



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; Lori Jump, Board Secretary; Claudia Disend (via teleconference); and Rodney Lofdahl. Absent: Erika (Nuerenberg) Lautenbach.

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; Christina Read, Human Resources Manager; Mary Vermillion, Community Relations Manager; Lisa Gresham, Collection Services Manager; Jennifer Rick, Foundation Development Director; Ruth Nail, Administrative Assistant.

Visitors: Dianne Marrs-Smith, Lynden Library Manager and FOBBL President; Debby Farmer, Blaine Library Manager.

Call to Order

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

Christine introduced and welcomed our new trustees, Claudia Disend and Rod Lofdahl.

Service Anniversary Recognition

The trustees recognized Ann McAllen, Adult Programming Coordinator, for her 10-year service anniversary. Michael introduced Ann, recounting her path with WCLS, starting with her work as Outreach Coordinator and community engagement, for which she won an award from the Whatcom Literacy Council. With a "can-do" attitude and a flexible schedule, Ann can be found participating in pop-up libraries at a variety of county events. She has received training as a PSA, so that she can act as a sub, and has taken on the task of keeping us current on food permits. In her current position, Ann continues interfacing with various organizations in the county, culling new contacts and potential ideas for Fall Read & Share and the Whatcom READS program, of which she is a project manager.

Expressing appreciation for Ann's drive, adaptability and innovation in community engagement and access, Michael and Christine presented Ann with a service anniversary recognition and thanked her for being part of coordinating the present and planning the future of WCLS.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included minutes of the January 21, 2020 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following:

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- January 1 - 15, 2020 Payroll: Nos. 1021911042 - 1021911050, (Voucher Nos. 542508 - 542663) Totaling \$ 193,676.97 and January 16 - 31, 2020 Payroll: Nos. 1022100314 - 1022100321, (Voucher Nos. 542669 - 542825) Totaling \$ 208,612.05.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$209,559.88; \$38,541.80 of this is for employee funded contributions to health insurance premiums, health savings accounts, PERS, and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2019-39G: Warrant Nos. 110644-1100679 Totaling \$27,311.45
- Claim 2019-40G: Warrant Nos. 1100721-1100747 Totaling \$103,457.08
- Claim 2020-01G: Warrant Nos. 1101738-1101772 Totaling \$55,299.90
- Claim 2020-02G: Warrant Nos. 1100680-1100685 Totaling \$94,734.47

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2019-22C: Warrant Nos. 110686-1100687 Totaling \$19,051.40

Rod 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, referring to the updated 2019 General and Capital Fund Year-end Summaries and briefly explaining the report categories and details of budget variances, as outlined in her written report. She noted that:

- 99% of property tax levy revenue has been received, roughly \$54,000 short of our full 2019 levy.
- Intergovernmental revenue was about \$99,000 over the budgeted amount.
- Collection Materials expenses are close to budget and comprised the standard 13-15% of operating expenditures.
- Professional Services were \$102,000 under budget, primarily from lower-than-expected expenses related to the ILS (Integrated Library System) migration earlier in the year.
- In the Capital Fund Summary, capital expenditures were less than budgeted due to project costs budgeted for 2019 that have been shifted to 2020.

Jackie presented answers to questions regarding property insurance expenses that were brought up in January's meeting. Jackie will arrange appraisals for the Administrative Services and North Fork Library buildings for earthquake and property insurance coverage purposes. She will also verify that flood damage coverage is included in the general property insurance coverage for buildings other than Sumas and Everson, which each have a separate flood policy. She will confirm that these Sumas and Everson policies include building contents.

Financial Report and Resolutions: 2020 General and Capital Fund Budget Amendments

Jackie reviewed amendments to the 2020 General and Capital Fund Budgets, noting that this resolution adjusts the General and Capital Fund budgets to reflect 2020 Beginning Fund Balances and updates General Fund Operating Revenue to reflect the final 2020 levy amount and additional anticipated revenues. The budget amendment increases General Fund expenditures related to personnel costs and property insurance premiums. It reflects the resolution passed at the December Board of Trustees meeting regarding design, staff education, and staff support costs associated with the Blaine and Birch Bay capital projects that will be paid out of the Facilities Ownership and Library Services Fund Reserve. The budget amendment also updates Capital Fund

revenue and expenditures to reflect items being transferred from 2019 to the 2020 budget and vice versa. Lastly, this amendment increases the amount of the Capital Fund Transfer.

