

North Central Washington Libraries

March 16, 2023

I. Call to Order

Nancy Churchill called to order the March meeting of the NCW Libraries Board of Trustees at 1:01 p.m. March 16, 2023. The meeting was held in person at the NCW Libraries Board Room with an option to attend virtually.

II. Attendees

Attending virtually was Board member Lisa Karstetter, and those Board members attending in person included Nancy Churchill, Denise Sorom, Kathleen Allstot, and Nancy Spurgeon. Jill Sheley and Jim Mitchell were absent. Also in attendance were Barbara Walters, Executive Director; Kim Neher, Deputy Director; Alicia Gomori, Associate Director of Community Libraries; Summer Hayes, Associate Director of Programs and Resources; Sheila Callihan, Director of Human Resources; Aaron Floyd, Director of IT Services; Mike Githens, Interim Director of Finance (virtual); Sharon Mauch, Executive Assistant.

III. Consent Agenda Items

- a. March 16, 2023 Meeting Agenda
- b. Minutes of the February 16, 2023, Board meeting
- c. Payroll & vouchers
 - i. February payroll for \$624,227.07 and Benefits for \$215,115.65
 - ii. February Accounts Payable for \$270,280.90
 - iii. Staff Reports

Kathleen moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Nancy S. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Closed Session

The meeting went into closed session at 1:02 p.m. for a period of thirty (30) minutes. Regular meeting resumed at 1:32 p.m.

V. Financial Report

Mike began by presenting an informational document – Public Funds Investment Market Update – reflecting the most recent data concerning employment figures and interest rates that impact public entities. He shared that we will continue to benefit from higher investment interest for the time being until the yield changes.

Revenue is low as is typical this time of year. Property taxes received are a little lower than at this same time in 2022, however an influx of revenue is expected as taxes come due at the end of April. Investment interest continues to produce a high return on investment.

Expenses reflect the personnel budget more in line with where it should be this time of year. Admin expenses are over budget mainly due to attorney fees due to union negotiations. This amount should drop once a CBA is in place.

Public Service expenses are below budget however this category cannot spend evenly as money is spent as expenses occur. The training budget is currently underspent, however several staff will be attending the WLA conference at the end of March and there will be more training opportunities for staff throughout the year.

Total expenditures thus far is higher than normal due to higher fuel and utilities costs. Library leadership will meet to discuss and plan ahead for for 2024.

VI. Executive Director Report

Sheila reported that there is a new librarian in Brewster who started today. An interview is on the books for strong candidate for the open librarian position at the Okanogan branch.

Due to the leadership expansion, there are two open positions in Wenatchee and another one in Moses Lake for which there are some strong candidates.

There are four upcoming retirements between now and the end of May and decisions will be made as to filling those positions. Barbara mentioned that the most recent retirement was Pam Hughes who worked for NCW Libraries for 44 years.

Barbara introduced Summer Hess from Sage Step Consulting who will work with NCWL on the strategic planning efforts. Summer gave her background and stated that she is excited to help NCWL work toward shaping our new strategic plan.

VII. Reimagining Spaces

Kim reported that they had their first site visit with Library Forward in early February. Forte Architects started asbuilt documentation for Curlew and Oroville. A website had been created for the project which will be added to as progress is made. Each location web page also contains details about progress for that specific branch. Also included with the board packet is an informational manual, "The Reimagining Spaces Road Trip." This manual is designed to help staff understand the specifics of the projects. At the beginning of each project, there will be a training day team members and area managers to make clear the responsibilities of all involved and the timeline.

The first staff field trip occurred earlier this month in Santa Cruz, CA where 16 staff members were able to tour a library system that is similar to NCWL and that recently refreshed their facilities.

The Brewster project is still on track, however contractor bids are higher than anticipated which may require a different approach to the scope of work, funding, etc.

The town of Oroville finalized their purchase and the library will open at the new location at the end of April. While this location is not a reimagined or redesigned, it is a fresh, clean space that will enable some creativity without having to do a lot of remodeling.

WPL is progressing through phase 2 with the Dept of Commerce grant. After the construction document development is complete, work will begin on preservation as it is an older building. It will then be sent for permitting and development of a firmer budget which will be submitted to the Dept of Commerce for contract readiness.

VIII. Community Libraries Report

Alicia highlighted a few items from her report:

- East Wenatchee library partnered with Norwood Wine Bar where they did a silent reading party to promote library as well as local business.
- The Quincy Valley Lions Club donated money for the George Library to have a Valentine's Day party where snacks and crafts were provided for participants.
- Omak started a Baby and Toddler Fun Program which will extend to twice weekly due to positive response.
- Jean Russell, Warden Librarian, joined the Warden Development Council to help find ways to support the library.

IX. Programming and Resources Report

Summer is currently working on internal structure such as finding capacity in our distribution department and increasing efficiency in how materials are moved.

Alicia O'Dell found an emerging author from Texas who is bicultural and bilingual. She is a poet and teaches creative writing as well. About 30 people participated in a virtual program that was offered featuring the author whereby Mary Lou Guerrero, Rural Services Manager, shares a similar history and interviewed her.

The SLP this year will focus on building outreach and representation of the Latinx community.

Barbara shared also that John Chrastka from EveryLibrary presented at a WSL sponsored event at the DC that dealt with materials challenges in libraries. There is a part two to the training that will be virtual, information for which will be provided when it is available.

X. IT Report

Aaron shared a tracker showing the progress of existing projects. Five more locations have been completed in the Microsoft transition, six additional locations with the rack cabinets are complete, and five additional locations are complete with bar code scanners. Work continues on the branch mailbox conversion.

The first meeting with Kelly Connect early this week concerning our printer lease. The focus is to provide every branch with multi-function print/scan/copy machines in both color and black and white.

XI. Other Discussion items

Nancy C. asked if board members would be interested in beginning the monthly board meetings with a prayer and the pledge. General consensus was not in favor of this.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Board of Trustees on April 20, 2023.

Nancy D. Churchill

[Nancy D. Churchill \(Apr 21, 2023 09:34 PDT\)](#)

Nancy Churchill, Chairperson

Jill Sheley

[Jill Sheley \(Apr 21, 2023 12:07 PDT\)](#)

Jill Sheley, Secretary