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Rocky Public Library



MINUTES

Rocky Mountain House Library Board

Special Emergency Meeting

Tuesday, October 14, 2025 7pm

Library Meeting Room

Present: Ben Worth, Lori Pratt, Karen Travis, Lynda Huseby, Ken Moesker, Mimi Cole, Elyse Morin **Absent:** Barbara Gibson

Guests: Michelle Swanson, Sydney Graham

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lori Pratt at 6:58 pm on Tuesday, October 14, 2025. She introduced everyone before beginning proceedings.

1.1 Agenda and Minutes

1.2 Additions/Changes to the agenda: Timeline of events was added to the agenda as part of the first point of discussion.

1.3 Motion #802 Mimi moved to adopt the agenda for tonight's meeting as amended. Seconded by Lynda. **CARRIED**

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

2.1 CCLB Letter: Lori shared a letter received from the Clearwater County Library Board (CCLB) that stated it would not be distributing any of the PLSB Operating Grant for 2025/26 to the RMHLB. The letter was not dated. Neither Lori nor Ben had any knowledge of this until Ben received an email forwarded by the Town CAO Dean Krause on October 9. On Friday, October 10th Ben received an email from



Caroline Municipal Library Co-Manager, Amanda Archibald, which included the letter from Clearwater County Library Board stating “The board has decided not to send any of the operating funds to Rocky this year”. The board had questions as to how this came about. Ben explained that Parkland Regional Library System used to distribute the funds as instructed by the county, allocating an amount to each of the three libraries (Caroline, Nordegg and Rocky Mountain House) based on population served. With the formation of the CCLB, the Rural Services grant funding is no longer applicable. CCLB now directly receives an equivalent provincial Library Operating Grant.

Timeline of Events: Ben read through a timeline of events he compiled from the establishment of the Clearwater County Library Board on May 27, 2025 through to the email he received on October 10. Lori added she was notified by Barb Gibson on September 24 that Bev Smith was now the Chair of CCLB. However, Bev informed Lori she is no longer the Chair. There is no reference to anyone new being appointed chair of CCLB in any CCLB meeting minutes.

- 2.2 Memorandum of Understanding:** The purpose of this MOU is to outline the distribution of Provincial library board funding between Clearwater County Library Board and Rocky Mountain House Library Board. It was initially drafted by Sydney Graham in June, 2025. It was reviewed by the RMHLB at their June meeting where some questions arose. The MOU was revised with adjustments to population distribution but was never signed. Sydney will let CCLB know the agreement should be signed as soon as possible.



2.3 Implications on 2025 and 2026 Budget Years: The RMHLB understands the need to support all libraries and the patrons they serve. However, planning needs to happen. The events that have unfolded are very problematic for our 2025 budget. There is not much time left in the year to make adjustments on the scale that would be required if we don't receive the grant funding. Ben outlined two possible scenarios. In one case, we could utilize a portion of our Operating Reserves. This situation meets the criteria for emergency use of the funds. The downside is the money is in a GIC that doesn't mature until February, 2026. This would result in a loss of \$2515 in interest. It would also be subject to approval by Rocky Credit Union. Also, our reserve has not yet reached the goal dictated in our policy. The other option is to drastically reduce services. This would mean staff layoffs and operational shutdowns. It would be devastating for our community. Usage is up considerably due to the teacher's strike. Also, with colder weather on the way, the library provides a warm and safe environment. Incredible harm could come to those we serve. For our 2026 budget, if funds are not received it will result in the layoff of one full-time position. Ken noted that our library already runs very efficiently, and our budget is very lean. Ben provided these stats on library cards issued to patrons living in Clearwater County:

Caroline: 210

Nordegg: 32

Rocky Mountain House: 822 (77%)

All of this is happening in the middle of a municipal election which further complicates things. The new county council will be sworn in on October 30.

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An Intermunicipal Library Board will be formed in the future and regional agreements will be established. Meanwhile, Michelle Swanson will put this issue on the agenda for the council meeting on November 12. Lori and Ben will also attend that meeting to present the 2026 budget. Sydney will set up an inter-board meeting between CCLB and RMHLB. Ben can provide any background information needed. Ron Sheppard from Parkland Regional Library will also be invited. The RMHLB is hopeful that more communication with the CCLB will increase their understanding of the consequences of their decision. We want to move forward with good planning and a positive outcome for all.

No decisions are being made at this time.

- 3 ADJOURNMENT: Motion #803** Ken moved to adjourn at 7:55 pm.
Seconded by Elyse. **CARRIED**