

North Central Washington Libraries
September Board Minutes

September 16, 2021

I. Call to Order:

Kathleen Allstot called to order the September meeting of the NCW Libraries Board of Trustees at 1:01 PM September 16, 2021. The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference.

II. Attendees:

The following persons attended: Board Members Kathleen Allstot, Jim Mitchell, Katherine Meade, Denise Sorom, Nancy Spurgeon, and Jill Sheley. Barbara Walters, Executive Director; Mike Githens, Director of Finance; Aaron Floyd, Director of IT; Tim Dillman, Executive Assistant.

III. Guests:

No guests present.

IV. Consent Agenda:

Kathleen asked if there were questions or corrections for any items in the Consent Agenda which included the:

- a. Minutes of the August 19 regular board meeting
- b. Payroll & Vouchers
 - i. August Payroll for \$491,206.84 and Benefits for \$177,849.74
 - ii. July Accounts Payable for \$234,317.33

Denise Sorom moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Nancy Spurgeon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

V. Gift Policy

The board looked at the third reading of the Gift Acceptance and Naming Policy. Barbara pointed out that the biggest change reflects that there would be a distinction made between facilities the district owns and facilities owned by cities and Friends of the Library groups. Jill commented that this change was a helpful distinction. Jill sees the purpose of the Gifts Policy related more to collections and library operations. Denise asked if Jill and Barbara had some discussion about the potential for overlap between a physical space and library programs (i.e a teen space that is named in honor of a donor that somewhere down the line does not serve the library mission as a teen space). Barbara pointed out the section that speaks to the length of duration for naming.

Both Denise and Jill made comments to the effect that naming areas within a library that are specific to programmatic use of the space (makerspace, reading room, etc) should be at the discretion of the library district and donors would need to recognize that specific use of the space for that purpose may change over time.

Barbara provided the board with the updated policy language which did not make it into the board packet, which states-

The Library Board has the sole right to name or rename library collections, owned facilities, or owned spaces. The Library Board shares the rights and responsibility for naming facilities occupied by the Library but owned by another entity, such as a municipality.

Barbara confirmed that this language is the suggested final language for the policy. Jim stated that he did not believe the board should give that right to another entity, and should maintain the sole right in both scenarios. Jill said that she is more comfortable with the new language in the third version. Denise agreed with Jill.

Jim moved to approve the Gift Acceptance and Naming Policy with the language above added.

Jill seconded. The policy was adopted by all board members.

VI. Internet Usage Policy- First Read

Barbara prefaced Aaron's presentation by letting the board know that the Internet Usage Policy needed to be updated to comply with CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act). Aaron provided additional background, adding that one of the conditions for the e-rate federal reimbursement that the library receives is proof of compliance with CIPA. The library has been working with an e-rate advisor who has said that the district needed an updated board approved policy. Library administration took the opportunity to update the policy in whole. Aaron shared that the desire was to align with CIPA and provide intellectual freedoms. Aaron explained that the current computing environment for the library system does not allow for separating children's and adult filtering. Aaron also spoke to the removal of gambling content from filtering in consideration of the role casinos play as employers. This would allow patrons to apply for jobs with casinos. Kathleen mentioned that bullets #1 and #4 in the fourth section use the word within and this doesn't address behavior on the library provided Wi-Fi. Aaron acknowledged that this may need revision and suggested adding the phrase "within NCW Libraries' networks". Kathleen agreed that would be a helpful change.

VII. Code of Conduct Update- First Read

Kim presented proposed updates to the Code of Conduct. The first updated section would add language about public health mandates. The language would be general and should anticipate future public health mandates. The second updated section addresses weapons in the library. The language presented to the board has been suggested by legal counsel. Legal counsel is also looking at some language about knives, swords, machetes, etc. Denise commented that there is some subjectivity in what constitutes intimidation. Kim agreed and added that the library can't prohibit blade weapons completely but could get more

specific about under what conditions must be met to allow them. Jill asked why schools can ban weapons, but the library would be unable to. Kim answered that Washington is an open carry state. The library is a public space, and unlike some other public spaces, it is not specifically called out in the RCW. Barbara added that there have been some bills proposed recently that would prohibit weapons in libraries and parks.

VIII. Director's Report

Barbara gave updates on a few primary projects. The first workshop for leadership with Nash Consulting is scheduled for October 12th. Administration will be contracting with the HR Consulting Firm One Digital who will provide assistance in the recruiting of an HR Director and provide support on benefits, FMLA, and other related matters. Barbara has continued to work with legal counsel on an MOU for Friends groups. The Friends of the Winthrop Library has given great feedback on that developing MOU. Barbara is developing a survey for branch staff to solicit feedback on what is working well with Friends groups and what could use improvement.

IX. Facilities Improvement Plan

Kim spoke briefly to a recent email received by a patron related to STEM equipment and gave the board an update on the current assessment of STEM programming taking place this Fall. Jim asked when it is anticipated that this assessment would be done. Kim said the department is hoping to have it done in the next month or two.