Lori made a motion to approve Resolution 02/18/20-01 amending the 2020 General and Capital Fund budgets, as presented; seconded. Passed unanimously.

Open Public Comment

No public comment.

Birch Bay Library Update

Michael reported that WCLS.org/birchbay is available online to view a final fly-through animation of the Birch Bay Library design created by Zervas Architects.

We have a preliminary grading plan and have provided information to Drayton Archaeology, who have updated our report with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). Hopefully, that approval process will culminate around March 2 via teleconference with representatives from DAHP, the Washington State Department of Commerce, and the Lummi Nation. Michael will report findings from this teleconference at the March 17 Board of Trustees meeting.

Michael reported that there is a request for a utility vault easement at the back corner of site that we need to discuss with Zervas Architects to determine if this presents any problem with our preliminary grading plan. As discussed before, we want to minimize soil disturbance to ensure that shell midden remains on-site. Taking the Lummi Nation's guidance into consideration, we are making design plans now to reduce archaeology requirements in the future. We are going to have a geotechnical inspection done. The biologist's habitat assessment is done, with good results. Zervas is doing a second pre-application review with county agencies, which should be reported on in March.

The Friends of the Birch Bay Library and WCLS are partnering with the Birch Bay Chamber of Commerce, to celebrate KiteFest, which will be held Saturday and Sunday, May 30 and 31 at the site of the new Birch Bay Vogt Community Library. See birchbaywa.org/birch-bay-kite-festival/ for more details and ongoing developments.

Blaine Library Update

The final building design was revealed on Tuesday, February 11, at the fourth and final community engagement meeting at Blaine Senior Center. Mary Vermillion noted that a video at WCLS.org/Blaine depicts the Feb. 11 public engagement meeting. The Beacon design, with its fireplace, quiet reading areas, portal, telescope and other inviting design elements was the chosen selection. Michael noted that we will be doing a digital presentation that would allow the viewer to do virtual walk-through of new library. The Johnston-King architectural team will be presenting a complete floorplan and walk-through at the March 17 board meeting and will be answering questions in more detail then. Michael commented that we are on track to have firm cost estimates at that meeting.

After his brief presentation of the plans, Michael answered trustee questions regarding the roofline, snow removal, roof leakage and watershed diversion into the rain garden and storm drains. The board expressed concerns on this topic which they would like Michael to address with the architects prior to the next board meeting.

Capital Funding Strategy Update

Christine announced we are working with EveryLibrary to schedule staff training, possibly April 14 or 15, related to providing information during an election. We are also scheduling meetings with county commissioners to discuss our capital projects. We are taking steps to be ready to go with the joint LCFA when we get the final cost estimate and approval from the Board in April.

Christine noted that the state legislature is voting on a bill that may change procedures related to LCFAs. She said the bill affects whether LCFA formation and funding approval would be voted on as a single ballot item or as two separate items on the ballot, as is the process now.

Christine did a preliminary analysis of voter turnout and ballot approval requirements. She presented her findings supporting an August LCFA ballot proposition, with a November backup, if required. She is currently working on preparing multiple backup scenarios.

A political action committee (PAC) to support a combined LCFA is forming. Cindy Leffel, who will be able to mutually represent Blaine and Birch Bay interests, will be serving as Chairperson.

Jennifer Rick posed questions pertaining to WCLF meetings and PAC attendance. It was clarified that PAC meetings may not be held on library property, and any staff members who participate do so as individuals, not on work time. EveryLibrary will be doing more training for us on that topic and others.

Christine reiterated that we will be receiving costs estimates from the architects at the March 17 meeting, and the April 21 meeting is last chance for the Board of Trustees to approve putting a LCFA on the ballot.

It was questioned whether the PAC can have a table at KiteFest, since it is being held on library property. Christine will clarify this point for the March meeting.

Break

Marvin adjourned for a break from 10:38-10:50 a.m.

