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Location

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This meeting was held in a hybrid manner, with remote attendance via Zoom and in-person attendance at Administrative Services, 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226.

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In Attendance

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**Trustees:** Marvin Waschke, Chair; Lori Jump, Vice Chair; Matthew Santos, and Rodney Lofdahl.

Absent: Erika Lautenbach

**Staff:** Christine Perkins, Executive Director; Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and Administration; Thom Barthelmess, Youth Services Manager; Mary Vermillion, Community Relations Manager; Lisa Gresham, Collection Services Manager; Geoff Fitzpatrick, IT Services Manager; Beth Andrews, Human Resources Manager; Maggie Mae Nase, Learning Coordinator; Dianne Marrs-Smith, Lynden Library Branch Manager; Jennifer Rick, Foundation Development Director; Amanda Bonilla, Administrative Assistant.

**Guests:** None

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Call to Order

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Marvin determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m., followed by a reading of the WCLS Land Acknowledgement by Thom.

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Open Public Comment

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No public comment.

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New Trustee Introduction/Board Committees and Positions Review

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Christine introduced and welcomed Matthew Santos, Blaine resident and new Board of Trustees Member.

Christine discussed the need to fill the Community Relations and Personnel Trustee committees, due to resignation of former Board Secretary Claudia Disend. The Personnel Committee requires a second person on the bargaining team representing the trustees, and would be invited to participate in interest-based bargaining training and union negotiations. After discussion, Christine and the Board concluded that Marv will be the new Personnel Committee member and Lori will take the role of alternate. Matthew volunteered to serve on the Community Relations Committee.

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Consent Agenda

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The Consent Agenda included minutes of the July 19, 2022 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following:

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- July 1-15, 2022 Payroll: Nos. 1030712120-1030712122, (Voucher Nos. 551949-552096) Totaling \$207,581.74 and July 16-31, 2022 Payroll: Nos. 1030886159-1030886164, (Voucher Nos. 552103-552250) Totaling \$205,337.79.
- Claim 2022-21G: Warrant Nos. 1149894-1149915 Totaling \$27,351.05
- Claim 2022-22G: Warrant Nos. 1150844-1150866 Totaling \$113,189.67
- Claim 2022-23G: Warrant Nos. 1151240-1151263 Totaling \$129,080.09

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2022-10C: Warrant Nos. 1149916-1149917 Totaling \$18,005.17
- Claim 2022-11C: Warrant No. 1150867 Totaling \$388.42
- Claim 2022-12C: Warrant Nos. 1151264-1151265 Totaling \$1,659.66

Authorization to Void Warrant:

- Resolution 08/16/22-06 voiding warrant 1149906

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

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IT Services and Network Update

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Geoff gave an update on WCLS's network status, reporting that IT Services were making solid headway in restoring systems and accessing backup data. WCLS now has phone lines active at all branches and at Administrative Services (AS). The next task for IT to take on is educating staff on how best to use their new and existing technology tools. They will also be trying to do much as possible via cloud computing, because of the risks of having critical operating material physically based at AS.

Marv initiated a discussion of a potential Board IT Committee. It was determined an ad hoc committee would be preferable to a formal one, and its members would be limited to two, to minimize security concerns and uphold the Open Public Meetings Act requirements. Christine pointed out that the results of the Requests for Proposals (RFP) presented in today's meeting would be ideal for such a committee to review.

**The Chair moved that a Board IT Committee, consisting of two trustees, be formed and meet as needed to review IT issues. Motion seconded. Passed unanimously.**

Lori was determined to be the second Committee member. Matthew stated his interest in joining it in 2023, when Marv's service is complete. The committee will also include staff members from the IT department and representatives from AS and Public Services.

Marv indicated he will negotiate a date and time in September 2022 for the first IT Committee meeting. He will also create an agenda, as well as a template for a review of WCLS's IT systems that would record changes, review incidents, etc.

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## Request for Proposals: Cybersecurity Consulting

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Christine presented this Request for Proposals, which will engage a consultant to audit our security systems and make certain that WCLS Policies and Procedures are aligned with expert recommendations. The goal would be to decrease our risk of cyber-attacks and reduce the impact of any possible future attacks. The RFP contains all of the deliverables that will be expected, including a thorough testing of WCLS systems. The consultants would complete their work by the end of the year.

Christine indicated that the cost of this consulting is an important investment. The Board was asked to approve a Fund Balance Amendment to accommodate a maximum budget of \$100,000.

