



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 Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org prior to the meeting.
3. 9:10 a.m. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Meeting Minutes
 - b. Expenditures
 - c. Authorization to void a warrant
4. 9:15 a.m. **Financial Report and Resolutions**
 - a. Finance Committee Report
 - b. Resolutions: A Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Whatcom County Rural Library District...
 - 12/17/24-17: Adopting the 2025 General and Capital Fund Budgets
 - 12/17/24-18: Adopting the 2025-2029 Capital Plan
5. 9:30 a.m. **AS Feasibility Study**
6. 10:15 a.m. **Policy Update**
 - a. Sick Leave Policy 12.22
 - b. Temporary Reassignment Policy 12.15
 - c. Overtime Pay/Compensatory Time Policy 12.43
7. 10:30 a.m. **2025 Addendum to Agreement with Whatcom County Library Foundation**
8. 10:35 a.m. **BREAK**
9. 10:45 a.m. **Executive Session to Discuss the Executive Director's Annual Review** per RCW 42.30.110 (1)(g)
No final action will be taken during the Executive Session. At the beginning of the session, the Library Board Chair will state the time when the session is expected to end. If the session ends early, the Board will not reconvene in open session until the stated time. If the session is not over at the stated time, the Library Board Chair will briefly reconvene the Board in open session at the stated time to announce the time to which the session will be extended.

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 Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org before 4:00 p.m. Monday, December 16, 2024. Written comments may be submitted to Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org prior to the meeting.

10. 11:15 a.m. **Executive Director's Annual Review**
11. 11:20 a.m. **2025 Meeting Locations**
12. 11:25 a.m. **Trustee Education: Classification Process**
13. 11:45 a.m. **Staff Reports**
 - a. Executive Director
 - b. Deputy Director
 - c. Youth Services Manager
 - d. Community Relations Manager
14. 11:55 a.m. **Performance Measures and Committee Reports**
 - a. Performance Measures
 - b. IT Services Committee
 - c. Personnel Committee
 - d. Whatcom County Library Foundation
15. 12:00 p.m. **Announcements and Adjourn**
 - a. Citizens Advisory Committee 1/30 at 6:00 p.m. at the Ferndale Library
 - b. Board attendance at Listening Sessions

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Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	12/17/2024
Committee or Department:	Administration Department
Subject:	Consent Agenda – Board Meeting Minutes, Monthly Expenditures, Authorization to Void a Warrant
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:

- November 19, 2024 Regular Board Meeting

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- October 16-31, 2024 payroll: check nos. 1040715249-1040715251 and voucher nos. 560610-560767 totaling \$239,924.80 and November 1-15, 2024 payroll: check nos. 1040889090-1040889094 and voucher nos. 560773-560926 totaling \$236,081.96.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$98,731.03; \$47,995.88 of this is for employee funded contributions to dental insurance premiums, Health Savings Accounts, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2024-44G: warrant nos. 1202986-1203005 totaling \$22,165.44
- Claim 2024-45G: warrant nos. 1203391-1203421 totaling \$117,499.90
- Claim 2024-46G: warrant nos. 1203875-1203900 totaling \$50,700.81
- Claim 2024-47G: warrant nos. 1204842-1204871 totaling \$36,366.96

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2024-22C: warrant no. 1203006 totaling \$14,392.69
- Claim 2024-23C: warrant no. 1203422 totaling \$27,740.00
- Claim 2024-24C: warrant nos. 1204803-1204804 totaling \$24,183.55

Authorization to Void a Warrant:

- Resolution 12/17/24-16 voiding warrant 1203415

Alternatives: N/A

Fiscal Impact: Expenditures for approval paid from available 2024 budgeted funds.

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



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: Matthew Santos, Vice Chair; Holly Robinson, Secretary and Danielle Gaughen. Absent: Rodney Lofdahl, Chair and John Miller.

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; 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.

Guests: None.

Call to Order

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

Open Public Comment

No public comment.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included minutes of the October 22, 2024, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following:

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- September 16-30, 2024 payroll: check nos. 1040341226-1040341227 and voucher nos. 560272-560428 totaling \$233,972.81 and October 1-15, 2024 payroll: check nos. 1040503280-1040503285 and voucher nos. 560434-560604 totaling \$269,424.50.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$117,901.55; \$64,326.55 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 2024-39G: warrant nos. 1200650-1200668 totaling \$52,169.65
- Claim 2024-40G: warrant nos. 1201027-1201047 totaling \$47,558.42

- Claim 2024-41G: warrant nos. 1201285-1201312 totaling \$115,681.59
- Claim 2024-42G: warrant nos. 1201927-1201944 totaling \$65,039.52
- Claim 2024-43G: warrant nos. 1202552-1202574 totaling \$69,376.33

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2024-18C: warrant no. 1200669 totaling \$10,682.12
- Claim 2024-19C: warrant no. 1201313 totaling \$5,133.90
- Claim 2024-20C: warrant no. 1201945 totaling \$11,944.00
- Claim 2024-21C: warrant no. 1202575 totaling \$1,022.97

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

Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

Jackie reviewed her report, including the October Notes and Highlights section. WCLS received a large amount of the remaining property tax revenue in October but has received less of the levy than is typical for this time of year. Jackie contacted the Whatcom County Treasurer’s Office to inquire about the lag and was assured this is simply a timing issue, with additional revenues posting to our account in early November. The remaining property tax levy should be received in November and December. This situation speaks as to why WCLS needs cash flow reserves on hand.

Holly motioned to move Staff Reports ahead of the Public Hearing on the agenda due to being ahead of the agenda schedule. Seconded. Passed unanimously.

Staff Reports: Executive Director

This agenda item was moved before the Public Hearing due to being ahead of schedule.

In addition to her written report, Christine highlighted the attendance at the Citizen’s Advisory Committee meeting last week at the Ferndale Library. Danielle stated that additional meetings are needed to reach more of the community and encouraged having smaller group discussions. Matthew agreed with Danielle and suggested appointing group facilitators ahead of time to help manage the limited time during the meetings. Many comments were received from the participants and will be shared prior to the next Board meeting. Christine conveyed that the format for the next meeting will be breakout groups for focused discussion on different topics. She asked the trustees present if they were open to attending smaller meetings at different branches and they responded positively.

The Freedge had its soft opening at the North Fork Library. Once the weather improves this spring, the shed housing the Freedge will be painted. Sustainable Connections is currently pursuing another grant opportunity in conjunction with the City of Sumas to have a second Freedge installed in the lobby of the Sumas Library.

Christine reviewed the 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting schedule with the trustees. At the previous board meeting some trustees expressed interest in resuming the practice of holding meetings at different branches. Danielle stated that visiting other branches poses a timing issue for her and she may not be able to attend these meetings in person. Matthew stated that visiting the other branches would provide trustees with the opportunity to be out in the community more. Changes to the proposed schedule were requested. The decision to approve the schedule was delayed until December so that Rod and John may give input.

Christine asked the trustees for their opinions regarding staying half an hour after board meetings or arriving half an hour early for trustees to learn more about each other on a personal level. Matthew and Danielle both brought up concerns of time constraints and scheduling. This idea will be further explored when all trustees are present.

Matthew announced the beginning of the public hearing on proposed 2025 operating budget revenue sources and preliminary budget at 9:25 a.m.

Jackie reviewed the fund balance, revenue and expense items in the 2025 Preliminary Budget, noting changes made since the draft shared in October. She noted that some designated amounts in the fund balance have been changed to undesignated.

Jackie also reviewed the 2025-2029 Capital Plan. Capital projects planned for 2025 include completion of the Birch Bay Vogt Library Express and installing electric vehicle charging stations in a few locations.

Jackie presented Resolution 11/19/24-13 Authorizing an Increase in the Regular Property Tax Levy and summarized its contents. Christine reminded Trustees that the budget presented today includes an operating deficit, therefore she and Jackie recommend Trustees approve increasing the levy by our statutorily allowed 1%. There were no questions.

Holly moved approval of Resolution 11/19/24-13 Authorizing an Increase in the Regular Property Tax Levy. Seconded.

Discussion took place. Clarification was asked for the percentage of increase WCLS is requesting for the regular property tax levy.

Unanimously approved.

Jackie presented Resolution 11/19/24-14 Adopting the Fiscal Year 2025 Preliminary General and Capital Fund Budgets and Resolution 11/19/24-15 Adopting the 2025 Preliminary Capital Plan.

Danielle moved approval of Resolution 11/19/24-14 Adopting the Fiscal Year 2025 Preliminary General and Capital Fund Budgets, as presented. Seconded. Unanimously approved.

Holly moved approval of Resolution 11/19/24-15 Adopting the 2025-2029 Preliminary Capital Plan. Seconded. Unanimously approved.

Matthew announced the conclusion of the public hearing at 10:07 a.m.

Break

Matthew adjourned for a break from 10:07-10:21 a.m.

Staff Reports: Deputy Director

Staff Reports continued after the break and began with the Deputy Director report.

Christine shared Michael's report since he had to depart the meeting early. In addition to his written report, Christine spoke about patrons bringing pets into the library. This does not include service or support animals, nor animals authorized for program related visits. Two incidents in the past year have brought this topic into focus. In both instances, the pet was permanently trespassed from the library. The Safety Committee will be discussing this topic again. Danielle would like to know how allowing pets into the library affects WCLS insurance rates. Matthew believes that consistent and clear communication throughout the branches is necessary and the risk assessment piece of this concerns him. The administration team will continue to discuss this topic with the Safety Committee and follow up with insurance rate inquiries.

Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

Thom shared his written report and highlighted the Youth Services Department online Staff Shelf. It helps young people find new books that they may not have found at their branch or at all if they are not able to visit and browse the shelves. Thom walked the Board through how to locate the Staff Shelf on wcls.org and interact with

it. Youth Services staff share this feature when they are out in the community. This helps kids realize how easy it is to find their next read, place a hold and check out that item. Youth can also use the Staff Shelf to communicate with a Youth Services staff member.

Special thanks to Youth Services Assistant Tess Reding Hoffart, who migrated individual items on the Staff Shelf when the website was recently updated, and to Online Experience Coordinator Neil McKay, who ensured everything was looking great and working as expected.

Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

Mary discussed her written report, noting that her report is focused on Open Book. Now that the event has passed, it is time to pause and reflect on what was accomplished and the community feedback that was received. There were many focal points such as the Libby fortune teller booth and the photo booth featuring Lloyd the dragon created by Birch Bay artist Kim Morris.

Danielle commented that she had heard that Open Book may not return in 2025. Christine spoke about the need to focus staff time on other things in 2025 as well as the importance of finding multiple sponsors for the event. WCLS would love to do Open Book again in the future and will be looking into ways to bring the event back or repackage the idea on a smaller scale.

The Whatcom County Library Foundation made this possible with their generous sponsorship of Open Book this year. Village Books was a great partner and advertiser for Open Book. Dianne mentioned that WCLS has talented staff, and they love that Open Book is staff-driven. Mary thanked the Community Relations team for the work they did promoting Open Book.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

In addition to the written report, Christine stated that the trends in materials usage WCLS has been experiencing are continuing. The increase in digital materials circulation and decrease in physical materials circulation is expected to persist. WCLS should pass the two million item checkout mark by the end of the year.