Interlocal Agreement with Bellingham Public Library

Christine reviewed the history of the agreement, the results of the 2017 Sustainable Future Study, and the need to renew and update our agreement with the Bellingham Public Library. The new version will eliminate Section IV pertaining to exchange of funds in the partnership between WCLS and BPL, will eliminate references to overdue fines, and will renew automatically so it won't accidentally lapse in the future.

Rod made a motion to approve the updated Interlocal Agreement with Bellingham Public Library as presented. Seconded. Unanimously approved.

In response to a trustee question, Christine reviewed the process of using the WWU and WCC libraries and checking out their materials via Interlibrary Loan with a WCLS library card or using a WCC or WWU card to check out materials there.

Policy Updates

- a. **Fixed Asset Policy** - Jackie explained that this policy update allows WCLS to donate surplus property to a 501(c)(3) non-profit when the cost to dispose of property exceeds its fair market value.

The Chair moved to approve the updated Fixed Asset Policy, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.

- b. **Sponsorship Policy** – Mary Vermillion noted that the purpose of this new policy is to identify the general conditions under which corporations, individuals and community organizations may become sponsors of library programs, services and events. She reviewed the definitions and terms contained within the policy.

The trustees reviewed the presented policy and discussed concerns regarding sponsors and implied endorsement of the sponsor’s product or services, as well as the requirement to clearly state the ability of WCLS to terminate the sponsorship at the system’s discretion.

The Chair moved to approve the Sponsorship Policy, with the amendment to include “or terminate” in the last line of the Implementation section. Seconded. Passed unanimously.

- c. **Gift Acceptance Policy** – Mary Vermillion explained that the revised policy clarifies that gifts intended as sponsorship are guided by the Sponsorship Policy and that donors may specify Whatcom County Library System, Whatcom County Library Foundation or a particular Friends of the Library group as the recipient.

There was discussion pertaining to donor-specified gifts to WCLS vs. WCLF, after which the trustees decided to strike the line in question.

Rod moved to approve the revised 20.12 Gift Acceptance Policy, striking the line “The donor may specify whether a donation is being given to WCLS, WCLF or to a particular Friends of the Library group.” Seconded. Passed unanimously.

Staff Reports: Executive Director

In addition to her written report, Christine highlighted that she and Marv attended the Washington Library Association’s Legislative Day in Olympia earlier this month, taking the opportunity to meet with Senator Doug Ericksen and Representatives Luanne Van Werven and Sharon Shewmake. Marv encouraged others to attend a legislative session in the capitol to see the deliberations and get a personal sense of the process.

Christine announced that the Ryan Dowd Homelessness Workshops are filling up, with only 16 openings in Lynden and 28 in Ferndale left as of today.

Christine reported that last year’s Read & Share program with Leif Whittaker was a big hit. Mary noted that his book, *My Old Man and the Mountain*, was #2 in the Top Ten Checkouts of 2019, evidence that this program helps drive circulation. Christine is looking forward to the success of this year’s featured book, *Thirst: 2600 Miles to Home*, and meeting its author Heather “Anish” Anderson. In 2018, Anderson became the first female to complete the “Triple Triple,” doing the three major U.S. thru-hikes three times each in one year.

Staff Reports: Deputy Director

In addition to his written report, Michael shared that the Friends of the North Fork Library has been reinvigorated after spending an entire year with a single member. He thanked Alexa Andrews, North Fork Library Branch Manager, for her involvement in the community and determination to revive active engagement in this Friends group.

Michael noted that the Whatcom Transit Authority (WTA) has provided day bus passes to each WCLS location, allowing staff to identify and assist patrons that may require such transportation. He reported that January and

February were months that saw several closures due to inclement weather. Michael thanked Mayor Kyle Christensen and City of Sumas staff for filling and stacking sandbags, preventing the Sumas Library from flooding.

Michael announced that WCLS will be posting an opening for the Everson/Sumas Branch Manager position. The current Branch Manager, Eileen Shaw, is planning on retiring at the end of May after twenty years with WCLS.

Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

Thom shared his written report and highlighted the 2020 Focus on Children Conference. He commented that WCLS used to send staff to learn at this conference and now we are also sending staff to teach there. Thom shared materials with the trustees from his conference presentation, which focused on expressions of gender identity in picture books. He noted the contributions of three members of the Youth Services team and their two-hour session on Confidence in Circle Time, as well as two Lummi Nation members who presented on the Since Time Immemorial kits. He acknowledged Ann McAllen, Adult Programming Coordinator, for her efforts in coordinating a pop-up library there all day, complete with targeted materials and presenters.

