



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Whatcom County Library System
September 19, 2023

Via Teams **and** Everson Library
104 Kirsch Drive
Everson, WA 98247

WCLS Vision: *An engaged community where curiosity is cultivated, literacy flourishes and democratic ideals thrive.*

1. 9:00 a.m. **Call to Order.** Quorum determined. Land Acknowledgement.
We are on the ancestral homeland of the Nooksack, Lummi and other Coast Salish peoples. They have been its stewards since time immemorial, respecting the land, river and ocean with the understanding that everything is connected, related and alive. We acknowledge the elders and their collective and individual plights and achievements. We consider the legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together today. And we pursue ongoing action, to build lasting relationships and grow together so that all may prosper.
2. 9:05 a.m. **Open Public Comment Opportunity**
This period is set aside for persons wishing to address the Board. Each person may have up to three minutes for this purpose. Written comments may be submitted to Em.Olpinski@wcls.org prior to the meeting.
3. 9:10 a.m. **Service Anniversary Recognition – Maggie Mae Nase**
4. 9:15 a.m. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Meeting Minutes
 - b. Expenditures
 - c. Void Warrants Older than One Year
5. 9:20 a.m. **Financial Report and Resolutions**
 - a. Finance Committee Report
 - b. 2024 Budget Planning Schedule
6. 9:30 a.m. **Trustee Education: Labor Relations**
7. 9:55 a.m. **Policy Update**
 - a. Copying and Printing Services for Patrons Policy 4.02
 - b. Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21
 - c. Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23
8. 10:10 a.m. **Tour of Everson McBeath Community Library**
9. 10:30 a.m. **BREAK**
10. 10:40 a.m. **Staff Reports**
 - a. Executive Director
 - b. Deputy Director
 - c. Youth Services Manager
 - d. Community Relations Manager

Board of Trustees Meetings are open to the public in accordance with RCW 42.30. The Board is currently holding meetings with options for in-person or remote participation. Persons wishing to be provided with an internet link or telephone number to access the meeting are asked to please email Em.Olpinski@wcls.org before 4:00 p.m. Monday, September 18, 2022. Written comments may be submitted to Em.Olpinski@wcls.org prior to the meeting.

11. 11:00 a.m. **Performance Measures and Committee Reports**
 - a. Performance Measures
 - b. Personnel Committee – Trustee Recruitment
 - c. Whatcom County Library Foundation

12. 11:15 a.m. **Announcements and Adjourn**
 - a. All Friends & Foundation Gathering September 20 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Ferndale Library
Trustees sign cards for Friends
 - b. Wage and Benefit Negotiations – Rod and Holly
 - October 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Administrative Services
 - October 10 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Administrative Services
 - October 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Administrative Services (backup date)
 - c. Board Budget Retreat October 31 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Ferndale Library
 - d. Trustee Interviews: TBD
 - e. Open Book Festival November 5 from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Ferndale Events Center

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Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	9/19/2023
Committee or Department:	Administration Department
Subject:	Consent Agenda – Board Meeting Minutes, Monthly Expenditures, Resolution to Void Warrants
Prepared By:	Jackie Saul
Impact upon Budget?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Recommendation or Request: Approval of consent agenda items.

Suggested Motion for Consideration: Move approval of consent agenda items as presented.

Summary:

Meeting Minutes:

- August 15, 2023 Regular Board Meeting

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- July 16-31, 2023 payroll: check nos. 1035250452-1035250454 and voucher nos. 555853-556002 totaling \$219,527.26 and August 1-15, 2023 payroll: check nos. 1035450938-1035450942 and voucher nos. 556010- 556160 totaling \$227,259.34.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$103,049.39; \$31,018.43 of this is for employee funded contributions to dental insurance premiums, Health Savings Accounts, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2023-30G: warrant nos. 1173928-1173945 totaling \$101,602.49
- Claim 2023-31G: warrant nos. 1174141-1174157 totaling \$11,920.40
- Claim 2023-32G: warrant nos. 1174727-1174753 totaling \$94,921.99
- Claim 2023-33G: warrant nos. 1175367-1175376 totaling \$34,279.11

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2023-14C: warrant nos. 1175041-1175042 totaling \$45,840.39

Authorization to Void Warrants

- Resolution 09/19/23-08 voiding warrants older than one year

Alternatives: N/A

Fiscal Impact:

Comments: The Finance Committee has reviewed the General and Capital Fund claims listed above. They reviewed that there were no General Journal entries in August.



Location

This meeting was held in a hybrid manner, with remote attendance via Microsoft Teams and in-person attendance at Sumas Library, 461 2nd Street, Sumas, WA 98295.

In Attendance

Trustees: Rodney Lofdahl, Chair; Lori Jump, Vice Chair; Erika Lautenbach, Secretary; Matthew Santos and Holly Robinson.

Staff: Michael Cox, Deputy 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; Ryan Cullup, Facilities Services Manager; Beth Andrews, Human Resources Manager; Dianne Marrs-Smith, Lynden Library Manager and Friends of the Birch Bay Library (FOBBL) President; Jennifer Rick, Foundation Development Director; Em Olpinski, Administrative Assistant; Paul Fullner, Everson and Sumas Library Manager; Neil McKay, Online Experience Coordinator; Alix Prior, Ferndale Library Manager; Coreen Kurtz, PSA – Cultural Liaison; Joshua Olsen, PSA – Cultural Liaison; Amelia Martinez, PSA – Cultural Liaison; Diana Antaño, PSA – Cultural Liaison.

Guests: N/A

Call to Order

Rodney determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., followed by a reading of the WCLS Land Acknowledgement by Michael.

Open Public Comment

No public comment.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included minutes of the July 18, 2023 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following:

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- June 16-30, 2023 payroll: check nos. 1034901227-1034901231 and voucher nos. 555547-555691 totaling \$216,236.97 and July 1-15, 2023 payroll: check nos. 1035078759-1035078763 and voucher nos. 555699-555845 totaling \$216,156.73.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$88,542.48; \$30,195.22 of this is for employee funded contributions to dental insurance premiums, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).

- Claim 2023-26G: warrant nos. 1172074-1172113 totaling \$163,370.98
- Claim 2023-27G: warrant nos. 1172959-1172970 totaling \$45,795.98
- Claim 2023-28G: warrant nos. 1173067-1173092 totaling \$95,050.89
- Claim 2023-29G: warrant nos. 1173635-1173645 totaling \$66,739.97

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2023-13C: warrant no. 1172119 totaling \$135.00

Holly moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded. Approved unanimously.

Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

Jackie reviewed her report, including the July Notes and Highlights section. She shared that we have received 56% of our budgeted revenue for the year. We also received a property tax refund of \$33,733 in July, following a dispute over a highly valued property being resolved. Our operating revenue for 2023 is up about 3% from 2022, while our operating expenses are up about 7.3%.

As of July, our operating expenses for the year were at 54% of budget. In July, Jackie conducted an annual inventory of WCLS' capital and small and attractive assets with help from WCLS Accountant, Ruth Nail. This involved visiting branches to count electronics and other valuable supplies. Jackie has no concerns with the findings from this inventory.

Jackie shared that since switching to the Public Employee Benefit Board (PEBB) system in 2021, we have had some issues with deposits to Health Savings Accounts being delayed, largely because they were being sent by mail. We recently transitioned to an electronic payment process that should hopefully reduce delays.

Following some time off at the end of August, Jackie will begin working on the 2024 budget. Ryan will be joining Jackie in meetings with branch managers to discuss facilities needs for the coming year.

The 2023 transfer of \$45,000 from the General Fund to the Capital Fund occurred at the end of last month, following the board's approval.

Jackie then shared some potential dates and times for an upcoming Budget Retreat with the trustees. The retreat was scheduled for October 31 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Rod commented that the lighting project at Deming Library is coming along nicely. Jackie said that Ryan has taken over this project, which encompasses updating the library's fluorescent lighting with LED lighting. Rod said that the new lighting appears to improve the ambience of the building. Jackie commented that the new fixtures project light up, helping to highlight the building's beams, which will be cleaned soon.

Michael informed the group that the meeting was running ahead of schedule and suggested re-ordering the agenda to move item six, Birch Bay Library Planning Project Update, to before Item five, Trustee Education: Cultural Liaison Staff, to give presenters more time to join the meeting.

Holly moved to reorder the agenda, as described by Michael. Seconded. Approved unanimously.

Birch Bay Library Planning Project Update

Michael said that the documents necessary to get under contract for the new library in Birch Bay were shared with the Washington State Department of Commerce (DoC) in early July. These documents are currently still being reviewed.

At Michael's last meeting with DoC, it was indicated that we will not be required to provide a 50% match of the \$2 million state grant we were awarded for the Birch Bay Library project in 2019.

We acquired the Birch Bay Library property in 2017. When we were awarded our grant in 2019, the earliest date for reimbursable expenses relating to the use of the grant was 2016, and we have been informed by DoC that this still applies to our grant. In our initial grant application, we did not request reimbursement for the

acquisition of the property, but in our 2022 scope change request we did. The submitted budget anticipates a reimbursement of about \$280,000 for property acquisition. However, this detail needs to be confirmed by DoC before our contract can be executed. Once we are under contract for this project, we will be able to begin the request for qualifications (RFQ) process.

Michael also informed the trustees that our contact at DoC will be retiring in October and that fundraising efforts of the Friends of Birch Bay Library have been going well.

Trustee Education: Cultural Liaison Staff

WCLS Public Service Assistant (PSA)-Cultural Liaisons Coreen Kurtz, Amelia Martinez, Diana Antaño, and Joshua Olsen joined the meeting virtually to discuss the role that Cultural Liaisons play at WCLS.

Michael shared that it was part of WCLS' 2019 Action Plan to find a better way to meet the needs of traditionally underserved populations in Whatcom County, including the Hispanic, Indigenous, Punjabi, Russian, and Ukrainian communities of the County. We recognized that we needed to have staff with cultural knowledge and experience with these communities in order to meet their needs. The PSA-Cultural Liaison positions were introduced to serve this role. Michael noted that WCLS also has a team of 15 staff who have passed a test certifying that they are bilingual.

Amelia has been working for WCLS for 13 years and is a Cultural Liaison to the Hispanic community at Lynden Library. Joshua is a registered member of the Nooksack Tribe and is a Cultural Liaison to this community at Deming Library. Diana is a Liaison to the Hispanic community at Everson Library. Coreen Kurtz is a registered member of the Lummi Nation and is a Liaison to this community at Ferndale Library. She has been with WCLS since June.

Michael said that WCLS' Cultural Liaison positions are founded on the idea that representation in libraries matters. The demographics of library staff often do not match the demographics of the people they're serving. Michael then gave a summary of how the PSA-Cultural Liaison positions were developed. Involving community stakeholders from the communities we are aiming to serve played a key role in developing the Cultural Liaison model. We aim to fill these positions with pre-existing WCLS staff, when possible. Diana and Amelia were both PSAs before moving into their Cultural Liaisons positions.

Michael posed questions to the panel of Cultural Liaisons, including how their work has changed since assuming this position, what types of projects and programs they have been involved with, what challenges they have faced, and what the hiring and onboarding process was like. Project and program highlights include the Club de Mujeres Latinas (Latin Women's Club) put on by Amelia at the Lynden Library, a screening of the film *Honoring Sacred Waters* planned in part by Joshua, and support at a summer school for children of farm workers. Amelia and Diana have also hosted a Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) program at the Lynden Library and Cuentos y Paletas (Stories and Popsicles) at several library locations. Joshua is currently putting together a presentation about the 2023 Canoe Journey, Paddle to Muckleshoot, for an upcoming library program.

Amelia said that since becoming a Cultural Liaison she has felt more empowered to show her culture at the library. She has also heard from many patrons that they are impressed by the culturally focused programs WCLS is offering.

Michael shared photos with the group from various programs planned by the PSA-Cultural Liaison staff.

Discussion followed with the trustees about ways WCLS is currently serving the deaf community of Whatcom County and potential ways WCLS' resources for this community could be expanded.

Matthew asked if there is a way for bilingual staff to communicate the languages they speak to patrons on their nametags. Michael responded that a new nametag attachment for bilingual staff will be rolled out soon.

Lori said that she has loved watching the PSA-Cultural Liaison positions come to fruition. Michael thanked the Cultural Liaisons for sharing their experiences.

Tour of Sumas Library

Paul gave the trustees a tour of the Sumas library, which shares a building with the Sumas Community Center. The Sumas Library was damaged during the November 2021 Nooksack River flooding event and was closed until February 2023. Following the flood, which filled the building with over two feet of water, all flooring, shelving, equipment, and drywall were removed and replaced inside the library.

The trustees thanked Paul for his tour and commented that the new features in the space make the library feel open and inviting.

Break

Rodney adjourned the meeting for a break from 10:35 -10:45 a.m.

Staff Reports: Executive Director

In her absence, Michael shared highlights from Christine's July report. The final Junior Grooves event of the summer will be at Blaine Library on August 18, and the final Whatcom Grooves concert will be at the Blaine Performing Arts Center on August 19. A new WCLS podcast episode about Whatcom Grooves was recently released.

The Common Threads Farm food truck has been bringing nutritious, free lunches to kids at the North Fork and Deming libraries throughout the summer. Lunches have been served after storytimes and have allowed many families to spend several hours at the library.