There was an all-time high of new OverDrive users in October, specifically in eAudiobooks. Peterson's Test Prep has taken off in use. LinkedIn Learning programs related to AI have increased.

Holly asked about the pricing of eAudiobooks. Lisa explained that the pricing is not much different than the eBook pricing model of having to purchase a temporary license.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee reported they have finished gathering feedback for the Executive Director annual review. This information will be discussed during the Executive Session planned for the December Board of Trustees meeting.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

Branch Out this year was very successful. The event came in under budget and the Foundation saw an increase in donations from 2023. As of now, they will end the year 46% over the total fundraising goal set by their Board for 2024. WCLF will be able to make a sizable transfer from the general fund to the endowment fund. The WCLF 2025 draft budget will be approved at the next Foundation Board meeting.

Announcements and Adjourn

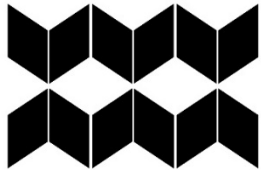
No further announcements.

Matthew adjourned the meeting at 11:13 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on December 17, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. online via Microsoft Teams and at Administrative Services, 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226.

<hr/> Holly Robinson, Board Secretary	<u>12/17/2024</u> Date	<hr/> Rheannan Pfnister, Exec. Assistant
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whatcom county
library system

RESOLUTION NO. 12/17/24-16

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT
AUTHORIZING THE CANCELLATION OF A WARRANT**

WHEREAS, the following warrant was issued for payment of Interlibrary Loan charges; and,

WHEREAS, the item has been returned and the warrant is no longer needed; and,

WHEREAS, the warrant is in the possession of WCLS and has not been redeemed;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Administrative Services and County Treasurer are hereby authorized to execute the cancellation of the warrant shown below.

Warrant #	Date	Vendor	Amount
1203415	November 12, 2024	Sno-Isle Libraries	\$22.00

Adopted by the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees this 17th day of December, 2024:

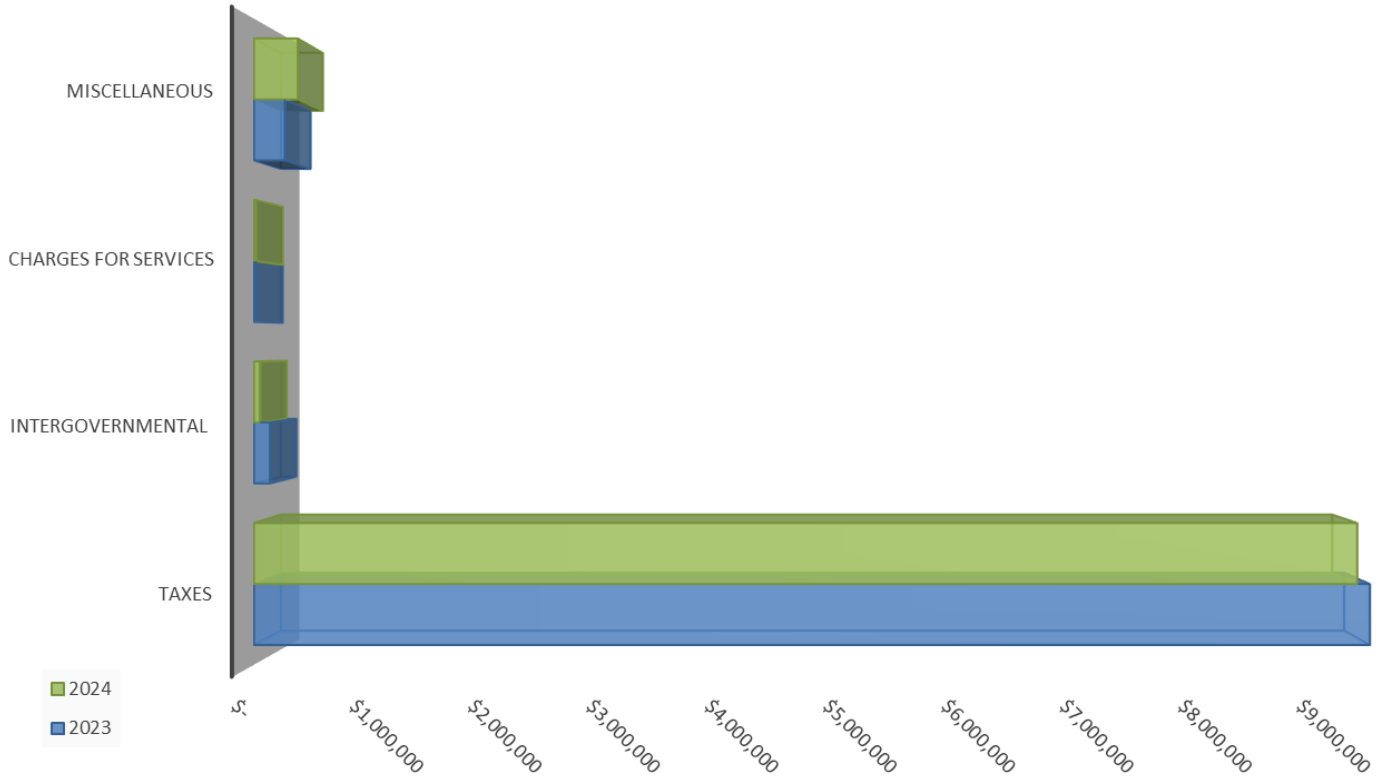
Rodney Lofdahl, Board Chair



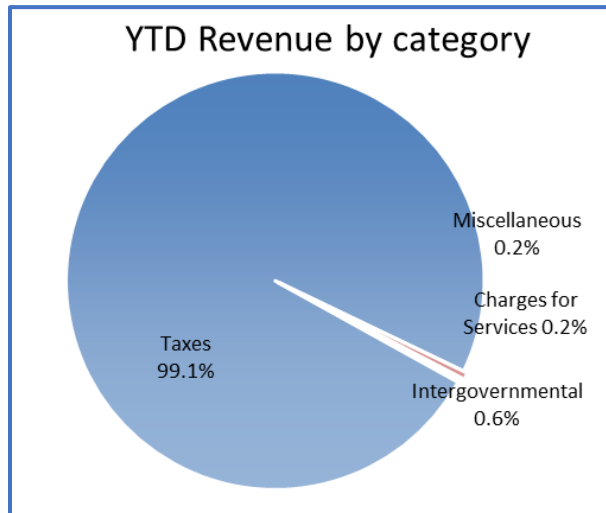
November Revenue

2024 Budget Revenues - Year-To-Date						
November 2024 (92% 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	9,769,533	\$ 9,671,493	95.40%	99.00%	\$ (98,040)
	TOTAL TAXES	9,769,533	\$ 9,671,493	95.40%	99.00%	\$ (98,040)
330	INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE					
333.4530	Fed Indirect Grant - IMLS	2,500	\$ -	0.00%	0.00%	\$ (2,500)
337.1000	Local Grants, Entitlements & Other	45,000	30,812	0.30%	68.47%	(14,188)
337.2000	Leasehold Excise Tax	30,000	23,402	0.23%	78.01%	(6,598)
	TOTAL INTERGOV. REVENUE	77,500	\$ 54,214	0.53%	69.95%	\$ (23,286)
340	CHARGES FOR GOODS & SERVICES					
347.2001	Printing & Duplication Services	4,000	\$ 5,186	0.05%	129.65%	\$ 1,186
347.2002	Library Use Fees	12,300	12,380	0.12%	100.65%	80
	TOTAL CHARGES FOR SERVICES	16,300	\$ 17,566	0.17%	107.77%	\$ 1,266
360	MISCELLANEOUS REVENUES					
361.1100	Investment Interest	291,780	\$ 293,290	2.89%	100.52%	\$ 1,510
362.1000	Rents & Leases	3,500	870	0.01%	24.86%	(2,630)
367.1000	Contributions & Donations	73,500	61,066	0.60%	83.08%	(12,434)
369.1000	Sale of Surplus	100	80	0.00%	80.00%	(20)
369.4100	Judgements & Settlements	-	67	0.00%	0.00%	67
369.8100	Cashier's Overages or Shortages	-	1.17	0.00%	0.00%	1
369.9101	Other Misc. Revenue	20,000	20,445	0.20%	102.22%	445
369.9102	Reimburse Lost/Damaged Books	11,000	9,998	0.10%	90.89%	(1,002)
369.9106	COBRA Reimbursement	733	550	0.01%	75.02%	(183)
	TOTAL MISC. REVENUES	400,613	\$ 386,367	3.81%	96.44%	\$ (14,246)
	TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	10,263,946	\$ 10,129,641	99.92%	98.69%	\$ (134,306)
390	OTHER FINANCING SOURCES					
395.1000	Proceeds from Sale of Capital Assets	7,752	7,752	0.00%	100.00%	\$ -
397.3000	Transfers from Designated Fund Balance	230,000	-	0.00%	0.00%	(230,000)
	TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	237,752	7,752	0.00%	100.00%	\$ (230,000)
	TOTAL REVENUE	10,501,698	\$ 10,137,393	100.00%	96.53%	\$ (364,306)

General Fund Operating Revenue to Date-Compared to Prior Year

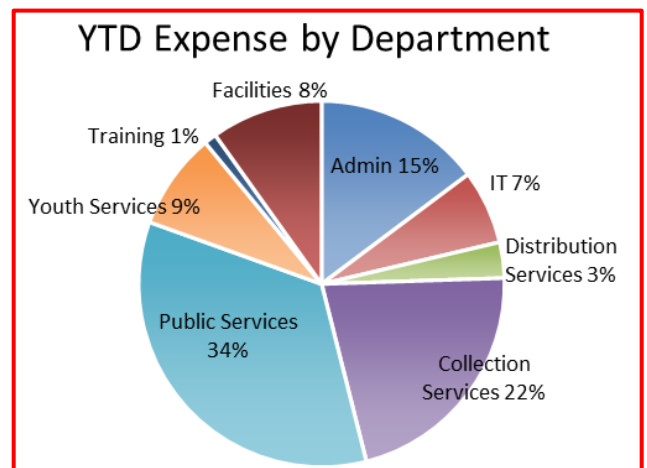
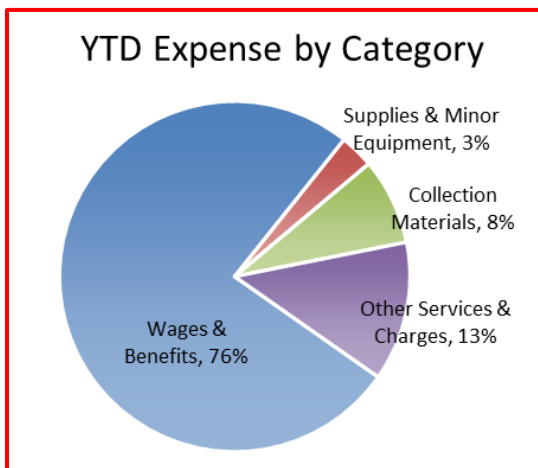


