

North Central Washington Libraries  
Board Minutes

October 21, 2021

**I. Call to Order:**

Kathleen Allstot called to order the October meeting of the NCW Libraries Board of Trustees at 1:04 PM October 21, 2021. The meeting was held as a Zoom teleconference.

**II. Attendees:**

The following persons attended via Zoom: Board Members Kathleen Allstot, Katherine Meade, Denise Sorom, Nancy Spurgeon, Lisa Karstetter, and Jill Sheley. Barbara Walters, Executive Director; Kim Neher, Deputy Director; Mike Githens, Director of Finance; Aaron Floyd, Director of IT; Tim Dillman, Executive Assistant.

**Guests:**

Sarah Fletcher, Library Systems Manager  
Erin McCool, Legal Counsel-Ogden, Murphy, Wallace

**III. Consent Agenda:**

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

- a. October Meeting Agenda
- b. Minutes of the September 16<sup>th</sup> regular board meeting
- c. Payroll & Vouchers
  - i. September Payroll for \$519,528.77 and Benefits for \$184,701.28
  - ii. September Accounts Payable for \$298,905.93
  - iii. Staff Reports

**Denise moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.**

**Lisa seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

Denise mentioned that on the Summer Library Program it would be good to know the year-to-year changes in participation. She asked if the district looks at participation numbers versus the cost of the program. Kim said that the Service Manager team does track costs from event to event. This year the costs were tracked for the take home kits. Denise shared that it would be nice to get to a consistent dashboard report on the standard metrics the district tracks and determine what an appropriate price per participant should be. Kathleen asked Kim how the Service Managers felt about the Summer Library Program this year. Kim said they were a little underwhelmed. As they start planning for next year's program they have researched and budgeted for both a fully virtual and a fully in-person summer library program which they feel will provide a better experience if in-person gatherings are still limited.

**IV. Resolution 21-01- Establishing a Gift Acceptance and Naming Policy**

Kathleen explained that the board had already approved the language in the policy at the September 2021 meeting. A resolution had not been prepared at that time so a motion would formally adopt the new policy.

**Jill moved to adopt the Gift Acceptance and Naming Policy.**

**Nancy Seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**V. Resolution 21-02-Updating the Internet Usage Policy**

Aaron shared with the board that the changes discussed at the September meeting had been incorporated in the new draft. Aaron clarified that both wired and wireless devices are captured by using the term ‘networks’ throughout the policy. Kathleen pointed out that in item number four, bullet point 1, she believed the district may still be leaving too much room for discrepancy. For instance, the current state does not capture use of the district’s network in the parking lot. Aaron said that he agreed and could draft some language to correct that. Jill asked how it is practical to enforce this policy. Aaron answered that enforcement is done via routing and filtering which is done centrally. Jill asked if the district does that, and Aaron answered yes. Kathleen asked what is done if we see a patron trying to get around that filtering. Kim said that when the policy is broke, the patron is trespassed.

The board decided to table action on the resolution until later in the meeting to allow Aaron time to draft new language for Item 4, bullet 1.

**Later in the meeting Denise moved to approve Resolution 21-02 with replacement language for Item 4, bullet 1, which now read:**

**“Use any computing device located within NCW Libraries *or in its networks* for any illegal activity...”**

**Jill seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**VI. Resolution 21-03- Updating the Code of Conduct**

Kim presented the updated draft of the Code of Conduct which includes new guidance from legal counsel. Kim told the board that the library is unable to limit visible guns but can limit visible blades. The legal team has counseled that there is a slight risk with including the word sword, as the law is not clear on the constitutionality of prohibiting swords. Kim shared that library administration is comfortable with including this slight risk. The legal team provided the suggested language, and they are also comfortable with the risk. Kim clarified for the board that the updated policy also adopts language to specify the need to follow weapon laws of Washington State.

