



whatcom county  
**library system**

## APPROVED MINUTES

### Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

December 16, 2025

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#### Location

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This meeting was held in a hybrid manner, with remote attendance via Microsoft Teams and in-person attendance at Blaine Library 610 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Blaine, WA, 98230.

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#### In Attendance

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**Trustees:** Rodney Lofdahl, Chair; Matthew Santos, Vice Chair; John Miller and Jes Stugelmayer. Absent: Danielle Gaughen, Secretary.

**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; Beth Andrews, Human Resources Manager; Dianne Marrs-Smith, Birch Bay and Lynden Library Manager and Friends of the Birch Bay Library (FOBBL) President; Maggie Mae Nase, Learning Coordinator; Allyson McBride Records Management Specialist & Executive Assistant; Emma Radosevich, Collection Development Librarian.

**Guests:** Karyna Orcutt and Annika Grande, WA State Auditor's Office

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#### Call to Order

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Rod determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m., followed by a reading of the WCLS Land Acknowledgement by Christine.

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#### Open Public Comment

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No public comment.

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#### Consent Agenda

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The Consent Agenda included minutes of the November 18, 2025, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following:

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- October 16-31, 2025 payroll: check nos. 1044984730-1044984734 and voucher nos. 564396-564544 totaling \$250,948.04 and November 1-15, 2025 payroll: check nos. 1045149599-1045149603 and voucher nos. 564549-564697 totaling \$241,809.41.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$85,519.55; \$44,084.85 of this is for employee-funded contributions to dental and vision insurance premiums, Health Savings Accounts, and PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).

- Claim 2025-44G: warrant nos. 1266723-1266740 totaling \$38,800.83
- Claim 2025-45G: warrant nos. 1266929-1266947 totaling \$117,131.59
- Claim 2025-46G: warrant nos. 1267048-1267088 totaling \$94,837.55
- Claim 2025-47G: warrant nos. 1267793-1267823 totaling \$71,207.39

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2025-19C: warrant no. 1266741 totaling \$1,177.22
- Claim 2025-20C: warrant no. 1267089 totaling \$1,254.76
- Claim 2025-21C: warrant no. 1267090 totaling \$307.50
- Claim 2025-22C: warrant no. 1267824 totaling \$4,631.91

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

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**Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report**

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Karyna Orcutt and Annika Grande from the Washington State Auditor's Office joined the meeting. They introduced the current audit process that is taking place, covering fiscal years 2023 and 2024. Karyna and Annika provided documentation of the current audit scope, including the two separate audits taking place this year. One of the audits is an Accountability Audit, which focuses on compliance and safeguarding of assets. The second audit being conducted is a Financial Statement audit. Annika is meeting with Jackie on a weekly basis. The guests confirmed that they hope to conclude the audits in January, at which point they will offer an exit conference, similar to today's entrance conference. Rod thanked Karyna and Annika for sharing. The guests left the meeting at 9:19 a.m.

Jackie reviewed her report, including the November Notes and Highlights section. She noted that there haven't been significant changes to report on. Jackie attended County Council Committee meeting on December 1<sup>st</sup> and confirmed that the levy amount resulting from the lid lift was included in the packet that will be presented to the state Department of Revenue.

Jackie confirmed that there have been adjustments made to the 2026 preliminary budget that was presented in November 2025 Board meeting. Whatcom County Library Foundation recently passed their budget which included a small amount of revenue for WCLS; this is now reflected in the 2026 budget. Something to keep in mind is that the County office is inviting those who have had 2025 flood damage to submit claims, which could bring down property evaluations, potentially reducing the 2026 levy which is based on the voter approved rate of \$0.42. Further information will come in the beginning of 2026, and the budget will be adjusted if need be. Jackie reviewed changes to expense items, and the impact of these changes on the ending fund balance. The Capital plan does not include any potential repairs or updates for the Sumas flood damage, a budget update will reflect any expenses added. Rod requested confirmation on whether there are any changes to the schedule of fines and fees. Jackie confirmed that there are no changes and has been this way since the last update in 2021. John complimented Jackie on the details included in the report.

***John moved to approve Resolution No. 12/16/25-20. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

***Matthew moved to approve Resolution No. 12/16/25-21. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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**Policy Updates**

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**Hours of Work Policy 12.12** – Jackie presented this policy update, which is revised to include Discretionary Time off in the statement that *use of paid sick, vacation, personal or discretionary time off will not result in an employee exceeding their budgeted hours*. It also includes a provision for how staff without budgeted hours will use this leave.

***Rod moved to approve the updated 12.12 Policy, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

**Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21** – Jackie presented this policy update, which is revised to state that employees may retain Discretionary Time Off when taking unpaid leave.

***Rod moved to approve the updated 12.21 Policy, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

**Family Medical Leave Policy 12.23** – Jackie and Beth presented this policy update, which was revised to include Discretionary Time Off. The update also removed the 6-month probationary period to use vacation time as there is no longer a wait period for new WCLS employees.