Actual General Fund Revenue Year to Date Comparison			
	2023	2024	% Change
Taxes	\$ 9,782,273	\$ 9,671,493	-1.13%
Intergovernmental	142,440	54,214	-61.94%
Charges for Services	16,403	17,566	7.09%
Miscellaneous	272,953	386,367	41.55%
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 10,214,070	10,129,641	-0.83%
Other Financing Sources	\$ -	7,752	
Total Revenue	\$ 10,214,070	\$ 10,137,393	-0.75%

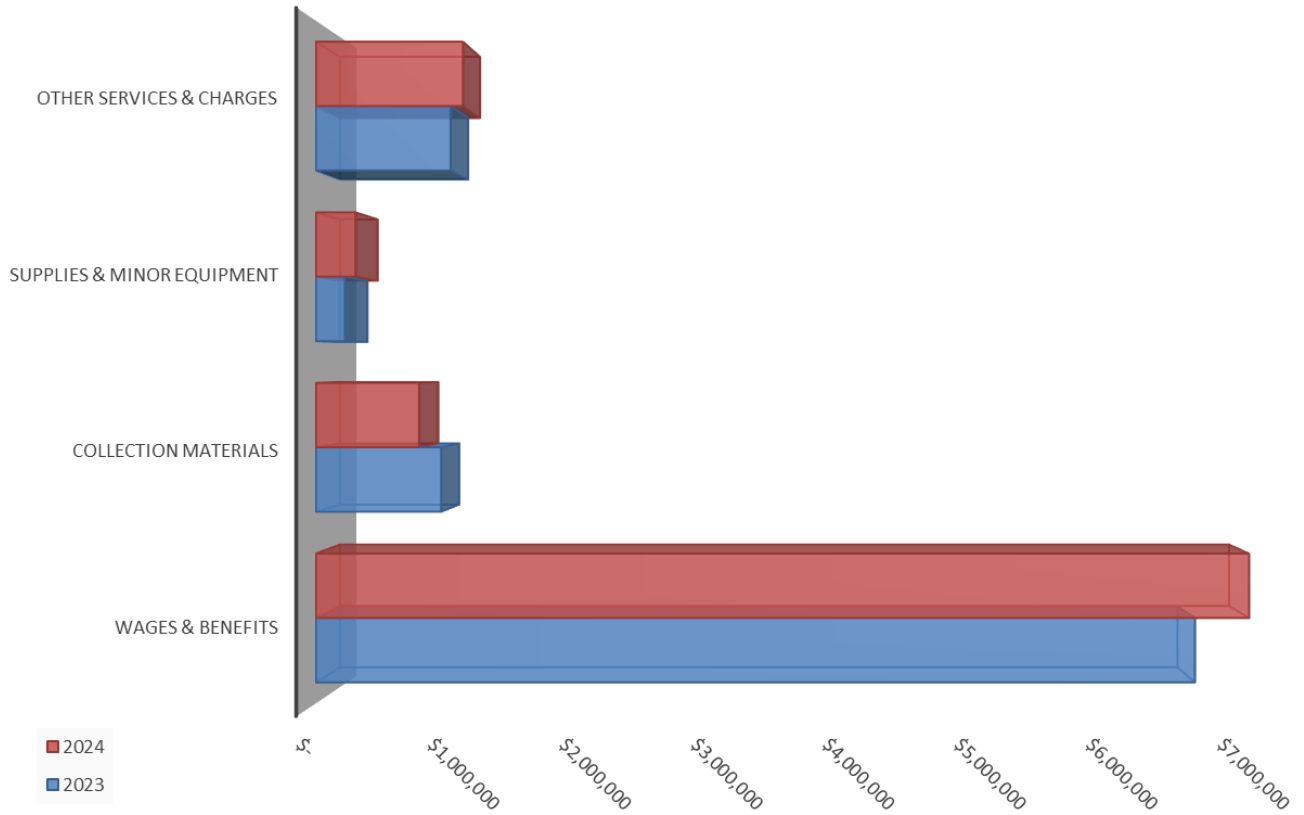


November Expenditures

2024 Budget Expenditures - Year-To-Date						
November 2024 (92% 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					
572.1000	Salaries and Wages	6,010,093	\$ 5,446,455	55.96%	90.62%	\$ (563,638)
572.2000	Benefits	2,112,922	1,904,436	19.57%	90.13%	(208,486)
	TOTAL SALARIES, WAGES, & BENEFITS	8,123,015	\$ 7,350,892	75.53%	90.49%	\$ (772,124)
572.30	SUPPLIES & MINOR EQUIPMENT					
572.3031	Office & Operating Supplies	168,410	\$ 156,683	1.61%	93.04%	\$ (11,727)
572.3032	Fuel	26,050	17,367	0.18%	66.67%	(8,683)
572.3034	Collection Materials	1,250,000	814,122	8.37%	65.13%	(435,878)
572.3035	Small Tools & Minor Equipment	185,075	139,771	1.44%	75.52%	(45,304)
	TOTAL SUPPLIES & MINOR EQUIPMENT	1,629,535	1,127,944	11.59%	69.22%	\$ (501,591)
572.40	OTHER SERVICES & CHARGES					
572.4041	Professional Services	582,140	\$ 531,381	5.46%	91.28%	\$ (50,759)
572.4042	Communication	152,500	137,463	1.41%	90.14%	(15,037)
572.4043	Travel	46,250	35,117	0.36%	75.93%	(11,133)
572.4044	Taxes & Operating Assessments	400	451	0.00%	112.85%	51
572.4045	Operating Rentals & Leases	64,271	63,412	0.65%	98.66%	(859)
572.4046	Insurance	91,874	92,250	0.95%	100.41%	375
572.4047	Utilities	171,176	135,032	1.39%	78.89%	(36,144)
572.4048	Repair & Maintenance	133,240	102,759	1.06%	77.12%	(30,481)
572.4049	Miscellaneous	92,910	61,526	0.63%	66.22%	(31,384)
	TOTAL OTHER SERVICES & CHARGES	1,334,762	1,159,391	11.91%	86.86%	\$ (175,370)
	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	11,087,312	9,638,227	99.03%	86.93%	\$ (1,449,085)
590	OTHER FINANCING USES					
597.1000	Transfers to Capital	94,135	\$ 94,135	0.97%	100.00%	\$ -
	TOTAL OTHER FINANCING USES	94,135	\$ 94,135	0.97%	100.00%	\$ -
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	11,181,447	\$ 9,732,362	100.00%	87.04%	\$ (1,449,085)
	NET INCOME (LOSS)	(679,749)	405,030			\$ 1,084,779



General Fund Operating Expenditures to Date-Compared to Prior Year



Actual General Fund Expenditures Year to Date Comparison			
	2023	2024	% Change
Wages & Benefits	\$ 6,924,395	\$ 7,350,892	6.16%
Collection Materials	987,432	814,122	-17.55%
Supplies & Minor Equipment	228,652	313,822	37.25%
Other Services & Charges	1,060,933	1,159,391	9.28%
Total Operating Expenditures	9,201,411	9,638,227	4.75%
Other Financing Uses	\$ 45,000	94,135	109.19%
Total Expenditures	\$ 9,246,411	\$ 9,732,362	5.26%

Fund Balance Summary	2023		2024	
	Actual	Budgeted	Budgeted	Actual to Date
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 10,630,324	10,612,545	\$ 10,612,545	
Revenue	10,305,797	10,501,698		10,137,393
Expenditures	(10,553,576)	(11,181,447)		(9,732,362)
Transfer to (from) Reserves	230,000	(230,000)		-
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 10,612,545	\$ 9,702,796	\$ 11,017,575	

Ending Fund Balance Designation Detail	2023		2024	
	Actual	Budgeted	Budgeted	Actual to Date
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Cash Flow	\$ 3,502,655	\$ 3,639,587	\$ 3,639,587	
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Emergency	892,009	926,588		926,588
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Capital Transfer	45,000	94,135		94,135
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Unemployment Comp Reserve	14,403	14,662		14,662
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	172,000	172,000		172,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Abeyance Fund	230,000	-		230,000
Total Designated Ending Fund Balance	9,548,382	9,539,286		9,769,286
Beginning Fund Balance less designated funds	1,081,942	1,073,259		843,259
Transfer to (from) Reserves	230,000	(230,000)		-
Net Income	(247,779)	(679,749)		405,030
Ending Unassigned Funds with no designation	1,064,163	163,510		1,248,289
Ending Designated Funds	9,548,382	9,539,286		9,769,286
Total Ending Fund Balance	\$ 10,612,545	9,702,796	\$ 11,017,575	

November Summary

- In last month's report I mentioned that we received less of our annual property tax levy than expected in October, but the County Treasurer's Office assured me that this was simply a payment timing issue. We did indeed receive more tax revenue in November, bringing our year-to-date total to \$9,671,493. We are still approximately \$98,000 shy of our total for the year, but I expect this to be received in December.
- Overall expenditures continue to track close to the budget target of 92% (11 of 12 months). Wage and benefit costs are at 90.5% of budget and total operating expenditures are at 86.9% of budget.

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.



Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	12/17/2024
Committee or Department:	Administration/Finance
Subject:	Resolution 12/17/24-17 Adopting the Fiscal Year 2025 General and Capital Fund Budgets and Resolution 12/17/24-18 Adopting the 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Plan
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 Resolution 12/17/24-17 adopting the Fiscal Year 2025 General and Capital Fund budgets and approval of Resolution 12/17/27-18 adopting the 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Plan.

Suggested Motion for Consideration:

Approve Resolution 12/17/24-17 adopting the 2025 General and Capital Fund Budgets.

Approve Resolution 12/17/24-18 adopting the 2025-2029 Capital Plan.

Summary:

See budget document for detail of General and Capital Fund budgeted revenues and expenditures for fiscal year 2025, and for a summary of the 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Plan.

Alternatives: None

Fiscal Impact: See budget document for detail of fiscal impacts.

Comments: None

WHATCOM COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

FINAL OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET
FISCAL YEAR 2025

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rodney Lofdahl
Chair

Danielle Gaughen
Board Member

John Miller
Board Member

Holly Robinson
Board Member

Matthew Santos
Board Member

Prepared By

Jackie Saul
Director of Finance and Administration

With Assistance From:

Christine Perkins, *Executive Director*

Michael Cox, *Deputy Director*

Beth Andrews, *Human Resources Manager*

Thom Barthelmess, *Youth Services Manager*

Ryan Cullup, *Facilities Services Manager*

Geoff Fitzpatrick, *Information Technology Manager*

Lisa Gresham, *Collection Services Manager*

Mary Vermillion, *Community Relations Manager*

WHATCOM COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET
FISCAL YEAR 2025

To obtain copies of this document, or for questions regarding its content, please contact:

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This document is also available online at www.wcls.org/library-board-of-trustees.

2025 Budget Introduction – Executive Director’s Message

For the second year in a row, WCLS is projecting a significant budget deficit that requires us to deplete reserve funds to accommodate. This is not indicative of poor planning but rather the cumulative effect of years of significant inflation outpacing increases to revenue. Library trustees must now make difficult decisions of how and when to reduce the library services the community relies on (to reduce expenses) and how and when to ask voters to support an increase to the levy rate (to increase revenue).

