

1. CALL TO ORDER

Session 23-01, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Kate Finn at 5:31 p.m. on January 17, 2023 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: BOARDMEMBERS KUSZMAUL, BAILY, FAIR, SPRINGER, DOLMA, MCKINNEY, FINN

CONSULTING: STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Public testimony in support of the LAB reversing the Library Director's decision regarding children and young adult materials:

Madeline Veldstra, non-city resident
Matt Pancratz, non-city resident
Larry Slone, city resident
Esther McLinn, city resident

Public testimony in support of the LAB upholding the Library Director's decision regarding children and young adult materials:

Cassandra Windwalker, non-city resident
Taz Tally, non-city resident
Nancy Lord, city resident
Xochir Loplzayala, city resident
Reverend Lisa Talbott, city resident
Judy Gonsalves, city resident
Val Sheppard, city resident
Rachel Lord, city resident
Mercedes Harnes, city resident
Jane Dunn, non-city resident
Matthew Puckett
Deb Curtis, city resident
Sierra Moskios, non-city resident
Claudia Haines, city resident
Kasey Aderhold, city resident
Kate McGregor, city resident

4. RECONSIDERATION

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 5.A. LAB Meeting Minute Approval
Unapproved November 15, 2022 LAB Minutes

KUSZMAUL/FAIR MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 15, 2022 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

6. VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

7. STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 7.A. Library Director Report
2022 November Library Director Report
2022 December Library Director Report
2021 Annual Stats
2022 Annual Stats

Library Director Berry spoke to his written reports, highlighting pending library projects, events that took place over November and December, and upcoming special events. He facilitated comments and questions from the board on library statistics.

- 7.B. Legislative Update
7.C. Fundraising Update

Boardmember Kuszmaul noted she will have an end-of-year recap at the next meeting.

Chair Finn called for a five minute recess at 6:38 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

8. PUBLIC HEARING

9. PENDING BUSINESS

- 9.A. Appeal of Library Director's Decision Regarding Children and Young Adult Materials
Agenda Item Report LAB 22-006
LAB Supplemental Packet 11/15/2022
Written Testimony Received by 5pm 11/15/2022
Written Testimony Received by 5pm 1/11/2023
Summary List of Challenged Materials

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading the title. She gave a synopsis of the action taken at the last meeting, how boardmembers spent the last two months reading all 55 books that were part of the appeal, and how this meeting will be to hear additional testimony and from the Appellant and Library

Director before starting in on their decisions. She deferred to Library Director Berry to speak to his recommendation per the appeal process.

Mr. Berry spoke to his recommendation. Over the last several months this community has talked about several weighty issues such as tolerance, representation, sexuality, religion, freedom of the press, censorship, and suicide. He opined that the real issue at the root of all of it is what does it mean to be a good parent? He shared how it's common knowledge in library circles that book challenges tend to come from parents of two distinct age groups: those that are 4-5 year olds who are just beginning to read on their own, and those that are 13-15 year olds who are gradually ceasing to be kids and are transforming into adults. He voiced his empathy for parents going through these challenges and understands they want their children to be safe, but that hiding books from kids does not mean they will stop growing up. Library staff does not want to raise other people's children but they do have a responsibility to ensure every parent has the tools to raise their own children the way they see fit, and that staff has the ability to provide books on whatever parents are looking for. There are 12,500 titles in the children's and young adult collections; the 55 titles on the appeal list represents 0.4% of that collection. Parents may want books that depict heterosexual couples, and others may want them to show two mommies that represent their own family. Mr. Berry asked the board to leave the materials where they are so that library staff can continue to serve the entire community.

Chair Finn explained the decision process; the fairest way to apply the Collection Development Policy to this appeal is to consider the materials on a title-by-title basis. With this many books it would not be judicious to lump them together, all or nothing, so a vote would be taken on each one for either: 1) upholding the Library Director's decision and keep the book in the children's section, or 2) repealing the Library Director's decision which means interfiling the item with the adult books in accordance with the Collection Development Policy.

She pointed out the list in the packet that summarizes each book the board reviewed and how she will be going down the list, read off the title and author, and then ask the board if they had read the book in its entirety in accordance with the Collection Development Policy Section O(4). Boardmembers were instructed that if they had not read the book, they would need to be recused from that particular vote per the LAB's bylaws.

