

North Central Washington Libraries  
Board Minutes

2021 Board Retreat  
July 21, 2021 8:30 am- 3:00pm  
Wenatchee, Wa

**I. Call to Order:**

Kathleen Allstot called the board retreat to order at 8:30 am.

**II. Attendees:**

The following persons attended: Board Members Kathleen Allstot, Katherine Meade, Denise Sorom, Jim Mitchell, 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.

**III. Guests:**

Margaret Sullivan, Emily Buttner

**IV. Introductions and Agenda:**

Kim introduced Margaret Sullivan and Emily Buttner and reminded the board of the work that NCW Libraries has done to date with the Margaret Sullivan Studio. Kim gave a brief rundown of what the flow of the day would be. Margaret had everyone go around the room and give a brief introduction.

Barbara then gave a history of the library district's financial management since 2001 and how the Strategic Initiative Fund originated. Denise discussed further the development of the Strategic Initiative Fund. She further highlighted the plan for the days retreat.

**V. Overview of Margaret Sullivan's Work**

Margaret started her presentation by asking every participant to go around the room and share a thought exercise. She asked participants to picture themselves at the grand opening of one of a newly refreshed and reimagined NCW Libraries location. "What will be your talking point? What excites you about the picture in your mind?"

Margaret then gave an overview of her studio's portfolio, and the experience Margaret Sullivan Studio brings to library design. Margaret then asked trustees to share any insights or ah-ha's they had in the prereading work assigned. Several participants answered the question. The board then discussed their strategic hopes and answered the question prompt, "How might we..."

**Break- 10:00-10:07**

**VI. Financial Overview**

Mike presented on the state of the library district's finances. The presentation included a revenue projection for 2022 that forecasted a very strong revenue forecast based on a strong housing market. Mike explained to the board how Washington State's funding structure for

libraries works and explained why as property values increase the district's levy rate goes down. Mike explained to the board that within the next few years, the district will find itself with an unsustainable budget picture where the revenue collected is not enough to keep pace with obligated expenses.

Mike also reminded the board of the steps that have been taken in the last year to put the district on firm, reliable footing, primarily with the creation of a Reserve Fund Balance Policy that earmarks money each year for predictable high dollar capital replacements, contingency reserves, and general fund operating reserve.

## **VII. Experience Principles**

Margaret introduced board members to the concept of experience principles. She summarized this philosophy as putting the community member at the center of a library's design and not the book. Margaret expanded on this framework. She let the board know that this is work that she has just started with all staff at NCW Libraries and will continue through a series of four workshops.

Margaret then showcased several library systems she has worked with who have been on similar journeys. She talked about the concept of prototyping and how Margaret Sullivan Studio approaches community engagement.

## **Lunch 12:20-1:00**

## **VIII. Presentation of Facility Improvement Plan**

Kim began her presentation with a brief overview of some of the deficiencies and challenges that the district's current library spaces present.

Kim then handed out a spreadsheet with various metrics and data points that were used to consider timeline scoring when developing the facilities improvement plan. The overarching goals of the plan were discussed before moving into the various details.

Kim systematically reviewed how the money in the Strategic Initiatives Fund would be utilized to partner with city partners, make facility improvements that are based on guided feedback from community members, analyze opportunities for material handling efficiencies, and plan for contingency.

(For further plan details, please see attached presentation slides)

## **IX. July Board Meeting**

A short break was taken and then the Board proceeded to their regularly scheduled July 2021 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathleen Allstot, Chairwoman

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Katherine Meade, Secretary