Michael said that Christine included a reminder in her report that both the *Bellingham Herald* and *Cascadia Daily News* are available on WCLS.org to people with WCLS and BPL accounts.

Planning for Open Book, an event to celebrate all things reading, is coming along nicely. Several poets will be in attendance, including Arianne True, Washington State Poet Laureate and Rena Priest, former Poet Laureate. Local artist and children's and young adult author Phoebe Wahl will also be in attendance. Open Book will be at the Ferndale Events Center on November 5 from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Staff Reports: Deputy Director

Michael shared that a Backyard Concert Series has been taking place at the Deming Library throughout the summer, with a final concert being hosted on September 9 at 6 p.m. Michael commented that the live music creates a free environment for people to meet and talk with the people around them, and utilizing the library's outdoor space has made for easy set-up.

WCLS' delivery schedule was recently updated by Mobile Services-Distribution Manager Sam Wallin. Sam analyzed the delivery schedule and was able to increase the frequency of deliveries to multiple libraries by having Distribution Drivers work slightly longer days and shorter work weeks. Sam also worked with branch managers to make certain the new delivery schedule lined up with the schedules of Pages. Michael thanked Sam for his work on this project—it was a large undertaking, and increasing the frequency of deliveries helps increase circulation.

Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

Thom shared his written report, highlighting the 2023 Summer Reading Program, which will conclude at the end of August. In July, Youth Services (YS) put on 129 programs, each involving about three to four hours of staff time. Thom gave a summary of the different types of events put on by YS staff for different age groups. In

Whatcom County, attendance at summer programs can sometimes lapse because of the area's nice weather, but attendance was strong this year.

Thom thanked our community partner, the Whatcom Educational Credit Union (WECU), for providing the funding to distribute "forever books" to young people in Whatcom County for Summer Reading. We were able to give away nearly 1,300 books to young people, ages birth to 18. Thom has included statistics about the types of books given away in his report in the August Agenda Packet. Thom commented that Cultural Liaisons have also been continuing to distribute forever books at recent events.

Holly asked Thom if having transportation to the library is a barrier for some youth to accessing programming. Thom replied that it is, which is why so much energy is being dedicated to the ConnectED program. Holly asked if there are any organizations we could partner with to help facilitate youth transportation to libraries. Mary commented that we already have a partnership with the Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA). Michael mentioned that WTA allows youth to ride buses for free and offers a low-cost van service in Lynden called the Lynden Hop. Holly asked if we are sharing information about these services with patrons. Thom replied that he will investigate more ways we could do this. Michael added that we receive WTA Ride Free passes to distribute at branches each year.

Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

Mary discussed her written report and reminded the group that the final Whatcom Grooves concert will be in Blaine on Saturday. Mary included a picture from the Whatcom Grooves concert at Ferndale Library in her report. It was great to see the space filled with people enjoying music. Hosting after-hours events like these in libraries can help people begin to see libraries in a different light.

Holly shared that there was live music at the Point Roberts Library 5th Anniversary Celebration, and the community really enjoyed the event.

Mary concluded by sharing that two new WCLS podcast episodes were recently released: a Summer Reading update and an episode about Whatcom Grooves. She thanked Neil McKay, Online Experience Coordinator, for his work on these episodes and for continuing to improve the podcast.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

Michael presented July Performance Measures to the group, sharing that we are currently having conversations with ILS Administrator Carmi Parker about the ongoing decline in physical circulation. Before the pandemic, CDs and DVDs made up 30% of physical circulation. However, the pandemic encouraged more people to shift to consuming media through streaming services. The circulation of materials on discs is now down 22% from pre-pandemic levels. The decline in the circulation of DVDs and CDs is leading the decline in our physical circulation. And although the use of eMaterials is gradually increasing, it is not offsetting this decline.

Thom commented that early and juvenile materials make up 50% of all circulation, but only account for 28% of our collection. Thom is working with Carmi on how we can better position these items to increase circulation.

Geoff then gave the group an update about door counters. In June of 2022, our database for storing door counts moved into the cloud, and it took about eleven months to reconfigure daily emails to branch managers with updated door count data. Our current door counters are battery-powered, and it is important to have staff monitoring door counts daily so we can know when the batteries are beginning to fail. When the devices fail, we use recent door counts to normalize the data.

Holly asked what the significance of door count data is. Michael responded that they help paint a picture of how many people are visiting libraries, and Rod said that it can be interesting to look for trends in this data. Thom commented that door count trends are dynamic. For example, door counts at South Whatcom have been down in recent months, but circulation at this branch is expanding. Paul said that comparing circulation per patron to door counts can help tell a story of how the library is being used.

Lori asked if Library Express door counts have been analyzed to evaluate the success of these locations. Michael responded that this has not been done yet, but it could be a good time to evaluate this data. Discussion followed about what patrons may gravitate to using Library Express locations and different ways these locations could be made more accessible.

Neil then gave a short presentation on the updated way we are monitoring engagement with WCLS.org. Neil explained that we use Google Analytics (GA) to track website traffic to both WCLS.org and BiblioCommons. In July, GA updated the way they measure some of their analytics. Before this update, we looked at website entrances to measure traffic to our website. The new metric we have for measuring website traffic is sessions, which tracks a website visitor's journey. Sessions are now a more standard way of reporting website activity.

Lori asked Neil if we are able to keep patron information private while using Google Analytics. Neil responded that Google Analytics only accesses the cookies on a person's computer and cannot access any patron or WCLS information.

Lisa presented database and digital use statistics from July. Month over month, unique users to Overdrive continued to grow in July, and the platform is attracting new users while also retaining older users. Simultaneous-use materials have continued to have strong use. Lisa is working on renewing two simultaneous-use eAudiobooks packages that have been popular this year.

Lisa has yet to hear from Overdrive about what their new definition of a visit to the platform Kanopy is. Lisa believes visits are the most accurate way to portray engagement, but videos played or minutes watched could also be used to track engagement, as the collection of these metrics has not changed. Lisa will wait to hear from Overdrive about the new definition before making a change to reporting.

Database use has been low throughout the summer, but Lisa expects it to increase once school is back in session. Lisa said that there are interesting stories behind the databases that patrons are using; these resources can help people change and improve their lives.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

No report.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

Jennifer reported that preparation for Branch Out is going well, and she is expecting there to be strong attendance. She also shared about several grant projects the Foundation has been working on, including a grant to put Land Acknowledgement art in each branch library. The Foundation also approved a grant for the additional 300 trees that will be planted by the Whatcom Million Trees Project for Summer Reading, as well as funding for the local author room at Open Book.

Jennifer concluded by sharing that a ukelele concert to honor Joan Aioldi is being held at Deming Library on September 24 at 3:00 p.m. Proceeds from the concert will support the Aioldi Innovation Fund.

Announcements and Adjourn

Thom said that there is still space at all five restorative practices discussion sessions of Lauren Wolk's book, *Wolf Hollow*. He asked the trustees to contact him if they have any questions.

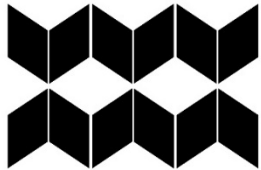
Rodney adjourned the meeting at 11:51 a.m.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be September 19, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. online via Microsoft Teams and at Everson McBeath Community Library.

Address: 104 Kirsch Drive, Everson.

<hr/>	<u>09/19/2023</u>	<hr/>
Rodney Lofdahl, Chair	Date	Em Olpinski, Admin. Assistant



whatcom county
library system

RESOLUTION NO. 09/19/23-08

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT
AUTHORIZING THE CANCELLATION OF WARRANTS
MORE THAN A YEAR OLD**

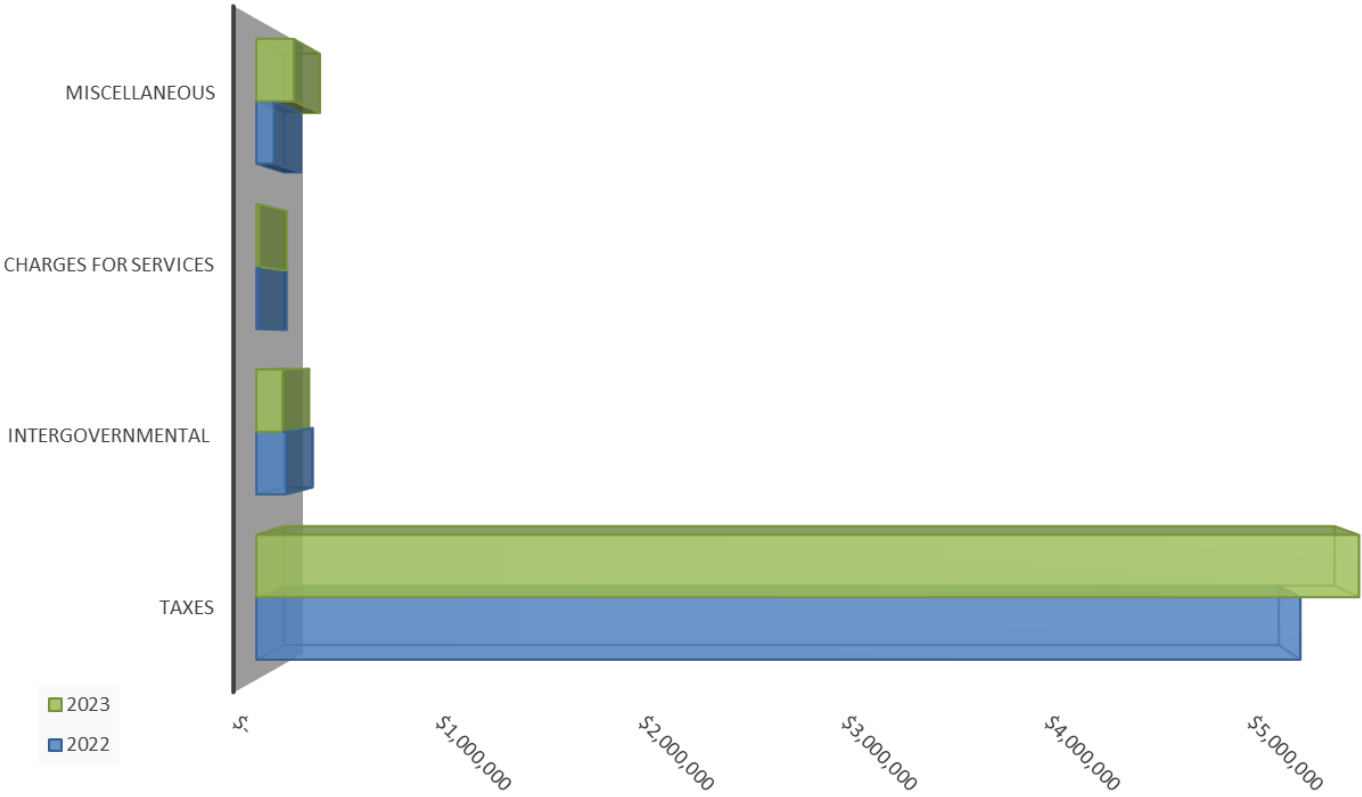
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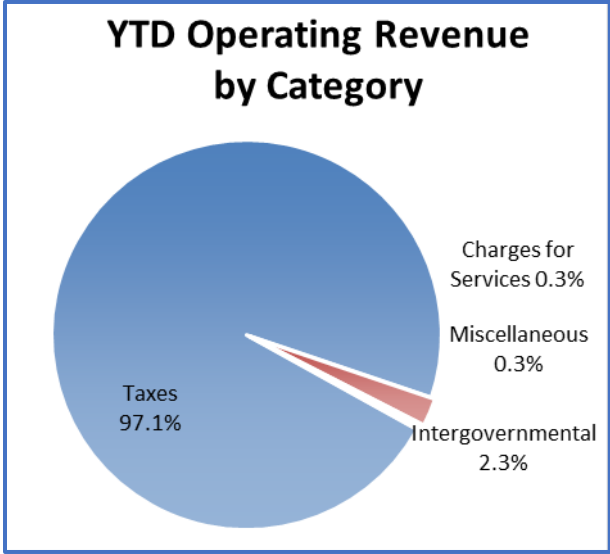
August Revenue