As WCLS prepares for a levy lid lift election, we will be focusing our energy on gathering input from the community to make these important budget-related decisions. We will also be working to communicate the library’s value to our constituents and the value to the community at large. We are working on a project called The Library Game that will encourage community members to visit their libraries and experience various programs and services. Our Youth Services team, along with Public Services and Collection Services, are piloting an effort targeted at families with preschoolers called “The First 500”. Staff will prepare weekly checkout bags of children’s books for enrolled families to grab and read with their earliest learners. Over the course of the year, the child will have enjoyed 500 library books – building a foundation for a lifelong love of reading and establishing a family pattern of regular library visits.

After many years of planning, working to develop bid documents and finalizing pre-permit application requirements with Whatcom County, we will be going out to bid on the Birch Bay Vogt Library Express project in 2025. We are working with Osborn Architects Inc. (OAI) of Lynden and look forward to selecting a local contractor. We are excited for construction to begin!

It has been three years since WCLS experienced a data breach by an unknown threat actor. Since then, we upgraded hardware and security software, implemented new security policies and continually emphasize staff security training. As required in our Information Technology Services Policy, we will be contracting with a third-party vendor to conduct a cybersecurity audit. This expense is substantial but essential to confirm that we are protecting our data and technology resources to the best of our ability and consistent with current best practices. Nationwide shortages of EV Charging equipment have delayed implementation of EV chargers at multiple branch locations and Administrative Services. We expect to be able to begin installation in 2025, accessing grant pledges to do this work. One grant requires us to purchase electric vehicles for our fleet; we have been waiting to replace two passenger vehicles until the charging stations are in service.

After 13 years as Whatcom County Library Foundation’s Development Director, Jennifer Rick is retiring. We are actively recruiting for her replacement. This is a twenty-hour per week non-benefited position. While it may be optimal to hire a full-time employee to serve in this role, the annual funds raised are not yet at a level that would support this. Whatcom County Library Foundation (WCLF) funds a small portion of the cost of wages and WCLS supplies the rest, consistent with our Memorandum of Understanding with WCLF.

In 2024 our bargaining team came to an agreement with AFSCME Local 1581 to update and renew our union contract through December 31, 2029. The annual Wage & Benefit agreement includes a 2.5% COLA and 1% proficiency for all staff. This adjusts our Pay Scale to account for increases to Washington State minimum wage. This year is a critical one for WCLS’s financial viability. Our intent this year is to maintain existing service levels to deliver maximum value to the community. In the future, we will need to adjust this approach based on the feedback we receive from community members prior to a levy lid lift and in response to election results.

-- Christine Perkins, Executive Director

Whatcom County Library System Services Summary

Service Area

Whatcom County Library System (WCLS) provides library services in the unincorporated areas of Whatcom County, Washington and five annexed cities and towns.

WCLS served an estimated population of 140,730 in 2024. WCLS offers more than 670,000 books, audiobooks, DVDs, digital resources and other items. In 2024, WCLS patrons checked out over 2,100,000 items, made more than 550,000 visits to branch libraries and there were over 52,000 participants in online and in-person programming and events.

WCLS services are available to anyone who lives, works, attends school or owns property in the WCLS service area, as well as individuals who live in Bellingham and any Washington resident with a public library card. Library materials are available to teachers in public and independent schools, homeschools, preschools and childcare centers in the service area.

WCLS holds formal reciprocal borrowing agreements with Bellingham Public Library, the Fraser Valley Library System, Upper Skagit Library District and La Conner Regional Library District.

Services

WCLS provides services through ten branch libraries, a bookmobile, three express libraries, homebound and jail services, outreach, its website and in partnership with public and independent school districts across the county.

WCLS service hours provide access to a branch seven days a week. Hours are designed so that as much as possible, there is access to library services mornings, afternoons and evenings to meet the needs of the diverse population. Express libraries offer extended holds pick-up hours seven days a week from 6:00 AM to 11:00 PM.

In addition to branch locations, the WCLS Mobile Services team provides services to those unable to visit a library. Mobile Services staff provided library materials to fourteen health care, retirement, residential treatment and assisted living facilities, the Whatcom County Jail and to those who are homebound. In 2022 WCLS introduced the Books-by-Mail program to reach even more patrons. The bookmobile serves four communities on a weekly basis.

Teen and Children's Services partner with Whatcom County school districts and independent schools to provide annual book talks and programming at elementary, middle and high schools throughout the county.

In Whatcom County Library System's branch libraries, people can access:

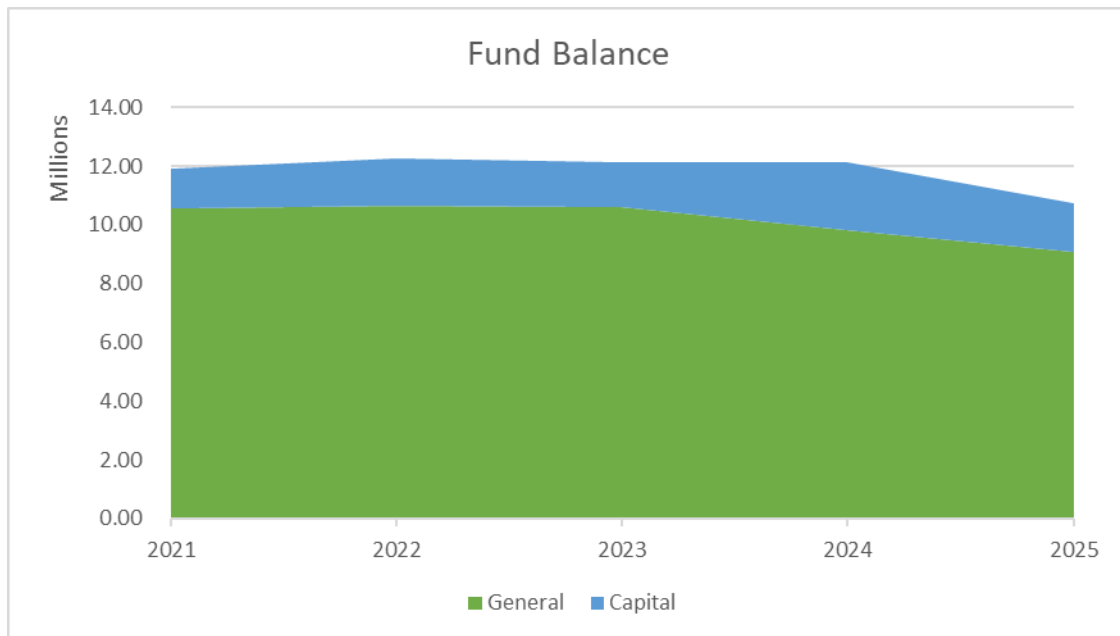
- Books, movies, music, games and more available for checkout
- No-contact curbside pickup of items, including curated "to-go" bags and printing services
- Free internet access on public library computers, personal laptops and other devices on the Library's WiFi network
- Drive-up WiFi internet service and loaner laptops
- Early learning programs and support for children ages birth-to-5, along with programs for children, teens and adults
- Job and business development assistance
- Materials and programs in world languages including Punjabi, Russian and Spanish
- Public meeting rooms
- Private spaces and equipment for online meetings
- Local history collections
- Staff to provide expert support for information access and reading recommendations
- Staff members who speak ASL, Punjabi, Russian and Spanish and staff who are members of Lummi Nation and the Nooksack Tribe

Online, people can access:

- Digital audiobooks, eBooks and eMagazines
- Online streaming of music, movies and documentaries
- Online versions of adult and youth programs including prerecorded storytime videos and online book clubs for adults and teens
- Credible, reliable information from online resources including newspaper and magazine articles, consumer information, vehicle repair manuals, encyclopedias and more
- Online reference and homework help
- Help for writing resumes, career planning and finding jobs
- A robust website, podcast and social media accounts to learn more about library services
- Online language learning for over 70 world languages, including Spanish, French, Italian, German and Japanese, as well as English courses for speakers of 21 world languages

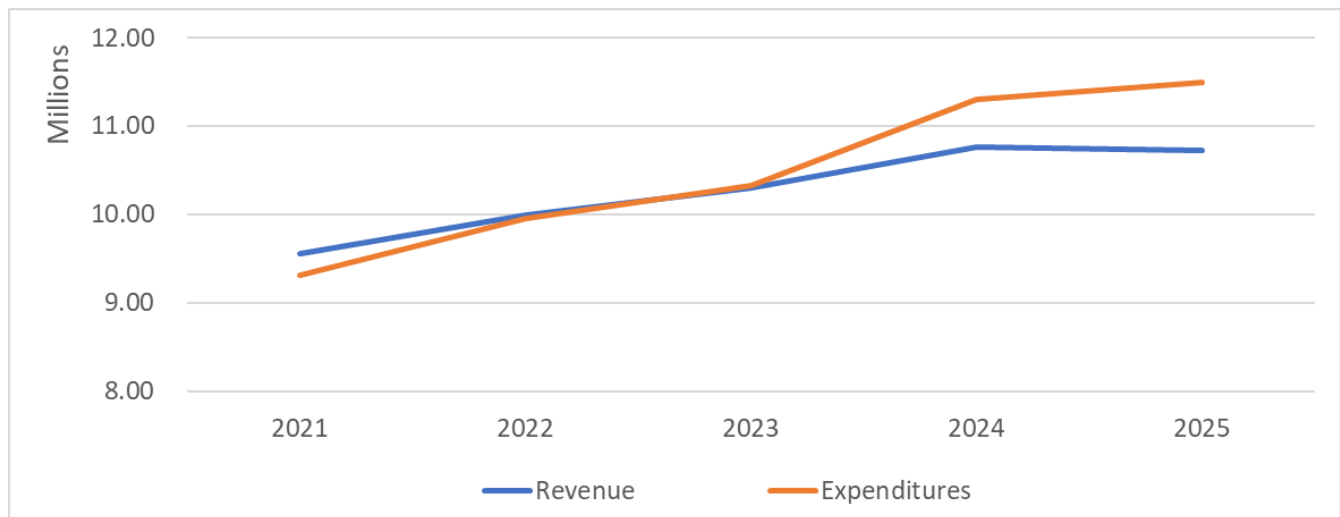
2025 Major Fund Balance Summary

	General Fund	Capital Fund	Total Funds
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 9,840,302	\$ 2,293,607	\$ 12,133,909
Total Revenues	10,728,189	2,202,827	12,931,016
Total Expenditures	11,490,286	2,729,802	14,220,088
Total Revenues Net of Total Expenditures	\$ (762,097)	\$ (526,975)	\$ (1,289,072)
Ending Fund Balance			
Assigned Fund Balance - Capital	\$ -	\$ 1,534,733	\$ 1,534,733
Designated Fund Balance - Cash Flow	3,767,044	-	3,767,044
Designated Fund Balance - Emergency	951,274	231,900	1,183,174
Designated Fund Balance - Capital Transfer	75,000	-	75,000
Designated Fund Balance - Unemployment Comp Reserve	15,560	-	15,560
Designated Fund Balance - Birch Bay Operating Fund Reserve	580,000	-	580,000
Designated Fund Balance - Facility Ownership & Library Svcs Fund Reserve	2,967,315	-	2,967,315
Designated Fund Balance - Facility Maintenance Fund	550,000	-	550,000
Designated Fund Balance - Operating Cost Stabilization Fund	-	-	-
Designated Fund Balance - Collection Project Fund	-	-	-
Total Assigned & Designated Ending Fund Balance	8,906,194	1,766,633	10,672,826
Unassigned, Undesignated Ending Fund Balance	172,011	-	172,011
Total Estimated Ending Fund Balance	\$ 9,078,205	\$ 1,766,633	\$ 10,844,838