The RFP was sent to contacts extracted from the rosters of the Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (MRSC), as well as the City of Bellingham's cybersecurity team, and two firms WCLS has been working with for cybersecurity. There may be presentations from the finalists before determining who is awarded the contract. Lori suggested that Christine send the RFP to the Whatcom Community College cybersecurity team to forward to their contacts, as well as checking in with the American Library Association.

***Lori moved to approve authorization for Executive Director to execute a contract with a cybersecurity consultant to perform work as described in the RFP for Cybersecurity Consulting for an amount not to exceed \$100,000, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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## Request for Proposals: Microsoft 365 Deployment and File Structure Optimization

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Christine presented this Request for Proposals for a consultant to assist with WCLS's administration team's file management, records management and working with all of the software elements of Microsoft 365. The consultants would train our Learning Coordinator and other leaders so they can 'train the trainer,' a method which has been employed in the past and would allow experts in to be present at all branches and AS. She expressed a need to execute this work quickly, and the proposal indicates the project should be completed by the end of October.

Matthew inquired how staff would be impacted if this RFP were not authorized. Christine replied that though she cannot quantify what staff would be missing out on by not using a consultant, the likelihood for smoother work processes is high. Marv predicted that the consulting would likely be under budget, and expressed his support for setting up technology systems for maximum functionality from the beginning.

***Lori moved to approve authorization for Executive Director to execute a contract with a Microsoft 365 consultant to perform work as described in the RFP for Microsoft 365 Deployment and File Structure Optimization, for an amount not to exceed \$50,00, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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## Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

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Jackie reviewed her report, including the July Notes and Highlights section. Based on statements from the County and the money recorded in payroll and warrants, the current financial standing is generally consistent with prior years.

Jackie reported she is continuing to work with FEMA for the Sumas flooding claim. They will pay for 75% of losses not covered by insurance. She anticipates receiving around \$23,250 and is awaiting a conclusion. She is also handling a pending insurance claim for vandalism at the AS building. She noted that the formation of the new IT Committee will be helpful in making decisions around renewing cyber insurance coverage.

Jackie outlined her three-part budget amendment and pointed out that the revenue coming in from the cyber insurance claim will help cover some consulting costs. On the expenses side, the increase in professional services costs for the two RFPs, as well as for the legal services taken on in response to the network outage, totals a reduction of about \$178,000. Her second resolution involved a transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Fund, which is a routine annual occurrence.

***The Chair moved to approve Resolution 08/16/22-07 Amending the 2022 General Fund Budget, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

***Rod moved to approve Resolution 08/16/22-08 Authorizing an interfund Transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Fund, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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### Request to Serve Alcohol at Friends of Birch Bay Library Event

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Christine presented to the Board a request from the Friends of Birch Bay Library (FOBBL) to serve alcohol at the Birch Bay Library site to their members at the Annual General Meeting. Lori outlined concerns of liability and the public image of WCLS approving of drinking. Marv noted that past events where alcohol has been served have been without issues.

***Rod moved to approve Request to Serve Alcohol to the FOBBL members at their Annual General Meeting Event on September 12, 2022, as presented. Seconded. Passed 3-1.***

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### Break

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Marvin adjourned for a break from 10:16-10:25 a.m.

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### Staff Reports: Executive Director

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In addition to her written report, Christine highlighted the following:

The Friends of the Library groups are back in action this summer, holding events such as the Fourth of July Blaine Friends book sale and the Island Library Friends silent auction, both of which elicited a great response from the community. The South Whatcom Friends group are excited to engage with families in person again, and the Friends of Birch Bay Library are in high attendance at Birch Bay's many summer festivals.

The Check Out Washington program has been highly popular, and Christine commended Lisa Gresham and Collection Services for kitting out backpacks with everything needed to enjoy Washington state parks. Lori mentioned she would be excited to share Check Out Washington with her contacts, and Lisa noted there are a set number of passes that are available each year.

Christine mentioned that, in observing patron behavior in the libraries, the return of self-checkout has been highly popular.

Looking at WCLS's Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work, Christine highlighted the Collection Services team's work in curating books for Disability Pride month. She suggested that WCLS leadership encourage some staff to attend a Disability in Libraries Summit, and that supporting disability community could be something to highlight in 2023 Strategic Goals.