2023 Budget Revenues - Year-To-Date						
August 2023 (67% of FY)						
Acct No	Description	Budgeted Revenues*	Actual Revenues YTD	% of Actual Revenues YTD	% of Budgeted Revenues Received YTD	Budget Variance
310	TAXES					
311.10	General Property Taxes	\$ 9,660,921	\$ 5,641,348	94.24%	58.39%	\$ (4,019,572)
	TOTAL TAXES	\$ 9,660,921	\$ 5,641,348	94.24%	58.39%	\$ (4,019,572)
330	INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE					
333.4530	Fed Indirect Grant - IMLS	\$ 19,546	\$ 19,546	0.33%	100.00%	\$ (0)
333.9700	Fed Indirect Grant - DHS	43,947	43,568	0.73%	99.14%	(379)
334.0690	State Grant from Other Agencies	650	650	0.01%	100.00%	-
337.10	Local Grants, Entitlements & Other	175,000	52,117	0.87%	29.78%	(122,883)
337.20	Leasehold Excise Tax	25,000	19,479	0.33%	77.92%	(5,521)
	TOTAL INTERGOV. REVENUE	\$ 264,142	\$ 135,360	2.26%	51.25%	\$ (128,782)
340	CHARGES FOR GOODS & SERVICES					
347.2001	Printing & Duplication Services	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,116	0.05%	77.90%	\$ (884)
347.2002	Library Use Fees	12,100	12,212	0.20%	100.93%	112
	TOTAL CHARGES FOR SERVICES	\$ 16,100	\$ 15,328	0.26%	95.21%	\$ (772)
360	MISCELLANEOUS REVENUES					
361.11	Investment Interest	\$ 120,000	\$ 137,489	2.30%	114.57%	\$ 17,489
362.10	Rents & Leases	2,000	\$ 1,750	0.03%	87.50%	(250)
367.10	Contributions & Donations	34,000	\$ 29,446	0.49%	86.60%	(4,554)
369.10	Sale of Surplus	100	\$ 20	0.00%	20.00%	(80)
369.41	Judgements & Settlements	1,546	\$ 1,546	0.03%	100.00%	0
369.81	Cashier's Overages or Shortages	-	\$ (6)	0.00%	0.00%	(6)
369.9101	Other Misc. Revenue	20,000	\$ 14,327	0.24%	71.63%	(5,673)
369.9102	Reimburse Lost/Damaged Books	10,000	\$ 7,813	0.13%	78.13%	(2,187)
369.9106	COBRA Reimbursement	1,151	\$ 1,624	0.03%	141.09%	473
	TOTAL MISC. REVENUES	\$ 188,797	\$ 194,008	3.24%	102.76%	\$ 5,211
	TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	\$ 10,129,960	\$ 5,986,045	100.00%	59.09%	\$ (4,143,915)
390	OTHER FINANCING SOURCES					
395.10	Proceeds from Sales	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%	0.00%	\$ -
395.20	Insurance Recoveries	-	-	0.00%	0.00%	-
	TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	\$ -	-	0.00%	0.00%	\$ -
	TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 10,129,960	\$ 5,986,045	100.00%	59.09%	\$ (4,143,915)
	*As amended 6/20/23					

General Fund Operating Revenue to Date-Compared to Prior Year



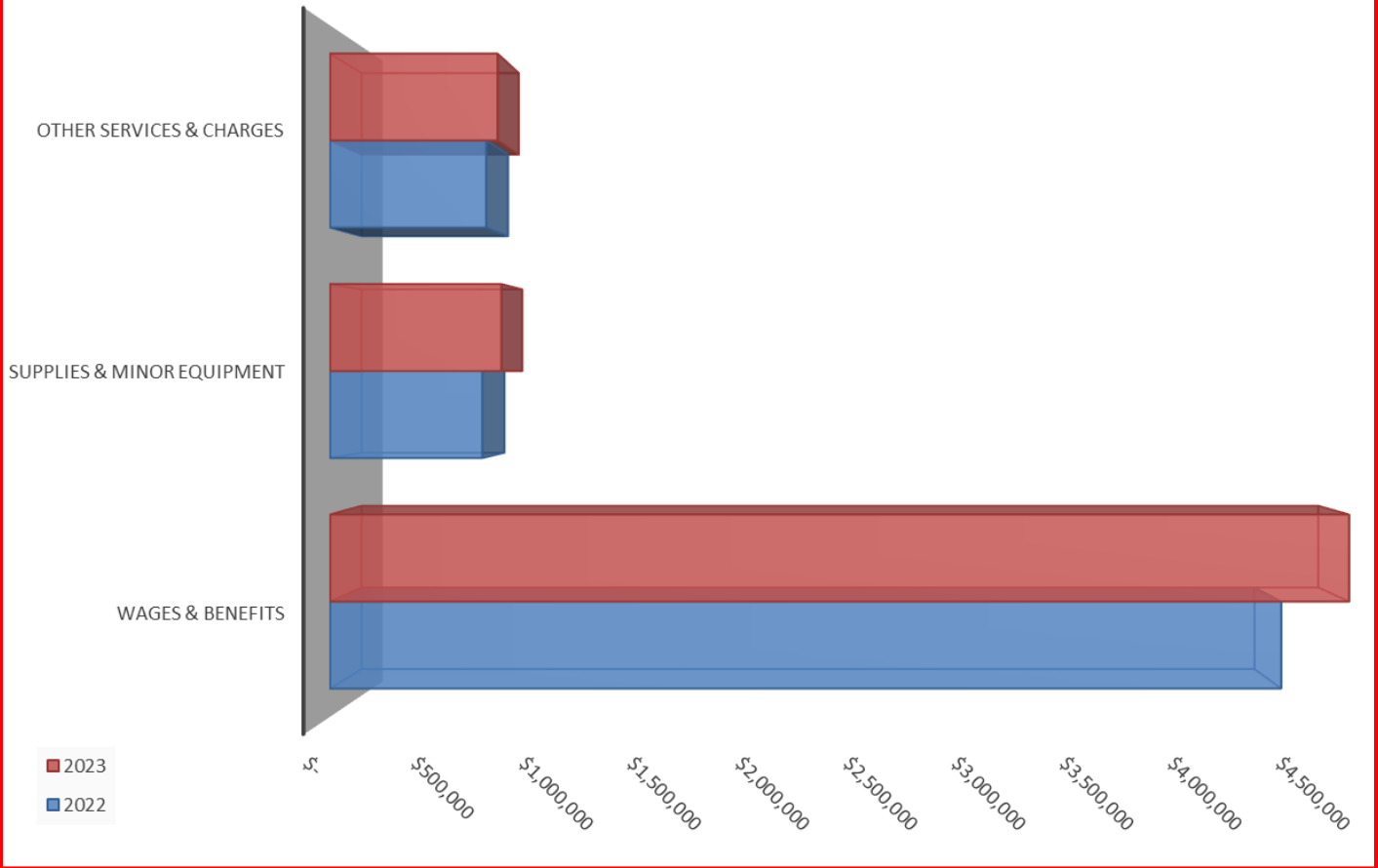
Actual General Fund Revenue Year to Date Comparison			
	2022	2023	% Change
Taxes	\$ 5,341,219	\$ 5,641,348	5.62%
Intergovernmental	155,129	135,360	-12.74%
Charges for Services	14,602	15,328	4.97%
Miscellaneous	91,881	194,008	111.15%
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 5,602,831	5,986,045	6.84%
Other Financing Sources	\$ 179,642	-	-100.00%
Total Revenue	\$ 5,782,473	\$ 5,986,045	3.52%



August Expenditures

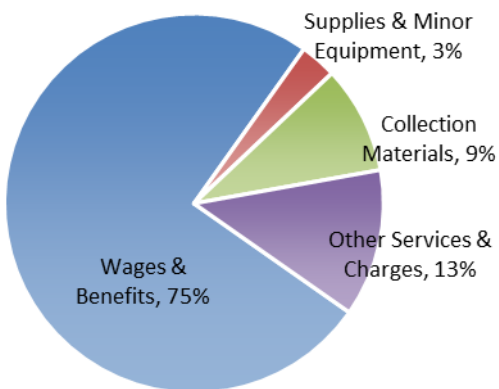
2023 Budget Expenditures - Year-To-Date						
August 2023 (67% of FY)						
Acct No	Description	Budgeted Expenditures*	Actual Expenditures YTD	% of Actual Expenditures YTD	% of Budgeted Expenditures Spent YTD	Budget Variance
572	SALARIES, WAGES, & BENEFITS					
572.10	Salaries and Wages	\$ 5,730,222	\$ 3,677,618	55.34%	64.18%	\$ (2,052,604)
572.20	Benefits	2,056,993	1,275,192	19.19%	61.99%	(781,801)
	TOTAL SALARIES, WAGES, & BENEFITS	\$ 7,787,215	\$ 4,952,810	74.53%	63.60%	\$ (2,834,405)
572.30	SUPPLIES & MINOR EQUIPMENT					
572.3031	Office & Operating Supplies	\$ 125,800	\$ 90,642	1.36%	72.05%	\$ (35,158)
572.3032	Fuel	28,900	13,735	0.21%	47.53%	(15,165)
572.3034	Collection Materials	1,250,000	606,036	9.12%	48.48%	(643,964)
572.3035	Small Tools & Minor Equipment	222,610	122,556	1.84%	55.05%	(100,054)
	TOTAL SUPPLIES & MINOR EQUIPMENT	\$ 1,627,310	832,968	12.53%	51.19%	\$ (794,342)
572.40	OTHER SERVICES & CHARGES					
572.4041	Professional Services	\$ 569,327	\$ 390,373	5.87%	68.57%	\$ (178,954)
572.4042	Communication	133,118	90,345	1.36%	67.87%	(42,773)
572.4043	Travel	40,182	20,872	0.31%	51.94%	(19,310)
572.4044	Taxes & Operating Assessments	500	257	0.00%	51.50%	(243)
572.4045	Operating Rentals & Leases	28,018	16,387	0.25%	58.49%	(11,631)
572.4046	Insurance	89,482	73,352	1.10%	81.97%	(16,130)
572.4047	Utilities	153,176	92,924	1.40%	60.66%	(60,252)
572.4048	Repair & Maintenance	164,780	73,282	1.10%	44.47%	(91,498)
572.4049	Miscellaneous	102,055	57,148	0.86%	56.00%	(44,907)
	TOTAL OTHER SERVICES & CHARGES	\$ 1,280,638	814,940	12.26%	63.64%	\$ (465,697)
	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$ 10,695,163	6,600,719	99.32%	61.72%	\$ (4,094,444)
590	OTHER FINANCING USES					
597.10	Transfers-Out to Capital	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	0.68%	100.00%	\$ -
	TOTAL OTHER FINANCING USES	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	0.68%	100.00%	\$ -
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 10,740,163	\$ 6,645,719	100.00%	61.88%	\$ (4,094,444)
	NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$ (610,203)	(659,674)			\$ (49,471)
	FUND BALANCE SUMMARY					
	Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 10,630,324	\$ 10,630,324			
	Net Income	(610,203)	(659,674)			(49,471)
	Ending Fund Balance	\$ 10,020,121	\$ 9,970,650			\$ (49,471)
	*As amended 6/20/23					

General Fund Operating Expenditures to Date-Compared to Prior Year

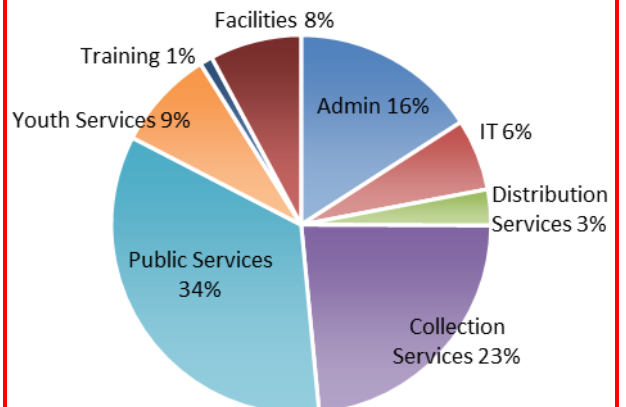


Actual General Fund Revenue Year to Date Comparison			
	2022	2023	% Change
Wages & Benefits	\$ 4,622,727	\$ 4,952,810	7.14%
Supplies & Minor Equipment	740,696	832,968	12.46%
Other Services & Charges	759,528	814,940	7.30%
Total Operating Expenditures	6,122,951	6,600,719	7.80%
Other Financing Uses	\$ 350,581	45,000	
Total Expenditures	\$ 6,473,532	\$ 6,645,719	2.66%

YTD Expense by Category



YTD Expense by Department



Fund Balance Summary	2023		
	2022 Actual	2023 Budgeted	Actual to Date
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 10,583,985	10,630,324	\$ 10,630,324
Revenue	9,994,550	10,129,960	5,986,045
Expenditures	(9,948,211)	(10,740,163)	(6,645,719)
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 10,630,324	\$ 10,020,121	\$ 9,970,650
Ending Fund Balance Designation Detail	2023		
	2022 Actual	2023 Budgeted	Actual to Date
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Cash Flow	\$ 3,369,707	\$ 3,502,655	\$ 3,502,655
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Emergency	850,936	892,009	892,009
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Capital Transfer	172,000	45,000	45,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Unemployment Comp Reserve	13,599	14,403	14,403
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Birch Bay Operating Fund Reserve	600,000	600,000	600,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Facility Ownership & Library Svcs Fund Reserve	3,192,315	3,192,315	3,192,315
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Facility Maintenance Fund	650,000	650,000	650,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Operating Cost Stabilization Fund	250,000	250,000	250,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Collection Project Fund	112,000	172,000	172,000
Total Designated Ending Fund Balance	9,210,557	9,318,382	9,318,382
Beginning Fund Balance less designated funds	1,373,428	1,311,942	1,311,942
Net Income	46,339	(610,203)	(659,674)
Ending Unassigned Funds with no designation	1,419,767	701,739	652,268
Ending Designated Funds	9,210,557	9,318,382	9,318,382
Total Ending Fund Balance	\$ 10,630,324	10,020,121	\$ 9,970,650

August Summary

- First, the good news: August property tax revenue included an unexpected \$230,000 from outstanding taxpayer payments from 2017, 2018, and 2019. Next, the not-so-great news: these back payments are the result of a WA Supreme Court ruling regarding a valuation dispute between Petrogas and the Whatcom County Assessor's Office. Petrogas's property tax payments were on hold pending a resolution to the disputed values. Ultimately, these back taxes are to be refunded to taxpayers.

