standing or special committees may be appointed at the discretion of the Board Chairperson with approval of the Board. The committee shall be considered discharged upon completion of its assignment and a final report to the Board. The following are standing committees of the Board: Personnel Committee and Facilities Committee.

#### **ARTICLE IX— AMENDMENT**

The Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of trustees present at an official meeting of the Board provided that the discussion of the amendment was included at the previous regular Board meeting.

**Library Board Approved February 28, 2024**

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## Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library

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### MEMO

TO: Library Trustees  
RE: Millage Ballot Language  
FROM: Debra Greenacre, Library Director  
Date: February 28, 2024

This was given to the Library Board on September 20, 2023 and at that time the Board choose option 3. Before getting the exact wording for the proposal from Anne Seuryneck, Library Attorney we thought we should have discussion on this one last time.

#### **Recommendation**

I recommend Board approval of one of the following options for the Millage Ballot Language.

#### **Executive Summary**

The following is communication from Anne Seuryneck with Foster Swift:

In that case, please consider the following because the Library cannot ask for the .75 mill as a full renewal. The Library can only renew the amount last levied, which is .7462 mill. The additional .0038 mill to restore the full .75 mill must be characterized as “new additional” millage. So, the Library has the following options

1. Proposal A is a renewal of .7462 mill and Proposal B is “new millage” of .25 mill. The Library would forgo the Headlee rollback amount of .0038 mill (to restore the full .75 mill) which is approximately \$4,200 per year (40-50,000 over the life of the millage)
2. Proposal A would ask for .75 mill, “of which .7462 is a renewal of the previously authorized millage that expires in 2023 and .0038 mill is new additional millage”. Proposal B will be .25 new millage.
3. Proposal A is a renewal of .7462 mill and Proposal B is “new millage” of .2538 mill. The Library would add the Headlee rollback amount of .0038 mill to the proposal asking for new millage.