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## Staff Reports: Deputy Director

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In Michael Cox's absence, Christine shared Michael's written report and highlighted the following:

There have been recent staffing reconfigurations due to retirement of longtime staff members Zynet Schmid, Distribution Services Supervisor and Sarah Koehler, Ferndale and Mobile Services Manager. The role of Ferndale Branch Manager had strong candidates, and Alix Prior was chosen for the role. Alix was able to relate her background in social work and homelessness advocacy to the work that can be done at a public library system. Ferndale has faced some challenges in terms of vandalism, and Alix's background is a good fit for taking on these issues. Lori commended Patty Zanin, Ferndale Assistant Manager, who has been temporarily taking the role of Ferndale branch manager, for doing an excellent job.

WCLS leadership is currently reviewing applications for combined role of Distribution Services Supervisor and Mobile Services Manager.

Christine relayed that the Friends of Birch Bay Library have been reaching out to local legislators on the topic of the Birch Bay Library Scope Change. FOBBL members will get to have face time with these legislators on August 27, which will be a great opportunity to explain WCLS's plans for the building in more detail. She expressed gratitude to the local politicians participating in this effort.

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## Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

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Thom shared his written report and highlighted the following:

Youth Services has been working on Summer Reading Kickoff Week and the subsequent distribution of forever books, paid for by Whatcom Educational Credit Union (WECU) and the Whatcom County Library Foundation (WCLF). Despite it coinciding with the network outage, Kickoff Week was highly successful. Youth Services positioned their book delivery as a moment for youth to affirm their reading and their membership in their local reading community. Though quiet, the Kickoff events in Deming and Everson were sites of rich reading conversations with young people.

Thom showed appreciation for his staff's efforts in distributing Summer Reading books, particularly Sarah Lavender who coordinated the entire program. Rhiannon Le Fay also did excellent work in sorting and sending out a large number of books. Thom reported it has overall been an extra successful summer for Youth Services programs.

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## Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

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Mary discussed her written report. She noted the following:

Her report caught up on the happenings around the ALA annual conference, which was held in Washington D.C. at the end of June. Mary and Amy Jones attended to celebrate John Cotton Dana award WCLS received in 2021. Carmi Parker also received an award for her work in equitable distribution of digital materials. In addition, Mary shared local news articles highlighting Sarah Koehler's retirement and Sarah Lavender's work in the Summer Reading program.

Marv commended the recognition WCLS received at the ALA conference. Lori requested that Mary make a presentation on the conference as a future trustee education effort.

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## Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

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In addition to the written statistical report, Christine shared:

Door counters at the branches have been offline and will be reconnected. In the meantime, staff are generally reporting that branches have been busy. Looking at digital content usage, the measures showed that though Kanopy use peaked during pandemic, it continues to be strong over 2022. Database usage has been overall stronger throughout the spring than the summer, which correlates to the times staff are present in schools promoting library resources. Lisa noted that a drop-off in usage in June and July coincided with the network outage.

Marv inquired as to how circulation and services are recovering from the pandemic. Christine replied they are still shy of pre-pandemic levels, but are improving each month. Thom added that Story Times have only been reintroduced this summer, and only time will tell how this program will contribute to recovering to pre-pandemic levels of public engagement.

Marv noted that there appears to be a permanent shift from digital to physical use. Lisa responded that Whatcom County experiences internet connectivity issues that currently keep WCLS digital usership increases modest. She does not anticipate a large change in these statistics until internet access is distributed more equitably across the county.

Thom added that schools have had reduced access to young people, due to concerns about COVID exposure. Youth Services is looking to get holds pickups in schools going next year, which will have a positive impact on physical circulation.

Matthew inquired about how success is measured in the quantitative performance measures presented in the report. Christine noted that we have done comparisons to similar sized library systems in the past, but these have gone by the wayside with the pandemic. As WCLS moves forward, she sees that there could be opportunity for more objective analyses of statistics. Christine pointed out that WCLS per capita usage is favorable in terms of the rest of Washington state. Lisa added that WCLS rebounded in circulation use more quickly after pandemic lockdown than other Washington library systems.

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## Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

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No Personnel Committee report.

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## Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

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Jenn reported that Branch Out is coming September 9, and organizing efforts and RSVPs are going well. The WCLF meeting on August 18, 2022 will mainly be concerned with Branch Out.

Jenn expressed her appreciation to Christopher and Geoff in IT for recovering important WCLF financial data that had been lost. She also noted that there is a significant balance in the Sumas Recovery Fund, the check for which can hopefully be presented in a public ceremony.