Chair Finn read the title *A Crow of His Own* by Megan Dowd Lambert and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *A CROW OF HIS OWN* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *A Day in the Life of Marlon Bundo* by Marlon Bundo and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *A DAY IN THE LIFE OF MARLON BUNDO* IN THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY COLLECTION.

The board discussed the issue that many of the books before them did not have an LGBTQ+ focus even though the language used in the appeal petition, the news articles, the testimony received, all implied these 55 books had LGBTQ+ themes. There was discussion on the overall content of the books; boardmembers spoke to how many of the books also relate to race, leadership capabilities of women or people of color, empowered women, or in some cases the authors themselves were gay but you would not have known that from reading the book. They commended library staff for the professional work they do to make such an inclusive, comprehensive children's section.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *A Family is a Family is a Family* by Sara O'Leary and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

MCKINNEY/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *A FAMILY IS A FAMILY IS A FAMILY* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

MCKINNEY/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *AND TANGO MAKES THREE* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Big Bob, Little Bob* by James Howe and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *BIG BOB, LITTLE BOB* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Black is a Rainbow Color* by Angela Joy and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

BAILY/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *BLACK IS A RAINBOW COLOR* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the nature of this book did not have any apparent LGBTQ+ themes.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Drawing on Walls: A Story of Keith Haring* by Matthew Burgess and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

DOLMA/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *DRAWING ON WALLS: A STORY OF KEITH HARING* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the author was a talented artist who died of AIDS, which seemed to be the only issue of this book that related to LGBTQ+.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Everywhere Babies* by Susan Meyers and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *EVERYWHERE BABIES* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the nature of this book did not have any apparent LGBTQ+ themes.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *George* by Alex Gino and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. Boardmember Springer disclosed she had not read the book and requested to be recused. Chair Finn called for a vote on Boardmember Springer's request to abstain from voting on this item.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn asked for a motion.

FAIR/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *GEORGE* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the book also went by the title *Melissa*.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Grandad's Camper* by Harry Woodgate and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/SPRINGER MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *GRANDDAD'S CAMPER* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Heather Has Two Mommies* by Lesléa Newman and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

MCKINNEY/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *HEATHER HAS TWO MOMMIES* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Home at Last* by Vera B. Williams and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *HOME AT LAST* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment that this title was a very sweet book.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *It's Okay to Be Different* by Todd Parr and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

DOLMA/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *IT'S OKAY TO BE DIFFERENT* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Julián at the Wedding* by Jessica Love and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/SPRINGER MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *JULIÁN AT THE WEDDING* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Julián is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *JULIÁN IS A MERMAID* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Keeper* by Kathi Appelt and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. Boardmember Fair disclosed he had not read the book and requested to be recused. Chair Finn called for a vote on Boardmember Fair's request to abstain from voting on this item.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *KEEPER* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment that the book made them cry and they highly recommended it.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Keith Haring: The Boy Who Just Kept Drawing* by Kay Haring and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *KEITH HARING: THE BOY WHO JUST KEPT DRAWING* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how there is no reference in the book to the author's sexual orientation, how he died, or how he contracted AIDS, implying the nature of this book did not have any apparent LGBTQ+ themes.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Littles and How They Grow* by Kelly DiPucchio and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/SPRINGER MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LITTLES AND HOW THEY GROW* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the nature of this book did not have any apparent LGBTQ+ themes.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Beware the Kitten Holy* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. Boardmember Springer disclosed she had not read all the books in this series and requested to be recused. Chair Finn called for a vote on Boardmember Springer's request to abstain from voting on *Lumberjanes* volumes 1 – 12.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn asked for a motion.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: BEWARE THE KITTEN HOLY* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment on the book's theme of the quality of self-reliance.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Friendship to the Max* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

DOLMA/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: FRIENDSHIP TO THE MAX* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment on the book's theme of striving to support one another and bringing forth one's best self.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: A Terrible Plan* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: A TERRIBLE PLAN* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Out of Time* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: OUT OF TIME* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment on the book's theme of time being fluid and the overall theme of the *Lumberjanes* series for their creative, out-of-the-box thinking for earning badges.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Band Together* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

