

Since July 7, the Campbell County Board of Commissioners and Library Board of Trustees have listened to comments about particular library books, programs, and staffing concerns during their respective board meeting public comment sessions. A variety of spirited viewpoints have been presented by citizens in opposition and support of the library.

Reading is a constitutionally protected First Amendment right. Public libraries are democratic institutions that provide collections for the varied interests of the communities they serve. County Commissioners and Library Trustees take their responsibility to provide diverse cultural opportunities to the community seriously. Commissioners and Library Trustees also welcome public feedback.

To officially address public concerns about library collections, the Library Board provides a process for community members to challenge materials through the Collection Development Policy, Request for Reconsideration process. This process was shared with the community at the July 26 Library Board meeting and again at a Special Meeting of the County Commissioners and Library Board on August 12.

Since the August 12 meeting, 33 Request for Reconsideration forms have been submitted, and more are expected. As part of a democratic process, removing or displacing a book is a serious matter that merits a thorough review, and so the reconsideration process requires due diligence and takes time, including time to appeal decisions to the Director and then to the Library Board. All parties involved in book challenges are committed to working through the process for the benefit of the community.

Since book challenges deserve a thorough evaluation, the Campbell County Board of Commissioners and the Library Board of Trustees request that community members be patient, respect the established procedure, and allow the reconsideration process to be completed.