



Location

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

In Attendance

Trustees: Marvin Waschke, Chair; June Hahn, Vice Chair; Lori Jump, Board Secretary; Erika Nuereberg. Absent: None.

Staff: Christine Perkins, Executive Director; Michael Cox, Deputy Director; Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and Administration; Thom Barthelmess, Youth Services Manager; Christina Read, Human Resources Manager; Mary Vermillion, Community Relations Manager; Lisa Gresham, Collection Services Manager; Jennifer Rick, Foundation Development Director; Ruth Nail, Administrative Assistant. Absent: Geoff Fitzpatrick, IT Services Manager.

Visitors: Dianne Marrs-Smith, Lynden Library Manager and FOBBL President; Wendy McLeod, Lynden Library Assistant Manager; Debby Farmer, Blaine Library Manager; FOBL Members: Cindy Leffel, Carol Macmillan, and Sandra Bogen; FOBBL Members: Brian Bell, Doralee Booth, and Harieklia Bryant; Chuck Kinzer, Birch Bay resident; Oliver Lazenby, *The Northern Light*.

Call to Order

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

Open Public Comment

No public comment.

Staff & Committee Reports: Executive Director

In addition to her written report, Christine noted that Marvin and Erika, representing the Personnel Committee, met last month with six trustee candidates to replace outgoing trustees June Hahn and Brad Cornwell. Marvin and Erika have put forth two recommendations to the Whatcom County Executive for approval, Claudia Disend and Rodney Lofdahl.

Christine invited everyone to attend WCLS' appearance on Chuckanut Radio Hour on January 30, in which she, Collection Development Librarian Mary Kinser, and North Fork Community Library Manager Alexa Andrews will be presenting their 2020 book recommendations. The show will also feature local poets and musicians, as well as a vaudeville-style performance by the Bellingham theater community. Chuckanut Radio Hour will be held at 7:00 p.m. at Heiner Theater at Whatcom Community College. Tickets are available through Village Books online and at the door

The December community engagement session in Blaine went well, thanks to all of the attendees who showed up despite the heavy snow falling. Michael will share detailed updates in later in today's agenda.

Christine met the Whatcom Community College's Director of Social Services at the recent Blaine City Council meeting. She discussed the upcoming Ryan Dowd Homelessness Training Workshop. We are planning two 4-hour workshop sessions, one in Lynden and one in Ferndale, with meetings during the day so that our community partners will be able to attend as part of their regular work day.

Irene Skyriver, author of *Paddling with Spirits: A Solo Kayak Journey*, was here at the Bellingham Public Library and Deming Library this past weekend. Christine extended her commendations to Ann McAllen, Adult Programming Coordinator, for putting together the Whatcom READS events and for hosting Irene at her house.

Christine observed that the Interlocal Service Agreement with Bellingham Public Library needs to be updated. WCLS and BPL are currently discussing terms and the updated agreement will be discussed further with the trustees at the February board meeting.

Staff & Committee Reports: Deputy Director

In addition to his written report, Michael highlighted the participation of five staff members in the WWU Community Engagement Fellows program and activities hosted at the Deming Library. "Learning through Food" and "Learning Together about Community Health" were two previous forum topics. "Putting Values into Action" is February's topic and notes will be posted afterward. This event is not listed in *Explorations* because there are often last-minute changes that need to be accommodated.

The WCLS phone tree has been transferred to a new phone server. We worked to make the system more user-friendly, reduce the time it takes to talk to staff and improve the administrative staff directory.

Recently, using Interlibrary Loan, Everson Library staff were able to locate an old *Reader's Digest Songbook* for a patron who recalled the title as being one that his mother had checked out from WCLS years before.

The Friends of the North Fork Library have contributed their portion of the funds to offset costs for the paving of the parking lot, closing the loop on that project.

Staff & Committee Reports: Youth Services Manager

Thom shared his written report and emphasized that we are in the midst of Youth Services Book Award Season, with staff preparing to travel to Philadelphia this weekend to attend the gathering. Whitney Motley, Children's Services PSA at Blaine Library, hosted Mock Caldecott selection panel there using the Caldecott Medal terms and criteria. Of the 2019 picture books under consideration, the panel chose *Elvis is King* as their winner, with its illustrations by Red Nose Studio and text by Jonah Winter. Melody Leung, Children's Services PSA at the Lynden Library, is involved in choosing beginning reader book selections for the Geisel Award, which is named after Theodor Geisel, aka "Dr. Seuss".