MCKINNEY/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: BAND TOGETHER* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Sink or Swim* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

DOLMA/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: SINK OR SWIM* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: A Bird's-Eye View* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: The Infernal Compass* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: THE INFERNAL COMPASS* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment on the book being a fun play on orienteering.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: On a Roll* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: ON A ROLL* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Parents' Day* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: PARENTS' DAY* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how this book did contain an LGBTQ+ reference in that one of the children had two dads; the boardmember wanted to point that out so it's understood they are not overlooking it since they have been noting when a book did not have any apparent LGBTQ+ themes.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Time After Crime* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: TIME AFTER CRIME* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Jackalope Springs Eternal* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: JACKALOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Lumberjanes: Unicorn Power!* by Noelle Stevenson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

DOLMA/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *LUMBERJANES: UNICORN POWER!* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment on the book's theme being an example of teamwork, friendship, and working together to solve problems.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress* by Christine Baldacchino and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *MORRIS MICKLEWHITE AND THE TANGERINE DRESS* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Mr. Watson's Chickens* by Jarrett Dapier and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *MR. WATSON'S CHICKENS* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *My Footprints* by Bao Phi and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

MCKINNEY/SPRINGER MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *MY FOOTPRINTS* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *My House* by Byron Barton and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *MY HOUSE* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the nature of this book did not have any apparent LGBTQ+ themes.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *One Family* by George Shannon and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *ONE FAMILY* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the nature of this book did not have any apparent LGBTQ+ themes; any complaints about this book would appear to be racially motivated.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag* by Rob Sanders and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *PRIDE: THE STORY OF HARVEY MILK AND THE RAINBOW FLAG* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Red: A Crayon's Story* by Michael Hall and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

DOLMA/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *RED: A CRAYON'S STORY* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the book was a modern-day story of *The Ugly Duckling*, and how that storyline applied to many of these titles. There were comments recommending it.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Sex is a Funny Word* by Cory Silverberg and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/DOLMA MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *SEX IS A FUNNY WORD* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on the benefits of this book for parents unsure of how to approach this particular subject with their children including how it was written to promote dialogue, and structured into sections for both parents and children. Boardmembers shared personal experiences of how often times parents do not get to choose when their children come to them with questions on the topic of sex; materials like this help.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Stella Brings the Family* by Miriam B. Schiffer and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/SPRINGER MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *STELLA BRINGS THE FAMILY* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Stonewall: A Building. An Uprising. A Revolution* by Rob Sanders and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *STONEWALL: A BUILDING. AN UPRISING. A REVOLUTION* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *The Adventures of Honey and Leon* by Alan Cumming and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE ADVENTURES OF HONEY AND LEON* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *The Cardboard Kingdom* by Chad Sell and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. Boardmember Springer disclosed she had not read the book and requested to be recused. Chair Finn called for a vote on Boardmember Springer's request to abstain from voting on this item.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn asked for a motion.

DOLMA/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE CARDBOARD KINGDOM* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment on how this book gave them a new perspective and who people might be in their fantasy worlds.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *The Hips on the Drag Queen go Swish, Swish, Swish* by Lil Miss Hot Mess and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE HIPS ON THE DRAG QUEEN GO SWISH, SWISH, SWISH* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on this book not being one they would have selected for their own children, but their kids are adults with their own families now and they acknowledge children are growing up in different times. Comments were made on it being their responsibility as a parent to discuss that with them if kids picked the book out, how children being exposed to YouTube and the internet pose a greater challenge than this title, and how the book provided opportunities for music and dance and play; it wasn't just about hips going swish.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *The Lottery's Plus One* by Emma Donoghue and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. Boardmember Springer disclosed she had not read this book or the following *Magic Misfits* series and requested to be recused. Chair Finn called for a vote on Boardmember Springer's request to abstain from voting on the next five titles.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn asked for a motion.