Essentially, these funds are an advance on next year's levy. When Petrogas made its payment to the County Treasurer, the Treasurer then distributed the funds to the affected tax districts, including WCLS. The funds are then withheld from the districts' tax levies the following year. This is the mechanism by which the back taxes are refunded to taxpayers. This will have a positive impact on the 2023 bottom line but a negative one on the 2024 bottom line. I want to be sure that these funds are "flagged" in our finances as being part of the 2024 levy/tax revenue.

- Today's packet includes a 2024 Budget Planning schedule. Budget preparation is underway. Ryan is joining me for meetings with Branch Managers, and I am also meeting with Department Heads. I will be collecting data and reviewing current year spending to begin making projections in preparation for our October 31 Budget Planning Retreat.

WCLS Account Summary

WCLS follows the Washington State Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System (BARS). Below is a brief description of revenue and expense accounts.

Revenue Accounts:

Taxes: This section includes taxes on real and personal property, which are the primary revenue source for the library system, making up 95% of operating revenues received. The bulk of property tax revenue is received in April and October of each year.

Intergovernmental Revenue: Sources of intergovernmental revenue include grant revenues received from state and federal sources and revenues resulting from the leasing of, or sale of, timber and other products from state forest lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources. It also includes taxes from private harvest timber sales.

Charges for Goods and Services: This category includes fees received from library printing and copying services. It also includes use fees from the sale of library cards to non-residents and from contracted services with other entities, such as the Whatcom County Jail.

Miscellaneous Revenues: This source of revenue includes investment interest earned through participation in the Whatcom County Investment Fund. It also includes fees received for library meeting room use, private grants and donations, charges for lost or damaged library materials, and other miscellaneous revenue such as rebates and reimbursements.

Other Financing Sources: This category includes non-revenue items such as proceeds from the sale of capital assets and insurance recoveries.

Expense Accounts:

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits: This expense category includes wages and fringe benefits for WCLS employees, including medical and dental insurance; contributions for employees enrolled in the State of Washington Public Employee Retirement System (PERS); contributions into the Social Security and Medicare systems; workers' compensation (Labor and Industries); state Paid Family and Medical Leave; long-term disability insurance; and unemployment compensation.

Supplies and Minor Equipment: This section includes office, program, maintenance, and custodial supplies, as well as fuel. It includes small tools and equipment items such as computer hardware, furnishing and fixtures, shelving, book returns and carts, etc. It also includes the collection materials budget that comprise WCLS's lending collection.

Other Services and Charges: This category includes costs for professional services, such as legal, payroll, programming, cataloging, and Interlibrary Loan services. It includes communication costs, such as postage, courier services, and phone and internet charges. Travel; use and excise taxes; auto, liability and property insurance; utilities; repairs and maintenance; and other miscellaneous expenses are also reported here.

Other Financing Uses: This category includes transfers to the WCLS Capital fund. This transfer is equal to the prior year's revenue received from certain intergovernmental sources, such as those resulting from the sale of timber and other products from state forest lands.

**WHATCOM COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
2024 BUDGET PLANNING SCHEDULE**

DATE	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
September 2023	Review current year costs and begin making projections for next year	Executive Director, Dir. of Finance and Admin.
September 2023	Obtain budget input from department heads and branch managers	Executive Director, Dir. of Finance and Admin, Facilities Services Manager
September 2023	Compile budget input and draft preliminary budget	Dir. of Finance and Admin.
October 2023	Continue to fine-tune preliminary budget	Dir. of Finance and Admin.
October 2023	Obtain preliminary property tax information from county assessor	Dir. of Finance and Admin.
October 12, 2023	Share updated cost and revenue projections with Finance Committee	Executive Director, Dir. of Finance and Admin.
October 31, 2023	Present cost and revenue projections to Trustees	Executive Director, Dir. of Finance and Admin.
October 31, 2023	Review planning goals and objectives for coming year	Board of Trustees
November 2023	Receive certified assessed valuation figures and levy calculations from county assessor	Executive Director, Dir. of Finance and Admin.
November 2023	Continue to fine-tune preliminary budget	Dir. of Finance and Admin.
November 21,2023	Hold public hearing on revenue sources	Board of Trustees
November 21,2023	Adopt resolution establishing an increase to the property tax levy and submit to County Council and County Assessor	Board of Trustees
November 21,2023	Adopt preliminary budget certifying the 2024 property tax levy and submit to County Council and County Assessor	Board of Trustees
November 21,2023	Adopt Capital Plan	Board of Trustees
December 2023	Receive state-assessed valuation figures from the County Assessor	Executive Director, Dir. of Finance and Admin.
December 2023	Prepare and distribute final budget	Executive Director, Dir. of Finance and Admin.
Dec. 19,2023	Adopt and certify final budget	Board of Trustees
February 2024	Amend budget based on final 2023 totals	Board of Trustees



Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	9/19/2023
Committee or Department:	Public Services Department
Subject:	Copying and Printing Services Policy 4.02 Update Recommendation
Prepared By:	Michael Cox
Impact upon Budget?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Recommendation or Request: Approval of updated language to the Copying and Printing Services Policy 4.02.

Suggested Motion for Consideration: Move approval of recommended changes to the Copying and Printing Services Policy 4.02.

Summary:

Current policy describes printing rates on a ‘per page’ basis. The proposed recommendation would change this to charge printing on a ‘per sheet’ basis. This change would better serve patrons and staff in two ways. First, it has come to our attention that the software managing printing from public workstations is unable to accurately charge when in duplex mode, improperly charging for blank pages. Secondly, patrons sending print jobs from a personal device interface with staff when printing. Since July 2021 when printing credits were introduced, different interpretations of ‘per page’ by staff collecting fees manually have created inconsistent expectations. All matters involving charges to patrons within policy language involve Board approval.

Alternatives: Due to software limitations, removing the duplex printing cost model is important. An alternative could be to adjust to charging ‘per sheet.’

Fiscal Impact: Insignificant.

Comments: Printing as a service is drawing new users into the library. The ability to submit documents from personal devices and pick them up with a quick staff interaction creates a delightful, maybe unexpected interaction. Weekly credits were set at a level to meet most printing needs, moving staff focus from transactional procedures to informational support.



COPYING AND PRINTING SERVICES FOR PATRONS POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 4.02

SCOPE: This policy documents that federal copyright law applies to all use of WCLS equipment and sets the charges for use of WCLS equipment for copying and printing.

Copying and Printing: The Whatcom County Library System provides multi-functional copying, printing, and scanning services in its branch libraries as a service to its patrons. Copies and printouts for patrons are \$0.10 per ~~pagesheet of paper~~ for black-and-white printing, and \$0.50 per ~~page-sheet of paper~~ for color printing. There is no cost for scanning. Library patrons will be provided a single credit of \$7.00 for a combination of copying and printing services, not to be rolled over, at the beginning of each week, defined as Sunday through Saturday.

The Library System will make every effort to establish procedures and policies that will meet the requirements of the copyright law.

RELATED POLICIES: Borrower's Policy 4.01.

STATUTORY REFERENCE: United States Constitution, Article I, Section 8; United States Code Title 17 and all Copyright Law.

ADOPTED by the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees August 14, 1984.

REVISED: July 20, 2021; September 16, 2014; March 15, 2011; October 20, 2009; July 18, 2006; October 15, 1996; December 14, 1993; July 15, 1988.



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September 19, 2023

Rodney Lofdahl, Board Chair



Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	9/19/2023
Committee or Department:	Human Resources
Subject:	Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21
Prepared By:	Beth Andrews
Impact upon Budget?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Recommendation or Request: Approval of changes to Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21.

Suggested Motion for Consideration: Move approval of Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21 as presented.

Summary: Necessary updates to the Family and Medical Leave policy to incorporate the Washington Paid Family and Medical leave (WApfml) program and its impacts on current FMLA policy and procedures had subsequent impacts on the Unpaid Personal Leave policy, as well. Changes include impacts on how the employer can dictate how employees use their paid leave accruals when leave is WApfml applicable. Adding “WApfml” where “FMLA” was referenced. Adding reference to a newly implemented “Unpaid Personal Leave Request Form.” Replacing “his or her” with “their” throughout.

Alternatives: None.

Fiscal Impact: Permits potential increased Paid Leave accrual liability on the books for longer.

Comments: The changes are legally mandated and have been complied with in practice, but policies need to be updated to match the new reality.

UNPAID PERSONAL LEAVE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.21

SCOPE: All employees of the Whatcom County Library System

The Whatcom County Library System may grant unpaid personal leave when requested by the employee and workload requirements and staffing considerations permit.

In general, unpaid personal leave may be granted only after all appropriate paid leave accruals have been exhausted, with the exception that the employee shall have the option of retaining up to ~~forty (40) hours of sick leave and/or up to~~ eighty (80) hours of vacation leave when going on Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave. Employees may retain any paid leave accruals when leave is claimed under Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (WApfml). Additional exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Executive Director.

If WApfml is denied, the employee will be required to use accruals in accordance with these guidelines and appropriate accruals may be applied retroactively.

I. Benefited Employees

A. Leave Requests: Request for unpaid personal leave must be made by ~~written request to the Executive Director and submitting an Unpaid Personal Leave Request Form to the Executive Director, and~~ may be granted or denied at ~~his or her~~their discretion. Except in emergency situations, requests for unpaid leave shall be made as far in advance as possible, no less than 2 weeks before the leave is to begin. Emergency leave of three (3) days or less may be requested and granted verbally or via email.

B. Leave Accrual: Employees on unpaid leave shall not accrue sick leave or vacation benefits and shall not be eligible for holiday pay for a holiday that falls within the unpaid leave period (unless qualifying family and medical leave applies as noted in the Family and Medical Leave Policy). During unpaid leave an employee shall maintain ~~his or her~~their sick leave and vacation benefit accrued but not used, if any, prior to the effective date of the leave. Such accrued sick leave and vacation benefits shall be available for the use of the employee on returning to active employment.

C. Continuation of Benefits: Benefited employees on unpaid leave other than FMLA or WApfml, for one or more complete calendar months, may be eligible to continue participation in WCLS's group insurance plans by paying the total premium for such plans on a monthly basis. Continued participation in such plans shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions of the applicable group insurance plan.

II. Non-Benefited Employees

A. Leave Requests: Unpaid leave up to the amounts listed below may be requested from and approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. Requests for leave beyond that authorized below must be made by ~~written request to the Executive Director~~submitting the Unpaid Personal Leave Request Form to the Executive Director and may be granted or denied at ~~his or her~~their discretion. Requests must be made in writing and must occur as far in advance of the leave as possible, no less than 2 weeks before

the leave is to begin. Emergency leave of 3 days or less may be requested and granted verbally or via email.

B. Leave Accrual: Employees on unpaid leave shall not accrue sick leave during the unpaid leave period. During Unpaid Leave an employee shall maintain their sick leave accrued but not used, if any, prior to the effective date of the leave. Such accrued sick leave shall be available for the use of the employee on returning to active employment.

C. Annual Unpaid Leave Amount: Non-benefited employees may request the equivalent of up to three weeks of unpaid personal leave per calendar year, increasing to a total of four weeks following five years of employment. Additional unpaid leave may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director. Employees should follow the guidelines in the Attendance & Punctuality Procedure (12.14.01) for notification requirements.

III. Performance and Salary Review An unpaid leave of more than one full calendar month will affect an employee's performance and salary review date, except as noted in the FMLA Family and Medical Leave policy. The review date will be adjusted forward for each unpaid calendar month until the employee returns from leave.

IV. Duration of Leave Personal leave in the form of paid and/or unpaid leave may be approved for up to a total of nine months unless a longer period is required by law. In the event that an employee has paid leave accruals that extend beyond nine months, an extension through the end of the paid leave accruals may be considered.

Factors that may influence ability to extend leave beyond nine months include necessity of temporary staffing, impact of the absence on the system and on library resources, and the amount of advance notice given regarding the extended leave.

V. Return to Work

When possible, an employee returning from unpaid leave shall be reinstated to his or her/their original position, or one equivalent, unless the leave has extended beyond nine months and/or business necessity has dictated otherwise. WCLS shall provide such employees with their original position or another position for which they are qualified by reason of skill, experience, ability and physical capacity, consistent with the terms of the current bargaining agreement, unless business necessity dictates otherwise.

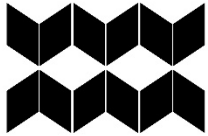
VI. Failure to Return to Work

An employee who fails to return from leave by the end of the period authorized, or accepts non-WCLS employment while on leave, unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director, shall be considered to have voluntarily resigned and forfeited his or her/their reinstatement rights to their original position. ~~With department head approval, the employee may be considered for inactive (adjunct) status providing continued employment with WCLS on a substitute-only basis and eligibility to apply for future internal job postings.~~

RELATED POLICIES: Attendance and Punctuality Policy 12.14, Sick Leave Policy 12.22, Family and Medical Leave ~~(FMLA)~~ Policy -12.23, Time and Attendance Records Policy 12.40.

ADOPTED by the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees April 1988.