WCLS Early Learning Coordinator Theresa Morrison has just been appointed to a statewide panel of specialists to update the Washington Early Learning Plan that was originally developed ten years ago. This is an exciting opportunity for Theresa's input to impact children statewide and serve as an ambassador for library services. With her experience, she will share the critical role that library plays in early childhood development.

Thom extended his thanks to the Lynden Library for hosting the *Whatcomics* Reception, as well as all of the attendees who came to share in this annual event. The event gives the teens an opportunity to display their artistic talents, observe each other's works, and be publicly recognized by their friends, family and community. The exhibit itself is still up for a couple weeks.

Staff & Committee Reports: Community Relations Manager

Mary discussed her written report and noted the success of the Farewell to Fines implementation. She expressed thanks to Communications Specialist Amy Jones for her photography and art direction in bringing to

life our concept, which WCLS and Bellingham Public Library (BPL) developed together to convey joy and energy and new ideas. The program graphics have been released in a variety of formats, with positive community engagement online and at branches. Mary plans to regroup in February with BPL's Janice Keller to transition to a new message, welcoming people back to the library, as the next phase. When she was questioned if Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Overdue Fines are treated the same, Mary confirmed that ILL Overdue Fines are waived in the same manner as WCLS-BPL Overdue Fines.

Whatcom Educational Credit Union (WECU) is going to be a sponsor for the collaborative WCLS-BPL Summer Reading program to buy board books and graphic novels for program participants. In addition, WECU's robust marketing team will enhance our ability to spread awareness of the Summer Reading program.

Mary reminded the trustees that the quarterly Community Relations Marketing Committee meeting is scheduled next Tuesday, January 28, at 10:30 a.m. to discuss marketing strategies for 2020. Christine and Marvin extended their thanks to Mary and her team for their creative work.

Staff & Committee Reports: Services Committee and Performance Measures

In addition to his written report, Michael highlighted the increase in physical circulation last year system-wide, with the exception of Island Library, which saw a 3.9% decrease. He would like to take a year-end perspective to examine trends and contributing factors locally, statewide and nationally, including policy changes, the new Bookmobile introduction, and staff changes. Electronic circulation is up, too, including Overdrive, despite the Macmillan boycott. RBDigital electronic magazine circulation, with automatic renewal and new issues posted, saw a dramatic increase. Door counts are down a bit, with Island Library standing out with the largest decrease. The Board discussed contributing factors such as inclement weather closures and the impact of the ConnectEd program. It may be time to adjust the way we collect and consider performance metrics.

Staff & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shared the results of their Trustee recruitment process and recommendations to the County Executive as noted above in the Executive Director's Report.

Staff & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

Christine announced that Shannon Flory has applied to, and been accepted by, the WCLF Board of Trustees. WCLF is working to find additional sponsors for the Ryan Dowd Homelessness Workshops in March. The Branch Out fundraising event will be held Friday, April 24, and she looks forward to seeing everyone there.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included minutes of the December 17, 2019 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following expenditures:

General Fund:

- December 1 - 15, 2019 Payroll: Nos. 1021530997 -1021531009, (Voucher Nos. 542193 -542346) Totaling \$192,422.92 and December 16 - 31, 2019 Payroll: Nos. 1021737305 -1021737316, (Voucher Nos. 542352 -542502) Totaling \$201,806.03.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$166,261.70; \$37,353.71 of this is for employee funded contributions to health insurance premiums, health savings accounts, PERS, and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2019-35G: Warrant Nos. 1098306-1098316 Totaling \$36,745.79
- Claim 2019-36G: Warrant Nos. 1098974-1099013 Totaling \$26,337.29

- Claim 2019-37 & 38G: Warrant Nos. 1099659-1099713 Totaling \$253,038.63

Capital Fund:

- Claims 2019-19C: Warrant No. 1098317 Totaling \$5,103.47
- Claims 2019-20C: Warrant Nos. 1098972-1098973 Totaling \$12,512.00
- Claims 2019-21C: Warrant No. 1099689 Totaling \$373.24

Management Leave Carry Forward:

According to the Management Benefits and Leave Policy, accrued vacation leave in excess of 240 hours cannot be carried forward without prior approval from the Board of Trustees.

