



Location

Via teleconference for all attendees, in accordance with Proclamation 20.28.15 by the Governor of the State of Washington, which amends and extends Proclamation 20-28, *et seq.*, and currently allows open public meetings to occur remotely.

In Attendance

Trustees: Marvin Waschke, Chair; Lori Jump, Vice Chair; Claudia Disend, Secretary; Erika Lautenbach and Rodney Lofdahl. Absent: None.

Staff: Christine Perkins, Executive Director; Michael Cox, Deputy Director; Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and Administration; Thom Barthelme, Youth Services Manager; Mary Vermillion, Community Relations Manager; Christina Read, Human Resources Manager; Lisa Gresham, Collection Services Manager; Sarah Koehler, Ferndale Library and Mobile Services Manager; Dianne Marrs-Smith, Lynden Library Manager; Alexa Andrews, Everson and Sumas Library Manager; Katrina Carabba, Deming Library Manager; Ruth Nail, Administrative Assistant.

Guests: None.

Call to Order

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

Open Public Comment Opportunity

No public comment.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included minutes of the June 15, 2021 Regular Meeting of the WCLS Board of Trustees, as well as the following:

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- June 1-15, 2021 Payroll: Nos. 1026527486 -1026527488, (Voucher Nos. 547965 - 548116) Totaling \$204,350.26 and June 16-30, 2021 Payroll: Nos. 1026666714 -1026666717, (Voucher Nos. 548122 - 548274) Totaling \$198,858.24.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$96,714.32; \$30,722.32 of this is for employee funded contributions to dental insurance premiums, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2021-18G: Warrant Nos. 1127194-1127198 Totaling \$40,274.13
- Claim 2021-19G: Warrant Nos. 1127299-1127314 Totaling \$94,955.72
- Claim 2021-20G: Warrant Nos. 1127805-1127823 Totaling \$11,534.04
- Claim 2021-21G: Warrant Nos. 1128220-1128246 Totaling \$86,756.81

- Claim 2021-22G: Warrant Nos. 1128770-1128784 Totaling \$49,883.24

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2021-07C: Warrant No. 1127199 Totaling \$1,352.50
- Claim 2021-08C: Warrant Nos. 1127315-1127318 Totaling \$17,682.45
- Claim 2021-09C: Warrant No. 1128247 Totaling \$3,109.90
- Claim 2021-10C: Warrant Nos. 1128785-1128786 Totaling \$16,226.12

There were no questions. Claudia moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded. Unanimous board approval.

Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

Jackie reviewed her report, including the June Notes and Highlights section. She highlighted account number line 337.20 Leasehold Excise tax, which includes revenues such as those from timber tax. Jackie commented that the revenue we receive is usually from private timber harvests; however, this June's timber tax revenue of \$5,000 comes from state-owned land. This is an infrequent revenue source that will go into next year's capital fund.

Jackie reported on expenditures, pointing out that wages and benefits expenses are under budget, largely the result of an increase in position vacancies. Marv inquired about the vacancies, and Christine noted that there have been several retirements, movement of personnel out of the area, and promotions from within the organization. Christina confirmed a high level of recruiting, adding that she and the rest of the management team are working to fill those vacancies.

Indicating the \$1 million positive budget variance in the Ending Fund Balance at the end of June, Jackie reported that we are still spending down revenue from April property taxes and are maintaining a healthy margin to cover the trough in incoming cash flow until October.

Jackie shared photos of the Everson Library remodel project, noting that major construction is complete and some additional furnishing orders are in progress. She detailed the destinations and transition in use of surplus items that the system has donated to other organizations, as referenced in her written report.

Jackie presented Resolution 07/20/21-09 Authorizing an Interfund Transfer, as previously budgeted for the 2021 fiscal year, and answered Erika's question regarding how this figure is determined.

Claudia moved approval of Resolution 07/20/21-09 Authorizing an Interfund Transfer as presented. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Values Statement and Strategic Plan

Christine provided a summary of the development process for the updated Values Statement and draft Strategic Plan. She reiterated that staff and the Board have had input in the statement, which was further streamlined by a team consisting of herself, Thom and Marv. Christine thanked Communications Specialist Amy Jones for creating the visual layout to accompany the mission, vision, and values statements, as well as the graphic representation of the Strategic Plan. Christine acknowledged the efforts of Lisa Gresham in crafting the Purpose Statement and credited Thom for the distillation and clarity in the updated Values Statement. The trustees reviewed the statements and expressed their pleasure and support of the updated verbiage. Some trustees expressed concerns about the library card featured in the center photo possibly being mistaken as a credit card and offered suggestions, such as making the library card more prominent or changing the placement of the photos from the center to the bottom of the page. Christine confirmed that she will pass on these design suggestions to Amy and inquired if the Values Statement itself was ready for approval.