2025 General Fund Budget Summary

Budget Number	Description	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Projected	2025 Budgeted	% Change over 2024 Projected
308.0000	Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 10,338,086	\$ 10,583,985	\$ 10,630,324	\$ 10,612,545	\$ 9,840,302	-7.28%
Operating Revenue							
310.0000	Taxes	9,206,508	9,408,229	9,827,497	9,769,533	10,206,689	4.47%
330.0000	Intergovernmental Revenue	193,695	195,188	157,899	75,400	77,000	2.12%
340.0000	Charges for Goods and Services	12,409	16,089	16,991	18,400	18,400	0.00%
360.0000	Miscellaneous Revenue	137,837	195,402	303,410	424,400	426,100	0.40%
	Total Operating Revenue	9,550,448	9,814,908	10,305,797	10,287,733	10,728,189	4.28%
390.0000	Other Financing Sources	3,347	179,642	-	237,752	-	
Operating Expenditures							
572.1000	Salaries and Wages	4,897,366	5,131,974	5,573,808	5,953,055	6,224,118	4.55%
572.2000	Personnel Benefits	1,715,921	1,805,438	1,973,700	2,085,078	2,184,008	4.74%
572.3000	Supplies	1,570,726	1,583,026	1,546,070	1,614,907	1,662,120	2.92%
572.4000	Services	851,259	1,077,193	1,184,998	1,320,553	1,345,040	1.85%
572.5000	Intergovernmental Services	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
	Total Operating Expenditures	9,035,271	9,597,630	10,278,576	10,973,593	11,415,286	4.03%
590.0000	Other Financing Uses	272,624	350,581	275,000	94,135	75,000	-20.33%
	Net Operating Income (Loss)	515,176	217,278	27,221	(685,860)	(687,097)	0.18%
	Net Other Financing Sources (Uses)	(269,277)	(170,939)	(275,000)	143,617	(75,000)	-152.22%
	Net Income (Loss)	245,899	46,339	(247,779)	(542,243)	(762,097)	40.55%
	Use of Fund Balance	-	-	230,000	(230,000)	-	
508.0000	Ending Fund Balance	\$ 10,583,985	\$ 10,630,324	\$ 10,612,545	\$ 9,840,302	\$ 9,078,205	-7.74%



2025 General Fund Revenues

Budget Number	Description	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Projected	2025 Budgeted	% Change over 2024 Projected
308.0000	Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 10,338,086	\$ 10,583,985	\$ 10,630,324	\$ 10,612,545	\$ 9,840,302	-7.28%
311.1000	General Property Taxes	9,206,508	9,408,229	9,827,497	9,769,533	10,206,689	4.47%
310.0000	Total Taxes	9,206,508	9,408,229	9,827,497	9,769,533	10,206,689	4.47%
333.4530	Federal Indirect Grant IMLS	-	13,634	19,546	400	2,000	400.00%
333.9700	Federal Indirect Grant DHS	7,809	40,207	43,568	-	-	
334.0690	State Grant Other	-	-	650	-	-	0.00%
337.1000	Local Entitlements	163,899	115,572	69,660	45,000	45,000	0.00%
337.2000	Leasehold Excise Tax	21,987	25,775	24,475	30,000	30,000	0.00%
330.0000	Total Intergovernmental Revenues	193,695	195,188	157,899	75,400	77,000	2.12%
347.2001	Printing and Duplication Services	3,409	3,709	4,659	6,000	6,000	0.00%
347.2002	Library Use Fees	9,000	12,380	12,332	12,400	12,400	0.00%
340.0000	Total Charges for Goods and Services	12,409	16,089	16,991	18,400	18,400	0.00%
361.1100	Investment Interest	81,417	104,090	230,261	320,000	352,000	10.00%
361.4000	Other Interest Earnings	3	0.48	-	-	-	0.00%
362.1000	Rents and Leases	803	2,225	3,720	3,000	3,000	0.00%
367.1000	Contributions and Donations	21,246	53,142	35,642	67,500	38,000	-43.70%
369.1000	Sale of Discards	314	272	53	100	100	0.00%
369.4100	Judgements and Settlements	-	-	1,546	67	-	
369.8100	Overage/Underage	(2)	22	9	-	-	0.00%
369.9101	Other Miscellaneous	22,686	25,037	18,989	22,000	22,000	0.00%
369.9102	Lost/Damaged Materials	11,317	10,088	11,385	11,000	11,000	0.00%
369.9103	NSF Fee Recoveries	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
369.9106	COBRA Reimbursement	53	527	1,804	733	-	-100.00%
360.0000	Total Miscellaneous Revenues	137,837	195,402	303,410	424,400	426,100	0.40%
	Total Operating Revenues	9,550,448	9,814,908	10,305,797	10,287,733	10,728,189	4.28%
395.1000	Proceeds from Sale of Cap. Assets	-	-	-	7,752	-	-100.00%
395.2000	Insurance Recoveries	3,347	179,642	-	-	-	0.00%
397.3000	Transfer from Designated Fund Balance	-	-	-	230,000	-	-100.00%
	Total Other Financing Sources	3,347	179,642	-	237,752	-	-100.00%
	Total General Fund Revenues	\$ 9,553,794	\$ 9,994,550	\$ 10,305,797	\$ 10,525,485	\$ 10,728,189	1.93%

Taxes: Taxes on real and personal property are the primary revenue source for the Library System, making up 95% of operating revenues received.

Amounts presented in this budget are based on preliminary valuations provided by the Whatcom County Assessor. Assessed valuations are projected to increase by 1.4% to \$38.6 billion, based on valuations of existing properties within the WCLS taxing district. The impact of this, along with the value of new construction and state assessed properties, has been factored into 2025 budgeted property tax collections. Given this scenario, the 2025 levy rate is anticipated to be \$.26409 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

Revenue from the sale of tax title property, along with the debiting of property tax refund interest, is not budgeted but recorded in mid-year budget adjustments.

Intergovernmental Revenue: Sources of intergovernmental revenue include grant revenues received from state and federal sources and revenues resulting from the sale of timber and other products from state forest lands that are managed by the Department of Natural Resources.

State or federal grants received in 2025 will be added as mid-year adjustments as needed.

Private harvest timber tax and the leasehold excise tax are also included in this revenue category. When timber is harvested from private lands, the person or business who owns the timber at the time of the harvest pays a harvest tax. The leasehold excise tax is a tax paid by persons or businesses that use or lease publicly owned property. These sources are budgeted at levels consistent with the prior year's amount.

Historically, revenues from the sale of timber and other products from state forest lands have fluctuated from year to year as market forces, including variations in the housing market, impact the rate of harvest in Whatcom County. 2025 revenues have been budgeted to be consistent with the prior year's amount.

Due the variability in the distribution of these revenues, WCLS will budget to reserve these and other similar shared revenues for transfer to the Capital Fund.

Charges for Goods and Services: Sources of revenues from charges for goods and services include printing and photocopy fees and library use fees.

All WCLS branch libraries provide printers and copiers for public use. The amount budgeted for 2025 is consistent with amounts received in 2024. Printing revenue reflects a waiver of the fees for this service of up to \$7.00 per patron per week in accordance with Resolution 07/20/21-10.

Library use fee revenues are generated from the sale of library cards to people outside of the WCLS service area and through contracted services with other entities. Patrons who are not residents of the library district and who are not covered by a reciprocal borrowing agreement with another library system, can check out books, movies, music and other materials from any WCLS branch library by obtaining a non-resident card. WCLS currently contracts with the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office to provide library services at the Whatcom County Jail, with fees paid each year for services provided in the previous year.

Miscellaneous Revenues: This source of revenue includes investment interest, rents and leases (meeting room use fees), donations, COBRA and other reimbursements, charges for lost or damaged library materials and other miscellaneous revenue.

On a monthly basis, WCLS invests any substantial amount of excess cash available after calculating immediate expenditure needs. WCLS participates in the Whatcom County Investment Pool program administered by the

Whatcom County Treasurer. The program is a stable investment pool with various taxing district participants. Given the recent rate of return of the investment pool, the amount budgeted for 2025 is \$352,000, a 10% increase over projected 2024 interest revenue.

No significant changes are anticipated for revenue from rents and leases, sales of discards or payments for lost or damaged library materials.

WCLS receives contributions from the Whatcom County Library Foundation, Friends of the Library groups and other private funding sources. Contributions and donations are expected to decrease by 43.7% in 2025 after completion of one-time only projects in 2024.

Other miscellaneous revenues come from reimbursements from Bellingham Public Library for distributing patron notices, rebates and other miscellaneous cash receipts.

COBRA reimbursements are from separated employees or those who lose health insurance coverage because of reduced work hours; federal law allows these employees to purchase group health insurance coverage for themselves and their families for limited periods of time. Due to the nature of COBRA revenues, no amount will be budgeted for 2025, but the budget will be amended throughout the year to reflect actual collections.

Other Financing Sources: This source of revenue includes proceeds from the sale of capital assets and insurance recoveries. Payments received, if any, will be added as mid-year adjustments as needed.

2025 General Fund Expenditures

Budget Number	Description	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Projected	2025 Budgeted	% Change over 2024 Projected
572.1000	Total Salaries and Wages	\$ 4,897,366	\$ 5,131,974	\$ 5,573,808	\$ 5,953,055	\$ 6,224,118	4.55%
572.2010	Retirement	519,306	477,319	496,704	496,178	521,473	5.10%
572.2030	Social Security	366,738	382,466	411,334	455,409	474,597	4.21%
572.2045	Health Insurance	765,699	890,723	972,653	1,073,185	1,106,445	3.10%
572.2055	Disability Insurance	9,190	9,752	10,637	12,444	12,929	3.89%
572.2059	Industrial Insurance	53,729	43,603	31,791	46,214	48,083	4.04%
572.2069	Paid Family Medical Leave	-	-	49,830	1,648	16,537	903.51%
572.2079	Unemployment Compensation	1,259	1,575	-	-	3,945	0.00%
572.2099	Qualified Moving	-	-	750	-	-	0.00%
572.2000	Total Personnel Benefits	1,715,921	1,805,438	1,973,700	2,085,078	2,184,008	4.74%
	Total Salaries, Wages, & Benefits	6,613,287	6,937,412	7,547,508	8,038,133	8,408,126	4.60%
572.3031	Office and Operating Supplies	108,244	132,873	144,131	169,469	148,570	-12.33%
572.3032	Fuel Consumed	15,930	27,471	24,787	22,447	24,050	7.14%
572.3034	Collection Materials	1,227,586	1,238,277	1,275,608	1,250,000	1,275,000	2.00%
572.3035	Small Tools and Minor Equipment	218,966	184,405	101,545	172,991	214,500	23.99%
572.3000	Total Supplies	1,570,726	1,583,026	1,546,070	1,614,907	1,662,120	2.92%
572.4041	Professional Services	339,887	436,967	528,286	591,895	680,765	15.01%
572.4042	Communication	131,781	140,989	139,618	157,197	132,088	-15.97%
572.4043	Travel	6,387	29,965	37,304	41,650	30,600	-26.53%
572.4044	Taxes and Operating Assessments	294	326	378	550	550	0.00%
572.4045	Operating Rentals and Leases	21,751	23,127	20,812	69,190	22,423	-67.59%
572.4046	Insurance	64,194	63,232	75,718	103,415	97,529	-5.69%
572.4047	Utility Services	130,801	144,325	156,255	162,492	166,424	2.42%
572.4048	Repairs and Maintenance	69,872	140,554	140,483	105,240	112,740	7.13%
572.4049	Miscellaneous	86,291	97,708	86,143	88,924	101,920	14.61%
572.4000	Total Services	851,259	1,077,193	1,184,998	1,320,553	1,345,040	1.85%
	Total Operating Expenditures	9,035,271	9,597,630	10,278,576	10,973,593	11,415,286	4.03%
597.1000	Transfer to Capital	272,624	350,581	45,000	94,135	75,000	
597.2000	Transfer to Designated Fund Balance	-	-	230,000	-	-	
	Total Other Financing Uses	272,624	350,581	275,000	94,135	75,000	-20.33%
	Total General Fund Expenditures	\$ 9,307,895	\$ 9,948,211	\$ 10,553,576	\$ 11,067,728	\$ 11,490,286	3.82%

Salaries and Benefits: WCLS continually monitors staffing levels, allocating staff to maintain appropriate service needs while balancing current and future budgetary constraints.