The following vacation balances in excess of the carryover maximum are approved by the Board of Trustees for carryover and use in 2020:

Perkins, Christine – 34.22 hours vacation leave

The Chair moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded; approved. Unanimous board approval.

Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

Jackie reviewed the Finance Committee reports, highlighting

- We are still closing out December, so no final 2019 numbers yet. Levy collections are anticipated to be \$55,000 behind projections
- The final total for 2020 property tax revenue from new construction is \$35,000 less than projected. With a refund of \$22,000 from adjustments made by the County Assessor throughout year, this yields a net reduction of \$13,000 to our budgeted 2020 levy, which will be reflected in the pending budget amendment.
- Our property and automobile insurance undergoes renewal every January. Increasing our liability coverage from \$2,000,000 to \$5,000,000, as requested, increased our premium by \$750. Our current policy includes a blanket limit for earthquake coverage of \$2.5 million. A premium increase of \$6,000 was quoted to increase earthquake coverage to \$8.3 million, a combined total that includes coverage for the Administrative Services and North Fork buildings and their contents. There was a discussion reviewing broker and carrier information, coverage details, and deductibles. Jackie will continue investigating coverage valuations and costs and report her findings to the board for approval.
- Pending 2020 Budget Amendment: With budget adjustments, there is an anticipated net increase of \$45,000 to the FY2019 ending fund balance over the previous projection.

2019 Incident Report Summary

Jackie summarized incident report counts for 2019, and reported that activity at the Ferndale branch has decreased over the past few months compared to earlier in 2019. The Safety Committee has really encouraged incident reporting, resulting in a system-wide increased count of incidents that is indicative of the cultural awareness of proactively reporting.

The “Other” category was highest type of incident reported, which includes strange smells, close calls, and other incidents that didn’t fit the usual categories.

There were eight incidents of patron illness/injury on WCLS premises; only one was a safety issue that was immediately addressed.

There was a discussion on the usage of surveillance cameras on library property, security, maintenance of records, requests for videos, personnel required and personnel impacts. Our goal is to make patrons feel safe in the library and there may be other ways to accomplish this goal without surveillance cameras.

Break

Marvin adjourned for a break from 10:28-10:33 a.m.

Policy Updates

4.01 Borrower's Policy and 4.01.04 Fee Schedule

On the Borrower's Policy, we are expanding eligibility for WCLS library cards to all students who attend schools in Whatcom County. Under our existing policy a student at Western living on campus would be eligible for a card while a classmate commuting from Mt. Vernon would not be. Similarly, many school districts in Whatcom County welcome students from Skagit County and those students, unlike their classmates who live in Whatcom County, are not eligible for cards. We want all students at schools in Whatcom County to enjoy the same access to WCLS resources.

We renamed the "Schedule of Fines and Fees" to "Fee Schedule" and updated the Borrower's Policy and Fee Schedule to reflect the accelerated lost item charge assessment that accompanies the end of overdue fines.

The Chair moved to approve the revision to 4.01 Borrower's Policy and 4.01.04 Fee Schedule as presented; seconded. Passed unanimously.

