

POUDRE RIVER PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Name of Requestor: Holly Carroll
Appearance Date: January 12, 2015
Time Required: 10 minutes
Date Decision Needed: January 12, 2015

Agenda Item:

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Approval : no-extended use fees on picture books

Objective:

Board approval to eliminate extended use fees (fines) on children's picture books to encourage greater use of these items in support of the Library District's early literacy efforts.

Situation:

The Library District and other public libraries across the nation provide essential early literacy services to children and to parents/caregivers of the very young in teaching them the importance of early literacy skill development. In 2012/13, the Colorado State Library conducted the study, SPELL: Supporting Parents in Early Literacy through Libraries (<http://spellproject.weebly.com/>) which provides compelling evidence of the effectiveness of early literacy services of public libraries for school readiness. National research shows that the more books that are in the home of a young child; the more likely the child will have the skills and learning development necessary for succeeding in school.

The state study also identifies barriers in the use of libraries, borrowing materials and story time attendance. One of the barriers in use of the library is the fear of accumulating fines on borrowed books. This may lead to fewer items borrowed and avoidance of the library once fines are accumulated. Fines are a disincentive for low income families.

In May 2014, the Board of Trustees approved a six-month pilot project which discontinued extended use fees on picture and board books to allow library staff and administration time to evaluate the effectiveness of such action in terms of public response, fine revenue and circulation.

Advantages:

During the six months of the pilot project, June- November 2014, circulation of picture books decreased by 2.1%. The circulation decrease of all other print and A-V items was -5.4%. It appears that removing the fines did help to stabilize the circulation of picture books. Total decrease in circulation for 2014 was 4.16%.

As part of the pilot project, staff created a brief survey to capture customers' opinions about eliminating the fines. There were 131 respondents to the survey. 33% of the respondents indicated that fines were a barrier to checking out picture books and 48% said that they would check out more picture books because of the no-fine policy.

Disadvantages:

Revenue from fines and fees in 2014 was budgeted at \$180,000. Of that total, extended use fees for picture books is estimated at \$15,000. A six-month "no fine" policy on picture books was estimated to decrease fines by \$7,500. Fine revenue for 2014 was approximately \$171,300. (Final revenue figures are not yet available from the City.) Loss of revenue from eliminating fees on picture books was estimated correctly.

Requested Action:

Board approval of revising extended use policy to discontinue fines on picture books.

Fine revenue decreased as estimated, however, the pilot project stabilized circulation of picture books during the six-month trial period, and was received positively by our customers.

Potentially Affected Interest:

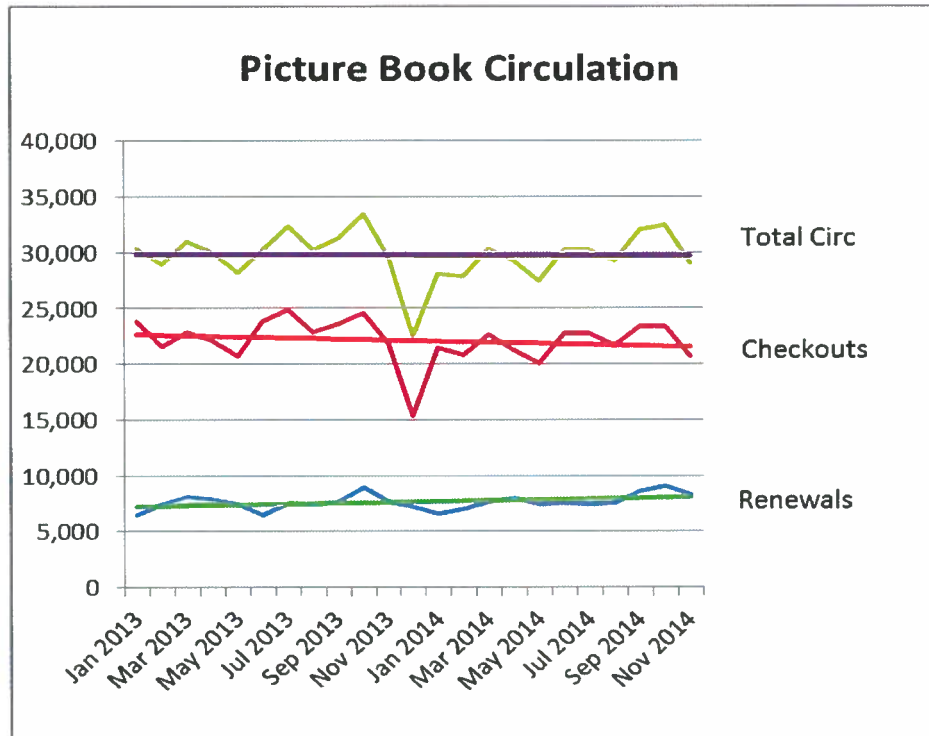
The public, especially preschoolers and their parents who rely on the public library as an essential resource for reading readiness.

