

**North Central Washington Libraries****July 18, 2024****I. Call to Order**

Chair Kathleen Allstot called to order the July 2024 meeting of the NCW Libraries Board of Trustees at 1:00 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, Nancy Churchill, and Kathleen Allstot. Also in attendance were Barbara Walters, Executive Director; Kim Neher, Deputy Director; Mike Githens, Interim Director of Finance, Summer Hayes, Associate Director of Programs and Resources; Aaron Floyd, Director of IT; and Tim Dillman, Executive Assistant. Nick Husted, Area Manager for the West Region, also attended.

**III. Public Comment:**

Okanogan County resident Nicole Bangerter made a public comment. Ms. Bangerter said she was attending in support of the public comment Melanie Gillespie was about to make. She also expressed appreciation that an American flag decal had been added to the door at the Okanogan Library.

Okanogan County resident Melanie Gillespie provided a public comment. Ms. Gillespie expressed disagreement with the placement of a display of banned books in the Okanogan Library. The display included books that Ms. Gillespie found to have content too mature for younger audiences, and she requested that those titles be displayed in sections of the library geared toward adults and not children.

**IV. Consent Agenda Items**

- a. July Meeting Agenda
- b. Minutes of the June 20, 2024 Board meeting
- c. Payroll & vouchers
  - i. June Payroll for \$635,464.28 and Benefits for \$226,680.06
  - ii. June Accounts Payable for \$537,180.27

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

**V. Annual Financial Report for 2023-Mike Githens**

Mike reminded the board that the State Auditor's Office requires district administration to provide and review the annual report submitted to the SAO. This report summarizes all revenue and expenses for 2023. NCW Libraries has a public accountant review the report and certify it. This report is available to the public as an unaudited statement.

## VI. Financial Report

Mike reviewed the end of June financials with the board, starting with the revenue. Current property taxes collected account for 54% of what was budgeted. Mike pointed out that the intergovernmental revenue is not revenue that comes in evenly throughout the year, but there is no concern with meeting budget in this line item. The charges for services looks good, and the investment interest continues to show very strong performance.

In the General Fund expenses Mike reminded the board that if all expenses hit each month equally the board could expect to see year to date totals equaling 50% of budgeted expenses. The Admin Professional Services line item is high, largely due to the charges for the annual audit. June saw a slight bump up under Facilities due to the first half of the year's payment to cities under the terms of our Building Use and Maintenance Agreements. Mike reviewed other line items, and commented to the board that department managers are doing much better this year at spending in line with the budget. Jill asked if Mike is seeing anything that concerns him, and Mike answered that he is not. Some line items are a bit high, but overall the budget looks healthy.

WPL Fund 646: Mike reported that this fund, which covers the WPL phase 2 project, is winding down. He expects it should be pretty much spent down at the end of July. The last payment from the Department of Commerce grant has been received.

Fund 647-Reimagining Spaces: Mike said that a lot of spending is coming through with several projects underway. The investment interest on this fund continues to be quite strong.

## VII. Resolution 24-08- Amending the 2024 Budget

Mike explained that this resolution will amend the 2024 budget to account for the grant funding that NCW Libraries received for the George Library relocation and show the expense related to that project. This is a budget neutral change. The resolution also trues up the Organization of Materials line item so that the district does not overspend in that category.

Mike also mentioned that at the time of budget adoption, the district did not have final property value estimates and had to base the budget on estimates. The resolution will true up the budget to actual property values which impacts the projected revenue to be received from contracting cities.

Under the Endowment Fund, the resolution will recognize newly acquired donor funds and expenditures.

Under the Capital Fund, the resolution captures the money that was paid to the WPL project for work that qualifies as capital expenditure.

**Nancy moved to adopt Resolution 24-08-Amending the 2024 Budget. Melva seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

## VIII. Executive Director Report

Barbara shared a high level timeline for development of the 2025 budget. She also updated the board on the progress of recruitment for a Finance Manager position. First round of interviews have been completed and the second round will be completed by the end of July.

## IX. Reimagining Spaces Report

Kim gave a word of thanks to all of the staff and departments that worked so hard to get the George Library moved on an accelerated timeline. Community Engagement has commenced for Cashmere's Reimagining

Spaces project. The Moses Lake Library shelving install will begin next Monday, and the Curlew remodel project is tentatively scheduled to start in early September.

**X. Resolution 24-09: Adopting a Reimaging Spaces project budget for Bridgeport**

Jill asked Kim for a reminder of why the project budgeting is done this way. Kim responded that the project budget resolutions provide board authorization to the Executive Director to authorize any single expense that may exceed the \$50,000 standard limit that is typically set by the Purchasing Policy.

