New submission from Contact Library Board of Trustees

asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Wed 2/16/2022 3:17 PM

To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineiflibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen <laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>

Name

Wendy Lauman

Your Email Address

mwlauaman@montanasky.us

Type your message below.

When we moved to the Flathead Valley 16 years ago and I mentioned to friends that we volunteered at the library the only response was “when are we getting a new library building?” Well we still don’t have a new building but we sure have a lot of chaos due to 3 members of the library board. Adams, Ingram and Roedel are the source of the chaos. The library is exceptional with a variety of programs for all ages, yearly increases in book circulation, and helpful staff. The Flathead County Library Alliance will work to hold Adams, Ingram and Roedel in check until we can have new board members who are library advocates.
New submission from Contact Library Board of Trustees
asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Wed 2/16/2022 3:36 PM
To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineiflibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen <laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>

Name
Wendy Lauman

Your Email Address
mwlauman@montanesky.us

Type your message below.

Asking the Montana State Library to fix the loss of $35,000 that three members of the Library Board knowingly created is unbelievable. The State Library has rules and rules need to be followed. Perhaps the 11 candidates for Library Director who withdrew their names from consideration reflects on the offer of a low salary, a lack of adequate funding for a library of this size, and current Library Board turmoil. Not a great opportunity for a new director.
Asking a new director from a tiny library with a staff of two to run a bigger library, work on her college degree, work on a master’s degree, and deal with Library Board micromanaging is a bit overwhelming.
We already have drought, a pandemic, high inflation, and political division, do we really need to deal with library problems too? We need Library Board members who are library advocates.
Hello!

1st, let me start by saying I think you all are doing a great job during a very stressful period. How you have all continued services for our community is beyond admirable! Impressive really.

I read the "Answering Questions About the Library" in the Flathead Beacon in regards to the budget and how it affects services. After reading the article, it doesn't seem that the loss affects much at all. So, one might ask, what's the big deal that we lost the certification and the $35,000+ in funds, if all the services are still available?

What might have been helpful to know, is what is impacted with the loss of funds, if not services. That didn't get answered in the article. It mentioned who is responsible for the budget, why, but not the impact of the loss of funds. Are there services that are affected that were not listed in the article? Is if for maintaining the physical structure? Was it to buy new books?

To be clear, I am not happy with the recent actions of some of the Trustees and the resulting loss of funding, but this article made it sound like it was no big deal.
RE: Library Budget

Sean Anderson <sanderson@imagineiflibraries.org>
Fri 2/18/2022 3:42 PM
To: KIRSANOW3@msn.com <KIRSANOW3@msn.com>
Cc: Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>

Hi Lily,

Thanks for the message and the kind words – we appreciate it!

I think that’s a fair assessment, and we could have done more to explain how the loss impacts services. To be clear, other shared, state-administered services are unaffected - That had been the most common concern we had heard from the public, and one that we wanted to address most directly.

We will most definitely feel the loss of $35k, but exactly where we will feel it is unclear at this point. In preparing the proposed FY23 budget for the County Commissioners, we are planning to request additional funds to account for the loss of state aid. It is ultimately the Commissioners’ decision as to whether that funding increase is granted. That being the case, we also plan to have a number of contingencies for where in the budget we might need to trim – Library materials, Wi-fi Hotspots, building maintenance are a few lines that could conceivably see reductions. Staffing costs are a significant expenditure for the library, but also by far our greatest asset. Reductions in staff, salaries, or open hours are not on my radar nor something I would advocate for.

This is a big decision for the finance committee (and the Board of Trustees) to make, and until that discussion is had, I can only speculate on the specific impact on library services. That said, your point is well taken – we have a responsibility to be open about the impact of changes to the budget and any changes to services. We certainly will continue to inform the community along the way, and input like yours helps us craft that message effectively.

I also encourage you to attend the Board and Committee meetings to share your thoughts directly with the Trustees. The next regular board meeting is on 2/24 at 9am, here at the Kalispell location. Once the finance committee meeting is set, we will be publicly noticing that as well.

Thanks again, and please feel free to reach out with any other questions or concerns.