Birch Bay Library Update

Michael has had meetings in Birch Bay on January 7 with Drayton Archaeology, the Lummi Nation, and Zervas Architects to facilitate the historical review process for release of state grant funds. The Lummi Nation is pleased that we have met with them twice so far in the process and we have been responding positively to their requests. The Lummi Nation does not have any additional requests for changes at this point and appreciated the integration of historical structure and maintenance of archeological artifacts by utilizing a raft foundation, thereby minimizing soil disturbance to 8" and only in some areas. They reiterated that anything done to reduce digging and soil disturbance will make it easier on everyone and minimize archaeology work. We will accomplish this by doing small sample tests before engaging in large scale digging or removal of asphalt, concrete foundations, etc. Any cultural materials, such as shell midden, must be remain on the property, although they may be moved on the site. There will be testing of some of asphalt in the existing drive to make sure it was not poured directly over shell midden. We will leave existing foundations and incorporate them into our plans. Drayton Archaeology is updating their report to incorporate the current state of design to include minimized disturbance and maintenance of foundations. Marvin inquired on the civil engineering for a catch basin, treatment of storm water, and other drainage concerns. Michael responded that we have contracted that work and the findings will be presented at March board meeting. The DAHP seems pleased with mitigation strategies and techniques being incorporated in the plan, as discussed in December's BOT meeting. The SEPA process is underway.

Christine commented that the Birch Bay community is working on a community meeting with the superintendent of the Blaine School District. She noted the helpfulness of the connections of the Friends of the Library with BSD and the Chamber in making this community meeting happen.

Blaine Library Update

Christine reviewed the updated Memorandum of Understanding Between Friends of Blaine Library, Whatcom County Rural Library District, and the City of Blaine, and summarized key points. At the December Board of Trustees meeting, the trustees expressed concerns over the Blaine Library building's ownership and indicated that moving forward in the LCFA conversation required a revised MOU with City of Blaine. The revised MOU takes out one line, item 8, concerning the question of future ownership.

The Blaine City Council voted unanimously to approve this revised MOU at their January 13, 2020 meeting. The Friends of the Blaine Library have also approved this agreement. Furthermore, the City of Blaine has indicated their support of moving forward with a LCFA.

June moved approval to authorize the Executive Director to sign the updated Memorandum of Understanding Between Friends of Blaine Library, Whatcom County Rural Library District, and the City of Blaine, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.

After gathering input at the last community engagement meeting, Michael has a follow-up web meeting with the design team tomorrow, Weds. 1/22 from 2:30-3:00 p.m. The design choices have been narrowed down to 2 options: The Boat and The Beacon. He reviewed the design plans and highlighted changes made.

The Beacon, with its fireplace and quiet reading areas, and its comparative ease to adjust square footage, is poised to be the front runner.

Tuesday, February 11, is the final community engagement meeting at Blaine Senior Center, in which the final building design will be revealed. That final design is what we will be cost estimating, with minimal changes able to be incorporated.

A guest commented that Birch Bay has less square footage and a fixed cost. A 4.5% escalation with Zervas was noted, and a 5.7% escalation was suggested, by this guest.

Michael responded that we plan to use a 5.67% annual escalation for both projects, with a 2022 build for Birch Bay and 2023 build for Blaine. He stated that we are on track to have firm cost estimates at the March Board of Trustees meeting.

Capital Funding Strategy Update

Christine announced we are working with EveryLibrary to schedule staff training related to a possible election. We are also scheduling meetings with county commissioners to discuss our capital projects. We taking steps to be ready to go with the joint LCFA when we get the final cost estimate and approval from the Board in March. She asked the trustees if they have any further questions, to which Marvin responded that he just wants firmer budgets than we have now.

Christine acknowledged that we are proceeding on all fronts and working to get firm cost estimates for the Board.

Christine noted that the state legislature is voting on a bill that may change procedures related to LCFAs. She is currently working on preparing multiple backup scenarios.

Announcements and Adjourn

Christine restated the invitation to join her for Chuckanut Radio Hour on January 30 at 7:00 p.m. at Heiner Theater on the Whatcom Community College campus.

Marvin invited meeting attendees to his February 1 presentation on cyber-security and February 8 presentation on computer privacy on-line. Both events will be held in the Ferndale Library Meeting Room from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

On March 7 and 14, he will do the same presentations in the Meeting Room at the Lynden Library from 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Marvin commented that there were estimated losses of \$8 billion attributed to ransomware last year. This figure may be conservative due to non-reports.

Marvin adjourned the meeting at 11:23 a.m.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be at Administrative Services, February 18, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Address: 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226

Signed by Lori Jump

Lori Jump, WCLS Trustee

2/18/2020

Date

Signed by Ruth Nail

Ruth Nail, WCLS Admin. Assistant