A 2.5% Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) and a 1% proficiency increase are included in staff salaries and wages based on the results of Interest-Based Bargaining union negotiations. The COLA is intended to keep WCLS wages in step with state minimum wage requirements and increased inflation.

Benefit costs include employer contributions for employees enrolled in the State of Washington Public Employee Retirement System (PERS); contributions into the Social Security and Medicare systems; medical, dental and vision insurance premiums; Health Savings Account contributions; workers' compensation (Labor and Industries); Washinton State Paid Family and Medical Leave; long-term disability insurance; and unemployment compensation.

Retirement contributions are based on rates set by the State of Washington Department of Retirement Systems. The employer contribution rate in 2025 will be 9.11% of gross wages.

The employer contribution for Social Security and Medicare is 7.65% of gross wages and salaries. This rate is set by the Social Security Administration and is not projected to increase in 2025.

Medical, dental and vision insurance premium costs are covered at 100% for eligible employees. Costs for dependents are shared by the employer and employees. WCLS participates in the Washington State Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB), which offers multiple plan options including QHDHP (Qualified High Deductible Health Plan) combined with a Health Savings Account and PPO (Preferred Provider Organization) plans.

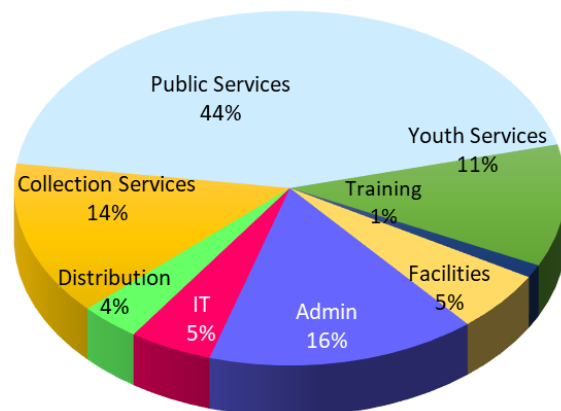
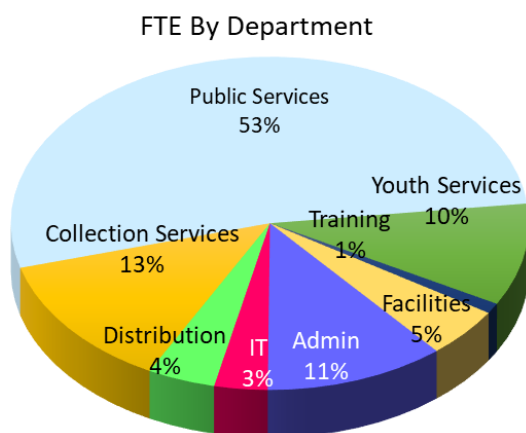
Rates for some PEBB plans are decreasing by up to 4.28% in 2025 while some will increase by up to 10.1%. Dental and vision coverage, along with long-term disability are provided by a private carrier. Dental rates will decrease by 1% while long-term disability rates will increase by 6.9%. Vision coverage was previously included with PEBB medical premiums.

Based on 2025 rate information provided by the State of Washington Department of Labor and Industries, an increase of 4.04% is budgeted for total workers' compensation costs.

WCLS is on a reimbursable plan with the State of Washington for unemployment compensation. 0.06% of gross wages are budgeted for possible reimbursements, in addition to a fund reserve made up of 0.25% of wages.

Paid Family and Medical Leave is a state-mandated paid leave program that began in 2019. Leave is available to qualifying employees and premium costs are shared by the employer and employees. Rates are set by the Washington State Employment Services Division (ESD). In 2025 employers will contribute 0.2848% of 0.92% of gross wages.

Personnel Budget By Department



Office and Operating Supplies: The supplies category includes office supplies; custodial and maintenance supplies; computer, copier and printer supplies; materials processing supplies; mailing and shipping supplies; and vehicle supplies and replacement parts. Expenses in this category are expected to decrease by 12.3% due to several one-time only purchases in 2024.

Fuel: This category is for the diesel and gasoline for WCLS's Bookmobile and eight other fleet vehicles. The amount budgeted for 2025 has increased by 7.1% over 2024 due to anticipated usage and rising fuel costs.

Collection Materials: The collection materials budget provides for the books, magazines, audiobooks, CDs and DVDs, along with the Library of Things and other items that comprise the Library's lending collection. WCLS provides its patrons a continuous supply of new materials in print, sound, video and digital format and current information to support school, work and recreational activities. WCLS has set a target of 13% of operating expenditures for collection spending; this is made up of collection materials as well as the cost of services needed to maintain the collection, such as the integrated library system (ILS) and various cataloging, interlibrary loan, data maintenance and processing costs. In 2025 the collections materials budget includes an increase of 2% over 2024, to accommodate the increased cost of physical and digital materials.

Small Tools and Minor Equipment: This category includes furnishings, computers, computer hardware, software, printers, shelving, book carts and other fixtures and equipment. The 2025 budget includes a 24% increase over 2024 spending. WCLS aims to refurbish and reuse furnishings and equipment when possible, however, in 2025 necessary replacements and upgrades are planned. The 2025 budget also includes the cost of new IT equipment for the new Birch Bay Vogt Library Express.

Professional Services: The amount budgeted in this category includes costs for legal services, payroll services, the collection services described above, advertising, consultant services and participation in an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) program. This category also includes costs for adult and youth programming at branch libraries or online. In 2025 WCLS plans to conduct a follow-up cyber security audit. The cost of this, along with anticipated increases on existing services, will result in an increase of 15.1% over 2024.

This category also includes payments to local fire districts for emergency and fire protection services at WCLS owned properties. According to Washington State statute, this payment to local fire districts is in lieu of property taxes because as a government entity, WCLS does not pay property taxes on the property it owns.

Communications: This category includes postage; UPS, FedEx and other courier services; local and long-distance voice service; fiber optic circuits which link Administrative Services to the integrated library system, the branch libraries, the library network and the Internet; DSL circuits in the smaller libraries to meet patron demand for additional Internet services; and cable data circuits for Bookmobile sites. Although rate increases are anticipated for the services listed, WCLS will be reducing the number of paper notices mailed to patrons, reducing postage costs. This will result in an overall expense decrease of 16% in 2025.

Travel: This includes reimbursement to employees and Trustees for use of personal automobiles on WCLS business and travel expenses associated with attendance at continuing education events, conferences and seminars. The WCLS mileage reimbursement rate mirrors the national IRS reimbursement rate. WCLS will focus on online or local training opportunities in 2025, reducing travel costs by 26.5%.

Taxes and Operating Assessments: This category includes the sales taxes paid on printing and duplication services provided to patrons. Budgeted amounts are consistent with prior years.

Rentals: This category includes costs for leasing a postage meter, copiers and post office box rentals. This category also includes rental costs associated with usage of the Sudden Valley Adult Center for the South

Whatcom branch library. Budgeted amounts are expected to decrease by 67.6% due to a one-time expense in 2024 that will not continue into 2025.

Insurance: This includes insurance for WCLS’s real and personal property, flood insurance, vehicle insurance, errors and omissions coverage, employment practices and an umbrella liability plan. 2025 premiums are budgeted to increase by 5% although costs will decrease from 2024 due to a change in timing of when annual payments are made. Costs may be amended after final renewal rates are known in late December 2024.

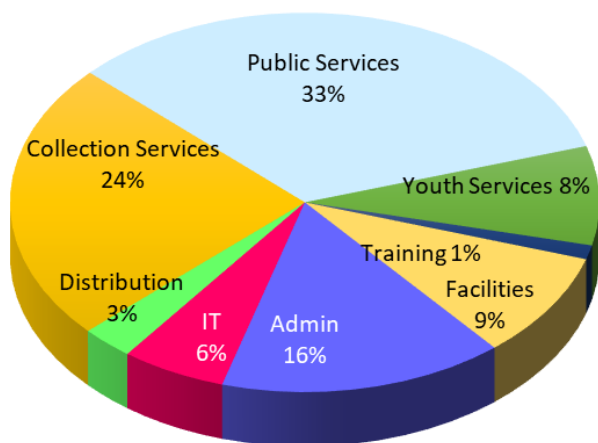
Utilities: This category includes costs for electricity, natural gas, water, sewer and refuse collection for all WCLS locations. A 2.4% increase is included to reflect anticipated rate increases.

Repair and Maintenance: This category includes costs for office and telecommunications equipment maintenance and on-going fleet and facilities maintenance. While several projects are planned for 2025, the amount budgeted also includes a contingency for unanticipated vehicle and facility repairs. The repair and maintenance budget will increase by 7.1% in 2025. Additional amounts needed for unanticipated costs beyond the contingency amount will be added through mid-year budget amendments.

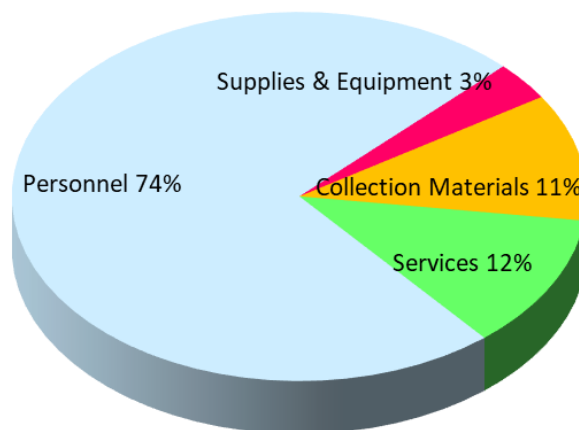
Miscellaneous: This expense category includes trustee and staff WCLS memberships in the Washington Library Association (WLA) and other professional organizations, refunds to patrons who have paid for lost items and later found and returned them, along with training registrations, printing services and other miscellaneous fees. An increase of 14.6% is budgeted over 2024 spending.