Sean Anderson
Senior Librarian

imagineif LIBRARIES
247 1st Avenue East
Kalispell, MT 59901
406.758.2197
sanderson@imagineiflibraries.org

Bigfork | Columbia Falls | Kalispell | Marion
New submission from Contact Library Board of Trustees

asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Tue 2/22/2022 6:28 PM

To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineiflibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen <laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>

Name

Mike Cronin

Your Email Address

seaslide26@gmail.com

Type your message below.

I regret that I cannot attend the Feb. 24 meeting, but I urge you NOT to hire your choice for library director as that person is not in the slightest bit qualified for the job and we all would eventually regret that hire.

Also, for the sake of fairness and transparency, please grant the ACLU’s request.
Ask Library

**imagineif LIBRARIES**
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406.758.5815  
asklib@imagineiflibraries.org

Bigfork | Columbia Falls | Kalispell | Marion

From: asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Sent: Monday, February 21, 2022 5:38 PM
To: Ask Library <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Subject: New submission from Contact Us

First name

Dina

Last name

Pomper

Your email

dinapthenotary@gmail.com

Subject

Feedback Re: The Good Ol' Boys Club AKA "Trustees"

Your message

Good afternoon team,

Let me start this with a note of sincere gratitude for the entire team at The Imagine If Library System. Your focus and commitment to this community shows, EVERY. SINGLE. DAY. I want all of you to know that you are appreciated for what you do, day in and day out. You have saved this community THOUSANDS and THOUSANDS of dollars by utilizing the wonderful resource of our library here in Flathead County and you are a cornerstone of our community.

I, like others, have quietly been reading the news reports of the resignations of qualified library staff and crucial cogs of the team. Personally, I think it's sad and truly unfortunate that now our library system has to contend with "The Good Ol' Boys aka Trustees" who only care about control and certainly do not care in any slight bit about the team at the library. When I read recently that their answer to the $$ loss of the Director was to reduce salaries of library staff, I was
appalled. Do they honestly think that is going to make a difference? Sure it will. More people will resign as it will make life here in The Flathead even harder by making less money.

Certainly nothing will happen to “The Good ‘Ol Boys” and their bank / retirement accounts so that = to them let’s mess with the staff’s salaries. Seriously, unacceptable. IN. EVERY. WAY. How about if they donate to keep their seats as “Trustees” when you know their “friends - The Good ‘Ol Boys - sector 1” have engineered their placement at the library board.

Personally I think it’s appalling that these people would think their opinion should matter in the world of library science. Like any of them would ever in a million years check out a book or strike up a conversation with the team or have any kind of gratitude for a hard day’s work.

Tony @ the C-Falls branch has always been my library buddy. From his early days @ Kalispell I would reach out to him with a number of titles I wanted to check out and he would literally get me every title if it was possible. It was from Tony’s example and truly amazing connection that the library became my candy store.

Team, my only point of reaching out to you today was to let you know that I care. Just looking at the pictures of the trustees meetings show the body language of toxicity with literally no emphasis on the importance of team work for this community. I think that is sad but with “The Good ‘Ol Boys” hard at work I am realistic enough to know that any positive change will not be realistic.

I do however have strong belief and faith in Sean Anderson and the entire team at our library. I want all of you know that your hard work is celebrated and appreciated by so many. You might not hear it as often as you should but straight up, Thank You.

“Ignore The Noise” you guys - you’ve got this and we believe in you!!!!!

With truly best and kind regards,
Dina L. Pomper
Flathead County, Montana
New submission from Contact Library Board of Trustees

asklib@imagineifilibraries.org <asklib@imagineifilibraries.org>

Wed 2/23/2022 2:01 PM

To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineifilibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen <laxelsen@imagineifilibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineifilibraries.org>

Name
Amy Conrey Andreas

Your Email Address
amycconreyandreas@gmail.com

Type your message below.
I would like to attend the Board Meeting on Thursday, February 24. Are you offering a virtual option? If not, why not? So many very unusual and disturbing things happening that will negatively impact Imagine It's ability to serve their community. Whatever you can do to make it easier for people to participate would be greatly appreciated.
New submission from Contact Library Board of Trustees

asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>  
Wed 2/23/2022 2:19 PM

To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineiflibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen <laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>

Name
Amy Conrey Andreas

Your Email Address
amyconreyandreas@gmail.com

Type your message below.

