

**AGENDA**  
**Billings Public Library Board Meeting**  
**Billings Public Library, Yellowstone Board Room**  
**August 8, 2024**  
**12:00 pm – 1:00 pm**

**Mission**

*Billings Public Library: embracing, empowering, and enriching our community.*

**1. Public Comment**

*Citizens may address the Board regarding any item of Library business on the agenda, with the duration of comment for an individual speaking permitted to exceed one minute only at the discretion of the Board.*

*Citizens may address the Board regarding any item of Library business not on the agenda, with the duration of comment for an individual speaking permitted to exceed three minutes only at the discretion of the Board.*

**2. Chair's comments – 2 minutes**

**3. Consent agenda (No discussion except for separated item/s)**

- a. Minutes from May 2024 meeting
- b. Minutes from June 2024 meeting

**4. Challenged Material (ACTION ITEM) – Gavin Woltjer**

**5. Foundation Board Representative (ACTION ITEM) – Susan Plath**

**6. Director Evaluation (UPDATE) – Susan Plath**

**7. Board Report to Council (UPDATE) – Susan Plath**

**8. BPL Updates – BPL MGMT**

- a. BPL MGMT
- b. Foundation – Jeannie Tracy
- c. FOL

**9. HPBA Sponsorship**

**10. Good of the Order (DISCUSSION ONLY)**

**11. Adjournment**

**Proposed next regular meeting: September 12, 2024**

*Reasonable accommodations will be made to enable individuals with disabilities to attend this meeting. Please notify Jamie Bratlie, Library and Facility Coordinator, at 657-8391.*

**TO:** BILLINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD  
**FROM:** GAVIN J. WOLTJER, LIBRARY DIRECTOR  
**RE:** STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT *Nick and Charlie: A Heartstopper Novella* by Alice Oseman  
**MEETING DATE:** 8 August 2024

Attached is a "Statement of Concern about Library Resources" submitted by Ms. Amanda Scheidler on 22 May 2024. Letter of notification was sent to Ms. Scheidler on 24 May 2024 stating the date the Board will review this Concern.

**STATEMENT REQUEST**

"I don't agree with same gender relationships, but I am okay with adults reading it. However, this is a bit too sexualized for younger people, plus there are uses of the 'F' word & other adult expletives. Overall, it is inappropriate for young readers."

"At least remove from Y books, as the target age is 14-18. Personally, I don't believe young people should have access to it."

**BACKGROUND**

Description of *Nick and Charlie: A Heartstopper Novella* from goodreads.com:

"From the mega-bestselling creator of Heartstopper, a must-have novella in which Heartstopper's lead characters, Nick and Charlie, face one of their biggest challenges yet.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder... right?

Everyone knows that Nick and Charlie love their nearly inseparable life together. But soon Nick will be leaving for university, and Charlie, a year younger, will be left behind. Everyone's asking if they're staying together, which is a stupid question... or at least that's what Nick and Charlie assume at first.

As the time to say goodbye gets inevitably closer, both Nick and Charlie start to question whether their love is strong enough to survive being apart. Charlie is sure he's holding Nick back... and Nick can't tell what Charlie's thinking.

Things spiral from there.

Everyone knows that first loves rarely last forever. What will it take for Nick and Charlie to defy the odds?"

The Library acquired this edition of *Nick and Charlie* May 2023. Since acquiring this title, it has circulated 11 times.

There are ten (10) libraries in Montana that hold this title. Eight (8) of these libraries catalog it YA. Two (2) libraries (Senior High School and West High School) catalog it as fiction because these libraries do not have a designated YA section. (See attached document for more information)

## **REVIEWS**

Kirkus Reviews (1 April 2023) <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/alice-oseman/nick-and-charlie/>

In this novella addition to the Heartstopper graphic novel series, English teen boys Nick and Charlie face a new challenge—sustaining a long-distance relationship.

At the end of the summer, Nick will leave for university a couple of hundred miles north in Leeds. He can't wait for independence and an escape from his hometown. As much as Charlie wants to support his boyfriend, every time Nick mentions his plans, Charlie sinks deeper into anxious thoughts about a whole year apart. All of Charlie's followers on Tumblr say their breakup is inevitable, which doesn't help. Determined not to make Nick feel bad about his insecurity, Charlie tries to distract both of them from the future and the upcoming changes. Chapters switch back and forth between Charlie's and Nick's perspectives. Each time Charlie swallows his anxiety and lies to Nick, he feels worse. The steady buildup of tension drives the story forward at a fast pace. Returning characters and references to past events from the comic series receive some introduction and explanation for new readers, but familiarity with the previous volumes or the live-action Netflix series provides beneficial context for characters' relationships and the central conflict. Illustrations throughout capture romantic and emotional moments. Although presented in a different format from the rest of the series, this appealing addition strikes the same balance of engrossing drama and gentle love.

