

North Central Washington Libraries  
Board Minutes

November 18, 2021

**I. Call to Order:**

Kathleen Allstot called to order the November 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, 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:**

Patty Garcia, HR Generalist

**III. Consent Agenda:**

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

- a. November Meeting Agenda
- b. Minutes of the October 21 regular board meeting
- c. Minutes of the October 21 Executive Session
- d. Payroll & Vouchers
  - i. October Payroll for \$510,200.33 and Benefits for \$182,246.36
  - ii. October Accounts Payable for \$383,968.19
  - iii. Staff Reports

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

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

**IV. Financial Statement**

Mike began by pointing out that the second half of property tax payments are due in October and a portion of these show up in the October financials, but the district will see a larger amount in November and a little will trickle in in December.

Mike does not have a way to tie the October financials to the Chelan County Treasurer as the county's accounting system Eden has been down all week. Mike balanced the financials to actual expenses.

In the expense categories spending mostly leveled off. There continues to be underspending in the Personnel category which has been the trend for the year. Mike pointed out that while the Professional Services budget in the Admin budget is overspent, the overall capacity of the budget in Admin will sustain the Line 18 overage. In Public Services the Supplies line item is in line with what the district has been spending throughout the year. Mike pointed out a few other areas of note with expenses. He summarized by showing that the bottom-line year-to-date spending is at 67% of budget.

If all things were equal across the 10 months of spending year-to-date, expenses would be at 83% of budget.

Mike pointed out that there are not expenses to report for October in the Capital Fund or Strategic Initiative Fund. Mike reminded the board that no expenses should be expected at this point in the Strategic Initiative Fund as the board has approved a plan for the fund but has not approved itemized budgets for projects yet.

## **V. Public Hearing of 2022 Budget-First Reading**

Kathleen announced the start of the public hearing for the first reading of the 2022 budget. No members of the public were present.

Mike showed the board the estimated cash balance for the end of 2021. The 2021 budget had a starting cash position of \$7,156,311. The ending cash position is projected to be at \$7,129,769. Mike explained that after making all transfer outlined in the Fund Reserve Balance Policy there would be \$1,629,769 left. The district administration will be recommending carrying over reserves to support the 2022 budget.

Mike spoke to the setting of the levy rate, explaining that the board has a choice to raise property taxes 1% or not increase the levy rate and instead use reserves to fund the budget. Jill asked if the 1% is not taken does the district lose money. Mike said not necessarily. It is possible it would create banked capacity that could be collected in 2023. Mike stressed to the board that the district is consistently not spending the budget. He emphasized that he and Barbara are diligently planning to ensure the budget of 2022 gets spent.

Kathleen asked Mike if the 1% is the ad valorem tax. Mike said yes. He pointed out that if the district adopts a 1% levy increase it amounts to roughly \$500,000 in revenue. Kathleen sought clarification that if the board does not take the 1% increase, they would have roughly \$800,000 in reserve to apply to the budget. Mike said that is true.

Mike stressed that if the 1% is not taken it would be wise for the district to try to advertise that and communicate this to the public. Jim responded that he thought the board should not take the 1% and should do a press release to communicate that. Denise shared that she did not believe the board could justify taking the 1%. The board has an excess that can be applied, and it is not ethical to raise the levy rate when the budget is so underspent. Lisa agreed and added that her one concern would be to ensure that staff are being compensated fairly, and the district is remaining competitive with wages. Nancy also agreed with the comments up to this point and said it could be a way to support other taxing districts as well as members of the public who have faced hardships due to COVID.

Jill respectfully disagreed with other trustees. She shared that she has done much reading lately about the significant impact libraries can make in the areas of non-traditional services, in addition to expanding and improving facilities. She stated that adopting the 1% levy increase allows the board to continue expanding offerings and may also have the potential to increase reimbursement to the cities with which the district partners. Lisa said she agreed with Jill's comments provided there is a plan to spend the additional revenue.

Mike reminded the board that NCW Libraries cannot give more money to towns than what is outlined in contracts with the partnering cities. He also clarified with the board that the district has not been having trouble attracting candidates largely due to a good benefits package and an hourly rate that keeps the district competitive.