MCKINNEY/DOLMA MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE LOTTERYS PLUS ONE* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on the book being a coming-of-age story, how to move through a hard time, where to go for support when you need it, and the importance of family no matter what it looks like.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn called for a five minute recess at 8:24 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

Chair Finn read the title *The Magic Misfits* by Neil Patrick Harris and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE MAGIC MISFITS* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There were comments from boardmembers who really enjoyed the series and look forward to more volumes.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *The Magic Misfits: The Second Story* by Neil Patrick Harris and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. Boardmember Fair disclosed he had not read this book or the other volume in the *Magic Misfits* series and requested to be recused. Chair Finn called for a vote on Boardmember Fair's request to abstain from voting on this title and the next one.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn asked for a motion.

DOLMA/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE MAGIC MISFITS: THE SECOND STORY* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *The Magic Misfits: The Minor Third* by Neil Patrick Harris and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer and Fair who were abstained. She asked for a motion.

MCKINNEY/DOLMA MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE MAGIC MISFITS: THE MINOR THIRD* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *The Sleeper and the Spindle* by Neil Gaiman and verified that all boardmembers had read the book with the exception of Boardmember Springer who was abstained. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE SLEEPER AND THE SPINDLE* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how the nature of this book did not have any apparent LGBTQ+ themes; it read simply as a book of female empowerment. There were comments in favor of the illustrations and its reframed version of a classic fairytale.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *The Stonewall Riots: Coming Out in the Streets* by Gayle E. Pitman and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THE STONEWALL RIOTS: COMING OUT IN THE STREETS* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how well-written and informative the book was, and that it was historical in nature.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *They, She, He, Me: Free to Be!* by Maya Christina Gonzalez and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/MCKINNEY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THEY, SHE, HE, ME: FREE TO BE!* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on the author's writing style and how other books on pronouns did a better job of explaining the subject.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *This Day In June* by Gayle E. Pitman and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

KUSZMAUL/SPRINGER MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *THIS DAY IN JUNE* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on how this holiday is being celebrated here in Homer and all around the nation, so it's helpful to have materials that provide background and what the intention is behind the holiday.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Two Grooms on a Cake: the Story of America's First Gay Wedding* by Rob Sanders and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

MCKINNEY/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *TWO GROOMS ON A CAKE: THE STORY OF AMERICA'S FIRST GAY WEDDING* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment on the use of the cake topper in storytelling that may give parents an opportunity to explain an alternate point of view.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *Were I Not a Girl: The Inspiring and True Story of Dr. James Barry* by Lisa Robinson and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *WERE I NOT A GIRL: THE INSPIRING AND TRUE STORY OF DR. JAMES BARRY* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was discussion on the book's nature being about the struggles of women equality; sexual orientation was immaterial to the reason Dr. James Barry had to live her life as a man to accomplish her goals. There were comments on other stories that depicted the same theme in history.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn read the title *What Are Your Words? A Book About Pronouns* by Katherine Locke and verified that all boardmembers had read the book. She asked for a motion.

DOLMA/FAIR MOVED TO UPHOLD THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO KEEP *WHAT ARE YOUR WORDS? A BOOK ABOUT PRONOUNS* IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION OF THE LIBRARY.

There was a comment on how this author's writing style did a better job of explaining the subject of pronouns.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Finn thanked the board for reading the books with such attentiveness and thoroughness, and for their professionalism on this agenda item.

10. NEW BUSINESS

11. INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- 11.A. Materials Submitted by Chair Finn
Library Infographic
- 11.B. LAB Meeting & City Council Report Calendar
2023 LAB Calendar

Chair Finn volunteered to give the LAB report at City Council's January 23rd meeting, and noted the upcoming agenda items for the LAB's February meeting. Deputy City Clerk Tussey requested boardmembers consider which Council meetings they would be available to give the LAB report, and they will work on updating the calendar at the February meeting.

12. COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Rachel Lord, city resident, thanked the board for the amount of work they did and shared how it was like a super strange book club. She appreciated their summaries and anecdotes on the books. She commented on the library's policies for these kind of appeals and suggested the board and library staff consider revising the process so that every book should have to be defended by the appellant. The board should not be in the position of guessing why certain books are before them. She thanked the board again for their diligence and that there should be a rule that if a meeting goes over three hours they should have access to the Council's fridge for snacks.

Jenny Baker, city resident, reiterated Rachel Lord's comments on revising the library's appeal policy. She thanked the board for all the work they did and for the excellent reading list for her and her child.