Rod moved approval of the Values Statement as presented. Seconded. Unanimously approved.

Christine presented the Strategic Plan for review and discussion. Rod noted that he is pleased with the

incorporation of the Board's previous input. Claudia commented that she appreciated the detailed goal and objective statements in the Strategic Plan. Christine provided expanded details on the goals, objectives, and bullet points in each of the five sections of the Plan: **COMMUNITY**, **ACCESS**, **RESOURCES**, **EQUITY**, and **STEWARDSHIP**.

The trustees offered recommendations for adjustments as follows:

COMMUNITY - Objective 3: Marv wants to make sure we are differentiating ourselves enough from Whatcom Talk, KGMI, Whatcom News, etc. He suggested rephrasing "trusted source" of local news, which may carry implications of an original news source involving investigative journalism. Terms such as "conduit" or "access point" were suggested. Claudia commented that she viewed this as an extension of our research and reference services, providing unbiased answers with integrity, in which various viewpoints are represented and we are able to highlight what is happening in the community and provide factual information. Lori expressed her concern of sufficient staffing to support this information-sharing, and Christine noted the potential need to refine the scope of this objective. Marv approved of the concept of revitalizing the reference aspect of the library and offered the suggestion to make it clearer that this is an extension of our reference services. Lori concurred and recommended a statement such, "WCLS continues to be a trusted access point..." so that it is clear that this is an extension or continuation of an existing effort.

ACCESS - Objective 5: Marv inquired if it were possible to expand upon the marketing section for added visual weight. Mary confirmed that the Marketing Plan itself would be lengthy and thorough.

RESOURCES: No changes suggested.

EQUITY – Objective 3: Lori recommended disability community advisors, in addition to a standard ADA audit. Objective 2/3: Erika noted accessibility should also extend beyond physical ability to speakers of languages other than English. She suggested additional signage in different languages to make those patrons feel welcomed and indicate that their needs/cultures are being addressed. Christine noted possible parallels with objectives in the ACCESS section.

STEWARDSHIP - Objective 5: Marv would like to see "minimal impact" changed to "positive impact." The other trustees agreed. Objective 6: With regard to the emergency preparedness plan and crisis communications plan, Lori inquired about sharing that information on our website.

Christine will incorporate these suggestions and present the revised Strategic Plan to the Board for final approval in August.

Break

Marv adjourned for a break from 10:21 to 10:30 a.m., during which Lori excused herself from the meeting.

Mary shared a link to an article on the merits of public libraries:

<https://www.marketplace.org/2021/07/20/public-libraries-investment-well-worth-it/>.

Policy Updates

- **Copying and Printing Services for Patrons Policy 4.02:** Michael recapped a summary of copying and printing fees over the past two years, including the May 2020 Board-approved waiver of these fees due to COVID-19. He presented Resolution 07/20/21-10 Waiving Printing Fees, the rationale to support this proposed waiver, and a suggested revision to the existing Copying and Printing Services for Patrons Policy 4.02, should the Board approve said resolution. Michael added that the system currently allows a credit of 20 pages per day under certain circumstances, such as in support of reference questions to staff. He noted that \$30,000 from printing fees was collected in 2019, and Jackie clarified that \$17,000 of such revenue was budgeted for 2021.

Michael introduced Library Managers Katrina Carabba, Dianne Marrs-Smith, and Alexa Andrews, of the Deming, Lynden, and Everson and Sumas branches, respectively. The Library Managers shared their experiences with patrons and copying and printing fees, pre-, during, and post-COVID waiver, and the impacts to patrons and staff in their branches, which vary in size and demographics.

Michael thanked the library managers for sharing, and all three managers thanked the trustees for their consideration of this proposed credit. Marv inquired how the weekly credit amount of \$7.00 was determined. Michael replied that we evaluated our current waived amount of \$21.00/week and our patrons' average historical use, as well as took into consideration amounts offered at other libraries, in order to determine a more equitable solution. He believes the \$7.00 per week figure allows the system to appropriately balance fiscal impact with positive user experience. Michael explained that we anticipated a weekly credit might be easier to manage for staff and patrons, especially students printing homework.

Rod moved approval of Resolution 07/20/21-10 Waiving Printing Fees as presented. Seconded. Unanimously approved, with Lori absent.

Claudia moved approval of the revised Copying and Printing Services for Patrons Policy 4.02 as presented. Seconded. Unanimously approved, with Lori absent.

Erika excused herself from the meeting.