Other Financing Uses: Each year WCLS transfers from the General to the Capital fund an amount that is equal to the previous year’s revenue received from certain intergovernmental sources such as those resulting from the sale of timber and other products from state forest lands. In 2025 the Capital fund transfer is expected to be \$75,000 and will be amended after 2024 revenue totals are known.

Budget By Department



Budget By Category



Schedules of Fines and Fees

Administrative Procedure 4.01.04 Schedule of Fines and Fees

Policy Authority: 4.01 Borrower's Policy

1. Nonresident card fees:	
a. Family Fee	\$52.00 (up to 8 cards)
b. Adult Fee (18-65)	\$40.00
c. Child Fee (under 18)	\$20.00
d. Senior (65 and older)/Disabled Fee	\$20.00
2. If library materials are returned late:	
No overdue fines; items that are more than 28 days overdue will be considered lost. Damaged and lost fees may apply.	
3. If the account is submitted to collection agency:	\$10.00
4. Lost items or missing parts:	
Lost items will be charged to the patron's account based on their replacement value.	

Adopted by the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees May 18, 2010.

Revised: August 17, 2021, January 21, 2020, September 17, 2019; August 15, 2017; December 20, 2016; March 15, 2016; November 27, 2012; December 13, 2011; December 17, 2010.

7.03 Meeting Room and Facilities Use Policy Attachment A Schedule of Fees

Base Rental Fees (Rate covers 2 hours of use)			
Meeting Room	Capacity	Schedule A	Schedule B
Blaine Library Multi-Use Space	45	No Fee	\$30
Deming Library Meeting Room	58	No Fee	\$30
Ferndale Library Meeting Room	80	No Fee	\$30
Ferndale Library Conference Room	10	No Fee	\$25
Ferndale Library Study Room	3	No Fee	\$15
Lynden Library Meeting Room	80	No Fee	\$30
Lynden Library Conference Room	10	No Fee	\$25
Lynden Library Study Room	3	No Fee	\$15
North Fork Library Outdoor Side Lot	40' x 40'	No Fee	\$15
Point Roberts Library Meeting Room	30	No Fee	\$30
Additional Fees			
<p>The following is charged in addition to the base rental fee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional time incurs additional fees charged in two hour blocks. 2. Before/Afterhours use fee will be assessed by WCLS, the building owner, or Friends of the Library group on a case-by-case basis. Staff time is assessed at \$20 per hour and subject to availability. 3. If special cleaning or repair is required as a result of use by a person or group, WCLS may charge the contact person an amount equal to the cost incurred by WCLS to return the meeting room to its previous condition. 			

Adopted by the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees May 17, 2016 **Revised: July 20, 2021**, August 17, 2018, March 28, 2017



Whatcom County Library System Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan 2025-2029

Whatcom County Library System's Capital Budgeting Policy requires that the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan be updated annually. The purpose of this plan is to forecast and facilitate adequate capital spending levels and to help ensure WCLS's future financial health and the continued delivery of services as WCLS continues to grow and change.

The Capital Improvement Plan outlines revenues and expenditures for current and new capital projects necessary to support WCLS operations and meet the service demands of the residents of Whatcom County. As most library buildings that WCLS operates are owned by the cities and communities that WCLS serves, WCLS works with building owners to maintain, improve and expand facilities to meet community needs.

The Capital Fund is primarily funded through interest earnings on its fund balance and transfers from the WCLS General Fund. WCLS transfers shared revenues distributed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and others to the WCLS Capital Fund on an annual basis to fund capital expenditures. When possible, WCLS may seek outside public and private grant funding for certain capital projects.

Although not specifically mentioned below, capital purchases in 2025 may also include items or projects identified and approved for 2024 but carried forward into 2025. When this is the case, the 2025 budget will be amended to reflect the revised spending amounts.

Project Descriptions

Building and Furnishings Enhancement and Replacement Program

Projects in this category are intended to further WCLS's efforts to replace aging furnishings and make improvements in its branch libraries. With these projects WCLS hopes to create welcoming public areas that improve patrons' experiences while also increasing staff efficiency and safety through the creation of well-designed, ergonomic workspaces.

2025

- Purchase fixtures, furnishings and equipment (FFE) for the new Birch Bay Vogt Library Express.
- Update staff and manager workspaces at the Blaine Library.
- Complete updates in teen areas at the Deming and South Whatcom Libraries.
- Purchase furnishings for updated meeting space at the North Fork Library (pending grant funding for renovation costs).

2026

- Make updates to circulation and staff work area at Deming Library (pending grant or other funding).
- Complete Birch Bay Vogt Library Express project.
- Review use, size and capacity of existing youth spaces at WCLS libraries for possible updates and expansion where possible.

2027

- Update circulation area at South Whatcom Library.

2028

- Update patron lounge and task furnishings at the Lynden Library.
- Install outdoor play area at North Fork Library (pending grant or other funding).

2029

- Funds are set aside for projects not yet identified.

Building Repair and Maintenance Program

This category includes major improvement, repair and maintenance projects at WCLS facilities, including those recommended in the 2021 Facilities Assessment. Funds are budgeted to update aging or outdated exterior signage at branch libraries and to address infrastructure needs at Administrative Services. Additional projects may be added.

2025

- Partner with the Friends of the Deming Library to replace carpeting at the Deming Library.
- Partner with the Friends of the North Fork Library to create a private meeting space within the library (pending grant funding).
- Install retrofit LED lighting at Administrative Services.
- Update monument and wayfinding signage at various libraries.

2026

- Partner with City of Lynden to make restroom updates at Lynden Library.
- Reseal and restripe parking lot at North Fork.
- Partner with Point Roberts Park and Recreation Department to update the irrigation system at Point Roberts Library.
- Continue to address items identified in Facilities Assessment.
- Continue efforts to update monument and wayfinding signage.

2027

- Partner with Deming Friends to update exterior areas at Deming Library.
- Create additional private meeting space at Deming Library (pending grant or other funding).
- Updates at Everson Library including carpeting, exterior, storage, water fountain/bottle refill station (pending grant or other funding).
- Investigate solar panels for North Fork Library (pending grant or other funding).
- Partner with Sudden Valley Community Association for LED lighting updates at South Whatcom Library.
- Continue to address items identified in Facilities Assessment.
- Continue efforts to update monument and wayfinding signage.

2028

- Partner with City of Ferndale to for LED lighting retrofit at the Ferndale Library.
- Update staff and manager areas at Lynden Library (pending grant or other funding).
- Continue to address items identified in Facilities Assessment.

2029

- Install acoustical noise reduction system at Ferndale Library (pending grant or other funding).
- Continue to address items identified in Facilities Assessment.

Equipment Replacement Program

WCLS budgets to replace aging equipment, particularly vehicles, on a regular basis. In accordance with our Strategic Plan focus of Stewardship, both fiscal and environmental, WCLS will aim to purchase electric vehicles when possible. The vehicle replacement schedule is as follows:

2025

- Replace mid-sized passenger vehicle and mini-vans with electric vehicles.
- Replace aging lift-gate on a box truck.
- Purchase a book return.

2026

- Replace Nissan NV or similar style work van.

2027

- Replace second mini-van with an electric vehicle.

2028-2029:

- No replacements planned.

Land Purchases, New Branch Libraries, Building Upgrades

This category includes costs related to new or updated library facilities, including real estate purchases, architectural design and construction costs.

2025

- Complete architectural design and construction on Birch Bay Vogt Library Express Project.
- Install electric vehicle charging stations at various locations, including making necessary power infrastructure updates. Costs for this project will be offset by various public and private grants, including the State Department of Commerce and Puget Sound Energy.

2026-2029:

- No additional projects planned.

2025 Capital Budget

Project	2024 Projected	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Est. plan Total
Building and Furnishings Enhancement and Replacement program							
Birch Bay New Branch Furnishings	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000
Branch Renovations/Upgrades	53,951	121,866	87,000	35,000	160,000	50,000	453,866
Sub-Total Building and Furnishings Enhancement and Replacement Program	53,951	271,866	87,000	35,000	160,000	50,000	603,866
Building Repair and Maintenance Program							
Admin Services Maintenance & Improvements	17,698	75,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	475,000
Branch Lighting Retrofit Upgrades	-	-	-	20,000	120,000	-	140,000
Branch Building Updates	51,485	135,000	88,000	113,000	28,000	45,000	409,000
Exterior Signage Updates	-	25,000	60,000	10,000	-	-	95,000
Solar Panels	-	-	-	75,000	-	-	-
Sub-Total Building Repair and Maintenance Program	69,183	235,000	248,000	318,000	248,000	145,000	1,119,000
Equipment Replacement Program							
Vehicle Replacements & Upgrades	69,156	135,000	50,000	28,000	-	-	213,000
Book Return	-	6,000	-	-	-	-	6,000
Storage Container	4,674	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub-Total Equipment Replacement Program	73,830	141,000	50,000	28,000	-	-	213,000
Land Purchase/New Branch Libraries/Building Upgrades							
Birch Bay Library Design and Construction	69,972	1,718,221	-	-	-	-	1,718,221
AS Feasibility Study	62,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Electric Vehicle Charging Initiative	-	363,715	-	-	-	-	363,715
Sub-total Land Purchase/New Branch Libraries/Building Upgrades	131,972	2,081,936	-	-	-	-	1,718,221
Total Expenditures	\$ 328,937	\$ 2,729,802	\$ 385,000	\$ 381,000	\$ 408,000	\$ 195,000	\$ 3,654,087

Funding Summary:	2024 Projected	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Est. Plan Total
Investment Interest	\$ 66,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 350,000
Grants/Donations/Reimbursements	936,168	2,057,827	111,000	173,000	113,000	-	2,454,827
Transfer From General Fund	94,135	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	375,000
Prior Period Ending Fund Balance	1,526,242	2,293,607	1,766,633	1,637,633	1,574,633	1,424,633	
Total Funding	\$ 2,622,544	\$ 4,496,435	\$ 2,022,633	\$ 1,955,633	\$ 1,832,633	\$ 1,569,633	

Fund Balance:	2024 Projected	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	
Assigned Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 1,294,342	2,061,707	\$ 1,534,733	\$ 1,405,733	\$ 1,342,733	\$ 1,192,733	
Designated Beginning Fund Balance - Emergency	231,900	231,900	231,900	231,900	231,900	231,900	
Total Beginning Fund Balance	1,526,242	2,293,607	1,766,633	1,637,633	1,574,633	1,424,633	
Revenues	1,002,168	2,127,827	181,000	243,000	183,000	70,000	
Transfer From General Fund	94,135	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	
Expenditures	328,937	2,729,802	385,000	381,000	408,000	195,000	
Net Income	767,366	(526,975)	(129,000)	(63,000)	(150,000)	(50,000)	
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 2,293,607	\$ 1,766,633	\$ 1,637,633	\$ 1,574,633	\$ 1,424,633	\$ 1,374,633	

Note: Projected revenues and expenditures represent current estimates. The priority, timing and available funding for budgeted projects are subject to change based on the changing needs of WCLS, its staff and the patrons and communities that it serves.



