



## APPROVED MINUTES

### Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

March 19, 2019

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#### Location

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Administrative Services 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98225. (Note: "Library" refers to the Whatcom County Library System—WCLS.)

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#### In Attendance

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**Trustees:** Marvin Waschke, Chair; June Hahn, Vice Chair; Lori Jump, Board Secretary; Brad Cornwell and Erika Nuerenberg. Absent: none

**Staff:** Christine Perkins, Executive Director; Michael Cox, Deputy Director; Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and Administration; Thom Barthelmess, Youth Services Manager; Geoff Fitzpatrick, IT Services Manager; Lisa Gresham, Collection Services Manager; Darcy Riggins-Schmidt, Administrative Assistant; Debby Farmer, Blaine Library Branch Manager joined the meeting prior to break with two Blaine representatives of the Friends of the Blaine Library (FOBL): Sandra Bogen, FOBL Treasurer and Cindy Leffel, FOBL Board member.

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#### Call to Order

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Marvin determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

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#### Open Public Comment

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No public comment.

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#### Mary Kinser 10 Year Service Anniversary Recognition – Lisa Gresham

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Lisa spoke about Mary's dedication to WCLS since 2009, noting her extreme attention to detail, and her extensive history working with books. In 2013 Mary was promoted to Technical Services Supervisor, she received her MLIS degree the same year and shortly thereafter moved into her current position as Collection Development Librarian.

Mary also selects adult board games and coloring books. She's served on numerous committees over the years, she is a "booklist master," an occasional *Cascadia Weekly* book reviewer, and has done numerous lightning books talks and presentations. She's often a guest on Alexa Andrews' radio show on KAVZ Radio, where they have fun conversations about books and reading related topics. Christine added her appreciation for Mary's extensive contributions to WCLS.

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#### Staff & Committee Reports: Executive Director

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In addition to her written report, Christine mentioned that we've had a number of incident reports recently, some of which have involved members of the public who may have mental illness. She commended our branch staff and their continued efforts to handle these situations with compassion and professionalism.

The Spokane Public Library is a finalist for the 2019 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. She noted that one of their successful events is an evening event held at the library, featuring local talent and drinks.

Emma Radosevich has accepted the new Collection Development Librarian position; she will begin on May 6. Mary Vermillion has accepted the position as the new Community Relations Manager and will begin on April 15.

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#### Staff & Committee Reports: Deputy Director

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In addition to his written report, Michael shared that he has been reviewing payroll hours with Dana to gather information on overall staffing totals for 2018. We have been steadily adding hours of service, which has subsequently resulted in an increase in staff hours.

Brooke Pederson will begin as the Island Library Manager on April 24. Christine added that she's worked with Brooke previously in her role as the Director of the Upper Skagit Library District and has been impressed by her many talents and attributes.

Alexa Andrews, North Fork Branch Manager, has been asked to serve on the Small and Rural Libraries Task Force of the Washington Library Association.

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#### Staff & Committee Reports: Youth Services Manager

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Thom passed around a book that is currently being featured in Youth Services programming: *Julián is a Mermaid*, by Jessica Love. This book tells the story of a young Afro-Latinx boy who told his Grandma that he was also a mermaid, after seeing a group of women riding the subway in costumes. Tessa Bundy, Youth Services Assistant, created and organized the Merfolk program. Thom added that she has an absolutely magical way of presenting and interacting with the children.

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#### Staff & Committee Reports: Services Committee and Performance Measures

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In addition to his written report, Michael shared that we saw an expected drop in door counts and circulation due to the February snow days. He noted that the decrease in digital circulation could be due to less promotion of those services; Lori added that the widespread power outages may also account for the decrease in digital usage.

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#### Staff & Committee Reports: Community Relations Coordinator & Committee

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Christine commented on the beaver activity in the South Whatcom Library parking lot, which was recently covered in the *Bellingham Herald*, adding that the tree the beaver was working on does not pose a safety risk.

She noted that Online Experience Coordinator Neil McKay has been transitioning our website to a new WordPress template. He has strived to minimize drastic site changes to prevent frustration for patrons who were comfortable navigating the previous site. Michael added that the former WordPress template was out of date, sluggish, and not compatible with some necessary plug-ins.

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#### Staff & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

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Marvin noted that personnel updates have been shared earlier in the meeting and moved on to the next item in the agenda.

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#### Staff & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

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Christine thanked everyone for coming to the Special Joint meeting with the Whatcom County Library Foundation last week. The group discussed some insights they took away from the meeting. Board members expressed that it was very helpful and they felt it would be beneficial to have the joint meeting again next year.

