

North Central Washington Libraries

October 20, 2022

I. Call to Order

Denise Sorom standing in as chair for Nancy Spurgeon, called to order the October meeting of the NCW Libraries Board of Trustees at 1:03 p.m. October 20, 2022. The meeting was held in person at the NCW Libraries Board Room with an option to attend virtually.

II. Attendees

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

III. Introductions

Kim introduced Sheila Callihan, the new Human Resources Director, to the Board. Sheila shared her background with the group and that she is looking forward to her new position at the library.

IV. IT Report

The 2023 IT budget was submitted last month. Small scale projects include that all receipt printers have been updated across the organization, the Standardized Computer Deployment procedures have been updated, and some inventory items were pulled and included in the surplus sale earlier this month. In addition, the Coulee City branch received assistance in reconfiguring their desk for safety, security, and workflow. The IT Resource Policy has been successfully deployed to all staff. IT continues to work on large scale projects such as phase 2 of the Microsoft migration, as well as our email distribution group conversion for all branches.

V. Tax Increment Funding (TIF)

Barbara and Mike gave an overview of the Tax Increment Funding (TIF) as it may have an effect on library districts. TIF captures a property's appreciated value by using its increased property taxes to finance infrastructure improvements that benefit a designated area. Local jurisdictions that use TIF benefit from improved public infrastructure, increased economic development and local job growth.

The City of Wenatchee is assessing whether to create a tax-increment financing district in

The northern part of the city (see map below). This would help finance major renovations along North Wenatchee Avenue and North Miller, formerly home to the WA DOT headquarters as well as fruit warehouses lost in the 2015 Sleepy Hollow Fire.

Development creates the opportunity to increase the value of existing taxable property. The **increment** of taxes on identified properties that would have gone to other taxing agencies is instead used to pay for public projects and associated debt service for LTGO bonds. (LTGO Bonds are limited tax general obligation bonds, secured with an unlimited ad valorem tax pledge. The property tax pledge is limited by state law, the bonds are referred to then as LTGO.)

VI. Executive Director Report

Barbara reported that she attended the Public Libraries of WA conference in Spokane last month. This was their first in-person meeting since prior to the pandemic. Spokane Public Library Director, Andrew Chance hosted us at their new downtown location. Topics included Cyber Security, partnerships with tribal libraries (more details to come), and legislative updates.

VII. Consent Agenda Items

- a. October 20, 2022, Meeting Agenda
- b. Minutes of the September 23, 2022, board meeting
- c. Payroll & vouchers
 - i. September payroll for \$619,322.06 and Benefits for 208,677.97
 - ii. September Accounts Payable for 402,275.98
 - iii. Staff Reports

Kathleen moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Nancy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Approval of Security System Funding

IT is requesting that the board approve funding in the amount of \$62,982.33 to Right! Systems Inc. for a security system, which is a planned expense. This is the first of 3 phases to provide security to some of the branches, with the ultimate goal being to have this system at all of our libraries. Just 8 of the branches currently have security cameras. Implementation and spending of funds will follow the facility improvement schedule as much as possible. We are piggybacking off of a state contract in order to get the best pricing. Kim reiterated that the more we use vendors with whom the state discount is built in, the less time we spend searching for a vendor and the best chance we have of getting the best pricing.

Kathleen asked how this vendor was chosen. Aaron responded that this vendor is the only that will provide unlimited archiving for historical reference. They also provide a dedicated mobile app, lower internet bandwidth consumption, and a 10-year warranty.

Nancy confirmed with Aaron that this is a planned expense.

Nancy moved to approve the purchase of the security system.

Lisa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Financial Report

Mike reported that revenues are pretty normal for September. Approximately \$147K in property taxes was received. This amount will catch up as property taxes are paid in October. He highlighted the investment interest which is very good. Interest earned on the Facility Improvement fund was \$15K.

Expenditures:

- Personnel expenses are at 73.3%.
- Medical benefits are under expensed. A budget amendment will be brought to the Board to move money out of that budget to better spend it elsewhere.
- Public service items – supplies are over budget.
- Capacity in IT budget for expense discussed for security system.
- Overall budget September month-end budget looks good.

X. 2022 Budget Amendment #2

Mike presented the budget amendment, proposing to move \$85,449.00 from medical benefits which will be restored in the 2023 budget. The proposal is to use those funds for purposes including the exterior wraps on the bookmobiles with new logo, book drop replacements at the branches, pallet jack replacement at DC, and repair work done on the HVAC system at DC. In addition, \$19,200.00 will be used to purchase a utility terrain vehicle (UTV) for snow removal at the DC and WPL.

Kim stated that the investment in the UTV will benefit and satisfy our needs without having to depend on the city's schedule.

Nancy noted a typo on the **memo** that indicates more than the actual resolution addressed. Mike clarified that the amount of \$85,449.00 is correct, the greater amount showing on the memo to be a typo.