Nancy Lord, city resident, thanked the board for all their work regarding the appeal of the Library Director's decision on children and young adult materials. She appreciated the board showing every one of the public respect, and the amount of work the board and staff has put into these meetings. She commented on the lengthy process, agreed with making revisions to the appeal policy, pointed out that some of the books were technically in the young adult section and not in the children's section of the library, and the outrageousness of some of the titles being on the list just because the author was gay. She thanked the board again.

Ron Hess, city resident, commented on age appropriateness of some of the titles in the challenged materials and that he did not agree that many of those books were for children aged 5-6 years old.

Matt Pancratz, non-city resident, spoke to his research on this topic and the number of books he came across that were instructive on the LGBTQ+ ideology. He provided references and suggested the board read these books written by experts in their fields that speak to the psychological damage that is affecting today's youth.

Cassandra Windwalker, non-city resident, shared her observation that during the board's discussion and public testimony on the appeal of the Library Director's decision on children and young adult materials, all the comments were in the context of the parents. She noted it is important to remember that there are many children in our community who do not have a parent, or have an abusive/non-supportive parent, that can be a resource to them or help them know what to read or not read; libraries can offer that support. She voiced how grateful she is to the board that they want a library and a community that provides that support not just for their own kids but for all kids.

Xochir Loplzayala, city resident, reiterated the comments thanking the board for their work, and reiterated the comments made by Boardmember Baily during discussions; a lot of these books had racial undertones of seeing a person of color in a position of power or leadership. It highlights the Homer Pride Committee's work to try and educate how often black, brown, and indigenous communities share overlapping oppression with the LGBTQ+ community. By reading these books the board was able to see that and she thanked them for acknowledging it. She voiced how sorry she was they had to read all those books because of ignorance and not because they wanted to, and thanked them again for all their effort.

Madeline Veldstra, non-city resident, thanked the board for reading the books as part of the appeal process she had filed. In response to concerns as to why certain books were on the list that did not have apparent LGBTQ+ themes, she volunteered to speak to boardmembers after the meeting as to how the list was created. Ms. Veldstra spoke to what she has learned through this process, primarily that there are two opposing ideas that will not coincide. Because of this, she asks library staff to consider putting subject stickers on children's books so at a quick glance it's clear if the book contains themes related to topics such as LGBTQ+, Christianity, Judaism, or Islamic. She beseeched the board and others to understand that there are parents in this community that do want to limit which books their children read, be it for personal or religious reasons, and how a subject identification system would assist all parents when selecting books with their kids. She reiterated her thanks to the board and for taking the time to read everything.

Deb Curtis, city resident, echoed Rachel Lord's comments on the need for revisions to library policies. As the librarian for Homer High School, she shared how the high school's library policies are set up for contesting materials that prevents lump appeals on a particular topic. She thanked the board for putting so much time into this appeal process.

Elaine Burgess questioned who came up with the list of challenged books. Deputy City Clerk Tussey explained this moment on the agenda is an opportunity for comments and public testimony, not Questions-and-Answers, and to contact City Staff after the meeting.

Val Sheppard, city resident, reiterated the other comments thanking the board for the time and dedication they put into reading and evaluating each one of these books individually. She spoke to the comments made by Xochir Loplzayala and boardmembers about how many of the issues they identified in these books overlap; if one of these topics is brought up for consideration then it's not unfair to say the other ones will soon follow. She is grateful that point was brought up and discussed, and that the board decided to leave the books where they are.

Reverend Lisa Talbott, city resident, voiced gratitude for the amount of thorough and thoughtful work the board did this evening. She appreciated the time, effort, really specific comments and connections to their own lives, and the conversations they have had with community members. She thanked her husband for coming to the world's weirdest date night, but they are leaving with a fantastic shopping list for their grandkids. She noted how yesterday was Martin Luther King Jr. day, which is a time in our nation to remember that the fight for justice, equity, and community is ongoing. She provided an MLK quote and voiced her gratitude for seeing love implementing justice and justice upholding love.