Sweet and idealistic. (cultural notes for American readers, character information and sketches)  
(Romance. 14-18)

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Ms. Colleen Scheidler has requested this novella be “remove[d] from Y[A] books, as the target age is 14-18.”

This book is currently cataloged in Young Adult fiction section of the Billings Public Library that curates materials for ages 13-19 readership.

This title was selected by library staff for inclusion in the library's collection for purchase per the Billings Public Library's Collection Management Policy, section 4, Philosophy of Selection, which states:

The Library's patrons represent different reading levels and interests. Selection does take into account the fact that patrons have a variety of points of view, as well as reading and format preferences, and these need to be represented in the collection.

When selecting new materials, staff will consult reviewing sources to determine which authors, titles and subjects might be most appropriate for the collection. Customer demand will also be an important factor in selecting materials. Patrons are encouraged to make recommendations to staff for additions to the collection and staff will consider these recommendations for purchase. In order to keep up with high demand requests, the Library will monitor the number of reserves on an item and this will frequently trigger the purchase of additional copies.

The selection process takes into account that Library users represent different points of view, some of which may be controversial. The collection will try to represent these views by offering, whenever possible, a balanced perspective of issues.

Staff recommends that the Board denies the request for this item to be removed from the YA collection and reclassified as Adult Fiction. The placement of the title is consistent with other Montana libraries, publishers' designation (Scholastic and Harper Collins Childrens), and Kirkus Review designation of 14-18 romance.

**Billings Public Library's Inclusivity Statement:**

"The Billings Public Library supports and values and celebrates diversity and inclusion. We strive to curate a collection of resources that represent all demographics in our community's tapestry. We believe an inclusive and welcoming community is a stronger community."



## BILLINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT LIBRARY RESOURCES

The Board of Trustees of Billings Public Library has authorized the use of this form according to the policy found on the reverse. Please complete the form and mail it to: Library Director, Billings Public Library, 510 N Broadway, Billings, Montana 59101.

Name of Person Completing Form Amanda Scheidler  
Address [REDACTED]  
City [REDACTED] State [REDACTED] Zip [REDACTED]

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Book	Internet
<input type="checkbox"/> Magazine	Content of Library Program
<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper	Other (describe) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Audiovisual Resource	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Software	_____

Title Nick & Charlie

Author/Producer Alice Osman

2. Please indicate how much of the resource you have read or viewed, e.g. all of it, quit after the beginning, none of it but concerned based on reports from others.

Mostly browsed

3. Please comment on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on those matters which concern you. (Please use and attach additional pages as needed.)

I don't agree with same gender relationships, but I am okay with adults reading it. However, this is a bit too sexualized for younger people, plus there are uses of the "F" word & other adult expletives. Overall, it is inappropriate for young readers.

4. What specific action regarding this resource are you seeking from the Library?

At least remove from Y books, as the target age is 14-18. Personally, I don't believe young people should have access to it.

Amanda J. Scheidler  
Signature

Date

5-22-24

**Nick and Charlie : a Solitaire novella****Author:** Oseman, Alice**ISBN:** 9781338885101

**Subject:** Gay teenagers -- Juvenile fiction.  
 Teenage boys -- Juvenile fiction.  
 Interpersonal relations -- Juvenile fiction.  
 Gay people -- Fiction.  
 Teenage boys -- Fiction.  
 Interpersonal relations -- Fiction.

**Physical Description:** 153 pages : illustrations ; 22 cm.

**General Note:** "Originally published in English in Great Britain by HarperCollins Children's Books, a division of HarperCollins Publishers Ltd."--Title page verso.

**Title Format:**  Books

Actions:

▼

[Place Hold](#)

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Library	Call Number	Item Barcode	Item Type	Status
Billings Public Library	Y OSEMAN	31238009843938	Young Adult book	Due 8/31/24
Belgrade Community Library	YA OSEM	33773100951006	Book	Young adult fiction
Bitterroot Public Library	YA OSEMAN	39525010650969	Book	Young adult fiction
Bozeman Public Library	YA OSEMAN	33773004211648	Book	Young adult fiction
Great Falls Public Library	YA FIC OSEMAN	30867005364738	28 day checkout	On shelf
Great Falls Public Library	YA FIC OSEMAN	30867005365586	28 day checkout	On shelf
ImagineIt! Kalispell	YA OSEMAN #1.5	33236007192991	28 day checkout	Due 7/18/24
LCL Helena Main Branch	YA OSEMAN	31159006396771	28 day checkout	On shelf
Senior High School	FIC OSEMAN	30425001179194	28 day checkout	On shelf
West High School	FIC OSEMAN	3220700002538	28 day checkout	On shelf

MARC Tag 521 Target audience- 14-17 years or grade 9-12

Publishers: Harper Collins Childrens and Scholastic