**Jill moved to adopt Resolution 21-03 Amending the Code of Conduct.**

**Lisa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **VI. Resolution 21-04- Updating the Employee Classification Policy**

Mike explained to the trustees that the primary change that is being proposed to the Employee Classification Policy is to add a section (Section 1.6) related to differential pay. Previously, there was only language related to the Bilingual Differential. Library administration is proposing adding differential pay for a Library Assistant Person in Charge differential. This would allow administration to provide a two dollar per hour differential to more fairly compensate Library Assistants any time they are working in a library branch as the sole employee.

**Nancy moved to adopt Resolution 21-04 Updating the Employee Classification Policy.**

**Denise seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **VII. Executive Report**

Barbara shared with the board that the leadership development work with Nash Consulting is now underway. The 1<sup>st</sup> leader training was held on October 12<sup>th</sup> in Wenatchee. At the end of the training Mike Nash reviewed the results of an employee survey that was sent to all staff. Barbara began her executive coaching with Mike Nash. She shared that a focus of the coaching has been on providing clear and direct communication and clear and direct feedback for staff. Jill asked who attended the training on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Barbara shared that the five days of training will be for all leaders in the organization, including all executive team members, managers, and supervisors. Barbara added that the executive team had an initial meeting with Mike Nash to talk about team building and setting priority goals based on feedback received from the staff survey. Denise asked if there is a plan to communicate back the survey results to staff. Barbara replied that the results were shared with all the leaders who attended the training and were forwarded to all staff via email after the training.

Barbara provided the board a list summarizing branch staffing additions over the 2021 budget year. The sheet showed an overall FTE increase of 6.24 spread across 14 branches. Denise commented that it looked like many of these FTE increases and new hires are scheduled to start before the beginning of 2022. She commented that it is exciting to see this investment in branch staffing. Denise said she hope library administration can share this information with staff. Barbara agreed, saying Mike and she intended to hold some 2022 budget open houses for staff and want to celebrate this information. Barbara went on to share that an HR Generalist has been hired and will start November 1<sup>st</sup>. Barbara also updated the board that several candidates have applied for the HR Director opening. Kathleen asked if there is a timeline for hiring the HR Director. Mike responded that he and Barbara are working with One Digital (HR Consulting firm) and looking at how to get the word out more about the position.

Barbara asked Mike to give an update to the board on the status of the new HRIS system. Mike told the board that the library is on track to go live with UKG on December 16<sup>th</sup>. The first pay date out of the new system will be January 10<sup>th</sup>. Mike added that the HRIS will also help with the process of recruitment and onboarding as candidates will apply for positions through the system. Training for managers and staff on the new system will take place in late November and early December.

Mike also shared that open enrollment for benefits will be starting in November. Mike shared that the library got a 4% reduction in the renewal rate due to high staff involvement in the wellness program. Mike is scheduling virtual benefits fairs for staff to meet with benefit

providers and get their questions answered. This year the library will add a flexible spending account option for staff which will allow staff to set aside a predetermined amount of money pre-tax to be used on copays and deductibles.

## **VII. Facilities Improvement Plan**

Kim expanded on the written report that she provided to the board. She shared 5 candidates will be interviewed for the Communications and Engagement Manager position in early November. Initial meetings with cities and building owners related to the Facility Improvement Plan are scheduled throughout the first week of November and through the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of December to explain the project and the timeline and field any questions they may initially have. In the month of October, Kim, and other members of the NCW Libraries team, had the first meeting with city staff from Coulee City.

Kim updated the board on the Brewster Prototype Project. A team of staff have been organized to help facilitate the project. The team from Margaret Sullivan Studio will be visiting Brewster the final week of October and Brewster Librarian Daniel Blanchard has helped plan and schedule several events and visits with community stakeholders over a 3-day visit.

23 applications have been received for the Facilities Manager position. Kim is planning to reach out to some local contacts as well to raise awareness of the job.

Denise asked if the library plans to use the same design firm for all the branch refresh projects. Kim said the RFP will likely be for one overarching design firm, but that firm may have 2-3 smaller local firms with which they work. Kim added that in addition to the design firm, she would like to put out an RFP for any vendor that can do overarching project details, such as a shelving or furniture vendor.

## **VIII. Financial Report**

Mike notified the board that the state audit of the 2020 fiscal year is about to begin. He shared the entrance letter from the State Auditor's Office.