Jill said that she agrees with Lisa's comment. She reiterated that a plan for spending would be needed, and she believes the board and staff can think bigger about what can be done for communities. Lisa said she is fully behind that. She shared that in very rural areas the big need is to help connect people to the skills, tools, and resources they need, and libraries can be key for that. Denise said she appreciated what had been shared but stressed that she doesn't feel comfortable approving the 1% increase if the board doesn't have a plan for allocation. Implementation of the plan would be the job of Barbara's team. Nancy said she was thinking the same thing and asked Barbara how quickly the team could scale up.

Barbara shared that right now the focus is on refreshing branches. There is a need to make space in the branches for the innovative services staff are already dreaming of. Barbara said she wants to really focus on the ambitious plans the board has already approved. Barbara added that to accomplish more, staff will really need to work on building partnering relationships.

Mike reminded the board that so far, the budget has been built under the assumption that the board would adopt a 1% increase. Mike shared an outline not included in the board packet. Mike explained that whether the board adopts a 1% increase or not the levy amount will go down. Mike said the 2022 budget shows a 5.968 FTE increase over the 2021 budget. In addition, all staff would receive step increases and a cost-of-living allowance, pending board approval. The budget also includes an increase in the Library Assistant budget to allow for better coverage in branches.

Mike mentioned that the district will be able to increase some benefit offerings for staff at no cost to employees. The benefits represent 19% of the budget. Salaries and benefits are 67% of the 2022 budget. Mike noted that the 2022 budget increases the Admin Supplies budget to account for staff recognition programs. The budget also increases the Professional Services budget to cover an anticipated increase in cost in this area in 2022.

Under Public Services, there is a net increase in the supply budgets. The budget maintains Library Books and Materials at the 2021 level. The IT budget overall is increasing. The mileage budget has been increased—this area was not budgeted for in 2021. The advertising budget has been increased to account for the marketing and communication plan in 2022. Rentals and leases have been reduced to bring them more in line with actual costs. The Miscellaneous account was not budgeted for in 2021. This accounts primarily for sales and use tax. Overall, the Public Services budget in 2022 shows a net reduction of \$9,920 from 2021.

Mike pointed out to the board that the 2022 budget shows an 11.7% increase in Personnel costs.

Denise said to Barbara that she worries a little about the mindset that the district must wait on the facilities plan until new services can be provided. Barbara said that as the library staff are holding community conversations with cities, they will be asked what the community wants that the library can provide, and this will naturally expand services. Aaron mentioned that from the perspective of IT the systems are not where they need to be to expand services. The amount of time and energy needed to compensate for staff transitions is taking up bandwidth for IT.

Kathleen asked Mike what percentage of COLA is showing in the budget. Mike answered that the budget is currently set at a 3.5% COLA. Mike asked the board for more clarification on the direction they would like to go with the 1% levy rate. Nancy asked if the budget just

presented includes the 1% increase. Mike said yes, and it uses about \$300,000 from reserve to balance the budget. Denise asked Mike if the 1% were not taken what would need to be changed. Mike said that this would decrease the tax revenue by roughly \$500,000 and more reserve money would have to be applied. Nancy asked if excess money could be put into the facility improvement plan. Kim told the board that the facility improvement plan estimates spending approximately \$83/square foot. But construction costs are going up. In addition, 5 out of the 8 communities that have been spoken to about the plan have expressed interest in increasing square footage which increases the districts costs for maintenance reimbursements.

Nancy shared that after the budget presentation, scaling up does not sound as intimidating. Nancy spoke about grant funding that will be available for “Play and Learn” groups, and that this may be an easy way to increase services. Jill said she believes that the 1% should be taken and the board needs to challenge the staff to creatively spend the revenue. Denise said she wanted to continue to stress that the district needs a clear plan for spending as the board has not been spending the tax it collects.

Kathleen closed the public hearing.

## **VI. Executive Report**

Barbara walked the board through the Executive Report included in the board packet. The report included an update on the work that library leadership is doing with Nash Consulting, as well as an update on recruitment efforts for the HR Director.

## **VII. Facility Improvement Plan Update**

Kim gave the board an update on progress being made on the Facility Improvement Plan. The report included an update on the hiring for the Communications and Engagement Manager and the Facilities Manager. Four meetings were held with City officials to explain the plan, and eleven more have been scheduled. A prototype project in Brewster is well underway. A working group of NCW Libraries staff has been recruited, and a 3-day community engagement visit was held in Brewster at the end of October which included staff from Margaret Sullivan Studio.