REVISED: September 19, 2023; February 20, 2018; July 5, 2016; June 21, 2016; November 16, 2010; February 19, 2008; March 17, 1993.



whatcom county
library system

UNPAID PERSONAL LEAVE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.21

SCOPE: All employees of the Whatcom County Library System.

The Whatcom County Library System may grant unpaid personal leave when requested by the employee and workload requirements and staffing considerations permit.

In general, unpaid personal leave may be granted only after all appropriate paid leave accruals have been exhausted, with the exception that the employee shall have the option of retaining up to eighty (80) hours of vacation leave when going on Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave. Employees may retain any paid leave accruals when leave is claimed under Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (WApfml). Additional exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Executive Director.

If WApfml is denied, the employee will be required to use accruals in accordance with these guidelines and appropriate accruals may be applied retroactively.

I. Benefited Employees

A. Leave Requests: Request for unpaid personal leave must be made by submitting an Unpaid Personal Leave Request Form to the Executive Director and may be granted or denied at their discretion. Except in emergency situations, requests for unpaid leave shall be made as far in advance as possible, no less than 2 weeks before the leave is to begin. Emergency leave of three (3) days or less may be requested and granted verbally or via email.

B. Leave Accrual: Employees on unpaid leave shall not accrue sick leave or vacation benefits and shall not be eligible for holiday pay for a holiday that falls within the unpaid leave period (unless qualifying family and medical leave applies as noted in the Family and Medical Leave Policy). During unpaid leave, an employee shall maintain their sick leave and vacation benefit accrued but not used, if any, prior to the effective date of the leave. Such accrued sick leave and vacation benefits shall be available for the use of the employee on returning to active employment.

C. Continuation of Benefits: Benefited employees on unpaid leave other than FMLA or WApfml, for one or more complete calendar months, may be eligible to continue participation in WCLS's group insurance plans by paying the total premium for such plans on a monthly basis. Continued participation in such plans shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions of the applicable group insurance plan.

II. Non-Benefited Employees

A. Leave Requests: Unpaid leave up to the amounts listed below may be requested from and approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. Requests for leave beyond that authorized below must be made by submitting the Unpaid Personal Leave Request Form to the Executive Director and may be granted or denied at their discretion. Requests must be made in writing and must occur as far in

advance of the leave as possible, no less than 2 weeks before the leave is to begin. Emergency leave of 3 days or less may be requested and granted verbally or via email.

B. Leave Accrual: Employees on unpaid leave shall not accrue sick leave during the unpaid leave period. During Unpaid Leave an employee shall maintain their sick leave accrued but not used, if any, prior to the effective date of the leave. Such accrued sick leave shall be available for the use of the employee on returning to active employment.

C. Annual Unpaid Leave Amount: Non-benefited employees may request the equivalent of up to three weeks of unpaid personal leave per calendar year, increasing to a total of four weeks following five years of employment. Additional unpaid leave may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director. Employees should follow the guidelines in the Attendance & Punctuality Procedure (12.14.01) for notification requirements.

III. Performance and Salary Review

An unpaid leave of more than one full calendar month will affect an employee's performance and salary review date, except as noted in the Family and Medical Leave policy. The review date will be adjusted forward for each unpaid calendar month until the employee returns from leave.

IV. Duration of Leave

Personal leave in the form of paid and/or unpaid leave may be approved for up to a total of nine months unless a longer period is required by law. In the event that an employee has paid leave accruals that extend beyond nine months, an extension through the end of the paid leave accruals may be considered.

Factors that may influence ability to extend leave beyond nine months include necessity of temporary staffing, impact of the absence on the system and on library resources, and the amount of advance notice given regarding the extended leave.

V. Return to Work

When possible, an employee returning from unpaid leave shall be reinstated to their original position, or one equivalent, unless the leave has extended beyond nine months and/or business necessity has dictated otherwise. WCLS shall provide such employees with their original position or another position for which they are qualified by reason of skill, experience, ability and physical capacity, consistent with the terms of the current bargaining agreement, unless business necessity dictates otherwise.

VI. Failure to Return to Work

An employee who fails to return from leave by the end of the period authorized, or accepts non-WCLS employment while on leave, unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director, shall be considered to have voluntarily resigned and forfeited their reinstatement rights to their original position.

RELATED POLICIES: Attendance and Punctuality Policy 12.14, Sick Leave Policy 12.22, Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23, Time and Attendance Records Policy 12.40.

ADOPTED by the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees April 1988.

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September 19, 2023

Rodney Lofdahl, Board Chair



Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	9/19/2023
Committee or Department:	Human Resources
Subject:	Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23
Prepared By:	Beth Andrews
Impact upon Budget?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Recommendation or Request: Approval of changes to Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23.

Suggested Motion for Consideration: Move approval of Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23 as presented.

Summary: It is necessary to incorporate the Washington Paid Family and Medical leave (WApfml) program and its impacts on current leave policy and procedures. Changes include adding “WApfml” or “Family and Medical Leave” where “FMLA” was referenced; clarifying each programs’ summary, eligibility, coverage, definitions of family members, qualifying conditions, and administration; outlining impacts on how the employer can dictate how employees use their paid leave accruals when leave is WApfml applicable, as well as impacts to benefit protection for a larger group based on WApfml eligibility; and replacing “his or her” with “their” throughout.

Alternatives: None.

Fiscal Impact: Permits potential increased Paid Leave accrual liability on the books for longer periods. Increases eligibility for benefit protections at employer cost while on approved medical leave due to expansion of eligibility criteria for WApfml.

Comments: The majority of the changes are legally mandated, and we have been complying with them in practice, but our policies were not reflecting this new reality.

12.23 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ~~(FMLA)~~ POLICY

Policy Number: 12.23

SCOPE: All eligible employees of Whatcom County Library System

A. Family and Medical Leave Policy Statement

Eligible employees experiencing a need for Family and Medical leave may qualify for leave according to the program and eligibility requirements outlined below.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA): FMLA is an unpaid federal family and medical leave program. FMLA rules and forms are set by the federal government. FMLA is administered by the employer's Human Resources department. Eligible full-time employees may take up to 480 hours – the equivalent of 12 40-hour weeks (pro-rated for eligible part-time employees, see Section D) – of job and benefit-protected leave during a 12-month period when the leave is necessary due to one of the following events a qualifying event (see below). Leave may be paid using paid time accruals, unpaid or combinations thereof, see Section E.

Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (WApfml): WApfml is a paid family and medical leave program that is administered by the Employment Security Department (ESD) for workers in Washington State. WApfml applications and determinations are between the employee and the ESD. Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks or up to 18 weeks in some cases, in a claim year for eligible qualifying events. WApfml provides compensation of up to 90% of the employee's weekly pay. The EDS defines the weekly compensation limit annually.

FMLA and WApfml run concurrently when an employee is eligible and utilizing both programs.

FMLA Qualifying Events:

1. The birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care, and to bond with the newborn or newly-placed child. Leave to care for a child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care must be concluded within 12 months of the birth or placement.
2. To care for an immediate family member* (spouse, child, or parent) who has a serious health condition, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care (see 12.23.02 ~~FMLA Family and Medical Leave~~ Policy – Appendix A). Note that FMLA guidelines regarding immediate family members may differ from the Bargaining Agreement definition of a close relative.
3. For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or hertheir job, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care.
4. Qualifying exigency arising out of the active military duty (or notice of impending call or order to active duty) of an employee's spouse, parent, or child.
5. Care of a service member seriously injured while serving on active duty or a veteran injured any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment (see Section C).

*Under the Union contract sick leave can be taken if the employee is needed to care for a "close relative," defined in the Union contract as the employee's spouse or domestic partner, and the employee's child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, and sibling (including biological, adopted, foster, step

or legal guardian); and the child, parent, and sibling of the spouse or domestic partner of the employee. This is different from FMLA leave, which may be used only for the care of an immediate family member, i.e., the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

WApfml Qualifying Events:

An eligible employee can take medical or family leave when a serious health condition prevents the employee from working, or to care for a family member (see Section C) with a serious health condition, or for bonding with a new baby or child in their family. Examples of qualifying events include major surgery, pregnancy and childbirth, receiving medical treatment for a chronic health condition and receiving inpatient treatment for substance abuse or mental health. The amount of paid leave that can be taken is determined by the employee's medical provider up to the maximum allowed as outlined in Section D.

B. Eligibility

FMLA eligibility: To be eligible for FMLA leave, the staff member must have worked for WCLS System for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months prior to the start of FMLA leave.

WApfml eligibility: To be eligible for WApfml leave, the staff member must have worked for a Washington State employer for a minimum of 820 hours during the qualifying period (generally the last year) as determined by the Employment Security Department.

C. Caregiver or Family Leave

FMLA Caregiver Leave: An eligible employee who is the spouse, parent, child or next of kin of a service member injured while serving on active duty, or a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, and/or recuperating or in therapy for a serious injury or illness that occurred any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment while serving on active duty, may be eligible for up to 1040 hours – the equivalent of twenty-six 40-hour weeks (pro-rated for eligible part-time employees, see Section D) – of job-protected caregiver leave during a 12 month period. The total amount of leave available under the FMLA available to family members of individuals in the Armed Forces, cannot exceed the equivalent of 26 weeks in any 12-month period for any employee.

WApfml Family Leave: Employees may use family leave to care for: spouses and domestic partners, children (biological, adopted, foster or stepchild), parents and legal guardians (or spouse's parents), siblings, grandchildren, grandparents for spouse's grandparents), son-in-law and daughter-in-law, or someone who has an expectation to rely on the employee for care, whether they live together or not, as outlined by the Employment Security Department. Military family leave allows an employee to spend time with a family member who is about to be deployed overseas or is returning from overseas deployment.

D. Period of Leave

FMLA: An eligible full-time employee may be entitled to a maximum of 12 work weeks of FMLA leave, including paid and unpaid leave, during a "rolling" 12 months period measured back 12 months from the first date the employee uses FMLA Leave. An eligible employee who works less than full time (but more than 1250 hours in the prior 12 months) is entitled to FMLA leave on a pro rata basis determined by the

average number of hours worked by the employee per week during the prior 12 months. FMLA leave runs concurrently with Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave.

Intermittent Leave: Under qualifying conditions, FMLA leave may be taken intermittently in either blocks of time, or by reducing the normal weekly or daily work schedule. Since a work week consists of the average number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work each week, a reduced or intermittent work schedule may result in an employee being on FMLA for more than 12 calendar weeks. FMLA leave may be taken intermittently if medically necessary because of a serious health condition of the staff member or family member as defined above. If FMLA leave is for birth or placement for adoption or foster care, use of intermittent leave requires specific approval of the Executive Director.

When intermittent leave is needed for planned medical treatment or care for a serious health condition of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule time off so as to avoid undue disruption to [Library WCLS](#) operations.

~~In the case where both spouses are employed by WCLS, these staff members are entitled to a combined total of 12 work weeks of FMLA leave for the birth and care of the newborn child, for placement of a child for adoption or foster care, and to care for a parent who has a serious health condition.~~

WApfml: Within a claim year, a qualifying employee may take:

- Up to 12 weeks of medical leave or family leave. Medical leave is for recovering from or getting treatment for a serious health condition. Family leave is for taking care of a qualifying family member who has a serious health condition, for bonding with a new child, or for certain military events.
- Up to 16 weeks of combined medical and family leave if an employee has more than one qualifying medical and family leave event in the same claim year.
- Up to 18 weeks of combined medical and family leave if an employee experiences a condition in pregnancy that results in incapacity, such as being put on bed rest or having a C-section or post-partum depression. A medical provider will need to certify that the employee's serious health condition is related to pregnancy using the appropriate certification form provided by the ESD.
- Intermittent Leave: Employees are not required to use leave all at once but they must claim eight consecutive hours of leave each week, or claim zero hours if taking intermittent leave. Parental leave applicants can take their leave anytime within the first year after birth or placement.

E. Use of sick and vacation leave, ~~floating holidays~~ personal days and unpaid leave while on **FMLA Family and Medical leave**

Appropriate paid leave accruals ~~shall be taken concurrently with FMLA leave, except that~~ may be taken as follows:

- An employee may elect to retain some or all of their paid sick leave accruals as allowed by the Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law; and/or
- An employee may elect to retain some or all vacation or personal leave accruals when claiming WApfml.
- If only FMLA applies, an employee will need to use their paid leave accruals during their leave, however, they may retain up to 80 hours of their accrued vacation leave.

- Employees may use all of their accrued sick leave and/or vacation leave during ~~the FMLA medical leave~~, but are not required to do so. ~~However, if the employee applies for leave sharing, as described in the Union Contract, all paid leave must be exhausted.~~
- Employees are permitted to use paid leave accruals to supplement WApfml up to 100% of lost wages, but are not permitted to apply full shifts of WCLS paid leave accruals to shifts also claimed under WApfml to avoid double payment.
- ~~If any~~ The remainder of the FMLA leave remains after WApfml or paid leave accruals have been exhausted, if any, the leave will be unpaid unless the employee requests and receives Shared Leave.
- If the employee applies for shared leave, all paid leave must first be exhausted as described in the Shared Leave policy.
- If WApfml is denied, the employee will be required to use accruals in accordance with FMLA and/or Unpaid Leave guidelines and appropriate accruals may be applied retro-actively.
- If an employee elects to use paid leave accruals for time off that is later approved and claimed under WApfml, the employee must notify HR and Payroll to refund the accruals that were applied. Employees may not receive double compensation for hours missed.

