

North Central Washington Libraries**June 20, 2024****I. Call to Order**

Denise Sorom (Chair Pro Tem) called to order the June 2024 meeting of the NCW Libraries Board of Trustees at 1:03 p.m. The meeting was held in person at the NCW Libraries Board Room with an option to attend virtually.

II. Attendees

Attending Board members included Jill Sheley, Melva Calloway, Denise Sorom, and Nancy Spurgeon. Also in attendance were Barbara Walters, Executive Director; Kim Neher, Deputy Director; Mike Githens, Interim Director of Finance (attending virtually); Summer Hayes, Associate Director of Programs and Resources; Aaron Floyd, Director of IT; and Amanda Lawson, Facilities Manager.

III. Public Comment:

A public comment from Chelan County resident Terry LaBrue was read into the record. (The public comment is included as addendum A.)

IV. Consent Agenda Items

- a. June Meeting Agenda
- b. Minutes of the May 16, 2024 Board meeting
- c. Payroll & vouchers
 - i. May payroll for \$643,618.10 and Benefits for \$ 225,924.90
 - ii. May Accounts Payable for \$841,983.24

Melva moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Nancy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Financial Report

Mike discussed revenue, noting that as of the end of May, NCW Libraries had collected 54% of property taxes, including remittance from the other 4 counties. He also highlighted the DNR PILT, which exceeded budget expectations at 118%. Jill asked for clarification on DNR PILT, and Mike explained that this represents federal payments to offset property tax losses from non-taxable federal lands.

Regarding expenses, Mike provided updates on the personnel budget and administrative services, highlighting that 36.5% of the total budget has been spent year-to-date.

WPL Fund 646: Mike reported that the fund earned \$40K in interest and mentioned a minor recording error that was corrected.

Denise asked about the investment strategy for this fund, noting the current market stability, but expressing concern about what would happen if it declined. Mike responded that the investments are governed by state

investment guidelines, emphasizing that they are fixed income and liquid.

Jill asked for a high-level 2025 budget timeline. Mike responded that Barbara and he are currently working on personnel costs, and they plan to present preliminary numbers to the Executive Leadership Team in July for feedback. He added that they aim to draft a budget by August or September, with plans to present it for a first reading to the board in October.

VI. Executive Director Report

Barbara highlighted her written report, which detailed outreach efforts to the Quincy Rotary, notification of a Tax Increment Finance Area proposed by the Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority, and a petition from Ferry County residents regarding the Republic Library's Pride display and facebook posts. Jill inquired about the protection of our displays under board policy. Barbara explained that this was covered by several policies, including the Collection Development Policy and our Display Policy. Kim noted that we have several operational procedures outlining our approach to the celebrations and initiatives that the district participates in, including priority audiences that were developed by Summer and her team. Additionally, Kim noted a decrease in responses to Pride Month newsletter communications, from 20 last year to 2 this year. Jill suggested that the board should consider a special policy or statement to support Barbara and the staff in responding to concerns about their efforts to reach underserved and marginalized individuals. Denise cautioned about the phrasing of such a policy, which could be reversed under future leadership. Barbara mentioned that NCW Libraries already has internal processes in place to support staff. Jill requested Barbara to further research and report back to the board in July. Nancy asked that we work with organizations who are already doing this work, like NCW Equity Alliance.

George Updated Building Maintenance and Use agreement

Barbara presented updates to the George Building Use and Maintenance Agreement. Melva inquired about staffing plans for the library, mentioning the vacant Librarian position in George. Barbara replied that Library Assistants would be used temporarily.

Melva then moved to approve the George Building Maintenance and Use Agreement as presented, with Jill seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Reimagining Spaces Update

Amanda provided an update on the Reimagining Spaces Project, detailing progress at George, Cashmere, Ephrata, Soap Lake, Wenatchee, Moses Lake shelving, Peshastin, and Royal City. She also discussed the Omak project, mentioning that we were waiting to hear if we received additional funding from the Department of Commerce. Jill questioned why NCW Libraries applied for funding for Omak. Kim explained that it would allow us to undertake projects beyond the scope of NCW Libraries' funding, such as creating additional public spaces and structural changes. Denise praised Amanda and her team's work and asked how the board could advocate.

Amanda emphasized the importance of board supporting the project by setting aside the Reimagining Spaces fund. Kim suggested engaging with local legislators to advocate for NCW Libraries projects that were submitted to the Department of Commerce Library Capital Improvement Grant.

VIII. Community Libraries Report:

Kim reported on the ELT's restructuring since Alicia's departure. Kim will directly supervise the Senior Branch Leadership Team, Sheila will provide this team with support regarding any personnel matters, and Summer will provide this team with support related to programs, partnerships, collections, and Koha.

IX. Resolution 24-07

Kim also discussed SB5444 prohibiting all weapons from public libraries. A related update to the Code of Conduct policy was presented to the board for review and approval. Jill asked if we had run the policy by our legal council and Kim responded that yes, we had.

Melva moved to approve Resolution 24-07-Amending the Code of Conduct Policy. Nancy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Public Services, Programs and Resources Report:

Summer presented an overview of NCW Libraries' services for incarcerated patrons. Jill inquired about research on the impact of libraries on incarcerated individuals. Summer noted the challenge of isolating the specific impact but emphasized the library's role within the broader scope. The Service Managers then presented on the 2024 Summer Library Program (SLP), with Abby, Alicia, and Jessica outlining activities for children, teens, and adults. Alicia highlighted goals for engaging LatinX communities, citing historically low participation rates. Jill asked about our baseline data, and Summer answered that comprehensive data collection only began last year but we did see an increase in Latinx participation in 2023.

Jill asked if we have considered partnering with social services. Summer replied that yes, we work with several organizations, including Advance NCW to provide peer navigator support in the Moses Lake location, and we regularly host pop-up events at our libraries with public health and social service agencies.

XI. IT Report

Aaron outlined the IT team's current priorities. These include prioritizing cyber security across our IT infrastructure through training and improvements, and updating our public access computer to the Windows environment.

XII. Board Discussion:

None.

XIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:26pm.

Denise Sorom, Chair Pro Tem

Jill Sheley, Secretary