

**CITY OF BOULDER  
BOULDER, COLORADO  
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS MEETING MINUTES**

<b>Name of Board/ Commission:</b> Library Commission	
<b>Date of Meeting:</b> June 1, 2022	
<b>Contact information preparing summary:</b> Celia Seaton	
<b>Commission members present:</b> Jane Sykes Wilson, Steven Frost, Scott Steinbrecher, Benita Duran ( <i>arrived at 6:10PM</i> )	
<b>Commission members not present:</b> none.	
<b>Library staff present:</b> Jennifer Phares, Deputy Library Director Celia Seaton, Board Secretary Kate Kelsch, Volunteer Services Coordinator Karen Bowen, BoulderReads Program Coordinator Christine Burke, Library Coordinator, BoulderReads Aimee Schumm, eServices Manager, BLDG61Makerspace Robby Holb, Creative Technologist, BLDG61 Makerspace Adam Watts, Creative Technologist, BLDG61 Makerspace  <b>City staff present:</b> None.  <b>Members of the public present:</b> None.	
<b>Type of Meeting:</b> Regular   Remote	
<b>Agenda Item 1: Review of Online Meeting Guidelines</b>	<b>[0:00:19 Audio min.]</b>
<b>Agenda Item 2: Reminder: Commissioners please log monthly volunteer hours <a href="#">Count Me In Boulder</a></b> [0:00:24 Audio min.] The Commission logged their service.	
<b>Agenda Item 3: Approval of agenda</b>	<b>[0:00:53 Audio min.]</b>
The meeting was called to order and Sykes Wilson asked if there were any changes to the agenda. She suggested moving the approval of the minutes to later in the agenda to allow for all commissioners to be present. There was a nod of approval from the commission for this agenda as amended.	
<b>Agenda Item 4: Public comment</b>	<b>[0:01:30 Audio min.]</b>
None.	
<b>Agenda Item 5: Consent agenda</b>	<b>[0:59:55 Audio min.]</b>
a. Approval of May 2022 Meeting Minutes: Steinbrecher moved to approve these minutes, Frost seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.	
<b>Agenda Item 6: Presentation: BoulderReads and Reading Buddies Program Update [0:01:39 Audio min.]</b> Kelsch, Bowen, and Burke presented an overview of these <a href="#">literacy programs</a> , along with recent challenges and plans for expansion (see <a href="#">handouts</a> .) BoulderReads provides individual tutoring for adults in literacy and language, along with offering Career Online High School, Conversations in English, Reading Buddies, and other community partnerships.  Local demographic data indicates the community need (e.g., 13% of residents speak English not well or at all, 16% of residents speak a language other than English at home, and 34,400 immigrants live in Boulder County.)  For 36 years, the tutoring program allows learners to set their own goals whether they involve business entrepreneurship, citizenship status, or acquisition of a driver's license. As a long-established stronghold in the community for equity and public service, the mission of BoulderReads precedes many of the guiding documents in the city and the library and yet clearly aligns with the established guiding principles. The program aims to encourage self-sufficiency and personal empowerment through education. Learners enjoy a whole language approach with research-based instruction.  Bowen highlighted the stories of a few participants in the program. Franklin, from El Salvador, started with BoulderReads at a 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade English level. In his time as a learner, he increased his reading skill by 6 grade levels. He worked with the Small Business Development Center to launch a successful pupusa business with the Boulder County Farmers Market. Hailing from Ghana, Maputo has founded and is now building the Akbe Cultural Center	

in the coastal village of Kokrobite which aims to preserve and celebrate the arts of Africa for the world. Per Maputo: “BoulderReads has helped me improve my literacy, which helps me communicate in writing with the people in Ghana who are working on the project.” Many similar [stories](#) illustrate the power of the program’s life-changing capacity.

[Conversations in English](#), currently helmed by Burke, allows learners to practice conversational English in a safe and welcoming environment. As the virtual option became available, weekly sessions have increased from 4 to 10 offerings. Staff plans to restore in-person sessions at the Meadows Branch in 2022.