Since I cannot attend the meeting in person I would like to submit my comments for the record regarding your recent hiring of Ashley Cummins as Director. It is disappointing that you would hire someone not qualified for the job when there are many qualified candidates. Imagine If has been a shining star in the world of community libraries. As a librarian myself, I have often looked to Imagine If for inspiration and programming ideas. My professors in my university classes have often referenced them as doing excellent work in all that they offer and do for their community. The direction the board has taken is forcing quality employees to leave. The board's actions seem to insinuate that you are attempting to purposefully dismantle a successful and much beloved library program. Please listen to your community and let your certified librarian professionals run the show.
Dear Library Staff,
I just wanted to say that I appreciated your guest column in The Beacon. I have raised two children in this valley, now both in high school and have so many fond memories of visits to the library. My boys were avid readers for many years and even won awards at their school for the sheer quantity of pages they read in elementary and middle school.

In addition to being a mom, I am also a pediatrician and our office participates in the Reach Out and Read program, giving books to children at every wellness visit from 6 months to 5 years (potentially 9 books over that time). We participate because we know how important reading is in language development and preparing children for school. We have also been the grateful recipients of library bags with books and other goodies courtesy of our local library which we give to families new to the area.

As a community member, mother and pediatrician, I feel that it is extremely important that our library be directed by a qualified individual and that we follow national library standards. Avoiding local politics by using national standards seems reasonable and logical.

All of this to say, you are loved and appreciated. Please hang in there! It is very sad that our library Board of Directors has chosen a political path which does not reflect our community as a whole. I have already sent an email to the county commissioners reflecting my sentiments.

Lynn Dykstra MD

"People are hard to hate close up. Move in." - Brené Brown
New submission from Contact Library Board of Trustees

asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>

Wed 3/9/2022 9:16 AM

To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineiflibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen <laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>

Name
Lisa Bate

Your Email Address
lisajb2016@gmail.com

Type your message below.

Hello,

I have been reading and hearing about the lack of support for our public libraries. I can hardly think of anything more important than libraries to help children, young adults, adults, and seniors to find resources on all subjects. There is the old saying that you think education is expensive, then try ignorance. Books are one of the safest ways for people to learn about all kinds of subjects, including some that are uncomfortable to talk about.

I grew up going to libraries and so did my kids. Please continue to support ImagineIf libraries in a way that they will be accredited.

Thank you.
To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineiflibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen <laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>

Name

Isabelle Higgins

Your Email Address

isabelle.m.higgins@gmail.com

Type your message below.

To whom it may concern,

I am a senior English Writing and Literature double major at Montana State University. I am writing a feature article about banned and contested books in Montana, specifically.

Is there someone that I may speak to on the Board of Trustees regarding the subject? My article would be incomplete without it. Please let me know if you are able to help me. Thank you.
Fw: New submission from Contact Us

Ask Library <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Fri 3/11/2022 4:07 PM
To: Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>

Ask Library

imagineif LIBRARIES
247 1st Avenue East
Kalispell, MT 59901
406.758.5815
asklib@imagineiflibraries.org

Bigfork | Columbia Falls | Kalispell | Marion

From: asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 12:03 PM
To: Ask Library <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Subject: New submission from Contact Us

First name
Barbara

Last name
Boorman

Your email
barbboorman@yahoo.com

Subject
Trustee meetings

Your message
It was impossible to hear most of the speakers at the Board meeting yesterday. I have no idea what Tracy or Star said and could hear very little of what Sean, Ashley and Heidi said. I was wearing my hearing aids and moved my chair up so I was practically sitting at the table! A man behind me kept asking people to speak up and many other people told me they could not hear what was going on. There is no point in having a meeting open to the public if the public cannot hear what is being said. Please remedy this situation before the next board meeting. Thank you.
First name
Marylane

Last name
Pannell

Your email
kuhlcan@cyberport.net

Subject
Lack of microphones

Your message
I was in attendance at the trustees retreat yesterday. I could not hear what was said during the meeting.
First name
Gordon

Last name
ASH

Your email
kmprash@centurylink.net

Subject
March 10 meeting?