Thom reported on the ConnectED program, which provides physical and digital access to WCLS materials for all students. He noted that we have signed ConnectED MOUs with all six Whatcom county public school districts, as well as Lynden Christian and the Lummi Nation, and that representatives from these schools met recently for a group conversation to discuss the future. One of their first tasks will be renewing these MOUs, which expire at the end of this school year. Marv congratulated and thanked Thom for his initiative and the success of the ConnectED program. Thom responded with appreciation for the board's support and their commitment to increased access for all patrons.

Thom commended Children's Librarian Melody Leung, who served on the 2020 (Theodore Seuss) Geisel Award Committee to select distinguished American books for beginning readers.

Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

Mary discussed her written report, noting that the model for the cover of the Spring 2020 edition *Explorations* is a vocational teacher at Ferndale High School and a regular patron at Ferndale Library. Mary highlighted the visit of *To the Bright Edge of the World* author Eowyn Ivey and the Whatcom READS author events taking place March 5-7. Mary thanked all of the Community Relations team for working to spread the word about these events. She noted that the list of Top 100 books checked out last year includes *To the Bright Edge of the World*, indicating that the Whatcom READS program successfully drives circulation and traffic in the branches. The program also garners local media coverage, including the recent front page of the *Ferndale Record*.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

In addition to his written report, Michael commented on the discussion at the January board meeting regarding December 2019 circulation being up and door counts being down. He indicated that the same trend is evident in January and recounted some influential factors in the period from January 2019 to Jan 2020, such as: DVDs are the fastest growing type of circulation; during the migration to Polaris last year, we did not accept holds and instead extended checkout times, which yielded a decrease in circulation for January 2019; the different methods of measuring door counts—laser beam break counter vs. keypad or scanned library card, in addition to the point in the facility where the measurement takes place.

Various methods are being used to track ConnectED code usage by school, and a ConnectED report card is being prepared. Marv commented that he would like to see a line in the monthly statistics showing ConnectED checkouts.

Michael extended kudos to the ILL Team. We have seen an increase in both interlibrary borrowing and lending. He noted that this statistic may also have been affected by the Polaris migration in January 2019.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee noted the addition of the two new board members. Christine noted that the Annual General Meeting will be postponed until April 21, at which there will be a vote on chaired positions and committee memberships. She plans to meet more with new trustees to orient them on the process and committees.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

Jennifer Rick handed out “Save the Date” cards for the Branch Out fundraising event, which will be held Friday, April 24, and she looks forward to seeing everyone there. This is the WCLF’s 15th year. Amory Peck will be the Keynote speaker, presenting on democracy, voting and the Foundation’s story and future. Attendance is open to ages 21 years and older. The event is filling up quickly, with half of the tables already reserved.

Christine noted WCLF’s partnership in sponsoring the Ryan Dowd Homelessness workshops, along with Whatcom Community Foundation and Bellingham Public Library. She expressed appreciation for Jenn’s coordination of these two co-partners in this event and noted the benefit of the Foundation’s Opportunity Fund.

Jenn reminded everyone that Library Giving Day is April 23rd. Last year, the Foundation received \$10,000 for Library Giving Day. She is working with Mary on publicity and roll-out with hopes to meet or exceed last year’s fundraising amount for the day.

Announcements and Adjourn

Reminder that the Annual General Meeting is scheduled for April 21.

Register for Homelessness Workshop at www.wcls.org/workshop ASAP.

Marvin gave two talks last month at Ferndale Library, and they had to pull out extra chairs for both talks. He extended an invitation to his March 7 presentation on cyber-security and March 14 presentation on computer privacy on-line. Both events will be held in the Lynden Library Meeting Room from 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Marvin adjourned the meeting at 12:14 p.m.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be at Administrative Services on March 17, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Address: 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham

*Unanimously Approved by the
WCLS Board of Trustees*

Lori Jump, WCLS Trustee

03/17/2020

Date

Signed by Ruth Nail

Ruth Nail, WCLS Admin. Assistant