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Director has until Wednesday to decide whether to leave library or be demoted

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Jan 16, 2018



Carbon County Library Executive Director Jacob Mickelsen organizes books Monday at the Rawlins Branch Library. Mickelsen plans to announce his decision to either leave the library system or be demoted to the branch manager Wednesday.

Rawlins Daily Times
Mathew McKay

Rawlins —The Carbon County Library Executive Director Jacob Mickelsen plans to announce his decision to either leave the library system or be demoted to branch manager Wednesday.

The Carbon County Library System Board told Jacob Mickelsen last week they would like to demote him but that he could also choose to leave.

Wednesday's meeting is open to the public and will begin 9 a.m. at the Rawlins Public Library, 215 W. Buffalo St.

Mickelsen said Monday he is choosing to focus on what he can control, and is concentrating on keeping the offices and programs running as normal.

"Every location is still open for business as usual," Mickelsen said. "I am just keeping the wheels on it until this whole thing is settled."

Carbon County Library System Board Chairman Joyce Menke was contacted Monday morning but said she was out of town and said she preferred not to comment.

Mickelsen, confused by the announcement last Monday, said the library circulation had been doing well considering the budget.

"We circulated 51,377 items county-wide in six months," Mickelsen said. "It is on track to be pretty consistent with the last year."

He said the county circulated just shy of 90,000 items in the 2016-2017 fiscal year and is on track to reach the same number this fiscal year. He also said the county has added 3,034 new items to the shelves.

"It is a little bit lower than last year, but we are also working with 41 percent less budget for materials this year," he said.

Mickelsen said he compared the numbers to those of Fremont County and found them to be reasonable.

"They have a population of over 40,000 people," Mickelson said. "They have twice as much money as we do and they have only added 4,700 items in that same amount of time."

Mickelsen said he may have made errors, but feels very positive about what has been completed since taking the role.

“The day you do everything perfectly is the day you should probably move on to the next challenge,” he said. “I feel we have had a very strong year and a half, and all of the communities seemed pleased.”

Previously reported by the Rawlins Daily Times, Mickelsen took over the position July 2016 after the Carbon County Library Board dismissed outgoing Library Director Bobbie Morgan at the July 6, 2016 meeting.

Mickelsen entered the role after serving several months as the Saratoga Library Branch Manager and working at the Fremont County Public Library in Riverton.

Carbon County commissioner Lindy Glode said Monday the County Commissioners are unable to override the board’s decision, but is surprised by the Carbon County Library System Board.

“I was surprised to hear about this because I have heard only positive comments about the director,” Glode said.

Mickelsen said he potentially could make roughly $25,000 less in pay if he decided to fill the branch manager role, and the board offered him the standing pay the position is budgeted for. But he said an amount has yet to be discussed or decided. The Rawlins Daily Times previously reported that he would make $53,000 a year when he was given the Executive Director position

Mickelsen said he would take the position of Joshua Wood who resigned about a month ago, after serving as branch manager for about a year and a half