

Flathead County Library Resolution

Regarding

The Main Branch in Kalispell

Background:

Kalispell and the Flathead Valley have enjoyed library services since the 1890s.

In 1969, the main branch of the county-wide library system moved to its current location at 247 First Avenue East. Dating back to 1917, the structure is owned by the local School District, which leases space on three floors to the library.

The aging building with asbestos pipes, a single, creaky elevator, leaky basement and antiquated heating and cooling system can no longer provide sufficient and suitable space for a main library that serves an ever-growing county population. Moreover, the library's lease with the School District runs out in 2033.

Several local construction projects are currently under way or have recently been completed with the goal of revitalizing downtown Kalispell. Encouraged by these developments, Flathead County Library is redoubling its efforts to find better space for its main branch.

Resolution:

WHEREAS the existing Kalispell library facility no longer accommodates the efficient delivery of library services due to limited square footage over three stories;

WHEREAS the lease for the current location expires on June 30, 2033;

WHEREAS the leased facility is aging and requires costly upgrading of major building components such as plumbing, HVAC, ADA accessibility, elevator, etc., forcing the use of county funds to improve a School District building;

WHEREAS the existing facility's capacity for handling materials and its ability to serve patrons is hampered by lack of loading space and parking;

WHEREAS staff working conditions in the basement are marginal at best;

WHEREAS the public meeting room in the basement is subject to Fire Marshall occupancy limits, difficult to access, and often used to store overflow materials;

WHEREAS the children's area is too small for programming and can no longer house the growing and popular children's collection;

WHEREAS lack of space requires the inefficient storage of library materials off-site;

WHEREAS providing security is difficult due to the multi-floor layout;

THERE FORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Flathead County Library Board desires, encourages and supports the replacement of the Kalispell branch of Flathead County Library.

Passed and adopted the 16th day of January, 2025.