Your message
Yesterday at the meeting there was mention (during the end summary) of a meeting or determination of possible arbitration by the Facilitator. Is there a special review on April 13? Possibly in Helena? Is there an agenda? What was the Facilitators name, and contact email if possible?
Staff did a great job, a great civics lesson and very professional- Thank you Gordon Ash
New submission from Contact Library Board of Trustees

asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>

Fri 3/11/2022 4:21 PM

To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineiflibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen <laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>; Ashley Cummins <acummins@imagineiflibraries.org>

Name

Wendy Lauman

Your Email Address

mwlauman@montanasky.us

Type your message below.

We are encouraged that the Montana State Library is involved in Library Board issues. It is amazing that the Montana State Library has to be involved in encouraging the Library Board to be accountable and to be library advocates. That should be a given. It has not been an issue in the past. Why are 3 board members trying to be in charge of the library and change policies? The librarians are professionals and they do an amazing job without your interference..
First name

Wendy & Mike

Last name

Lauman

Your email

mwlauman@montanasky.us

Subject

Library Board Meeting 3/10/22

Your message

We are encouraged that the Montana State Library is involved in Library Board issues. We attended the meeting 3/10/22 and could not hear most of the discussion. One gentleman encouraged the group to speak louder but it didn't help. We could not hear the librarian from the Montana State Library and the only people we could hear were Doug, Connie, Terry and Shawn. We hope to keep the Library Board accountable. They should all be library advocates.
From: asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 4:27 PM
To: Ask Library <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Subject: New submission from Contact Us

First name
Kathryn

Last name
Britton

Your email
kbrittonrr@gmail.com

Subject
Poor acoustics in meeting room

Your message

I'm sure you're already aware the acoustics in the meeting room are dismal for the public. I can rarely hear all that's being discussed by the board, despite sitting close to the table and the board members' attempts to project their voices. They invariably forget as the discussion ensues, voices drop, and information is lost.

Could the computer sound system that is used upstairs when there's an overflow crowd be used in the meeting room?

Thank you, and thanks for the great job you're doing! That last meeting (the part I heard) was very informative and enlightening.

Kathy Britton
Thinking the 3/10/22 Board Retreat with the Montana State Librarian was the first time the State Library had to intervene with our amazing library because of the actions of three Library Board members. So glad to have that support. The best comment from the public at the end of the meeting was "If you want to run a business, start your own business." I hope the 3 board members understand that professional librarians run the library.
I urge the board to rebuke the tyrannical ideas of Mr. Adams. Specifically his ideas about withdrawing from the American Library Association's Bill of Rights and especially rebuke his intentions to censor the content of library books and make his own personal values the ones that should be used in deciding if a book should be carried at the library. In libraries in this country, it is not the libraries job to decide which books patrons should be allowed to check out, it is the patron's right to check out any book they please. Any other idea is abhorrent to any liberty loving American. We hold that truth to be self-evident.
New submission from Contact Library Board of Trustees
asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Mon 3/14/2022 6:59 PM
To: Library Trustees <librarytrustees@imagineiflibraries.org>; Lune Axelsen
<laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org>; Teri Dugan <tdugan@imagineiflibraries.org>; Ashley Cummins
<acummins@imagineiflibraries.org>

Name
Lois Wagner

Your Email Address
loisewagner@gmail.com

Type your message below.

I just finished reading the article in the Beacon Roundup for today in which there was a report on last Thursdays meeting. I was so pleased with Sean Anderson’s responses to Doug Adams. Sean knows what a Public Library is supposed to be. It appears that Doug does not. Perhaps he could establish his own private library with only books he likes.
From: asklib@imagineiflibraries.org <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 2:28 PM
To: Ask Library <asklib@imagineiflibraries.org>
Subject: New submission from Contact Us

First name
Barbara

Last name
Boorman

Your email
barboorman@yahoo.com

Subject
Trustee meetings: inability to hear speakers

Your message
I would like to add to the previous email I sent regarding the inability to hear the trustees and the public comments at the Board meetings:

1. The problem of not being able to hear the proceedings was NOT unique to the meeting on March 10, 2022. This has been an ongoing problem at all the meetings.

2. The Board of Health and the County Commissioner meetings have microphones available for each Board member or Commissioner as well as one for use by those who want to make a public comment. There is no problem hearing the speakers at those meetings.

I trust that steps will be taken to insure that the deliberations of the Library Board members, staff and those making public comments can be heard by those in attendance at the meetings.