



March 19, 2020

Location

Administrative Services 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226. (Note: "Library" refers to the Whatcom County Library System—WCLS.)

In Attendance

Trustees: In person: none

Via teleconference: Marvin Waschke, Chair; Lori Jump, Board Secretary; Claudia Disend; Rodney Lofdahl; Erika Lautenbach (joined at 7:30 p.m.)

Absent: none

Staff: In person: Christine Perkins, Executive Director; Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and Administration.

Via teleconference: Michael Cox, Deputy Director; Thom Barthelme, Youth Services Manager; Christina Read, Human Resources Manager; Lisa Gresham, Collection Services Manager; Debby Farmer, Blaine Branch Manager; Dianne Marrs-Smith, Lynden Branch Manager.

Absent: Geoff Fitzpatrick, IT Services Manager; Mary Vermillion, Community Relations Manager

Call to Order

Marvin determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Emergency Closure Policy Update

Christine explained the purpose of this policy update and the meeting this evening. She noted that as the day progressed after the meeting Tuesday, March 17, it became apparent that a change of action was needed. Specifically, we need a way to assign specific tasks to staff members who are actively working from home and to ensure that staff who aren't actively engaged are ready and available to perform work if needed, and are otherwise being paid. The policy has been further clarified to allow for these possibilities. It has been reviewed by Christina Read, Jackie Saul, and our attorney Dan Gottlieb. We believe that this revision clarifies the intent of what staff discussed with the Board at the Tuesday, 3/17/20 meeting.

Marvin suggested additional changes after the meeting packet was distributed. Christine read aloud the policy with these changes.

Lori asked how far in advance are staff scheduled. Christine explained that it varies and clarified the role of adjunct staff, who work as subs and do not have regularly scheduled hours. Christine noted that for this closure we will pay adjuncts and other subs for shifts scheduled through Tuesday, March 24 and all subsequent sub shifts are canceled. Christine further clarified that part-time staff members generally work a set schedule and their closure pay will be based on that schedule. Adjunct staff are not scheduled and therefore this policy won't apply to them.

Christine noted that if a location is open but an employee cannot get to work due to weather conditions or other reasons they must take paid or unpaid leave.

Lori wondered if we might incur overtime when we reopen and should we reduce paid closure leave to mitigate the increased cost. Jackie noted that we would bring staff back online in a coordinated way so as to not incur overtime. She reported that we rarely use overtime and would continue that practice when reopening. Christina reminded the group that the WCLS Overtime Pay Policy states that overtime is permitted only in extraordinary circumstances and agreed we would continue to follow that. Christine will send the Overtime Pay Policy to trustees for reference.

Marv noted that will hold our regular Board meeting in April before we reopen and Christine can share plans for getting back online at that time.

Jackie reported that Lori's previous question about chain of command has been addressed in the Emergency Closure Procedure. The chain of command is Executive Director, Deputy Director, Director of Finance and Administration, and then any available member of the L3 Management Team. Not designating a specific L3 member allows for greatest flexibility at a time when it will likely be necessary.

Rod made a motion to approve the revised policy including the revisions made by Marvin; seconded. Passed unanimously. Erika was not present during the vote.

COVID-19 Response Update

Christine provided an update on activity since the Board met on Tuesday 3/17/2020. The Community Relations team, particularly Neil McKay, has been actively working to add resources to our website and social media to ensure patrons have easy access to obtaining a card and are able to take advantage of freebies offered by publishers and web-based service providers.

Christine reported on the conflicting interests of closing Library Express locations and having staff empty book returns without knowing the full risk of handling materials. This ultimately led to the difficult decision to close our book returns. Community Relations staff member Suzanne Carney prepared signage for the book returns and staff members distributed them. We are asking people to hang onto materials until we are open again.

We are receiving and processing online card applications.

We are training staff who will be monitoring phones and chat reference sessions. We will start promoting this on Monday 3/23/20.

Christine attended a meeting about the 2020 Census today. Our local Census representatives hope the response time will be extended due to challenges related to in-person collection of information. Instead of banners to promote completing the Census at the library, the current plan is to install banners on the outside of our libraries to promote completing the Census at home or by phone, noting that library buildings are visible locations where the word can still be shared. The Whatcom Complete Count Committee is coordinating the creation of the banners.

The City of Blaine has issued an executive order mandating that the Blaine Library conference room be used by the Community Assistance Program Operations Center throughout the duration of the COVID-19 outbreak. Meetings will be by appointment only with limited numbers of people in the room at a time. Christine noted that while this was done through executive order and we didn't have a choice, we would have gladly offered our space for this community service. Lori suggested checking on insurance implications; Jackie will follow up.

We are proceeding with recording and airing storytime sessions.

Other staff remain on call awaiting assignments.

Claudia asked if anyone is working at Administrative Services. Christine reported only a few, and we are practicing social distancing. Branch managers have checked in on their locations but in general staff are working remotely using VPN.

Announcements and Adjourn

The Board training scheduled for April has been canceled.

Marvin adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be held at Administrative Services on April 21, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Address: 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226

Unanimously approved by the

WCLS Board of Trustees

Lori Jump, WCLS Trustee

04/21/2020

Date

Approved by Jackie Saul

Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and
Administration