Vacation leave, sick leave and holiday pay for employees who work less than full time ~~hours~~ will be prorated according to the hours the employee is budgeted to work. Employees who have worked for WCLS for less than six months may use their vacation for FMLA-WApfml situations, even though they are not eligible for FMLA leave.

F. Health Insurance and Other Benefits

1. Health Insurance During FMLA Family Medical Leave

WCLS will continue to pay premiums for health insurance, on the same basis as during regular employment, through the last day of the month in which the FMLA or WApfml leave ends. Employees who pay part of the premium for their own coverage or for dependent coverage during regular employment must continue to make these payments during FMLA their approved family and medical leave. If the staff member terminates employment with WCLS during or after FMLA their family and medical leave, the continuation of health benefits is covered under the COBRA regulations.

2. Health Insurance and Other Benefits After FMLA Qualifying Medical Leave

FMLA Family and Medical leave ends when the employee returns to work or exhausts all FMLA or WApfml hours. Additional time off under WCLS's general medical leave or leave without pay policies may be available, if needed and requested by the employee before the end of the FMLA family and medical leave period, and approved by WCLS.

During unpaid leave time after FMLA and/or WApfml ends, the employee and dependents ~~will not be covered by WCLS's~~ may receive health insurance benefits in accordance with the Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21. COBRA coverage may also be available, ~~however~~. The terms of the policy in effect at the time will determine the coverage of the employee and any dependents.

A staff member who chooses to ~~take dependents off coverage~~ remove coverage for dependents at any time should be aware that renewal coverage for those dependents may not be available until the next open enrollment period.

A staff member who does not return to work after [FMLA-qualifying medical](#) leave will be required to reimburse WCLS for the insurance premiums paid by WCLS during [FMLAtheir qualifying medical leave](#), unless failure to return is beyond the control of the staff member.

[WCLS will pay benefits as if WApfml is approved starting from the application date, but if FMLA doesn't apply AND the WApfml the request is denied, the employee may have to pay back benefits, including holidays, insurance, etc.](#)

3. Leave Pay and Accrual

Staff members will not accrue sick leave, vacation leave ~~and holiday pay~~ [or personal days](#) during periods of unpaid leave. Leave is not accrued while a staff member is using [leave-sharing](#) ~~shared leave~~, but holiday pay, pro-rated according to the hours the employee is budgeted to work, will be paid [when on an approved medical leave](#). ~~Seniority may be affected during periods of unpaid leave, including FMLA leave, as seniority is based upon the number of hours in paid status.~~

A staff member's ~~anniversary date or the date for his/her performance and salary review date, or the date for their~~ vacation benefit increase will not change during periods of [qualifying family and medical](#) ~~FMLA~~ leave.

G. Return to Work

An employee returning from FMLA ~~or WApfml leave~~ ~~leave~~ will be restored to the same position the employee would be working in if ~~FMLA- the family or medical leave~~ had not been taken. In most cases this will mean returning to work in the employee's former position, or an equivalent position. Restoration is not an option if the employee's former position no longer exists.

WCLS may require a statement from a certified medical provider that the employee is able to return to work. If required, this statement must be made on the "Certification of Physician or Practitioner" form. A copy is available from the Human Resources Department.

If an employee does not return to work after FMLA ~~or WApfml~~ leave, employment with WCLS may be terminated. In most circumstances, extended health insurance coverage is available to the employee on a self-pay basis under COBRA. More information can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

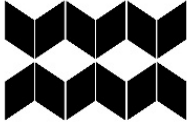
RELATED POLICIES: 12.21 Unpaid Personal Leave Policy, 12.22 Sick Leave Policy, 12.25 Military Leave Policy

STATUTORY REFERENCE: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), Family and Medical Leave Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law, [RCW Chapter 50A.04](#), and [RCW 49.46.210](#).

Legal review by attorney Deborra Garrett July 20, 2007.

ADOPTED by the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees May 21, 2002.

REVISED: September 19, 2023; November 19, 2019; November 17, 2009; April 15, 2008; September 18, 2007.



whatcom county
library system

12.23 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

Policy Number: 12.23

SCOPE: All eligible employees of Whatcom County Library System

A. Family and Medical Leave Policy Statement

Eligible employees experiencing a need for Family and Medical leave may qualify for leave according to the program and eligibility requirements outlined below.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA): FMLA is an unpaid federal family and medical leave program. FMLA rules and forms are set by the federal government. FMLA is administered by the employer’s Human Resources department. Eligible full-time employees may take up to 480 hours – the equivalent of 12 40-hour weeks (pro-rated for eligible part-time employees, see Section D) – of job and benefit-protected leave during a 12-month period when the leave is necessary due a qualifying event (see below). Leave may be paid using paid time accruals, unpaid or combinations thereof, see Section E.

Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (WApfml): WApfml is a paid family and medical leave program that is administered by the Employment Security Department (ESD) for workers in Washington State. WApfml applications and determinations are between the employee and the ESD. Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks, or up to 18 weeks in some cases, in a claim year for eligible qualifying events. WApfml provides compensation of up to 90% of the employee’s weekly pay. The ESD defines the weekly compensation limit annually.

FMLA and WApfml run concurrently when an employee is eligible and utilizing both programs.

FMLA Qualifying Events:

1. The birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care and to bond with the newborn or newly-placed child. Leave to care for a child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care must be concluded within 12 months of the birth or placement.
2. To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) who has a serious health condition, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care (see 12.23.02 Family and Medical Leave Policy – Appendix A). Note that FMLA guidelines regarding immediate family members may differ from the Bargaining Agreement definition of a close relative.
3. A serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care.
4. Qualifying exigency arising out of the active military duty (or notice of impending call or order to active duty) of an employee’s spouse, parent, or child.
5. Care of a service member seriously injured while serving on active duty or a veteran injured any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment (see Section C).

WApfml Qualifying Events:

An eligible employee can take medical or family leave when a serious health condition prevents the employee from working, or to care for a family member (see Section C) with a serious health condition, or for bonding with a new baby or child in their family. Examples of qualifying events include major surgery, pregnancy and childbirth, receiving medical treatment for a chronic health condition, and receiving inpatient treatment for substance abuse or mental health. The amount of paid leave that can be taken is determined by the employee's medical provider up to the maximum allowed as outlined in Section D.

B. Eligibility

FMLA eligibility: To be eligible for FMLA leave, the staff member must have worked for WCLS for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months prior to the start of FMLA leave.

WApfml eligibility: To be eligible for WApfml leave, the staff member must have worked for a Washington State employer for a minimum of 820 hours during the qualifying period (generally the last year) as determined by the Employment Security Department.

C. Caregiver or Family Leave

FMLA Caregiver Leave: An eligible employee who is the spouse, parent, child or next of kin of a service member injured while serving on active duty, or a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, and/or recuperating or in therapy for a serious injury or illness that occurred any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment while serving on active duty, may be eligible for up to 1040 hours – the equivalent of twenty-six 40-hour weeks (pro-rated for eligible part-time employees, see Section D) – of job-protected caregiver leave during a 12 month period. The total amount of leave available under the FMLA available to family members of individuals in the Armed Forces cannot exceed the equivalent of 26 weeks in any 12-month period for any employee.

WApfml Family Leave: Employees may use family leave to care for: spouses and domestic partners, children (biological, adopted, foster or stepchild), parents and legal guardians (or spouse's parents), siblings, grandchildren, grandparents (or spouse's grandparents), son-in-law and daughter-in-law, or someone who has an expectation to rely on the employee for care, whether they live together or not, as outlined by the ESD. Military family leave allows an employee to spend time with a family member who is about to be deployed overseas or is returning from overseas deployment.

D. Period of Leave

FMLA: An eligible full-time employee may be entitled to a maximum of 12 work weeks of FMLA leave, including paid and unpaid leave, during a "rolling" 12 months period measured back 12 months from the first date the employee uses FMLA Leave. An eligible employee who works less than full time (but more than 1250 hours in the prior 12 months) is entitled to FMLA leave on a pro rata basis determined by the average number of hours worked by the employee per week during the prior 12 months. FMLA leave runs concurrently with Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave.

Intermittent Leave: Under qualifying conditions, FMLA leave may be taken intermittently in either blocks of time, or by reducing the normal weekly or daily work schedule. Since a work week consists of the average number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work each week, a reduced or intermittent work schedule may result in an employee being on FMLA for more than 12 calendar weeks. FMLA leave may be taken intermittently if medically necessary because of a serious health condition of the staff member or family member as defined above. If FMLA leave is for birth or placement for adoption or foster care, use of intermittent leave requires specific approval of the Executive Director.

When intermittent leave is needed for planned medical treatment or care for a serious health condition of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule time off so as to avoid undue disruption to WCLS operations.

WApfml: Within a claim year, a qualifying employee may take:

- Up to 12 weeks of medical leave or family leave. Medical leave is for recovering from or getting treatment for a serious health condition. Family leave is for taking care of a qualifying family member who has a serious health condition, for bonding with a new child, or for certain military events.
- Up to 16 weeks of combined medical and family leave if an employee has more than one qualifying medical and family leave event in the same claim year.
- Up to 18 weeks of combined medical and family leave if an employee experiences a condition in pregnancy that results in incapacity, such as being put on bed rest or having a C-section or post-partum depression. A medical provider will need to certify that the employee's serious health condition is related to pregnancy using the appropriate certification form provided by the ESD.
- Intermittent Leave: Employees are not required to use leave all at once, but they must claim eight consecutive hours of leave each week or claim zero hours if taking intermittent leave. Parental leave applicants can take their leave anytime within the first year after birth or placement.

E. Use of sick and vacation leave, personal days and unpaid leave while on Family and Medical leave

Appropriate paid leave accruals may be taken as follows:

- An employee may elect to retain some or all of their paid sick leave accruals as allowed by the Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law; and/or
- An employee may elect to retain some or all vacation or personal leave accruals when claiming WApfml.
- If only FMLA applies, an employee will need to use their paid leave accruals during their leave, however, they may retain up to 80 hours of their accrued vacation leave.
- Employees may use all of their accrued sick leave and/or vacation leave during medical leave but are not required to do so.
- Employees are permitted to use paid leave accruals to supplement WApfml up to 100% of lost wages but are not permitted to apply full shifts of WCLS paid leave accruals to shifts also claimed under WApfml to avoid double payment.

- If any FMLA leave remains after WApfml or paid leave accruals have been exhausted, the leave will be unpaid unless the employee requests and receives Shared Leave.
- If the employee applies for Shared Leave, all paid leave must first be exhausted as described in the Shared Leave policy.
- If WApfml is denied, the employee will be required to use accruals in accordance with FMLA and/or Unpaid Leave guidelines and appropriate accruals may be applied retro-actively.
- If an employee elects to use paid leave accruals for time off that is later approved and claimed under WApfml, the employee must notify HR and Payroll to refund the accruals that were applied. Employees may not receive double compensation for hours missed.

Vacation leave, sick leave and holiday pay for employees who work less than full time will be pro-rated according to the hours the employee is budgeted to work. Employees who have worked for WCLS for less than six months may use their vacation for WApfml situations, even though they are not eligible for FMLA leave.

F. Health Insurance and Other Benefits

1. Health Insurance During Family Medical Leave

WCLS will continue to pay premiums for health insurance, on the same basis as during regular employment, through the last day of the month in which the FMLA or WApfml leave ends. Employees who pay part of the premium for their own coverage or for dependent coverage during regular employment must continue to make these payments during their approved family and medical leave. If the staff member terminates employment with WCLS during or after their family and medical leave, the continuation of health benefits is covered under the COBRA regulations.

2. Health Insurance and Other Benefits After Qualifying Medical Leave

Family and Medical leave ends when the employee returns to work or exhausts all FMLA or WApfml hours. Additional time off under WCLS's general medical leave or leave without pay policies may be available, if needed and requested by the employee before the end of the family and medical leave period and approved by WCLS.

During unpaid leave time after FMLA and/or WApfml ends, the employee and dependents may receive health insurance benefits in accordance with the Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21. COBRA coverage may also be available. The terms of the policy in effect at the time will determine the coverage of the employee and any dependents.

A staff member who chooses to remove coverage for dependents at any time should be aware that renewal coverage for those dependents may not be available until the next open enrollment period.

A staff member who does not return to work after qualifying medical leave will be required to reimburse WCLS for the insurance premiums paid by WCLS during their qualifying medical leave, unless failure to return is beyond the control of the staff member.

WCLS will pay benefits as if WApfml is approved starting from the application date, but if FMLA doesn't apply AND the WApfml request is denied, the employee may have to pay back benefits, including holidays, insurance, etc.

3. Leave Pay and Accrual

Staff members will not accrue sick leave, vacation leave or personal days during periods of unpaid leave. Leave is not accrued while a staff member is using shared leave, but holiday pay, pro-rated according to the hours the employee is budgeted to work, will be paid when on an approved medical leave.

A staff member's performance and salary review date, or the date for their vacation benefit increase will not change during periods of qualifying family and medical leave.

G. Return to Work

An employee returning from FMLA or WApfml leave Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), Family and Medical Leave Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law will be restored to the same position the employee would be working in if the family or medical leave had not been taken. In most cases this will mean returning to work in the employee's former position, or an equivalent position. Restoration is not an option if the employee's former position no longer exists.