Denise asked for more clarification that the amount to be moved from the medical benefit budget is actually \$85,449.00. Mike again confirmed this.

Lisa moved to approve the budget amendment.

Kathleen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. 2023 Budget Presentation

Mike presented the 2023 budget outlook. There will be a formal public hearing next month with a more in-depth presentation. The forecast for revenues is approximately a 2% increase, primarily from property taxes which constitutes 96% of our revenues. Our revenue increase is not keeping up with expense increase. On the expense side, no new FTEs are projected. However, to maintain the current staffing and to bring up Library Assistant budget to account for the increase in the minimum wage will mean a significant increase to the personnel budget. Some of the personnel budget was moved to spend in other areas this year. The benefit renewal rate included a slight increase. The budget amendment reflects about a 9% increase and keeps our staffing in place. PERS amount shows a decrease to reflect a more accurate budget amount.

Some cuts were made to balance the budget. Larger cuts occurred in the Public Service budget which will be defined more at next month's meeting. Extra money was over-budgeted in some areas, and those costs have been adjusted for actual decreases in expenditures in those areas and to right size the overall budget.

XII. Reimagining Spaces

The ambitious plan to refresh our branches is moving into a new and more visible phase. Kim thanked the board and gave a brief background as to how the project has progressed to this point, first reminding them of the original goals set forth when it was approved: 1) to make a visible and impactful investment in library service to our communities; 2) to follow an engaging community centric concept design process that will build and strengthen community partnerships and increase usership of local libraries; 3) to ensure that library staff have access to high functioning spaces to make their work more efficient and their working conditions more acceptable and equitable; and 4) to designate and spend taxpayer resources equitably and sustainably, and within an appropriate timeframe.

The funds allocated have been utilized in such a way that a solid foundation has been created to move forward. Additional staff have been hired, a design firm selected, and location sequencing completed. The first cohort of branches to be refreshed will be Curlew, Entiat and Peshastin. The rest of the cohorts have been determined but are subject to change.

Kathleen asked how the team came up with the cohorts. Kim responded that there was a thorough process that included meetings with building owners, branch staff, and review of the facilities assessments and observed deficiencies. Some owners indicated that they may want to move to a new location so things may change based on timelines.

Denise asked if the order of cohorts was indicative of anything. Kim replied they are simply in alphabetical order.

Denise inquired if the work will actually begin in the first quarter of 2023. Kim said that the full contract for the designer will be presented for approval at November board meeting. Launch meetings will take place with the community stakeholders about 2 months before work begins in order to obtain contact information, and to learn how to advertise in the communities, thus making them feel involved in the project and know how the funds are being spent.

Denise inquired about the timeline for completion, to which Kim responded that it is aggressive. This will be dependent on supply chain and availability of vendors.

Pictures were included from the original RFQ. Library Forward/Forte has been selected for the design due to their experience with both large and small libraries and their availability to partner with us. The team visited a library in Spokane that was designed by the same firm to see some of the work they have done.

Kim added that before each project is launched, the board will be given a sneak peek with information about what is happening.

Next steps include approval of the contract to be presented next month, some budget items to discuss, and a standard MOU that will be drafted for building owners that offers clarity of all expectations.

XIII. Programming & Resources Report

Summer reported on the foundational work that the new Latinx Services team has begun with Claudia Bovee as the manager. To date they have visited 28 of our branches and are focusing on outreach, identifying possible community partnerships, and discovering how the bilingual populations can be better served.

Summer's focus has been strengthening organizational health. Service managers will participate in a full day training next week. Managers currently have varying degrees of education, experience, and knowledge of equity practices and how to implement them in their work. The goal of the training is to get the managers at the same starting point so they that work together move forward in the same direction.

A survey was conducted of patrons who participated in the 2022 Summer Reading Program. Of those who responded, 96% said they were likely to participate again next year. There were 1200 finishers of kids up to 11 years of age, while the number of Spanish finishers was very low, so there is much work to be done in that area. Total attendees numbered 13,000 involved in various programs.

XIV. Branch Report

Alicia shared that she is having area managers submit a report to her about what is happenings each branch on a monthly basis, and tying that back to the vision of the strategic plan. She gave some examples of work that some of the branches are doing to serve and engage people.

Other areas of focus include user experience, what is working or not working, actively listening to patrons about what they need, collaborating with community partners, and promoting information to the public. Alicia sees the importance in keeping the individuality of each branch in their own communities while still understanding that all branches operate as one district.

XV. Adjournment

Barbara mentioned that the next 2 meetings will include a public hearing due to budget items. Sharon will send an email reminder with those dates.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.


Denise Sorom (Nov 22, 2022 20:00 PST)

Denise Sorom, Presiding as Chairperson


Jim Mitchell (Dec 14, 2022 23:13 MST)

Jim Mitchell, Secretary

October_Minutes_FINAL

Final Audit Report

2022-12-15

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