Mike reviewed the financial information from September 2020. Year-to-date revenue is at 59% for the year. Mike shared this is just what should be expected. For the expenses, the personnel budget will be underspent at year's end. Mike told the board that he has spent much time on improving projections for the personnel expenses in the 2022 budget to ensure spending is more in line with what is budgeted.

Mike shared that September was a typical month. The spending for the Summer Library Program was at 84% of budget. The budget for supplies is at a healthy level and the library is not experiencing much trouble getting supplies in. Under facilities, the library is seeing increases in fuel, and continuing to try to make necessary small equipment purchases for branches. Mike notified the board that he is planning to purchase 2 new compressors for the distribution center HVAC which will be a large expense.

Mike summarized his report, saying that expenses are at 59.6% of budgeted. If all spending was equally dispersed, spending should be at 75%.

Mike showed the board the balance of all district funds. End of September balances are at \$18,802,586.68 and everything is balanced and tied to the Chelan County Treasurer.

**IX. Resolution 21-05- Amending the 2021 Budget**

Mike notified the board that the resolution does not affect the levy rate. The cause for adjusting the 2021 budget is to allow the district to collect additional tax revenues that are being realized due to tax payments that are realized when properties are sold and due to new construction. The board is only allowed to collect up to the amount budgeted and must have the ability to collect back taxes and any changes in revenue during the year, otherwise that additional revenue would have to be refunded. While amending the budget to allow for additional tax collection, the resolution will also account for a decrease in the investment revenue line item.

**Nancy moved to adopt Resolution 21-05 amending the 2021 budget.**

**Denise seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**X. 2022 Budget**

Mike reminded the board that last year the district had to state a substantial need for the 1% levy rate increase due to the implicit price deflator. In 2022 this will not be necessary due to inflation. Administration will be recommending to the board to take the full 1% levy rate increase. Mike shared that he is seeing phenomenal property value increases and robust new construction. Mike shared that the revenue for property tax revenue at this point represents a \$543,362 increase in tax revenue for a total revenue of \$14,879,582, a 3.79% increase from the 2021 budget.

**XI. Branch Report**

Tim introduced Sarah Fletcher, Library Systems Manager. Sarah has been leading a team of staff to evaluate the library's catalog system as part of Strategic Initiative Goal 6. In June, the board approved the purchase of Aspen Discovery, a discovery layer developed by Bywater Solutions that works in tandem with the current catalog to provide a better user interface and overall improved experience. This new catalog overlay launched to the staff and public on October 11<sup>th</sup>. This will become the sole user interface December 1<sup>st</sup>. Sarah took time to preview the new catalog with the trustees.

**XII. IT Report**

In the interest of time, Aaron only provided the written report on IT projects.

**XIII. Executive Session**

**Denise made a motion to move into Executive Session until 3:15 in order to review the performance of a public employee and discuss with legal counsel potential litigation against the district.**

**Nancy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Executive Session ended at 3:06 pm and the regular open public meeting resumed.

**XIV. Executive Director Compensation**

Denise shared that the executive review committee is recommending a 1.5% increase to the Executive Director's compensation, retroactive to September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Jill asked how the

1.5% recommendation was arrived at. Denise shared that until the previous year, a review process for the Executive Director was not in place. A 3% increase had been proposed and approved last year by the Human Resources Director.

**Nancy moved to approve a 1.5% increase to Executive Director compensation, effective immediately and retroactive to September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.**

**Katherine seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**XV. Ferry County Board Representation**

Kathleen let the board know that Katherine submitted a letter of resignation, and the October meeting will be her last meeting as the trustee for Ferry County. Katherine's role as secretary will have to be filled. Jim Mitchell has offered to serve as secretary for the remainder of the 2021 year.

**Katherine moved to point Jim Mitchell as the secretary of the board for the remainder of the 2021 year.**

**Jill seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:11 pm.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled on November 18, 2021 via Zoom teleconference.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathleen Allstot, Chairwoman

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Jim Mitchell, Secretary