***Rod moved to approve the updated 12.23 Policy, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

**Domestic Violence Policy 12.24** – Jackie presented this policy update, which was revised to include Discretionary Time Off in Section D, Item 2: Leave Pay and Accrual.

***Rod moved to approve the updated 12.24 Policy, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

**Temporary Adverse Working Conditions Policy 12.45** – Jackie presented this policy update, which now includes Discretionary Time Off as an option for Non-Bargaining Unit employees to use.

***Rod moved to approve the updated 12.45 Policy, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

**Public Records Policy 21.01** – Jackie presented this policy update, which clarifies that, in addition to holiday closures, records are not available during other times when Administrative Services is closed to the public, such as weather-related closures.

***Rod moved to approve the updated 21.01 Policy, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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#### Northfork Update

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Christine informed the Board about an incident that took place at the North Fork Library which included an individual filming other patrons while conducting a first amendment audit.

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#### Flood Update

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Christine presented photos of the Sumas flood impact to the Board. Christine gave thanks to Paul Fullner, Everson and Sumas Branch Manager, Ryan Cullup and Mark Barrett, Facilities Management Coordinator, for 2025-12-16 APPROVED Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the WCLS Board of Trustees

arriving at the Sumas branch before the beginning of the flooding, allowing them to lift many books, furniture and other materials to avoid water damage. WCLS also thanks the staff who came to Sumas on Saturday, December 13, to help salvage books, furniture, IT equipment and more. PPE was provided for all those who assisted with the salvaging process. Christine also thanked Sno-Isle Library System for providing wooden carts for WCLS to load the collection on. After surveillance review, it was recorded that within two hours there was 17 inches of water in the library.

The Board discussed what the next steps should be for renovations as well as what potential solutions for service may look like while we wait for the building to be restored. Christine will begin conversations with the City of Sumas to get some of the Board's questions answered and a better timeline in place.

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#### Break

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Rod adjourned for a break from 10:40 - 10:50 a.m.

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#### Strategic Planning Discussion

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The Board continued discussions around the Strategic Planning Process starting in 2026. Jes agreed that attending community events could have beneficial outcomes and present an opportunity to reach a more diverse range of community members. The group started to discuss potential questions that could be included in a survey for the public. Christine shared a draft version of a 2026 calendar. The Board reviewed the draft and encouraged looking at Whatcom County events that are already scheduled so that WCLS can plan on attending some.

Christine shared an activity with the Board called "No Brainers" that she requested they all take some time to complete before the next meeting in order to help with this planning process. Matthew asked the Board if they would like to determine a Board meeting date in March to fully focus on Strategic Planning. The group agreed to wait until January to plan that date but will be sure to do it then.

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#### Staff Reports: Executive Director

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In addition to her written report, Christine highlighted an article regarding the Llano, TX Library System. The District Court approved allowing the County Board to have control over making decisions around library materials. The Supreme Court refused to look at this decision, which allowed the District Court to move forward with the approval. This article is quite recent so more information will continue to come out regarding the impact this could have on other systems. Christine will continue to monitor, and she will provide the article to the Board.

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#### Staff Reports: Deputy Director

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In the written report, Michael highlighted the Lynden Library. The Lynden branch manager, Dianne Marrs-Smith, attended this Board meeting and had an opportunity to discuss the report. Dianne wanted to highlight that it has been encouraging to see many patrons coming back to the library and increasing engagement. When looking at 10-year review of patron attendance, Dianne confirmed that Lynden is on an upswing, especially after COVID shutdowns. She was also happy to report that Lynden branch staff are doing well.

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#### Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

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Thom had no further comments on his report.

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## Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

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Mary had no further comments on her report.

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## Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

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Christine asked the Board if they would like to continue to have Physical Circulation totals broken down between disc materials and all other materials. The Board confirmed that they would like to continue to monitor this information. Physical Circulation stats will continue to be pulled and defined as disc materials and all other materials.

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## Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

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The Personnel Committee reported that John and Rod interviewed three candidates for the open Trustee position. They identified J. Riley Sweeney as the top candidate.

***Rod moved to recommend J. Riley Sweeney to fill the upcoming trustee position vacancy. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

Rod will send a letter to the Whatcom County Executive sharing the Board's recommendation.

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

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No comments were made.

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## Announcements and Adjourn

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Christine requested that Jes, Matthew and Mary work on finding a marketing committee meeting date in January.

Rod adjourned the meeting at 11:36 a.m.

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## Next Meeting

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The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on January 20, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. online via Microsoft Teams and in person at Ferndale Library, 2125 Main St., Ferndale, WA, 98248.

/s/	01/20/2026	/s/
Danielle Gaughen, Board Secretary	Date	Allyson McBride, Exec. Assistant