[Career Online High School](#) allows adults to transfer existing high school credits to complete their education. This program is self-paced and entirely virtual. It is currently scholarship-based and fully funded by the Boulder Library Foundation.

Kelsch discussed the 25-year history of [Reading Buddies](#), a collaborative project which engages students in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in one-on-one literacy mentorship with college students attending the University of Colorado at Boulder. The resulting bond facilitates the learning process by fostering a positive association with reading. Since March 2020, this program has been on hold due to factors such as the pandemic, library closure, University of Colorado going virtual, the loss of the Community Engagement Manager, and budgetary cuts to library staff. However, library leadership as well as the community are supportive of the return of Reading Buddies. By July, staff plans to hire a Literacy and Outreach Librarian. This newly full-time role will be tasked with getting the program up and running by fall 2022. Staff plans to extend the programming to include an adult literacy component, programming to support Spanish literacy, and targeted programming to support court-involved residents. The neighborhood of the new north Boulder library building will present opportunity for further engagement with Latinx families.

Steinbrecher wondered about the quotient of male mentees involved in Reading Buddies. His concern stems from an understanding that boys tend to appear less engaged in school and may require especial attention to not fall behind. Bowen will investigate this data. He also questioned the approach of using “whole language” as opposed to “phonics” when teaching reading skills as he believes the latter to be a superior method. Bowen responded that she determines the level of literacy and language acquisition for each learner when they arrive and develops appropriate curriculum; while she might heavily focus on a phonics track when warranted, those needs are varying for adults. Bowen noted that regardless of the tailoring of the support, it nearly always contains a phonics component.

Sykes Wilson expressed her enthusiasm about the return of Reading Buddies whose programming performs “vital work in the community,” particularly in the wake of the pandemic. She wondered whether the entry requirements might be extended out to 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Bowen noted the popularity of the program, which previously allowed participants up through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Heavy use by the same individuals within elementary schools along with no cap on the number of semesters influenced the decision to enforce a boundary at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and limit participation to 2 semesters. In order to accommodate potential expansion, Kelsch highlighted the supply and demand levels of volunteer tutors.

Frost: “Fantastic work. I am so excited about more full-time support in this program.”

The group thanked Bowen, Burke, and Kelsch for the presentation and staff expressed appreciation for the feedback.

#### **Agenda Item 7: Presentation: BLDG61 Makerspace Update**

**[0:35:00 Audio min.]**

- a. Final review and approval of updates to the BLDG61 Makerspace Policy – Schumm presented alongside Creative Technologists Holb and Watts. During the pandemic, the Makerspace was closed to the public for 15 months. Due to budget cuts, the team went from 3.5 creative technologist positions to 2.1. Despite the challenges, the team took the closure as an opportunity to serve and connect with the community through alternate means.

Staff constructed sneeze guards for public service desks across the city, along with hand sanitizer dispensers, face shields, and masks. “How-to” and orientation videos were produced in both English and Spanish and made available on [Youtube](#). BLDG61 has reopened to the public since June 2021, adorning the Canyon Gallery with an in-person [Maker Made](#) show earlier this year. Despite the reduction in programming due to the loss of a creative technologist position, public participation and demand for the Makerspace has steadily grown.

Holb helms “Shop 61,” the wood making space, which serves a range of users from novice to experienced. To meet patron demand, staff reconfigured the shop tools to maximize use of the space during the limited open hours.

Watts guided commission through the screen-printing area. This space (often a “bottleneck” during Open Studio hours) now has a more intentional schedule of access for patrons. Watts observed how the thread of “serendipitous discovery” that patrons experience exploring the bookshelves of a library weaves also through the Makerspace, which houses its own bounty of tools and materials.

Creative Technologist Zack Weaver successfully launched a series of welding classes in October 2021; all training sessions filled to wait list capacity. The public interest far exceeds the capacity of the mobile unit adjacent to BLDG61; staff hope to expand to a more suitable metalworking facility in the future.