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## Consent Agenda

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The Consent Agenda included minutes of the February 19, 2019 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following expenditures and policy update:

### General Fund:

- February 1 - 15, 2019 Payroll: Nos. 1018099338 - 1018099348, (Voucher Nos. 539113 - 539262) Totaling \$177,308.44 and February 16-28, 2019 Payroll: Nos. 1018211014 - 1018211025, (Voucher Nos. 539267 - 539419) Totaling \$182,598.57
- ACH transactions for employee benefits and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$160,632.15; \$35,368.90 of this is for employee funded contributions to health insurance premiums, health savings accounts, PERS, and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction)
- Claims 2019-03G: Warrant Nos. 1076932-1076942 Totaling \$8,592.33
- Claims 2019-04G: Warrant Nos. 1077320-1077343 Totaling \$36,770.64
- Claims 2019-05G: Warrant Nos. 1078207-1078246 Totaling \$103,002.19

### Capital Fund:

- Claims 2019-01C: Warrant Nos. 1077344-1077346 Totaling \$8,474.06
- Claims 2019-02C: Warrant No. 1078247 Totaling \$6,570.00

Policy Update: Approval of Claims and Payroll Policy is renumbered to 20.08 for consistency with our policy numbering system. It is updated to change any reference to Administrative Services Manager to Director of Finance and Administration.

***June moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded; approved. Unanimous board approval.***

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## Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

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- Jackie reviewed the Finance Committee reports, highlighting that our audit will be April 15-26. The audit covers 2017-2018.
- Christine pointed out the Jackie is also working on the state Annual Report, which will need to be done earlier than in most years, in order to be completed prior to the audit.
- Jackie advised that the audit committee will likely contact Marvin and June since they are on the Finance Committee.
- She discussed a recent water system update at the North Fork Community Library, which is the only WCLS branch that uses a well and regular testing is required. Water System Services performed the update and is our new testing vendor. The system update was provided at no cost thanks to funding from a Whatcom PUD Water System Technical Support program.
- The extreme winter temperatures and increased demand for heating fuel at North Fork resulted in the branch's propane tank running dry before the next scheduled delivery. Jackie was able to secure a refill the same day and branch staff will monitor the tank more frequently during colder temperatures.
- Jackie reviewed the details which have necessitated both of the financial resolutions presented for board approval and answered brief questions about them.

***Erika made a motion to approve resolution 03/19/19-04 authorizing the reissuance of a paycheck; seconded. Passed unanimously.***

***Marvin made a motion for approval of Resolution 03/19/19-05 authorizing an increase to the Petty Cash Revolving Fund Balance; seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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## Policy Updates

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### **Collection Policy 3.01 Update**

Christine reiterated that we discussed this policy at the February board meeting. The only change since that time was the addition of the supporting lineage for the changes to documents referenced in the Collection Policy. The most recently updated document was the ALA Library Bill of Rights.

***June moved for approval of updates to 3.01 Collection Policy as stated; seconded. Passed unanimously.***

### **Management Benefits and Leave Policy 12.20 Update**

Christine described the updates to policy 12.20. . This policy update clarifies the distinction between Exempt Management employees and Exempt Bargaining Unit employees, a new classification resulting from 2018 interest-based bargaining unit negotiations. It also clarifies the specifics around Management staff working on a holiday or accruing extra hours in a week due to a holiday and the resulting comp time accrual. Discussion followed. It was clarified that this policy update calls for extra hours worked to be accrued as 1:1 compensatory time, not paid out as additional hours. . Brad requested that the personnel committee receive a report, twice a year, showing the total comp hours accrued by management to date. He added that it is critical to prevent burn out of our leadership team, especially in light of new services and programs we have been adding.

Lori suggested a slight change in the language of the policy, to end after “time away from work” which would remove the extra language about relaxing and recreating. This change was made in the meeting and reprinted for Chairman approval.

***Brad moved for approval of the update to Management Benefits and Leave Policy 12.20 with the minor language edit; seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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## Project Evaluations

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**Personalized Reading Suggestions Service** – Lisa Gresham – Lisa reports that this project committee analyzed models for offering personalized reading services to patrons. It originated with concern about patrons who may be unable to come to a library to get recommendations in person or take part in a book club.

Most services of this type ask for a list of books that readers have enjoyed, and then provide another list of similar titles. In researching this model, it was learned that it is incredibly labor intensive in terms of staff time.

After researching the programs used, it was proposed that WCLS offer a subscription approach but on a quarterly basis, so that staffing time could be adequately planned. The question form will be based on the *type* of books you would like to read, not necessarily what you have enjoyed previously.

