

Dear Flathead County Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for a position on the Flathead County Library Board of Trustees. My name is Mellissa Wood, and I am a wife and mother of three young children (ages 8, 5, and 1 years old). I am a resident of Kalispell, and my family uses the Kalispell branch of the library weekly. My husband and I are both small business owners and I love to be involved in our community through serving in our church, volunteering at our children's schools, coaching youth sports teams, and attending community children's activities. I love reading and the personal growth and discovery of the world that can come through books. As I work to instill the love of reading and learning in my children the library has become a wonderful tool for our family. We take advantage of the wonderful children's programs and love to explore the children's section to take books home with us.

I am committed to our Flathead County Library and attend monthly Library Board of Trustees Meetings where I regularly make public comments before the trustees. I attended committee meetings and have participated in budget, public relations, facilities, and policy discussions. I am a member of Flathead County Friends of the Library, where I attend monthly meetings and volunteer in different ways to support the library and its staff. I participate as an ex-officio member of the Flathead County Library Foundation where I share updates and coordinate on behalf of Friends of the Library. I am committed to common-sense actions at the library and am a strong advocate for children and parents who use the library.

In addition to having young children of my own, I also lead the children's program for my church congregation where I oversee home lead, church-supported curriculum. We have 74 children in our program from ages 18 months to 11 years old. I work with teachers, parents, and children to facilitate learning and growth through Sunday school lessons, music, community service, and weekday activities. I also volunteer in my children's schools. These experiences give me a unique perspective on the current challenges our youngest generation face and how to best support parents in meeting the needs of their children through the library.

In my career I have over 16 years of experience working in state and federal government, and private sector natural resource management. I have a wide range of experiences in facilitating multi-stakeholder groups, soliciting and responding to public comment, creating and implementing multi-million-dollar budgets, using stakeholder input to write and implement policy, strategic planning, human resource actions, as well as planning and implementation of multi-year or multi-stage projects. These skills make me uniquely qualified to assist the Library Board of Trustees in their responsibilities and be a resource for support to the Library Director. I value collaboration and if selected as a Trustee I would listen to and value the voices of yourselves, the other trustees, our community, and library staff to further the mission of the library.

I would be honored to be selected as a Trustee of the Flathead County Library and I am committed to supporting our public library for current and future generations in Flathead County.

Sincerely,

Mellissa Wood

FLATHEAD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD MEMBER APPLICATION

Name: Mellissa Wood

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: mrosie21@gmail.com

1. How did you learn about the open position on the Library Board?

I learned about the open position while attending the Library Board of Trustee monthly meetings.

2. In what ways do you feel connected to the library's mission?

I have a deep love of and passion for lifelong learning. I am constantly researching and reading up on my interests and hobbies. My young children are also now learning to love literacy and learning, and I am in a privileged place to teach them the best ways and places to find resources that will encourage and help them grow. Flathead County Libraries are a hub in the community that my family and others rely on for our learning and entertainment. Additionally, having young children and in my volunteer efforts to serve children and their families in the valley, I see their potential. This potential can be unlocked no matter their challenges or life situations through literacy and learning. Libraries are a key community feature to promote and enhance this potential, and they are open to everyone. It is such a unique public service that doesn't just serve one demographic, it serves us all. I want to uphold and enhance this service for current and future generations of Flathead County.

3. Why are you interested in serving on the Board?

I believe in the mission of the library and as a parent of young children who is active in serving children and their families in the community, I am in a unique position to understand the challenges of this demographic, how to best reach them, what services they might need and how to provide these services. This demographic is currently lacking representation on the board. I have attended many board meetings as well as committee meetings and provided public comments over the last 3 years. I'm passionate about creating opportunities for our community and their children to engage in learning and their passions through reading. I also recognize that a strong library provides more than just books, but a place for the community to access services, gather, learn, and grow together.

I believe in listening to and respecting all members of our community who come and share their insights into the business of the library. I believe in civil discourse and respect and will strive to take criticism and input from the public and other trustees with grace while making decisions that are best for the library and its patrons in a transparent way. Additionally, I have extensive experience in public service and managing organizations. My skills will be very useful in assisting the Board of Trustees and the Library Director in managing and enhancing the library.

4. Do you have any previous leadership or board service experience? Please provide information about current and previous board experience.

Yes. My leadership and board experience include the following:

- 2011-2012; 2016-2019: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Congregation Women's Relief Society Organization Leadership Council
- 2015-2019: Rich County Coordinated Resource Management group, Voting Member
- 2016-2019: Box Elder County Coordinated Resource Management group, Voting Member
- 2016-2019: Salt Lake Field Office Bureau of Land Management Leadership Team
- 2016-2019: West Desert District Bureau of Land Management Leadership Team
- 2018-2020 Utah Division of Wildlife Resources Regional Advisory Council: Northern Region, Voting Member
- 2023-Present: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Congregation Children's Primary Organization President
- 2023-Present: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Congregation Leadership Council
- 2024-Present: Friends of the Library Volunteer
- 2024-Present: Ex-officio member of the Flathead County Library Foundation

5. What kinds of skills or expertise can you offer to the Board? How will they benefit from your participation?

In my career and work as a volunteer in the community I have had extensive experience in public service and managing and leading organizations. This experience includes facilitating multi-stakeholder groups, identifying shared goals and objectives among partners leading to collaborative solutions to complex problems, soliciting and responding to public comment, creating and implementing a 6.6 million dollar statewide budget for personnel and projects, managing facilities including their upkeep and evaluating safety protocols and procedures, writing and implement policy, creating strategic planning goals and objectives and working to achieve and periodically review them, executing human resource actions including performance reviews and performance improvement plans, as well as planning and implementing multi-year or multi-stage projects. I also have experience creating training and curriculum for adults and children. I excel at public speaking and am a clear communicator.

I have a certificate in collaboration from the University of Utah's Environmental Dispute Resolution program through the S. J. Quinney College of Law. All my knowledge, skills and professional and volunteer experience will help me work with others to lead and make decisions about library operations to advance its mission and improve its management. My experience in public service will allow me to take public feedback about the library and make responsible changes, when needed, to benefit the community. Bringing stakeholders to the table to tackle tough issues like policy and facilities for the library will strengthen the shared interests we have.

6. Will your schedule allow you to regularly attend board meetings? And participate in committee work between meetings?

Yes. I am a small business owner and set my own hours. I will attend board and committee meetings.

7. Our trustees are all certified through the Montana State Library and attend training both locally and at the State level. Montana Library Certification Program (mt.gov) Will your schedule allow you to attend training?

Yes. I will be able to attend and complete the required training to become and remain certified.

Please provide three references who could speak to your ability to serve on the Flathead County Library Board of Trustees:

Name: David Wigginton

Title: Founder and President of Glacier Investment Management

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email address: dave.wigginton@gmail.com

Name: Kris Hulvey

Title: Lead Scientist/Owner of Working Lands Conservation

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email address: kris@workinglandsconservation.org

Name: Matt Preston

Title: Deputy State Director for Resources, Utah Bureau of Land Management

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email address: mpreston@blm.gov