**Melva moved to approve Resolution 24-09. Nancy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**XI. Resolution 24-10: Adopting a Reimaging Spaces project budget for Oroville**

**Melva moved to approve Resolution 24-10. Nancy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**XII. Community Libraries Report**

Kim shared that it has been a delight to supervise the Senior Branch Leadership Team in the interim while the district recruits the next Associate Director of Community Libraries. Kim then introduced Area Manager Nick Husted who provided a presentation on the work of his branch staff in the West Region.

**XIII. IT Report**

Aaron spoke to IT's focus on the topic of cybersecurity. IT is in the blind test phase of cybersecurity training for staff, and will roll out some video training modules in the Fall.

IT is still working on updating the district's public computing environment to Microsoft. Gerge will serve as a pilot site for this.

**XIV. HR Report**

Sheila reported that the top seven candidates for the Associate Director of Community Libraries were interviewed this week. The district plans to bring up to four finalists in for a second round of in-person interviews.

For the Finance Manager position, the district had seven total applicants and narrowed the pool to three for first round interviews. The second round will take place this week.

Kathleen asked what the difference between the Finance Manager position and the Director of Finance position is. Mike responded that the hiring of a manager will allow the district to bring in someone with finance accounting skills who can grow into their capability to work on budgeting and other high level finance skills. In the short term the manager will review accounts payable, review payroll, and oversee other work done by the finance team.

Sheila continued her report, sharing that the bookmobile staffing model had be reorganized with one of the current Bookmobile Associates being promoted to the Bookmobile Lead.

Sheila closed by sharing that staff began using Bamboo HR for timekeeping yesterday. The first payroll will be run out of the sytem on August 9th.

**XV. Programs and Resources**

Summer reported to the board about the district's recent partnership with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to provide a citizenship naturalization ceremony. The closest USCIS office is in Yakima and in the greater Wenatchee area there are over 2500 people who are eligible to become citizens. This opportunity came about through NCW Libraries recent partnership with Hand in Hand Immigration Services to equip immigrants with information about how to become U.S. citizens.

**XVI. Board Discussion**

Nancy revisited the topic brought up during the public comment and also reminded the board of the comments shared by Ferry County resident Rosemary Goodwin in June. Nancy wanted to clarify that there were not any threats made related to the comment. Nancy said that the issue of displays related to the LGBTQ culture is an ongoing problem in Ferry County, particularly in the homeschooling community. Every community is different and not every community is the same as Wenatchee.

Nancy said that her community wants displays that are welcoming and inclusive to all members of the community and in this area we (NCW Libraries) are failing the community. It is failing on our strategic directions and the Ferry County Commissioners are reluctant to continue supporting the district. Nancy said she would love to see 2 years of foot traffic at the Republic Library because she suspects it has been negatively affected. Nancy acknowledge that there are gay people in the Ferry County Community but they don't need to monopolize the use of the library. Nancy stressed that she had not talked to the Librarian because that is Barbara's job.

Jill asked Barbara to report on what policy it is that speaks to how the district does outreach to the community. Barbara was not able to provide a specific policy in answer, but said that organizational values have been set to prioritize reaching out to marginalized communities and Pride Month falls under the annual monthly celebrations. Jill commented that the district is in support of all of these groups. She is not comfortable with the idea that libraries would choose one group not to welcome. When Jill hears that there are groups that are choosing not to come because they are uncomfortable she feels that this is their choice. The district's organizational value is to actively welcome everyone.

Nancy said that the district is not welcoming everyone. Jill asked how the district is not welcoming these populations. Nancy said that the materials are offensive to a large segment of the community. Nancy said that the district can welcome everyone without excluding groups. Jill asked if a segment of our population didn't want African American History month celebrated would the board honor that. Nancy said that this was an apples to oranges comparison and stressed that it is the overt displays that are the problem. She added that over 50 people in Ferry County petitioned to remove the Pride displays.

Jill said she believes the library should hold to its values of welcoming everyone. Nancy responded that she doesn't believe in that because it is the people's tax dollars supporting the library and they should get a say. Jill answered that the library is meeting their needs. Nancy said that is not true. The people are not coming in-- when we promote certain things, certain people don't feel welcome to come in. She doesn't see a problem with small changes. Jill responded that libraries are for everyone and if people are offended by Pride month not much can be done because these are normal, federally recognized observations for traditionally disenfranchised groups.

Kathleen closed by saying that as a regional library district we have a lot of variety of communities to serve, and determining the best way to do so will be an ongoing conversation.

**XVII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:44pm.

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Denise Sorom, Chair Pro Tem

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Jill Sheley, Secretary