

North Central Washington Libraries

March 17, 2022

I. Call to Order

Nancy Spurgeon called to order the March meeting of the NCW Libraries Board of Trustees at 1:00 p.m. March 17, 2022. The meeting was held as a Zoom teleconference.

II. Attendees

The following persons attended via Zoom: Board Members Nancy Spurgeon, Kathleen Allstot, Denise Sorom, Jill Sheley, Lisa Karstetter. Also in attendance were Barbara Walters, Executive Director, Kim Neher, Deputy Director; Mike Githens, Director of Finance; Tim Dillman, Interim Branch Operations Director; and Sharon Mauch, Temporary Executive Assistant. Nancy Churchill attended as a guest, awaiting full appointment as a trustee. Matt Neumann, IT Network Operations Manager, attended a portion of the meeting to present the IT report.

III. Introduction of New Trustee, Nancy Churchill

Nancy Spurgeon introduced Nancy Churchill, the new Board of Trustees member representing Ferry County. Nancy gave a summary of her background and her passion for the work of libraries. She is looking forward to working with NCW Libraries.

IV. Consent Agenda

Items included:

- a. March 17, 2022 Meeting Agenda
- b. Minutes of the February 17 board meeting
- c. Payroll & vouchers
 - i. February payroll for \$532,709.32 and Benefits for \$190,344.65
 - ii. February Accounts Payable for \$325,850.35
 - iii. Staff Reports

Kathleen moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Denise seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Executive Director Report

HR Update: Final interviews are underway for the Curlew Librarian position, as well as for the Adult Services and LatinX Program Manager positions. Interviews for the two open Associate Director

positions will be arranged after review of the qualified applicants. First round interviews will be conducted via Zoom, and the second-round interviews will be in person. Refer to the NCW Libraries website for more information on the positions for which we are recruiting.

There was a labor management meeting with the union. Updates were given on their election of union officers. A positive working relationship is expected.

HR has arranged travel and lodging for fifteen NCW library staff to attend the PLC Conference in Portland next week. There are ten staff members who will be attending the conference virtually as well.

The new payroll system will be rolled out on April 16 with the first pay date on May 10. Supervisors will receive training on March 28, and training for staff will follow in the first 2 weeks of April.

Intellectual Freedom: Barbara addressed this topic in the interest of being proactive in the event branch librarians face challenges by patrons concerning library materials. She described the process by which a patron can submit a challenge. She also asked the Board to reaffirm the Statement from the Collection Development Policy that was adopted by the Board. The Board agreed to reaffirm this statement. Training will be provided to branch staff concerning this issue.

Mask Mandate Update: The COVID taskforce, led by Tim, was acknowledged for its work during the pandemic in ensuring the safety of library employees. Although the mask mandate has been lifted, continual guidance is offered to keep our staff and patrons safe.

VI. Authorization for Increase to Nash Consulting Contract

Barbara asked for an increase to the current contract with Nash Consulting. This would provide a second phase that would include 360 reviews of leadership and then provide feedback to staff to help them grow as well. Staff also asked for additional training on conducting community-based meetings. The extra training will exceed the original threshold; therefore, Board approval of additional funds is required.

Kathleen moved to approve the second phase of the Nash Consulting work.

Lisa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VII. Financial Report

Mike presented the February financial report. Total revenue at the end of month is low but within the range of what is expected at this point in the year. The personnel budget is underspent by 2.5%. The district is budgeted as though all open positions were filled. As recruitment continues those funds will be spent. Under Public Services supplies, \$18,000 of the expended amount was due to purchases in preparation for the Summer Library Program. The Library Books and Materials is spending pretty consistently in the first two months of the year, and this area will likely increase with more attention and direction from the new Associate Directors.

Mike mentioned that increases in fuel expenses has that line item overbudget. Repairs and Maintenance was a little higher than expected in February due to a delivery vehicle that had to be repaired.

VIII. Facilities Improvement Plan

Kim reported on the successful community meetings with the cities of Warden, Leavenworth, and Mattawa, with 100% verbal agreement to the 4 items required of the cities for investment in a facility: 1) 10-year guarantee occupancy; 2) permission to make improvements; 3) make concrete plan to address deficiencies in space; 4) continued active participation throughout the process to engage the community. The next step is drafting written agreements. The written agreements will align with the current maintenance and use agreements set forth for the current facilities. The process has begun to define the roles of the project personnel, followed by choosing a library design firm, other vendors, and other project details as they move forward. Kim also shared an outline of status of current projects concerning all branches, as well as a detailed project update of the Winthrop, Waterville, and Wenatchee branches. Cashmere library is also interested in relocating and the city suggested taking over the Riverside Center which would be an ideal location. Talks are taking place with the community.

IX. Branch Report

Tim reported that he and Kim along with 11 branch staff members will be attending the PLA conference in Portland next week and 10 others will attend virtually. The safety committee relaunched with the first meeting on 3/16/22. The members will serve for 1 year and consist of 10 members: one each of the 6 regions and the Distribution Center and 3 others appointed by administration. The committee is tasked with updating the accident prevention manual and reviewing accidents and near misses as they occur. Concerns and suggestions can be brought to the safety committee to address for a safer working environment. Annual training for staff will also be established.

Area managers met to discuss changes to branch hours which would go into effect at in early June. This correlates in part with establishing hours for the new Winthrop branch opening, as well as the kickoff of the Summer Library Program, and a June marketing campaign to invite the public back to their libraries. The first draft of new branch hours will be available in mid-April and will be firmed up by early May. Denise asked if there is data concerning foot traffic and how it corresponds to time of day so that branch staff can be informed of hours that are in most demand. Tim responded that he provided foot traffic and circulation data for each location, so that current needs are still met. In addition, they are being intentional with current usage as well as being pro-active in finding ways to increase foot traffic at other times.

Mask messaging has changed to reflect that masking is now recommended but not required. Branch staff were surveyed concerning the issue and most are in favor of the change in policy. Social distancing is still encouraged in facilities. Indoor programming will not resume system-wide until May 16 at the earliest, although branches have permission to adjust that timeline as they see fit. In the meantime, branches continue to offer creative ways to serve their communities.

X. IT Report

Matt Neumann, Network Operations Manager, filled in as the IT representative to provide the IT report. The phone system implementation is more than halfway complete and is anticipated to be complete by the 1st week of April. They are also working on a more comprehensive auto attendant with the Communications and Mail Order Departments. The Microsoft migration plan is in Phase 2 with a goal to

complete the migration by mid-year. The IT budget is focused on standardization, enterprise management solutions, and replacing aging infrastructure.

The data report shows a positive increase in cards issued indicating that new and existing patrons are coming back to the library. Numbers should continue to increase as programming is able to return. The use of digital resources increased during the pandemic and that trend is continuing. Denise asked if new patrons who sign up for a library card receive a welcome email that gives them some information on the available resources. Kim confirmed that patrons do receive an email, and a welcome packet is being designed as well.

Barbara asked about the possibility of meeting in person next month. Tim stated that a hybrid meeting can be done so that those who cannot attend in person can do so virtually. It was decided that the April 21 meeting will be held as a hybrid version.

The Board will now move into executive session at 3:00 p.m. pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (b).

XI. Executive Session

Nancy announced that the board would move into executive session at 2:19 until 2:30pm to discuss a matter pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (b).

The board extended executive session at 2:30 pm until 2:45 pm.

The board extended executive session at 2:45 pm until 3:00 pm.

The board returned from executive session at 2:56 pm

XII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 pm.