

## MINUTES OF THE APRIL 21, 2026 GERING PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

Present:

Board Members: Theresa Ewing, Jeff Kelley, Kirstee Moore-Schutte, Suzanne Myers, Kim Walker

Library Director: Christie Clarke

Absent: none

Foundation Liaison: Jay Skiles

City Council Liaison: Dylan Cecil

Kelley called the meeting to order at 4:07 pm

Attention was called to the posting of The Open Meetings Act - NEB. REV.STAT. CHAPTER 84, ARTICLE 14.

As required by State Law, public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room. Agenda items may be moved up or down on the agenda at the discretion of the Board President. As required by State Law, additions may not be made to this agenda less than 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting unless they are considered under this section of the agenda and the Library Board determines that the matter requires emergency action.

Board members reviewed the March 17, 2026 board meeting minutes. Kelley asked for a motion to approve. Walker moved to approve the minutes and Ewing seconded it. The vote was called. "Ayes": Ewing, Kelley, Moore-Schutte, Myers, Walker. "Nays": none. Abstaining: none. Absent: none. The vote passed.

The statistical and financial reports for March were reviewed. Kelley called for a motion to approve. Myers moved and Walker seconded the motion. "Ayes": Ewing, Kelley, Moore-Schutte, Myers, Walker. "Nays": none. Abstaining: none. Absent: none. The vote passed.

Board members reviewed the March bills. Kelley called for a motion to approve. Ewing moved and Walker seconded to approve the bills. The vote was called. "Ayes": Ewing, Kelley, Moore-Schutte, Myers, Walker. "Nays": none. Abstaining: none. Absent: none. The vote passed.

## Director's Report:

-Please welcome our city council liaison, Dylan Cecil.

### -Programming Information

- The final Creative Aging Arts class will be on Thursday, April 23 but there are tentative plans to pursue another grant to hold a CAA class this summer due to the overwhelming positive response and desire from the community.
- The Keep Scottsbluff and Gering Beautiful Zero Waste program that was supposed to be held on April 13 was postponed until April 27 at 6 pm.
- The Last regular Wednesday storytime will be on April 29 and the last Saturday storytime will be May 2. A special storytime with the Gering Firefighters will be on Wednesday, May 13.
- Crafternoon will be held on Saturday, May 9 from 12-3 pm.
- Board Together the family board game program will be held on Saturday, May 23 from 1-3 pm.
- On May 24 Hayley and Jeff will be at Geil Elem School from 8 am to 3 pm for STEM Day. All grades from K to 5<sup>th</sup> will cycle through their classroom to participate in their STEM activity which will be tailored to each age group. The activity will also be related to the Summer Reading Program theme "Unearth the Story" to promote SRP participation.
- On May 24 Hayley will go to Northfield Elem to participate in their first Stuffie Sleepover. She already did her 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Stuffie Sleepover this year for Lincoln Elem. And she has heard that Geil will be starting this program next year as well.
- Staff are gearing up for the 2026 Summer Reading Program. Hayley and Jeff will visit all three elementary schools and the middle school in May to promote the program.
- On Saturday, May 30 Jeff and Hayley will be in Scottsbluff to participate in the Summer Safety Block Party. They will have an activity and will promote SRP 2026.
- The SRP Kickoff will be Wednesday, May 27 from 3-5 at the Gering Civic Center. Hayley will be sending out a mass email next week to solicit volunteers. The SRP theme this year is Unearth a Story.

## -Other Information

- Sculptor Littleton Alston will install the Willa Cather sculpture on May 19 on the library grounds. The sculptor will give a presentation about his process in creating the sculpture at the Emporium following the installation. On July 3, the Willa Cather sculpture will be gifted in a ceremony to the City of Gering in the Gering Civic Plaza at 6 pm. The ceremony will include a one-block walk to the northwest corner of the library for the unveiling of the sculpture. The city Parks Dept. began the task of getting the spot ready for the installation just today. The sod was removed from that corner of the library grounds. The statue and its stand will be just under 6' tall and will be surrounded by native prairie grasses and flowers.
- The Friends Annual Book Sale will be held during library hours April 23-25. During the sale you can place a bid on Lincoln Elementary's Art Auction items. Lincoln's preschool students and teachers visited the library in April, gathered in the children's space and created canvas paintings. These works of art will be displayed in the library entryway and in the community room during the book sale and you can bid on your favorites. A minimum bid of \$5 is required. Top bids win the art piece and all proceeds will go to the Gering Public Library Foundation. Bidding will end at 5 pm on Saturday, April 25.
- During the month of March, the library cash receipts were \$541.07. We received a check from the Library Foundation for \$295.72 to cover the cost of bottle openers for the NE West Fest. We also received a donation check from the Library Friends to replace two "lost" Storytime Backpacks to put back in the collection. And, we received three summer reading program donation checks totaling \$800. These donations were solicited by Youth Services Library Assistant, Jeff Fiet, specifically for the teen summer reading program. They were from Francisco's Bumper to Bumper (\$500), Dugan Kramer Funeral Home (\$200), and Bridgman Funeral Home (\$100).

**Gering City Council Liaison report:** No report

### **The Gering Library Foundation Board Liaison Report:**

- The focus on the capital campaign is continuing. The marketing committee has decided to explore hiring a capital campaign consultant and is meeting to review different firms.
- The quilt raffle sale will be over the last day of the Book Sale.
- Crack the code items, a Yeti cooler and stuffed Highland Cow donated by Murdochs for the Nebraska West Fest have been used at two events and will be at the Summer Reading Program kickoff.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:**

1. Consideration of closing the library on Saturday, July 4, 2026 was discussed. Moore-Schutte, moved and Ewing seconded to close the library on July 4, 2026. The vote was called. "Ayes": Ewing, Kelley, Moore-Schutte, Myers, Walker. "Nays": none. Abstaining: none. Absent: none. The vote passed.
2. Consideration of closing the library on Thursday, July 30, 2026 for staff to attend the Western Library System Annual Meeting in Kimball was discussed. In addition to staff, board members can attend and will be sent registration information. Myers moved and Kelley seconded to close the library on July 30, 2026. The vote was called. "Ayes": Ewing, Kelley, Moore-Schutte, Myers, Walker. "Nays": none. Abstaining: none. Absent: none. The vote passed.
3. Discussion was held concerning the library annual report to city council. In the past the director and staff has been instrumental in developing the report for board members to report. Director Clarke feels it should be the library board that develops and creates the report. The presentation has to have items required by state statute - usually statistics. A visual report would be good and the library has Canva that can be used. Council representative Cecil recommended the report should impress on board the importance and impact of the library. Moore-Schutte and Walker agreed to take leadership for developing a report. May 1 will be a work session for board members that can attend at 4:00 pm in the community room and the former Canva presentations and the booklets in addition to the required statistics will be available. Council meets June 8, June 22. A consensus of the board was that June 22, 2026 would work best. Director Clarke will check to see if it could be put on the agenda for that evening.

**Closed Session:** none

**Open Comment:** none

Kelley called for a motion to adjourn. Ewing moved and Walker seconded. The vote was called. "Ayes": Ewing, Kelley, Moore-Schutte, Myers, Walker. "Nays": none. Abstaining: none. Absent: none. The vote passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Suzanne Myers  
Secretary