



Location

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

In Attendance

Trustees: Rodney Lofdahl, Chair; Matthew Santos, Vice Chair; Holly Robinson, Secretary; John Miller and Danielle Gaughen. Absent: None.

Staff: Christine Perkins, Executive Director; 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, Birch Bay and Lynden Library Manager and Friends of the Birch Bay Library (FOBBL) President; Jennifer Rick, Foundation Development Director; Maggie Mae Nase, Learning Coordinator; Rheannan Pfnister, Records Management Specialist & Executive Assistant; Erin Suda, Island Library Manager.

Guests: None.

Call to Order

Rod determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:01 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 16, 2024, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following:

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- June 16-30, 2024 payroll: check no. 1039245473 and voucher nos. 559337-559490 totaling \$223,417.58 and July 1-15, 2024 payroll: check nos. 1039417967-1039417970 and voucher nos. 559497-559643 totaling \$232,512.72.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$127,347.06; \$70,367.73 of this is for employee funded contributions to dental insurance premiums, Health Savings Accounts, state paid family medical leave and long-term care fund premiums, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2024-26G: warrant nos. 1194929-1194945 totaling \$51,128.59
- Claim 2024-27G: warrant nos. 1195356-1195378 totaling \$153,831.25

- Claim 2024-28G: warrant nos. 1195640-1195665 totaling \$28,071.04
- Claim 2024-29G: warrant nos. 1196092-1196111 totaling \$96,048.25
- Claim 2024-30G: warrant nos. 1196864-1196880 totaling \$67,475.19

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2024-08C: warrant nos. 1194946-1194947 totaling \$1,204.82
- Claim 2024-09C: warrant no. 1195379 totaling \$11,880.00
- Claim 2024-10C: warrant no. 1195666 totaling \$59,249.06
- Claim 2024-11C: warrant no. 1196112 totaling \$4,550.00
- Claim 2024-12C: warrant nos. 1196881-1196882 totaling \$5,744.60

Authorization to Surplus Capital Asset:

- Resolution 08/20/24-09 Authorizing the Surplus of a Capital Asset

Authorization to Void a Warrant:

- Resolution 08/20/24-10 voiding warrant 1196877

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

Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

Jackie reviewed her report, including the July Notes and Highlights section. In July, WCLS purchased a new box truck to replace an older one that was experiencing recurring issues. The new box truck is a gas-powered vehicle unlike the other box trucks, which are diesel-powered. The new truck will be painted, and our logo will be added to it so that it matches the other WCLS vehicles. The Consent Agenda included a resolution to declare the previous box truck as surplus, and it will be sold at a local auction.

There are no major updates in the general fund for July. As we are between tax payment dates, there has been no significant increase in revenue. We are 58% through the fiscal year and wages and benefits are on track at 57%.

Jackie annually performs an inventory of the capital and small and attractive assets. This year, Accountant Ruth Nail conducted the inventory at the branches and Jackie conducted the inventory at Administrative Services. They will be finishing up that task this week.

Jackie inquired if there was any interest with the Board in having a budget retreat this year even though there was one last year. Rod stated that it would be beneficial to have another, since we have two new board members, and it would be useful to have this information refreshed since there are plans for a levy lid lift in the future. Discussion about possible dates and times for a budget retreat took place. Jackie will schedule a meeting date and send out a calendar invitation.

Trustee Education: Applicant Tracking System & Job Opportunities Website

Beth updated the Board on WCLS's new applicant tracking system (ATS), Applicant Pro, which we began using earlier in the year. She reviewed and compared the old and new procedures for posting jobs, as well as the general experience of hiring managers and applicants before and after implementing the ATS. Overall, the new experience is streamlined for both sides of the application process and is more user-friendly. The ATS has also created a shift from paper to digital format and storage regarding the job posting and interview process forms and paperwork.

HR can now easily access previously saved jobs and update them for a new job posting quickly. WCLS has moved to only accepting online applications unless accommodation has been requested through HR. WCLS.org has also been updated to reflect the new process.

Rod asked how WCLS is now advertising job openings. We are still using several of the job search sites. The ATS will auto post to many of them. HR does not need to create posts for each site as before or follow up with applicants who apply through them. Rod asked if our applicant numbers have increased due to the ATS incorporation. Beth stated that while our applicant numbers have increased, we experienced a significant decline in applicants during COVID and we are still working our way back to pre-pandemic numbers.

Rod stated the new system seems to be a much-needed improvement for WCLS and the Board is pleased it is working well.