Level of Public Interest and Participation:

Moderate

Circulation	Jun - Nov 2013	Jun - Nov 2014	
Picture Books	187,180	183,205	-2.1%
All other items	1,324,594	1,253,636	-5.4%

Yellow highlight is Picture Book pilot program

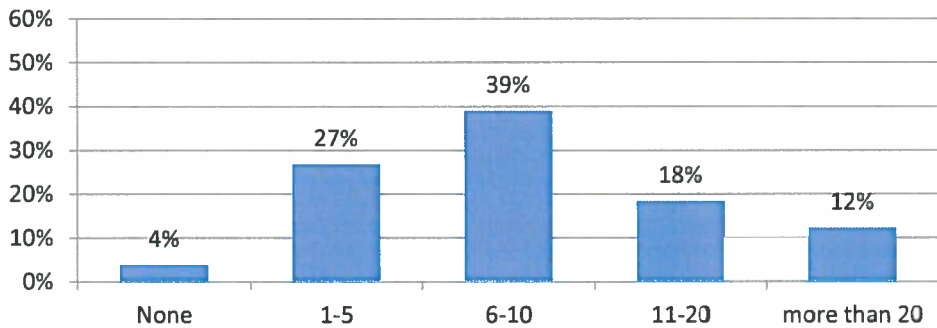


Trendline for Total Circ is virtually flat
Trendline for Checkout drops slightly
Trendline for Renewals increases slightly

Question #1

Books	# of respondents	
None	5	4%
1-5	35	27%
6-10	51	39%
11-20	24	18%
more than 20	16	12%
Total	131	

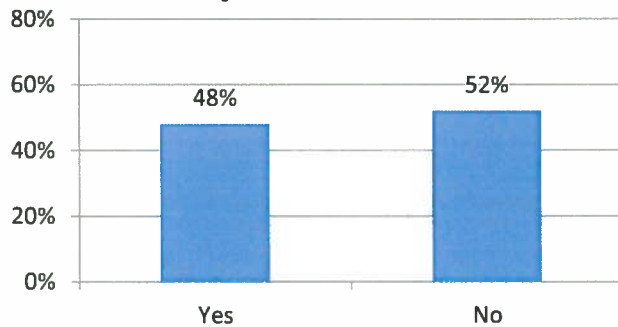
Q1 - About how many picture books do you normally borrow per library visit?



Question #2

Y/N	# of respondents	
Yes	61	48%
No	66	52%
Total	127	

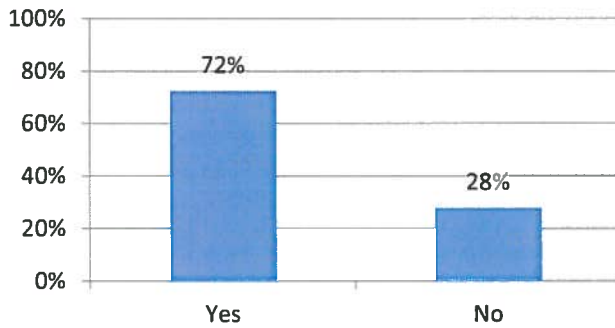
Q2 - Has the library's fine-free picture book program encouraged you to borrow more picture books?



Question #3

Y/N	# of respondents	
Yes	94	72%
No	36	28%
Total	130	

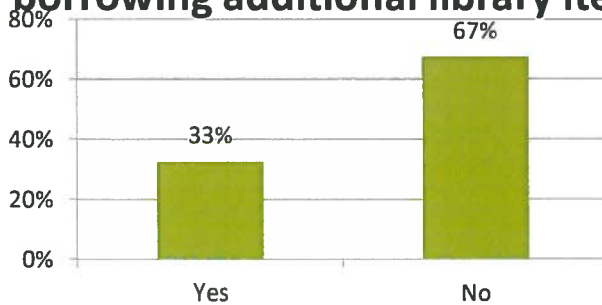
Q3 - Have you ever paid extended-use fees (overdue fines) for picture books?



Question #4 (Comments on next page)

Y/N	# of respondents	
Yes	30	33%
No	62	67%
Total	92	

Q4 - If you have paid extended-use fees for picture books, have your funds kept you or your family from using the library or borrowing additional library items?



Comments from Q4 - If you have paid extended-use fees for picture books, have your finds kept you or your family from using the library or borrowing additional library items?