In response to Steinbrecher’s inquiry, Schumm noted that BLDG61 often partners with businesses in the area. Watts explained that BLDG61 strives not to compete directly with private makerspaces or businesses as serves mainly as an educational hub. A sort of “cross pollination” occurs when a creative tech might recommend a private avenue for a patron’s larger needs, while a business may likewise recommend BLDG61 to provide a client with foundational training.

Commission expressed appreciation for the update on the Makerspace and staff’s engaging presentations.

**Agenda Item 8: Library and Arts Director’s Report**

**[1:01:22 Audio min.]**

- a. 2021 Boulder Public Library Annual Report – (see [link](#).)
- b. Update on Boards and Commissions Meeting Format – City guidance directs that all boards and commissions are to be conducted by virtual format until a safer level of COVID-19 transmission has been achieved (current levels have risen from yellow to red status.) Both Parks and Recreation and the Library are continuing with in-person programming.
- c. The collection now offers a new option for emerging readers: phonics kits.
- d. Historical Issues of the Boulder Daily Camera Available Online
- e. Research Jam at Carnegie Library for Local History engaged middle school students with a research through the archives on black-owned businesses in Boulder. The results of their research are now being digitized; staff plans to present the findings on Carnegie’s [website](#) in the next few weeks. This project resulted in shared benefits for students, the community, and staff.
- f. North Boulder Branch Library Project – Phares relayed that staff is awaiting the formal communication from Planning and Development Services providing site review approval and acceptance of other technical documents. The team aims to complete construction documents by July 1<sup>st</sup>. Building permits will be sought next, along with a “guaranteed maximum price” for the construction of the library building which will be received from the general contractor by the beginning of August. This price will reveal the actual gap between available budget and projected costs. A projected gap of \$250,000-\$500,000 has been estimated, due to cost escalation related to supply chain issues and the pandemic. Staff still anticipate groundbreaking to occur by September 2022.

Project Manager Antonia Gaona plans to provide further updates to the commission at the August meeting.

**Agenda Item 9: Update on Library District formation by petition process**

**[1:08:27 Audio min.]**

- a. The Boulder County Clerk’s Office accepted the signatures and petition submitted by the Library Champions, which was certified on May 31<sup>st</sup>. The number of signatures gathered in support greatly exceeded the requirement.

As an establishing entity in Colorado Library Law, the City has the opportunity to either accept the district process moving forward or “opt out” and retain the library resources currently held by the City (creating what’s been referred to as a “donut district” whereby the district would have funding, but no resources). This second outcome appears unlikely since a majority of council members indicated support for the district formation at past meetings. At the July 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, council will decide whether to pass a resolution to determine participation in the Boulder Library District.

Once the official ballot item is created for November’s election, campaign practices along with employee rights and responsibilities will be reviewed with Library staff.

**Agenda Item 10: Items from Library Commission**

**[1:13:24 Audio min.]**

- a. Updates from commissioners representing the Commission in other venues – Steinbrecher joined Librarians Celine

Cooper and Leanne Slater at Southern Hills Middle School to help register students for the Summer of Discovery reading program. Phares reported that current preregistration numbers total almost 900, which has ballooned from the numbers garnered around this time last year (200).

- b. Boulder Library Foundation (BLF) update (Steinbrecher/Frost) – Steinbrecher highlighted a newly created Spanish-language Facebook page for BLF. The group plans to meet in late August for the annual retreat. The Foundation has been assisting the Library Champions in hosting events related to district engagement around library funding and the potential district.
- c. Update on emails and phone calls to Library Commission

**Agenda Item 11: Adjournment**

**[1:20:00 Audio min.]**

Frost invited all to attend the second season of [Slay the Runway](#) which will be held from 6-7 PM on July 8<sup>th</sup> at CU's Atlas Institute. This show serves as the culmination to a series of fashion design, performance and sewing classes for LGBTQIA+ teens at Longmont's Firehouse Art Center and Boulder Public Library's BLDG61 Makerspace with support from the Boulder Library Foundation.

There being no further business to come before the commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned.

**Date, time, and location of next meeting:**

The next Library Commission meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, August 3, 2022, through a virtual setting.

**Commissioner Sykes Wilson approved these minutes on August 3, 2022; and Celia Seaton attested to it.**