Strategic Action Plan Check-In

Christine reviewed the updated Strategic Action Plan with the Board. She highlighted many of the completed projects such as A Forest of Words and Pride in the Park. A few projects were removed for 2024. The Kulshan/City of Blaine partnership to construct a lower-income housing development with a new Blaine Library attached fell through. WCLS has stepped back from this project for now so that we can focus on a levy lid lift campaign. The Voter Assistance Points project was also removed. WCLS was unable to launch this project as it was not possible for the County Auditor's Office to partner with us due to time and staff constraints.

Although many projects are in progress, a few larger ones are still waiting to begin. Michael spoke a bit about the small, convertible meeting spaces planned for the Deming and North Fork libraries. He touched on the funding and design work that is currently being reviewed and the options that are available for the spaces. John mentioned that he has attended a few trainings at the fire station across from the North Fork Library and can understand why there is a need for these types of spaces in the community.

Rod inquired about the timing of replacing the new vehicles and the installation of EV charging stations at Administrative Services. Ryan informed the Board that we are holding off purchasing the vehicles until the chargers have been installed. PSE is handling the installation and there is currently a shortage of EV charging stations in Washington State. We will purchase the new vehicles as soon as the chargers are in place.

The strategic action plan is on track for 2024. WCLS is attempting to be very minimal on what projects we undertake in 2025 to ensure that we can focus on a levy lid lift. Christine is organizing a Citizens Advisory Committee to gather and contribute input about a possible levy lid lift. She has asked each Trustee to recommend two people that may be interested in serving on such a committee.

Break

Rod adjourned for a break from 10:00-10:11 a.m.

Library Advocacy and Funding Conference Debrief

Christine, Jenn, Holly, Jackie, and Mary V. all virtually attended The Library Advocacy and Funding Conference (LAFCON) 2024 at the end of July. The attendees reflected on the themes throughout the conference and what stood out to each of them the most.

Staff Reports: Executive Director

In addition to her written report, Christine mentioned that Rick Jenkins from the Seattle Public Library security team recently visited a few of our branches to train WCLS staff on how to address disruptive behavior and deescalate stressful situations.

WCLS turned down funds to install EV charging stations at the Deming Library due to the already limited number of parking spaces available for patrons.

Lisa Gresham showed the Trustees the newest addition to our Library of Things, a lifelike robotic cat which could be borrowed for people with dementia or others who have pet allergies.

Staff Reports: Deputy Director

In addition to his written report, Michael shared that the number of people engaging with our summer programs has been great this year. About 250 people showed up for the Tumbao concert in Glenhaven. WCLS had popups at 41 different community events June through August. WCLS is reaching community members and is side by side with them when they are celebrating.

Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

Thom shared his written report and highlighted the concentrated work Youth Services is doing for the ConnectED program this summer and touched on the anticipated growth for the upcoming school year. He shared a template email that ILS Administrator Carmi Parker created that can be personalized and sent out to each school district highlighting their students' usage statistics and unique experiences using their ConnectED accounts.

July is the busiest month of the year for Youth Services. This July, WCLS hosted 146 programs for kids and teens throughout the system.

Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

Mary discussed her written report. She stated that she has been visiting all the branches with local videographer Lars Kongshaug. They have interviewed staff and captured many sweet, impactful moments and amazing patron interactions. Video is becoming more popular as a way of conveying information. We will be able to repackage the video bits and use them to promote the library if we choose to do so. They will reflect the value of the library and will enable WCLS to share with patrons the many ways our services are impacting the community.

El Periódico, *Ferndale Record*, and *Lynden Tribune* all ran an article featuring WCLS Cultural Liaisons Diana Antaño and Amelia Martinez. The article highlighted their work within the migrant and Hispanic communities around the county.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

In addition to his written report, Michael shared that door counts have been growing. Island, Point Roberts and South Whatcom libraries have been significantly exceeding the 2019 door counts. WiFi usage is slightly down, but more people are coming inside our branches and using the computers.

Michael compared our data to other similar systems within the state. WCLS is performing at the top of our peer group with programming. A summer-full of energetic programming has greatly contributed to it.

OverDrive usage has continued to rise but is plateauing. Summer months are usually a bit lower in usage since students are not using the databases for homework.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

Nothing to report.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

The Foundation has met 75% of its fundraising goal for 2024. After Branch Out next month and mail-in donations, the goal will be surpassed.

The Blaine and Lynden libraries each received an estate gift of \$10,000 from a patron bequest.