WCLS may require a statement from a certified medical provider that the employee is able to return to work. If required, this statement must be made on the "Certification of Physician or Practitioner" form. A copy is available from the Human Resources Department.

If an employee does not return to work after FMLA or WApfml leave, employment with WCLS may be terminated. In most circumstances, extended health insurance coverage is available to the employee on a self-pay basis under COBRA. More information can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

RELATED POLICIES: 12.21 Unpaid Personal Leave Policy, 12.22 Sick Leave Policy, 12.25 Military Leave Policy

STATUTORY REFERENCE: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), Family and Medical Leave Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law, RCW Chapter 50A.04, and RCW 49.46.210.

Legal review by attorney Deborra Garrett July 20, 2007.

ADOPTED by the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees May 21, 2002.

REVISED: September 19, 2023; November 19, 2019; November 17, 2009; April 15, 2008; September 18, 2007.

September 19, 2023

Rodney Lofdahl, Board Chair



COMMUNITY

At our 4th Corner Library Directors meeting this month we welcomed Western Washington University's new Dean of Libraries, John Danneker. Danneker was formerly the director of Learning Services at University of Washington Libraries and director of the Odegaard Undergraduate Library. He has a strong interest in information literacy (us too!) and is eager to support Whatcom READS.

ACCESS

Earlier this month, several of us met with Paul Schissler from Madrona Community Development and Andrew Krzysiek of Zervas Architects to discuss the mixed used project in Blaine. Schissler is coordinating the effort on behalf of Kulshan Community Land Trust. Zervas is conducting a preliminary site analysis to determine how the site might support an enlarged Blaine Library and affordable housing, while complying with parking requirements and other permit-related issues.

RESOURCES

Our Collection Services team toured Bellingham Public Library's Central Library recently to see the new layout, mending, and automated book sorting machines. This kind of automation works well in a centralized system with a busy headquarters library but is not ideal for a decentralized system where materials are spread out across multiple, very small locations.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We are in the process of formalizing a Diversity Committee Policy and will bring it to the Board at the October board meeting.

STEWARDSHIP

There was a happy buzz in the air on September 8 at Whatcom County Library Foundation's annual fundraiser, Branch Out. Darrell Hillaire, Lummi leader and founder of Children of the Setting Sun Productions, spoke about his book *Jesintel: Living Wisdom from Coast Salish Elders*. Hillaire was followed by our Lightning Booktalkers. So far, the fundraiser has grossed \$38,000, with more still coming in. These funds will support annual programs such as Books for Babies, Books Unbound, Summer Reading and Whatcom READS, as well as innovation grants.

Christine Perkins
Executive Director



COMMUNITY

Library services extend beyond library buildings. From a 10' x 10' canvas canopy, a spot of color can become a place of refuge and connection. At the Lummi Island Reefnet Festival, the library canopy was the kid's corner, an active space offering something to do (button making), people to talk to (Brooke Pederson and Kevin Wharton), and a place to connect. At the farm worker's camp in Lynden, youth and families engaged in crafts and stories. At the Logging Show in Deming, the Storytime in Hovander Park, the Pirate Daze in Blaine, the Summerfest, the Ice Cream Social, the 59th Anniversary, the Rome Grange Farmer's Market . . . WCLS was there. With three canopies designed by Community Relations and assistance from the Distribution Department to deliver pop-up library equipment to library staff, WCLS was able to engage with people across the county this summer. We were talking, celebrating, registering, lending, and having fun. We were engaging in community building at about 30 events June through August including:

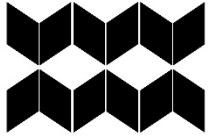
Pop-up Library Events

- | | |
|--|--|
| 6/3/2023 Day at the Beach - Birch Bay | 8/4/2023 Craft Fair - South Whatcom |
| 6/3/2023 Youth Pride - Bellingham | 8/5/2023 Pirate Daze - Blaine |
| 6/10/2023 Log Show - Deming | 8/9/2023 Paletero Man - SW |
| 6/18/2023 Farmworker Camp - Lynden | 8/18/2023 Ice Cream Social - SW |
| 6/26-6/29 Summer Reading - Bookmobile | 8/19/2023 Reef Net fest - Lummi Island |
| 6/23/2023 Sumas County Days | 8/19/2023 Blaine Jazz |
| 6/24/2023 Anniversary - Lynden | 8/24/2023 Housing in SU |
| 7/7/2023 Everson Summer Festival | 8/26/2023 SV 59th Anniversary - SW |
| 7/15/2023 Jazz Festival - Glenhaven | 8/26/2023 Popsicles LY |
| 7/24,27/2023 Craft Fair - Sumas, Everson | 9/8/2023 Branch Out - WCLF |
| 7/26/2023 Hovander Storytime - FE | 9/9/2023 Rome Grange Farmers Mkt |
| 8/3/2023 Housing in FE | 9/9/2023 Run w/ Chums - Birch Bay |
| 8/3-8/26 Bienvenidos - Everson | 9/13/2023 Water Adjudication panel |
| 8/5/2023 Summerfest- Kendall | Saturday Farmer's Market series |

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Diana Antaño, Joshua Olsen, and I are presenting a session titled "Building Community Connections by Hiring for Cultural Knowledge" at the Association of Rural and Small Libraries Conference. As a large system of small libraries, we are well positioned to both share and learn a lot.

Michael Cox
Deputy Director



whatcom county
library system

Youth Services Report

September 2023

Access

Restorative Practices

We wrapped up our discussions of Lauren Wolk's novel *Wolf Hollow* with over 70 staff and board members participating in lively, rich, and varied conversations. This communal one-read and discussion was designed to speak to WCLS's heartset, establishing a shared sense of values to work as a foundation for deeper investigations of Restorative Practices. The Restorative Practices Team will gather next month to review the discussions and see where we are, then begin planning for some work on our mindset, to develop a shared understanding of what Restorative Practices are and how they might inform our work. That will be followed, eventually, by some more specific work on our skillset, developing tools and systems to help us employ the principles with our patrons and one another. Thanks to the Restorative Practices Team—Alix Prior, Evie Harman, Katrina Buckman, and newly appointed Rosie Everson.

ConnectED

As of the beginning of the month, we have signed Memoranda of Understanding with all six public school districts in Whatcom County (Blaine, Ferndale, Lynden, Meridian, Mount Baker, and Nooksack Valley), as well as the Lummi Nation School and Lynden Christian School. These agreements make it possible for us to enable student IDs as library accounts, giving students automatic access to databases, downloadable eBooks and eAudiobooks, print books, audiobooks on CD and prerecorded media players, and to the internet. I'm so grateful to everyone on the YS Team for the year-round work of establishing and maintaining relationships with educators and librarians. Special Thanks to Tamar Clarke, who leads the ConnectED Team, and Carmi Parker, who manages the ConnectED accounts and data, for their extra work.

Stewardship

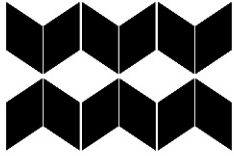
Tamar Clarke, Theresa Morrison, Dianne Marrs-Smith and I have formed a hiring committee to recruit someone into the vacant Youth Librarian position at Lynden. We have completed the preliminary round of interviews and are scheduling in-person interviews shortly.

Resources

This fall Theresa Morrison and I will run a Library Advocate for Preschoolers (LAP) Certification program. The four-session course, for adults who want to support the library use of the young children in their lives, will cover the essentials of how the library works, principles of early literacy, a survey of historical and contemporary picture books, and tips for choosing and sharing them. Designed with grandparents in mind, it is open to anyone with an interest in enhancing the reading lives of the young children they cherish.

Thom Barthelmess

Youth Services Manager



whatcom county
library system

ACCESS AND RESOURCES



The September-December issue of Explorations features fall programs and information about ConnectED, the Blaine Library proposed project, Reader to Reader, Open Book and the Foundation’s annual gift program. The magazine was mailed to all county households. It’s also available at the branches and [online](#).

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month. On social media and in our advertising campaign, we’re sharing moments of library joy to elevate awareness of the library, to encourage people to sign up for a card, and to invite advocates to tell their friends and family to get a card. Ads and the online card application are in English and Spanish. We invited WCLS staff to create joyful moments to share on our Instagram and Facebook pages. The response has been terrific.





WCLS’s integrated digital advertising campaign (The Power of Sharing) includes video, audio and display ads. Ads feature library resources and drive people to our website where they can access the featured service and apply for a library card. The slides below recap our January-August 2023 results. They include benefits of each platform and ad metrics for awareness (impressions), engagement (clicks), and hours spent watching and listening to library ads. We work with a talented local media buyer — Babette Vickers with Giant Killer Shark — to create, place and monitor our digital ads. She provided this recap.



Benefits of Google Ads

- **Informing and educating** the public by attracting new website visitors.
- **Promote events** for Whatcom Reads, Storytime, and more.
- **Driving in-person actions**, visit a library, find a meeting space, book clubs.
- **Recruiting volunteers** to friends of the library.
- **Promoting donation** to generate funds for library giving.
- **Building an audience** by attracting new library card holders.

12,798 impressions **5,142 clicks**

Popular Searches

- Get a library card
- Kanopy
- Libby library
- Library jobs
- Power outages near me
- Rental assistance
- Washington Anytime library
- Whatcom Writes
- Whatcom News
- Whatcom Reads
- What is Juneteenth

Benefits of digital advertising



Reduce advertising costs

Digital advertising is drastically cheaper than traditional advertising, allowing you to reach more people with less money.

Brands on average experience an 11% increase per year in reach efficiency with digital.

Variety of Creative Formats

Also mentioned as a leading factor in expanded audience reach, the variety of creative formats available is an appealing perk. Rather than put all your eggs in one basket, you can produce and test multiple formats.

- Including
- Audio ads
 - Connected TV (CTV) ads
 - Display ads
 - Native ads
 - Video ads

Improved Targeting Capabilities

Behavioral targeting serves ads based on consumer behaviors, such as website history, purchase habits, and product interests.

Geotargeting serves ads based on location, from data like city, zip code, and even IP address.

Retargeting serves ads based on users who have previously visited your website.

Cross-device targeting serves ads between one consumer device to the next, such as from a personal laptop to a cell phone.

Easily Trackable and Scalable

A digital ad campaign is the most trackable, as real-time visibility into performance and placement helps keep an eye on ad spend.

It's also the most scalable type of ad campaign, particularly for a start-up or small business with restricted finances. Allowing for adaptable campaign budgets.

WCLS Digital Advertising

JAN. 1 – AUG. 31, 2023



TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

370,138

- CTV
- Audio
- Video
- Display
- Native

New beginning in March 2023

Spanish language library ads

Connected TV Impressions

47,365

Equal to 197 hours of WCLS video viewed by Whatcom residents

Audio Impressions

22,637

Equal to 94 hours of WCLS audio listened to by Whatcom residents

Digital ad impressions delivered in Whatcom county

- 98230
- 98244
- 98247
- 98248
- 98262
- 98264
- 98266
- 98281
- 98229
- 98295

WCLS Social Media Advertising

JAN. 1 – AUG. 31, 2023



102,283 impressions 832 clicks

Be a thought leader

Social media platforms offer your company a voice.

Whether you're posting insightful content, sharing news, or running informative ads, social media allows your company to become a thought leader, building trust and loyalty among your customers.

Boost website traffic

Social media content helps with increasing your company website's traffic.

By posting content and running high-quality ads, you can easily attract readers each time you publish.

RESULTS

MEDIA	INDUSTRY STANDARD	WCLS AVERAGE
Video completion rate CTV	85%	98%
Video completion rate video	65%	85%
Audio completion rate	75%	90%
Display and social CTR	0.09%	0.10%
Google search CTR	10-12%	40%

New borrowers have increased by more than 20% compared to the prior year. We've also been able to track increased use of resources featured from March-August.

FEATURED RESOURCES

- January-February: Feeling Cozy (booklist). Final iteration of original Power of Sharing strategy.
- March-May: Libby (Free audiobooks)
- June-August: Creativebug
- September-November: Library Card Joy (Get a card)

News Releases

- [Whatcom READS announces Oct. 15 submission deadline for annual writing challenge](#)
- [Libraries are cooling stations](#)

Podcast: wcls.org/podcast or subscribe on your favorite podcast platform

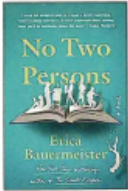
- Episode 38, Jerry Steinhilber and Whatcom Grooves

Book Reviews

- *Cascadia Daily News*, Aug. 8, 2023, [Review: 'The Least of Us' by Sam Quinones](#)
- *Cascadia Daily News*, August 26, 2023, [Review: 'No Two Persons' by Erica Bauermeister](#)
- *The Northern Light*, Aug. 2, 2023, [Blaine book club review: "Sea of Tranquility" by Emily St. John Mandel](#)
- *Bellingham Alive*, August 2023

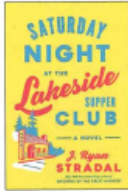
Book Reviews

WRITTEN BY MARY KINSER



No Two Persons
by Rafael Bauermeister

AT FIRST GLANCE, you might not understand the connection between the theme of this novel—the magic and power of story—and its title, “No Two Persons.” Inspired by the familiar adage “no two persons ever read the same book,” Bauermeister plays with structure to create a collection of linked stories that speaks directly to the heart of book lovers everywhere. The unifying thread is a fictional book called “Theo.” Though readers get only vague hints at the plot and themes of “Theo,” we follow the novel through its lifespan, from the writing process through publishing and then into the lives of nine of its readers. Notably, each person engages with the book in a different way. Bauermeister, a Northwest favorite, is at her best when it comes to creating relatable and complex people and emphasizing her theme: that stories call to us, imprinting our lives in ways we might never imagine.