Kim gave a rundown of the efforts that have been made to date to communicate the recently board approved facility improvement plan. This has included:

- In depth meeting with Area Managers to explain the plan
- Virtual meeting with department managers and supervisors
- 3 live sessions for all staff and 1 recorded session
- 30 location specific meetings with Kim, Tim, Area Manager, and Branch Librarian
- Held 2nd Values Workshop with Margaret Sullivan Studio with a large focus on new skill building for community interviews
- Drafted Communications and Facility Engagement job posting and Facilities Manager job posting

The next steps will be to release to staff the Community Activation Playbook provided by the Margaret Sullivan Studio. They will have the opportunity to review it in October and then take part in a 3rd workshop with that team in November. In October a message will be sent to all municipalities, building owners, and Friends group to announce the plan and invite them to meet with members of the NCW Libraries team. A press release will follow those letters to stakeholders and then the Facilities Manager and Communications Manager jobs will be posted.

Kim closed by notifying the board that the Friends of the Wenatchee Library fundraised for a mural on the west end of the building and the public will be getting a chance to vote on the final 3 renderings of the design. Kim invited the board to partake in the voting.

X. August Financials

Mike reviewed the August end of month financials with the board. He let the board know that the Chelan Treasurer notified the district that they have not completed accruing interest due to some difficulties with Eden. He pointed out that the district received revenue in the e-rate line item. This is more than budgeted because the district had not been receiving the distribution over the last few years. Mike reminded the board that the second half of property tax revenue will be captured in the October and November financial statements. Contracting cities are all paid at 50% of anticipated revenue and new statements will go out to the contracting cities within the next month for the payments due in the second half of the year.

On the expenditure side Mike pointed out that the salary and wages area of the budget is underbudget by about 7.2%. This is largely due to a number of full-time positions that are unfilled at the administrative office. Vacancies in frontline staff in the branches have been able to be filled fairly quickly. Benefits are also underspent by 6.6%. Mike predicts that the personnel budget will be underspent at year end by around \$700,000.

Mike reported that Line 18 Admin-Professional Services is trending high. This is due to some higher use of legal services. Library Books and Materials remains an area of underspending. Mike and Barbara are meeting monthly with the Collections Manager to determine how and where to spend more. There is only so much physical space in which to house new print materials. This area is being looked at closely in the 2022 budget.

The expense for Postage (Line 126) is an area that was increased for the 2021 budget but will likely be dropped back down for the 2022 budget. Training and Travel are also underspent due to most trainings remaining online and the inability to do large in-house, in-person trainings.

Mike concluded by noting that bottom line total expenses are at 53% of budget. If all expenditures could track perfectly with the budget plan, we would expect to be at 66% of the annual budget.

Mike reminded the board that no new expenditures are being realized out of the Strategic Initiative Fund. Future expenditures in this area will be tied to the Facilities Improvement Fund and the board will approve those expenditures as more detail emerges for specific projects.

XI. 2022 Budget Update

Next month Mike will bring a budget adjustment to the board. Mike told the board that the district cannot legally receive more tax money than what the board approved in the budget adoption resolution. Mike also commented on the anticipated revenue for 2022. The housing market and new construction is looking strong, and Mike anticipates approximately a \$600,000 increase in revenue, which should help cover projected increases in Personnel and Benefits.

Mike let the board know that there is speculation that Confluence Health and Premera have resolved negotiation disputes. The Finance team is continuing to do due diligence in looking at other health care insurance options to ensure the best option possible is being provided to staff. Mike said that the renewal for medical insurance came back, and it is a large increase. The first

public reading of the 2022 budget will happen at the November Board Meeting.

XII. Branch Report

Tim reviewed the new Lucky Day collection that has been piloted at six branches. The response from the public has been overwhelmingly positive. The new collection encourages drop in browsing at the branch and provides every branch with a small collection of the most popular new titles in Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction, and DVDs. The program will be rolled out at all 30 branches in October. The Area Managers have been working with branch staff on adjusting open hours based on usage and opportunities for better staffing efficiencies. New hours will be implemented at branches on a localized basis as branches are ready to transition. Tim also reported to the board the work that is being done to enforce the updated state masking mandate as well as understand how to comply with ADA requirements that would apply to patrons unable to wear a mask. Lastly, Tim let the board know that the Bookmobile teams will be using the fall months to evaluate how the service is used, reconnecting with accounts that have used the service in the past, and making some adjustments to operational practices.

XII. IT Report

Aaron shared with the board that the majority of IT's focus has been on preparation for the plan to migrate to the Microsoft environment. Aaron shared the IT list of active projects and noted that the breakdown of projects is the same as last month. There are several larger projects that will take some time to complete.

VII. Announcements

Kathleen asked for any announcements. There were none.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Allstot, Chairwoman

Katherine Meade, Secretary