Yes

Only when we have a large amount due. We pay is off quickly

Sometimes we won't borrow books for a while after paying fines.

When I get over \$5, I have to wait to check other /new books out until remember/budget money to pay the fine.

Yes, if I can't pay my fines – I can't check out books.

Yes, it is hard to keep up with the picture books and their due dates. Once my fines are too high I pay a dollar or two here and there to get to the point that I can check out more books.

Yes, not from the extended use fees but for the double penalty for lost items. We closed our library account.

Yes, we can't afford the fines so I stopped renting them.

Yes, we usually don't come back until I pay the fine.

No

No it is a worthy cause.

No, and although I do not like returning items late, I figure I am at least supporting the library!

No, for our income level the fines are minimal.

No, they are very reasonable and much cheaper than buying books.

No, we are happy to support the library.

No, we are lucky that is not a barrier for our family, but I think the program is wonderful for families who need it!

No, we just pay them and come back. We love all three libraries here in Fort Collins.

No, we love the library and love the reminder emails about due dates it's our responsibility to renew or pay the fines.

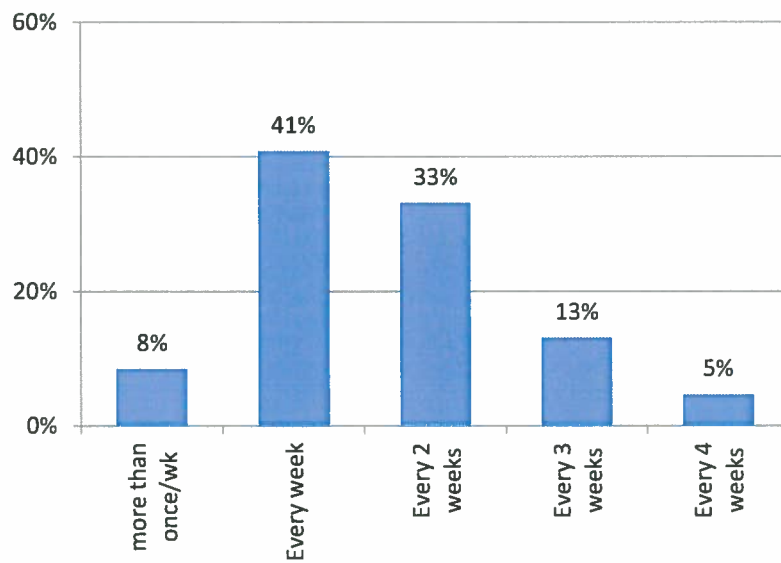
No. I am fortunate enough to be able to pay the fees.

Not a financial concern.

Question #5

Frequency	# of respondents	
more than once/wk	11	8%
Every week	53	41%
Every 2 weeks	43	33%
Every 3 weeks	17	13%
Every 4 weeks	6	5%
Total	130	

Q5 - How often do you visit a public library, on average?

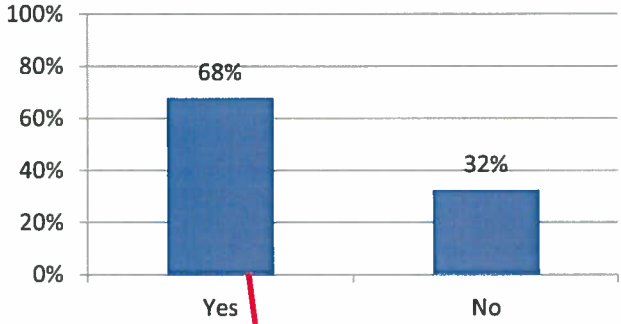


Question #6

Y/N	# of respondents
Yes	88
No	42
Total	130

68%
32%

Q6 - Do you ever attend our Library District's children's storytimes?

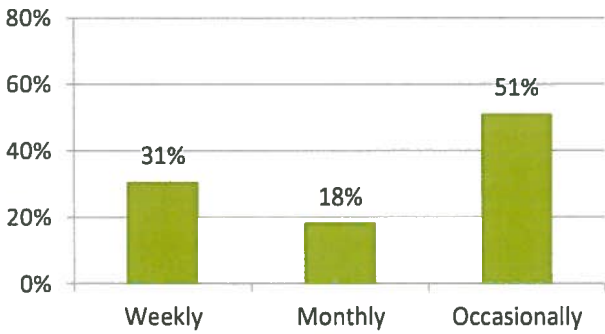


Question #7

Frequency	# of respondents
Weekly	27
Monthly	16
Occasionally	45
Total	88

31%
18%
51%

Q7 - If yes, do you attend -



Question #8

Y/N	# of respondents	
Yes	100	77%
No	30	23%
Total	130	

Q8 - Do you ever renew picture books?