Brad asked how the team is determining how to prevent the staff being overwhelmed in terms of labor involved. Lisa said, one piece of advice they received from other libraries was beta-testing the chosen program, which the project team plans to do with WCLS staff before launching to the public. Erika asked about feedback loops from patrons, which Lisa replied is part of the plan.

A new project has been formed to plan and implement the beta-test, with the goal of launching late in the year or in early 2020.

Marvin also expressed concern that staff time may increase tremendously. Lisa replied that she has discussed this with her team, and will be monitoring the time involved. She added that there is also a possibility of using new tools available in the Polaris Outreach Module, which could help the selectors save some time in this process.

**Library of Things – Lisa Gresham** The idea of the Library of Things is to reach new users, and make the library relevant to the community in fresh ways. It has been very well received, with some items having ongoing hold queues due to their popularity.

Regarding questions about how items are selected, she said they take many aspects into consideration, including selecting items that are expensive and are generally desired for short periods of time. Board games and American Girl Dolls, as examples, are both very popular.

They avoid very high costs items and those that break easily. They also avoid seasonal items, such as a cider press, since everyone would need it at the same time. The storage component is another consideration and since our system is built largely around rectangular shaped things, when we add items that are a different shape it can create issues in every step of the system.

**In-House Loaner Laptops** – Michael Cox reported that the In-House Loaner Laptops pilot project aimed to develop a model for allowing in-library loaning of laptops with access to Internet and Microsoft Office. Surveys had indicated that users wanted to be able to use computer services in a quieter environment, and be able to use them in different locations around the library.

For this project, six laptop computers were purchased and set-up with Cassie (time management/printing) and security software. Three were placed at both Blaine and Ferndale libraries. WiFi networks and secure charging locations support and store these devices.

Costs are a bit higher for laptops than desktops, both in maintenance and their need to be replaced more often, but surveys indicate patrons greatly appreciate the flexibility laptops allow.

The program has been promoted via social media and via staff promotion, which seems to have more impact. Usage has been steadily increasing.

Brad asked about the Airport Kiosk. Christine reported its working well so far, but it has been in operation for just a few weeks.

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Break

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Marvin adjourned for a break from 11:08-11: 15a.m.

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Board Education: WCLS Computer Networks – Christopher Phillips – *Postponed to April Meeting due to time constraints*

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Blaine Library Update

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Two members of the Friends of the Blaine Library joined the meeting with Blaine Library Manager Debby Farmer for this discussion.

Christine explained that we have been exploring options for a new or expanded Blaine Library facility. The City of Blaine has indicated that they are concerned about the long term maintenance of a larger building, and are interested in the option of WCLS taking ownership of the larger building once built. Christine said that she has talked to colleagues at Kitsap Regional Library. They own several of their library buildings, and have had positive experiences as a result. Discussion followed about the risks and benefits of this arrangement for the Blaine Library and for WCLS.

Christine said that currently in our operating agreements, we agree to negotiate a cost-sharing arrangement for large maintenance or repair costs; this could be written into a potential agreement with the City. Consensus from the group included due diligence about the proposed location, careful planning and taking steps to minimize risk, and setting up an arrangement that is mutually beneficial to both parties. It was suggested that an LCFA may be necessary to provide funding for Blaine and possibly Birch Bay as well.

Debby reported that in terms of interest from the City of Blaine towards a library, that the will is there but the funds are not. They have been verbally very supportive about the library needing a larger space, but the funding does not appear to be available.

An 18 year Friend of the Blaine library in attendance, Sandra Bogen, said they have worked diligently about seeing a new library come into fruition, and they continue to offer financial support in any way possible. The Blaine library is the center of a huge community, not just Blaine and they want to see that grow and improve. The Friends are behind this 100% and they look to WCLS to get them there.

Cindy Leffel noted that donations stop if donors don't see a plan. They've heard from community members that they will lose support if there isn't a plan to move forward soon.

Discussion followed about options for moving forward with both Birch Bay and Blaine libraries.

There was a consensus to further explore this arrangement with the understanding that additional questions need to be answered before any definitive steps are taken.

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*Friends of the Library 2018 Report – Postponed to April Meeting due to time constraints*

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### Announcements and Adjourn

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Library giving day is coming up, please help spread the word to help support WCLS.

Marvin adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

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### Next Meeting

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Next meeting will be at the WCLS Administrative Services office at April 16, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

Address: 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98225

Signed by Lori  
Lori Jump, WCLS Trustee

4/16/19  
Date

Signed by Darcy  
Darcy Riggins-Schmidt, WCLS