- **Meeting Room and Facilities Use Policy 7.03 Attachment A – Schedule of Fees:** Michael presented the revised Schedule of Fees and outlined the updates in meeting room availability that precipitated this revision, including the addition of reservable study rooms at the Ferndale and Lynden Libraries, as well as the removal of the Island Library space, which cannot be closed off and reserved.

Claudia moved approval of the revised Meeting Room and Facilities Use Policy 7.03 Attachment A – Schedule of Fees as presented. Seconded. Unanimously approved, with Lori and Erika absent.

COVID-19 Phased Return to Service

Christine reported that all branches are fully open and people are beginning to come back inside. While we are not hosting in-person events, our library meeting rooms are reservable for personal use. Michael noted the reduced capacity in our meeting rooms as we proceed cautiously with the full reopening of our facilities.

Birch Bay Library Update

Christine reported that our resolution requesting the establishment of the Birch Bay Library Capital Facility Area has been presented to the Whatcom County Council, which had their first reading of the item on July 13. It was moved forward to the second reading and Council vote, scheduled for July 27. Christine will be attending that meeting via Zoom, the current platform for the Council's public meetings.

Staff Reports: Executive Director

In addition to her written report, Christine praised the Community Relations team for winning their second John Cotton Dana award for outstanding public relations. She congratulated the team, noting the added distinction of receiving national recognition this year for work that was done completely in-house and during a pandemic.

Christine highlighted the honor of the Point Roberts Library being selected to host Governor Inslee's July 9 visit to discuss the impacts of the prolonged border closure on that community, as well as the opportunity to attend. The Governor praised WCLS on our innovation in setting up the Point Roberts Library Express location to serve the community in a situation where they otherwise would have lacked service.

Adding to Jackie's earlier sentiments, Christine expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to have items that have been well-loved and -used by WCLS get a second life elsewhere.

Staff Reports: Deputy Director

Michael presented his written report and highlighted our services at the Whatcom County Jail and the relocation of our library space there. Michael noted that staff take recommendations and suggestions from patrons and distribute materials by taking a cart around from which patrons make their selections. This service operates independently from the rest of WCLS system and does not feature a specific holds function. Requests are filled through a separate Jail Services budget, materials pulled from the main collection, magazine subscriptions for the jail, and surplus magazines from other sources.

Michael reported that WCLS staff get first aid and CPR training and certification every two years. He welcomed the Board to join and asked that they contact him to attend a session. Marv requested to be put on that list.

Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

Building on Michael's report, Thom commended the joyous curiosity and engagement of Barry MacHale, Public Services Assistant for Outreach & Jail Services, at a recent Library Reading Conversations training session.

Thom emphasized the opportunities for outreach and connection for the Youth Services team this summer and recounted the two examples included in his written report. Upon Claudia's request, Thom expounded on how Youth Services team members used their skills and expertise to adapt and customize their services for the children at the migrant camps. He explained that, in library settings, we typically start with reading a book together and then doing a craft based on the book. In this case, however, many of the children had no experience sitting and listening to someone read a book. Seeing the need to adjust to a more relatable experience, the team shifted to a combination of storytelling, singing, and game playing to creatively engage the children and establish a positive interaction upon which to build a future relationship.

Thom detailed other approaches being taken, outside of the traditional issuance of a card and checkout model, to bring library materials and services to underserved communities. At the migrant camp, for example, we have installed a Little Free Library station, funded through the generosity of the Whatcom County Library Foundation.

Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

Mary reviewed her written report and highlighted her team's celebration of winning the John Cotton Dana Award. She noted that this award comes with a \$10,000 grant for marketing activities, which will be applied to the Strategic Plan. She expressed gratitude for the support of the Sasquatch and Friends campaign, which worked with the cooperation and support of the trustees, front-line staff and the community. Mary gave kudos to her team and the Ferndale Library team who had to process all of the new library card sign-ups. She expressed her appreciation to the Board for their support in the reallocation of marketing funds from outside agencies to in-house applications and thanked them for the opportunities subsequently opened for her team.

Mary reminded everyone that the quarterly Marketing Committee meeting is next Tuesday. She noted the continued success of our new podcast, [WCLS in Whatcom County Presents Library Stories](#), which introduces the public to library staff, stories, services and activities. The recent episode features Early Learning Coordinator and Children's Librarian Theresa Morrison, Branch Manager Alexa Andrews, and an interview with Christine about MLIS degrees. Mary thanked Community Relations Aide Suzanne Carney for her compilations of media clips and links for the monthly Community Relations reports.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

Michael presented the reports, noting our print circulation is only down 19.5% compared June 2019. This month follows the trend indicating that patrons are transitioning back to the print collection. Electronic circulation is increased compared to 2019, even though it is decreased compared to 2020, when e-circ was the only resource available. Total circulation is down 16% compared to 2019.