## **VIII. IT Report**

Aaron told the board that the IT department has reprioritized ticket work. An influx of new and additional tickets has consumed a lot of IT time. Kathleen asked what types of requests IT gets. Aaron responded that it is everything that is IT or internet related aside from printers.

This month the department made progress on getting a traffic counter set up at the George Library. This had not been done since the branch moved to a new building.

Aaron shared that the Microsoft Project is moving at a crawl. Area Managers are being transitioned into the new environment, as well as any new onboarding staff.

The IT department is contracting with SimplePowerIT to have a third-party cyber security audit done.

Aaron presented to the board a projected realignment of print services. The implementation of this plan would not begin until the current contracts with Kelly Connect expire.

Aaron shared with the board that IT has used 57% of their budget. Aaron has worked on renegotiating contracts with vendors on under utilized projects. High expense projects initiated prior to Aaron's hire have been put on hold. In addition, IT has seen significant delays in acquiring products due to manufacturing hold ups.

Aaron closed his report by mentioning the collaboration that AMs are providing IT as systems are improved and projects are moved forward.

**IX. Branch Report**

Tim gave a branch report that included information on new service committees, indoor programming, and the Area Managers' participation in the Nash Leadership training. Tim also shared with the board the development of the new IRIS website database for recorded oral histories and regional success stories. This was a joint effort between IRIS and NCW Libraries. The site will go live to the public at the start of the year and resources will be developed for teachers, museums, and other educators to help get the most out of this resource.

**X. Announcements**

Tim shared an update on the Ferry County trustee vacancy. Tim spoke with the county commissioners, and they agreed to have NCW Libraries handle advertising and recruitment on the position. Once a qualified pool of candidates has been received, the board will have the opportunity to recommend candidates to the commissioners for final appointment.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 pm.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled on Thursday, December 16, 2001. The meeting will be held via Zoom teleconference.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathleen Allstot, Chairwoman

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Jim Mitchell, Secretary

# Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF WASHINGTON } SS  
COUNTY OF CHELAN }

## Public Notice

NCW Libraries will hold a public hearing to review the proposed 2022 budget and set the 2022 levy rate. This public hearing will take place on November 18th at 1:00pm. The public may attend via Zoom teleconference. Budget Documents will be available for review 24 hours prior to the public hearing at [ncwlibraries.org](http://ncwlibraries.org). To attend the hearing, please email your name and address to [tdillman@ncwlibraries.org](mailto:tdillman@ncwlibraries.org) to receive the Zoom log-in information.

The Wenatchee World is a legal newspaper published in the Chelan County, Washington, and approved as such by the Superior Court of said County and State. Serving the counties of Chelan, Douglas, Grant & Okanogan.

That said newspaper was regularly issued and circulated on those dates.

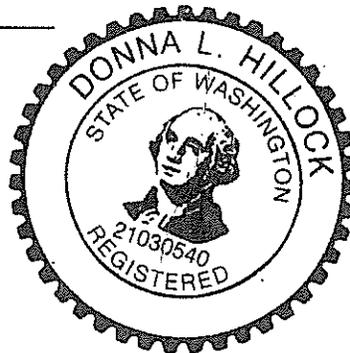
November 09, 2021, November 16, 2021

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 16th day of November 2021.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public, Chelan County, Washington

My commission expires: August 23, 2021

8/30/25



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Public Notice

Payment Reference:

NCW Libraries will hold a public hearing to review the proposed 2022 budget and set the 2022 levy rate. This public hearing will take place on November 18th at 1:00pm. The public may attend via Zoom teleconference. Budget Documents will be available for review 24 hours prior to the public hearing at ncwlibraries.org. To attend the hearing, please email your name and address to [tdillman@ncwlibraries.org](mailto:tdillman@ncwlibraries.org) to receive the Zoom log-in information.

Total: 33.94  
Tax: 0.00  
Net: 33.94  
Prepaid: 0.00

**Total Due 33.94**

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# Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF WASHINGTON

SS.

County of Okanogan

(2021-420 Nov. 10, 17)  
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Published by Omak Okanogan County Chronicle.