Saturday Night at the Lakeside Supper Club
by Ryan Stradal

It seems natural that Ned and Mariel would end up together. After all, they were both raised in the Midwest by families with deep ties to the restaurant community. But the similarities end there. While Ned’s family helms the chain restaurant empire Jorby’s, Mariel grew up in Floyd and Betty’s Lakeside Supper Club on Bear Jaw Lake, where the prime rib platters are staggering and Betty’s signature “lemonade” is always flowing. Though Ned wants to build his future in the family business, Mariel’s heart is forever bound to the Lakeside, a bond that only deepens when the couple’s life is marred by unimaginable tragedy. Intertwining Mariel’s story with that of her mother and grandmother, Stradal pays homage to the culture and character of his setting without shying away from difficult topics. This new novel is a perfect choice for readers who love stories of food, family, and connection.

Media Coverage

- *The Northern Light*, Aug. 9, 2023, [A ribbiting time at Blaine Public Library](#)
- *Ferndale Record*, Aug. 10, 2023, [Gallery: Shhh! Quiet please. Jazz masterpieces fill Ferndale Library](#)
- *Whatcom Talk*, Aug. 10, 2023, [Roots of Empathy: Volunteer Opportunities in Your Local Grade Schools](#)
- *Northern Light*, Aug. 16, 2023, [Library supporters organize Blaine jazz events August 18-19](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, Aug. 16, 2023, [Whatcom County News Briefs: Aug. 16, 2023 \(Whatcom WRITES\)](#)
- *Ferndale Record*, Aug. 16, 2023, [Whatcom County News Briefs: Aug. 16, 2023 \(Whatcom WRITES\)](#)

- *The Northern Light*, Aug. 16, 2023, [Derby Day, Summer Fun in the Park to end summer with family fun](#)
- *The Northern Light*, Aug. 23, 2023, [Library supporters bring jazzy tunes to the PAC](#)
- *The Northern Light*, Aug. 23, 2023, [Derby Day parade, activities return](#)
- *Ferndale Record*, Aug. 23, 2023, [Being resources for all](#) (Feature story about Theresa Morrison and Sarah Lavender’s work with Ferndale schools.)

Bellingham Alive, August 2023

Book Notes **Life**

Literary Events

August 8 | 10–11 a.m.

Storytime and More! with Children's Book

Author Barbara Davis-Pyles

Birch Bay Activity Center

7511 Gemini St. Blaine

360.656.6416

bbbparkandrec.org

Acclaimed children’s book author Barbara Davis-Pyles will be reading her book “Cliff the Failed Troll,” a tale about a troll who struggles to fit into the “troll lifestyle,” and wants to be a pirate instead. The reading is followed by crafts and outdoor games for kids ages 3–10.

All Point Bulletin, Aug. 3, 2023

Five Year Anniversary Party: Saturday, August 5, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., PR Library. This month marks five years since the Point Roberts Library moved into its new location. Keyboard music with Allison Chu at 10 a.m., genealogy consultations with the Falk Men at 11 a.m., Leah Tinkleman on the violin at 1:30 p.m., and George Wright on guitar at 2 p.m. Cake and scavenger hunt all day. Tree making craft begins at 10 a.m.

Salish Current, Aug. 4, 2023

Education

Empathy opportunity. Roots of Empathy Whatcom Program Manager Sara Airoidi introduces volunteers to the opportunities in the program that improves the mental health and well-being of elementary school children through visits with an infant and its parents. Aug. 8, 10–11 a.m., Ferndale Library.

[Information.](#)

Salish Current, Aug. 11, 2023

Library jazz. Whatcom County Library System presents Friends of the Library Summer Jazz in various locations on Aug. 19. Free. [Information and registration.](#)

Mary Vermillion

Community Relations Manager

Collection Size	August		
	Physical	Electronic	Total
	313,582	302,224	615,806

Circulation<	August		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Physical Circulation					
Blaine	15,203	13,125	113,288	98,850	-12.7%
Bookmobile & Outreach	5,308	3,831	37,196	32,685	-12.1%
Deming	8,980	7,734	76,599	62,586	-18.3%
Everson	10,641	9,910	80,807	74,432	-7.9%
Ferndale	36,168	34,204	274,684	258,356	-5.9%
Island	2,049	1,943	17,024	15,125	-11.2%
Lynden	43,509	39,048	328,029	308,574	-5.9%
North Fork	4,604	4,773	37,258	35,793	-3.9%
NWIC	0	7	72	83	15.3%
Point Roberts + PRX	3,654	3,619	19,533	20,257	3.7%
Sumas + SLX	411	2,569	2,626	15,658	496.3%
South Whatcom	9,171	8,535	62,181	62,629	0.7%
NDX	3,166	3,177	27,979	25,164	-10.1%
Total	142,864	132,475	1,077,276	1,010,192	-6.23%
Disc materials: DVDs and CDs	35,532	28,494	280,541	218,869	-22.0%
All other materials	106,532	103,921	786,316	787,043	0.1%
Electronic Circulation					
eBooks/eAudiobooks	30,823	33,814	225,258	256,360	13.8%
eMusic	8,599	11,423	74,297	95,768	28.9%
Streaming Video	737	914	6,938	6,478	-6.6%
eMagazines	1,676	1,738	12,906	13,465	4.3%
Total	41,835	47,889	319,399	372,071	16.49%
Total Circulation	184,699	180,364	1,396,675	1,382,263	-1.03%

< Sumas Library closed 11/20/21 to 2/11/23.

< Sumas Library Express opened 2/11/23.

Visitors (Door Counts)	August			Year to Date		% Chg Frm 2021
	2019	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Blaine	9,472	6,814	7,182	50,003	51,709	3.4%
Deming	3,701	2,330	3,296	18,839	19,156	1.7%
Everson	5,078	2,003	3,305	16,660	24,218	45.4%
Ferndale	15,266	10,809	17,692	80,584	98,534	22.3%
Island	2,205	1,601	1,630	10,294	8,200	-20.3%
Lynden	16,419	11,956	9,765	86,858	81,745	-5.9%
Northwest Drive Express		418	279	2,866	2,282	-20.4%
North Fork	2,742	1,890	2,469	13,525	12,536	-7.3%
Point Roberts + PRX	2,879	1,452	2,418	9,458	12,063	27.5%
Sumas + SLX	1,816	0	1,634	0	8,133	
South Whatcom	3,027	2,788	4,297	19,488	17,056	-12.5%
Total	62,605	42,061	53,967	308,575	335,632	8.77%

* Sumas door counter installed on March 1, 2023.

New Borrowers	August		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Registered	487	754	3,340	5,161	54.52%

Patron Service	August		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Interlibrary Loan					
Borrowed from BPL	11,165	11,201	95,445	91,359	-4.3%
Lent to BPL	22,254	22,314	182,657	176,162	-3.6%
Borrowed from other libraries	599	632	4,935	4,451	-9.8%
Lent to other libraries	618	667	3,995	3,864	-3.3%

Electronic Resources	August		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
WCLS.org Entrances	32,768	36,399	290,332	293,021	0.9%
Bibliocommons Entrances	50,098	68,555	412,344	445,073	7.9%
Internet Sessions	3,340	3,844	18,336	25,575	39.5%
Wifi Clients / Sessions	7,589	8,042	44,870	54,639	21.8%

Volunteers	August		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Volunteer Hours	722.50	1,249.50	6,279.25	6,736.75	7.3%

Activities	August		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Programs					
Adults	41	69	207	443	114.0%
Teens	0	0	151	152	0.7%
Children	11	40	277	606	118.8%
Total	52	109	635	1,201	89.1%

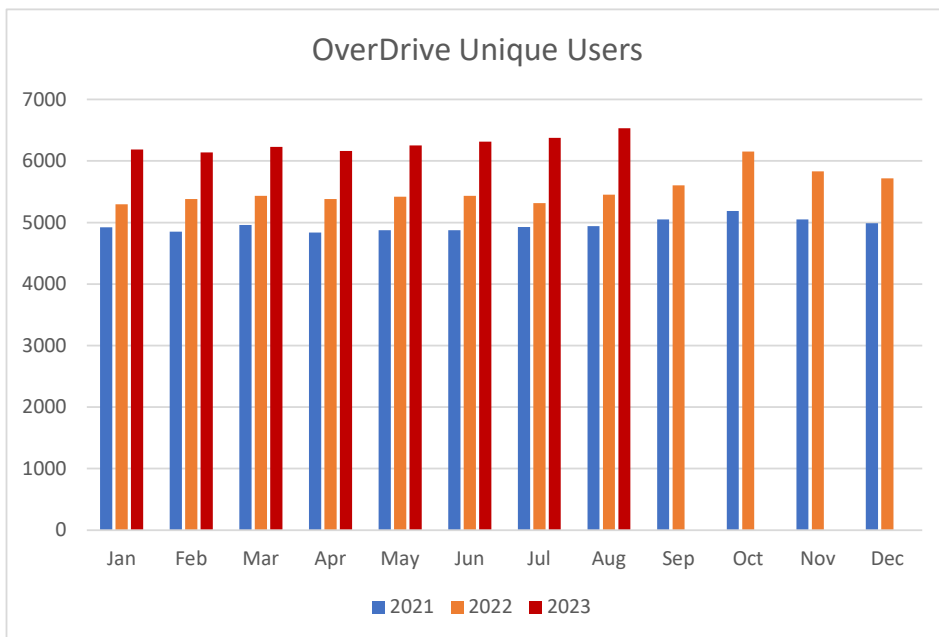
Attendance					
Adults	400	596	3150	4632	47.0%
Teens	0	0	3027	6308	108.4%
Children	1,148	1,055	12023	19691	63.8%
Total	1,548	1,651	18,200	30,631	68.3%

Corrections/notes:

As of July 2023, WCLS.org and Bibliocommons are now tracking Sessions rather than Entrances due to a Google Analytics platform update
 Missing volunteer hours NF, IS
 No teen programs in August

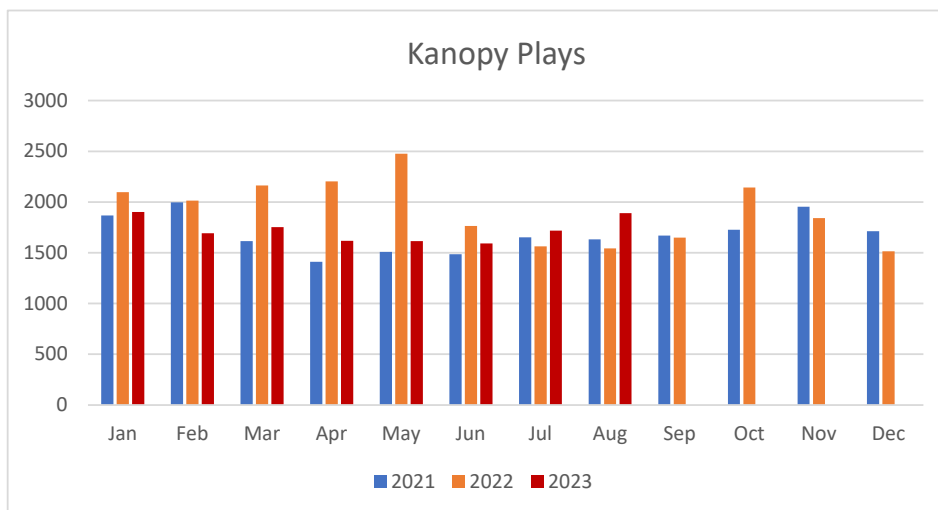
OVERDRIVE UNIQUE USERS

OverDrive unique users continue to steadily increase with another high point reached in August 2023. For digital checkouts to WCLS patrons, *Woman's World* eMagazine was #1 in August (103 circs) and *Minecraft World* eMagazine was #2 (63 circs). The eAudio format of Abraham Verghese's *The Covenant of Water* was #3 (56 circs). With one eBook exception, all of the top 25 circulating digital items are either eMagazines or eAudiobooks.



KANOPY PLAYS - JANUARY TO DECEMBER COMPARISON

We've been looking at the number of monthly "visits" to the Kanopy website, and you may recall that because Kanopy recently changed the definition of "visit," the past few months showed big spikes in use that were actually only due to the change made by Kanopy to data collection. I've revised the Kanopy stats for the past three years to look at the number of video "plays" which show August 2023 with slightly higher use than was seen the previous two years.



DATABASE USAGE

Some of the stories from this month's database use include people creating resumes, accessing repair manuals for 78 different car/truck make/model/years dating back to a 1969 Chevy Camaro, taking courses on Excel and Quickbooks, and completing craft courses on quilting, sweater mending, oil painting, and journaling. On LinkedIn Learning, a video called "The Good Life: Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness" was viewed 16 times.