Renee Eiden, city resident, commented that she came out to support Madeline Veldstra, and while she did not feel she could comment on the appeal because she had not read all the materials, she did want

to thank the board for treating Ms. Veldstra with respect and the work they did. She voiced her concerns about children being taught false science which causes confusion, her love for everyone there regardless of their sexual orientation, and how being confused about ourselves is not what God has intended for us. She thanked the board for their diligence and giving them an idea of what each book was about.

Bruce Hendrickson, city resident, spoke to his church's stance on gay marriage, how it aligns with the Pope, and that their church is there to provide support and love to everyone including those that are gay. He opined that if he read all of the challenged books he would likely agree with most of everything said in them, yet they are in a culture war and they want to protect their children and grandchildren until a more age-appropriate time to bring up subjects such as sexuality. He thanked the board and everyone there.

13. COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Library Director Berry extended his gratitude to the entire Homer community. He reiterated his comments from earlier and how the conversations have been courteous, polite, and remarkably civilized. Not all communities around our nation have been the same, some have gotten much more vicious, and it speaks really well of this town. He shared how blessed he feels to work in a place where people care this much about the library and thanked everyone.

Deputy City Clerk Tussey echoed the same sentiments and appreciated everyone being so civil during this appeal, the process, and public comments. It was definitely a testament to her clerk abilities; this was the largest packet she assembled for an advisory body, she had multiple meetings over days/weeks to ensure the board was following the policy and Homer City Code in a fair and equitable way, and is really glad it all worked out. She thanked everyone.

14. COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Boardmember Fair reiterated the comments made by City Staff and voiced his appreciation for the graciousness of everyone who attended. It's not easy to listen to people you do not agree with and to do that courteously and civilly was evident today. While the process took four hours, it has been a good one and he's appreciative of it.

Boardmember Kuszmaul shared her hopes that everyone can walk away from this exercise with an appreciation, a great amount of trust, and confidence in our library. They can see the care and attention that goes into selecting the resources that go into the library. She pointed out that some of the books Matt Pancratz used in his research to counter the ideas presented tonight were also in the library. She spoke to the professional duty of library staff to represent all viewpoints when selecting diverse materials; if it meets literary standards it can be about anything. Libraries are not a parent or a teacher, they are a repository and a group of people who want to make sure there's free access to information. She thanked everyone.

Boardmember Baily repeated comments he had made throughout discussions, particularly that his vote didn't necessarily mean he liked that book but it was necessary to act consistently with the library's written policies that says the responsibility for the reading choices and information accessed by children rests with the parent and legal guardians, not with the library. He understands it can be difficult at times but that is the standard he had to apply to his vote.

Boardmember McKinney voiced his hope that everyone goes away feeling respected. The board spent a lot of time reading these books; he found many of them are good and some he did not like. He opined that as generations go on it seems the parents have more responsibility. He wishes they could make everyone happy but, like Boardmember Baily, he looks to the policy and what a library stands for and concluded they have to include these books. He thanked everyone and appreciates the opportunity to be a part of this discussion.

Boardmember Springer appreciated the opportunity to be on the board, to read all the materials, and hear comments. She voiced her interest in also knowing why some of the books that did not reference LGBTQ+ themes were on the list, and thanked everyone for being there.

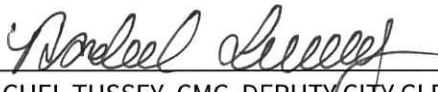
Boardmember Dolma commented on the Library Bill of Rights and how it speaks to parents' rights, that minors need to have access to resources, and how librarians know that. She is thankful for the policy but it does seem they need to make some revisions. She spoke to having read all the books, the respect she has for our librarians, and thanked all of Homer for caring about our library and the different capacities of hard work that went into this appeal and process. She thanked everyone including staff and the other boardmembers.

Chair Finn stated that much of the comments already said reflect what she feels in her heart around this theme that we all want the very best for Homer and everyone in Homer. That is the common thread and how we get there was discussed a little bit tonight. She noted that all the work they did and the time spent, the infrastructure that made it all possible is thanks to Deputy City Clerk Tussey. She was what held it all together. She commented on the books themselves, which ones she enjoyed, and which one she didn't. She thanked everyone again.

Student Representative Johnson had no comments.

15. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Finn adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.



RACHEL TUSSEY, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II

Approved: February 21, 2023