The undersigned, being duly sworn on oath, deposes and says that she is the principal clerk of the Omak-Okanogan County Chronicle, a weekly newspaper, that she is duly authorized to make this affidavit; that said newspaper is a legal newspaper and has been approved as a legal newspaper by order of the Superior Court in the county in which it is published and it is now and has been for more than six months prior to the date of publications hereinafter referred to, published in the English language continuously as a weekly newspaper in Omak, Okanogan County, Washington, and it is now and during all of said time was printed in an office maintained at 618 Okoma Drive, the place of publication of said newspaper. That the annexed is a true copy of

11/10/21

11/17/21

and that such newspaper was regularly distributed to its subscribers during all of said period. The full amount of the fee charged for the foregoing publication is the sum of \$55.88.



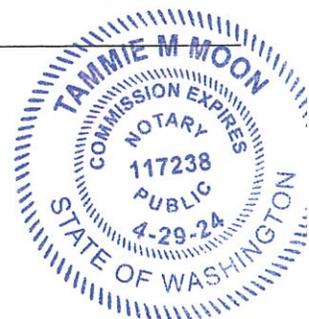
Principal Clerk

Subscribed and sworn to before me 11/17/2021



Notary Public in and for the State of Washington

Residing at Okanogan



# STATE OF WASHINGTON – GRANT COUNTY

No. 22309

## PUBLIC HEARING

NCW Libraries will hold a public hearing to review the proposed 2022 budget and set the 2022 levy rate. This public hearing will take place on November 18, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. The public may attend via Zoom teleconference.

*Budget Documents will be available for review 24-hours prior to the public hearing at [ncwlibraries.org](http://ncwlibraries.org).*

To attend the hearing, please email your name and address to [tdillman@ncwlibraries.org](mailto:tdillman@ncwlibraries.org) to receive the Zoom log-in information.

11/8, 11/11, 11/15, 11/18

## Affidavit of Publication

The undersigned, on oath, states that he/she is an authorized representative of the Grant County Journal, a semi-weekly newspaper, which is a legal newspaper of general circulation, and it is now and has been for more than six months prior to the date of publication hereinafter referred to, published in the English language continuously in Ephrata, Grant County, Washington, and it is now and during all of said time, was printed in an office maintained at the aforesaid place of publication of this newspaper.

The Grant County Journal was on the 2nd day of July 1941, approved as a legal newspaper by the Superior Court of Grant County.

The notice in the exact form annexed, was published in regular issues of the Grant County Journal, which was regularly distributed to its subscribers during the below stated period.

The annexed notice, a

Public Hearing

was published 11/8, 11/11, 11/15, 11/18

The amount of the fee charged for the foregoing publication is the sum of

\$ 90.00, which amount has been paid in full.

Subscribed and sworn to before me on

November 18, 2021

Notary Public for the State of Washington, residing in Ephrata

# Ferry County View

The Ferry County View  
PO Box 1117  
Republic, WA 99166  
(509) 775-2425

NCW Libraries  
16 N. Columbia  
Wenatchee WA 98801

Re: PUBLIC HEARING: 2022 BUDGET

## Affidavit of Publication

State of Washington  
County of Ferry

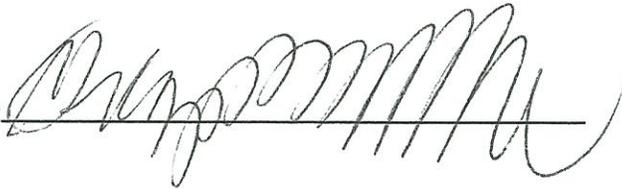
The undersigned on oath states that he is an authorized representative of The Ferry County View, a newspaper of general circulation, published weekly in Ferry County, State of Washington. The Ferry County View has been approved as a legal newspaper by order of the Superior Court of Ferry County.

This notice, in the exact form annexed, was published in the regular and entire issue of said paper and distributed to its subscribers during all of the said period.

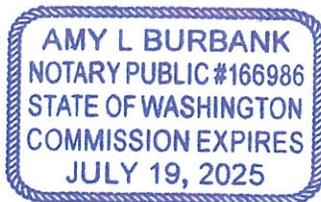
Publication Date(s): 11/10/2021 11/17/2021

Gregory S. Sheffield, Publisher

Signature



Subscribed and sworn to before me on 11-23-21 (date)



  
(Notary Signature)

Notary Public in and for the State of Washington, Ferry County, residing at Republic.

My appointment expires: 7-19-25

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### Legal Notice

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