

APPROVED MINUTES

Library Board of Trustees Special Meeting

October 2, 2024

Location

This meeting was held in a hybrid manner, with remote attendance via Microsoft Teams and in-person attendance at the Deming Library, 5044 Mt. Baker Highway, Deming, WA 98244.

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; Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and Administration; Thom Barthelmess, Youth Services Manager; Mary Vermillion, Community Relations Manager; Geoff Fitzpatrick, IT Services Manager; Ryan Cullup, Facilities Services Manager; Beth Andrews, Human Resources Manager

Guests: None.

Call to Order

Matthew determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m., followed by a reading of the WCLS Land Acknowledgement by Christine. Rod joined the meeting shortly after the call to order.

Review Agenda and Meeting Objectives

Christine reviewed the agenda, and Jackie reminded trustees that today's meeting is for information sharing and discussion only, and no formal action will be taken. Jackie also noted that we will discuss the 2025 budget in more detail at the regular October meeting. Union negotiations will have taken place by then so more accurate budget projections can be made. Today's meeting is for context and background to prepare for budget approval.

Budget Basics

Christine shared a Budget 101 presentation that she has been reviewing with staff. She is visiting branches, attending staff meetings, etc. to ensure that all staff see this presentation. It provides background on our budget and the implications if we continue to operate at a deficit. Christine wants staff to be aware that furloughs and possibly even layoffs are possible. The intention is not to alarm staff but rather to be transparent about the budget cuts that could happen if WCLS does not receive additional revenue in the future.

Ryan asked about unemployment during a furlough. Jackie noted that staff would be eligible for unemployment after a one-week waiting period. John clarified that there is only one waiting period per year. Christine reminded trustees that WCLS is set up as self-funded employer for unemployment; we may want to consider changing this status.

Break

Rod adjourned for a break from 3:27-3:37 p.m.

2024 Budget Recap

Jackie reviewed the current 2024 budget along with revenue and expenditure projections. Current projections indicate we will finish the 2024 budget year with a net loss of \$517,869, which is up from the budgeted net loss of \$679,749. Better than anticipated investment yields along with reduced personnel, equipment and repairs and maintenance expenditures are driving the variance. Jackie plans to present a 2024 budget amendment at the regular October board meeting. This will be a budget neutral amendment, reallocating costs between expense accounts.

Levy Basics

Jackie and Christine reviewed a presentation that has been shared with staff and community stakeholders. It is intended to be a refresher on the complicated topic of Washington's property tax and levy system. They discussed how levies are calculated, and how each property is covered by multiple taxing districts, such as schools, fire and park districts, WCLS, etc.

Action Plan Preview

Christine reviewed the 2025 Strategic Action Plan. Many projects are recurring or carried over from 2024. There are few new projects as our main focus will be on addressing our revenue shortfall. Among other things, in 2025 we will launch the Library Game, an initiative to incentivize visiting WCLS libraries, and the First 500, an effort to document and celebrate a child's first 500 books read. We will continue with construction of the Birch Bay Vogt Library Express and installation of electric vehicle charging stations. We plan to conduct a service needs assessment at the end of 2025.

Board Meeting Preview

To close the meeting, Christine reviewed next steps in the budget planning process. Union negotiations will take place the week of October 14. We will review a draft of the 2025 budget at the regular October Board of Trustees meeting. We will hold a public hearing on revenue sources at the November meeting, vote on the 2025 levy increase resolution, and approve a preliminary 2025 Budget and Capital Plan. We will approve the final budget and Capital Plan at the December meeting.

Adjourn

Rod adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on October 22, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. online via Microsoft Teams and at Administrative Services, 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226.

/s/	10/22/2024	/s/
Holly Robinson, Board Secretary	Date	Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and
		Administration