RESOLUTION NO. 12/17/24-17

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT ADOPTING
THE 2025 GENERAL AND CAPITAL FUND BUDGETS**

WHEREAS, after study and discussion by the Whatcom County Rural Library District Board of Trustees, Executive Director, and staff, the fiscal year 2025 General Fund and Capital Fund Budgets have been finalized; and,

WHEREAS, Resolution 11/19/24-13 authorized an increase in the regular property tax levy of 2.18352% from the previous year plus additional revenues resulting from the addition of new construction and improvements to property, any increase in the value of state assessed property, and any additional amounts resulting from any annexations that have occurred and refunds made; and,

WHEREAS, changes have been made to the Preliminary 2025 Budgets, including the estimated beginning and ending fund balances;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the attached General Fund Budget be adopted as the Whatcom County Rural Library District’s official General Fund Budget for the year 2025 in the amount of \$20,568,491; and,

ALSO, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the attached Capital Fund Budget be adopted as the Whatcom County Rural Library District’s official Capital Fund Budget for the year 2025 in the amount of \$4,496,435 and,

ALSO, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the attached Schedules of Fines and Fees remain in effect in support of the 2025 General Fund Budget.

General Operating Fund - Budgetary Accounts		
308 Beginning Fund Balance	\$9,840,302	
310-360 Total Revenue	10,728,189	
572 Operating Expenditures		\$11,415,286
597 Transfers Out		75,000
508 Ending Fund Balance		9,078,205
Total	\$20,568,491	\$20,568,491

Capital Fund - Budgetary Accounts		
308 Beginning Fund Balance	\$2,293,607	
360 Miscellaneous Revenue	2,127,827	
397 Transfers In	75,000	
594 Capital Expenditures		\$2,729,802
508 Ending Fund Balance		1,766,633
Total	\$4,496,434	\$4,496,435

Adopted by the Whatcom County Rural Library District Board of Trustees this 17th day of December 2024.

Rodney Lofdahl, Chair



RESOLUTION NO. 12/17/24-18

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT ADOPTING
THE 2025-2030 CAPITAL PLAN**

WHEREAS, at the August 18, 2009 Board of Trustees meeting, the Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees adopted the Capital Budgeting Policy for the District, and;

WHEREAS, said policy requires that the District develop a five-year plan for capital improvements and update it annually, and;

WHEREAS, the District has updated its initial capital improvement program based on identified needs, anticipated available funding, and the priorities established by the District's Strategic Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the attached 2025-2029 Capital Plan be adopted as the Whatcom County Rural Library District's capital improvement program.

Adopted by the Whatcom County Rural Library District Board of Trustees this 17th day of December 2024.

Rodney Lofdahl, Chair



Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	12/17/2024
Committee or Department:	Administration Department
Subject:	Updates to Sick Leave Policy 12.22, Temporary Reassignment Policy 12.15, Overtime Pay/Compensatory Time Policy 12.43
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 Sick Leave Policy 12.22, Temporary Reassignment Policy 12.15, Overtime Pay/Compensatory Time Policy 12.43 as presented.

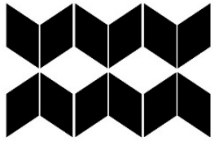
Suggested Motion for Consideration: Move approval of Sick Leave Policy 12.22, Temporary Reassignment Policy 12.15, Overtime Pay/Compensatory Time Policy 12.43 as presented.

Summary: Sick Leave Policy 12.22 requires a change to the definition of a family member, and an update to emergency closure language per Gross Senate Bill amending RCW 49.46.210. Temporary Reassignment Policy 12.15 requires an updated to some language to align with changes made to the Bargaining Agreement articles 11.7 and 17.8 that were agreed upon during negotiations. Overtime Pay/Compensatory Time Policy 12.43 updates the use of compensatory time from two months to three months, to support some folks who will be removed from Exempt status per L&I's minimum salary threshold in 2025.

Alternatives: Policy 12.22 would be out of legal compliance if the changes weren't approved. Policy 12.15 would not be in compliance with the Bargaining Agreement if not approved. Policy 12.43 would make it more difficult for folks who were removed from Salary to have adequate time to feasibly use comp time earned, and would face an even greater impact in the face of the Labor and Industries salary threshold increase in 2025.

Fiscal Impact:

Comments: None.



SCOPE

All employees of the Whatcom County Library System.

Paid sick leave is available for employees to care for their health and the health of their family members. The Whatcom County Library System follows Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law RCW 49.46.210.

ACCRUAL RATE, CARRY OVER AND CAP

Sick leave accrual rates, cap and carry over for bargaining unit employees are detailed in the current bargaining agreement. Sick leave accrual rates, cap and carry over for exempt management employees are detailed in the Management Benefits and Leave Policy.

For all other employees, sick leave will accrue at a rate of one (1) hour of paid sick leave for every forty (40) hours worked. Sick leave begins to accrue at the start of employment, and is available upon accrual. Any unused paid sick leave will carry over to the following year with a cap of two hundred (200) hours.

FAMILY MEMBER DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy, the term “family member” includes 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, and also includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home or where the relationship creates an expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. "Family member" includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home, except that it does not include an individual who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee care for the individual, as further outlined in RCW 49.46.210 (2). Use of sick leave for the care of persons other than those defined as a close relative may be considered at the discretion of the Executive Director and Human Resources Manager.

ELIGIBLE REASONS FOR USE

Employees may use accrued paid sick leave to cover absences due to:

- Employee’s illness (mental or physical), injury, or health condition, and for preventive care.
- Employee’s care for a family member’s illness (mental or physical), injury, or health condition, and for preventive care.
- Public health closures of WCLS facilities or a dependent’s school or care facility. When the employee's place of business has been closed by order of a public official for any health-related reason (unless the Closure is made under Emergency Closure Policy 12.35), or when an employee's child's school or place of care has been closed for such a health-related reason or after the declaration of an emergency by a local or state government or agency, or by the federal government.
 - When a closure is made under Emergency Closure Policy 12.35, the employee will be compensated using Emergency Closure Pay and eligible use of sick leave will not be necessary.

- Absences due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

RATE OF PAY FOR SICK LEAVE

Paid sick leave hours will be compensated at an employee's regular rate of pay. The minimum increment of paid sick leave use is fifteen (15) minutes. Paid sick leave hours will not count towards the calculation of overtime.

ABSENCES EXCEEDING THREE DAYS

When paid sick leave usage exceeds three consecutive scheduled work days, WCLS may ask the employee for verification from a health care provider that the absence is for an eligible reason. WCLS will NOT require an explanation about the nature of the condition. Verification must be provided within ten (10) calendar days of the first day an employee used paid sick leave to care for themselves or a family member.

If an employee believes obtaining verification for use of paid sick leave would result in an unreasonable burden or expense, they should contact the Human Resources Manager orally or in writing. They must indicate that the absence is for an authorized purpose and explain why verification would result in an unreasonable burden or expense. Within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the request, the Human Resources Manager will work with the employee to identify an alternative for the employee to meet the verification requirement in a way that does not result in an unreasonable burden or expense.

REASONABLE NOTICE OF ABSENCE

If an employee's absence is unforeseeable, the employee must contact their supervisor as soon as possible. When the need for leave arises before the start of their shift, the employee must notify their supervisor of their inability to work at least one (1) hour prior to the beginning of their shift. When possible, the notification should include the expected duration of the absence.

If an absence is foreseeable, the employee will provide notice at least ten (10) days, or as early as possible, before the first day paid sick leave is used.

RETALIATION PROHIBITED

WCLS will not discipline or retaliate against an employee for the lawful use of paid sick leave.

SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

If an employee separates from employment, there will not be a financial or other reimbursement to the employee for accrued, unused paid sick leave at the time of separation.

REINSTATEMENT OF HOURS UPON REHIRE

If rehired within twelve months of the date of separation, the separated employee will have 100% of unused paid sick leave accruals reinstated. If rehired in the following year, WCLS will reinstate no more than 200 hours of a rehired employee's previously accrued unused sick leave.

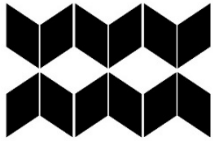
RELATED POLICIES: [Attendance and Punctuality Policy 12.14](#); [Management Benefits and Leave Policy 12.20](#); [Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21](#); [Family and Medical Leave \(FMLA\) Policy 12.23](#); [Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24](#); [Emergency Closure Policy 12.35](#); [Time and Attendance Records Policy 12.40](#).

STATUTORY REFERENCE: [RCW 49.46.210 Paid sick leave](#)—Authorized purposes—Limitations—“Family member” defined.

APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
December 19, 2017	Approved.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
March 19, 2024	Revised to clarify sick leave guidelines for all staff.	Jackie Saul & Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Matthew Santos

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SICK LEAVE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.22

SCOPE

All employees of the Whatcom County Library System.

Paid sick leave is available for employees to care for their health and the health of their family members. The Whatcom County Library System follows Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law RCW 49.46.210.

ACCRUAL RATE, CARRY OVER AND CAP

Sick leave accrual rates, cap and carry over for bargaining unit employees are detailed in the current bargaining agreement. Sick leave accrual rates, cap and carry over for exempt management employees are detailed in the Management Benefits and Leave Policy.

For all other employees, sick leave will accrue at a rate of one (1) hour of paid sick leave for every forty (40) hours worked. Sick leave begins to accrue at the start of employment, and is available upon accrual. Any unused paid sick leave will carry over to the following year with a cap of two hundred (200) hours.

FAMILY MEMBER DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy, the term "family member" includes 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, and also includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home or where the relationship creates an expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. "Family member" includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home, except that it does not include an individual who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee care for the individual, as further outlined in RCW 49.46.210 (2). Use of sick leave for the care of persons other than those defined as a close relative may be considered at the discretion of the Executive Director and Human Resources Manager.

ELIGIBLE REASONS FOR USE

Employees may use accrued paid sick leave to cover absences due to:

- Employee's illness (mental or physical), injury, or health condition, and for preventive care.
- Employee's care for a family member's illness (mental or physical), injury, or health condition, and for preventive care.
- When the employee's place of business has been closed by order of a public official for any health-related reason, or when an employee's child's school or place of care has been closed for such a health-related reason or after the declaration of an emergency by a local or state government or agency, or by the federal government.
 - When a closure is made under Emergency Closure Policy 12.35, the employee will be compensated using Emergency Closure Pay and eligible use of sick leave will not be necessary.
- Absences due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

RATE OF PAY FOR SICK LEAVE

Paid sick leave hours will be compensated at an employee's regular rate of pay. The minimum increment of paid sick leave use is fifteen (15) minutes. Paid sick leave hours will not count towards the calculation of overtime.

ABSENCES EXCEEDING THREE DAYS

When paid sick leave usage exceeds three consecutive scheduled work days, WCLS may ask the employee for verification from a health care provider that the absence is for an eligible reason. WCLS will NOT require an explanation about the nature of the condition. Verification must be provided within ten (10) calendar days of the first day an employee used paid sick leave to care for themselves or a family member.

If an employee believes obtaining verification for use of paid sick leave would result in an unreasonable burden or expense, they should contact the Human Resources Manager orally or in writing. They must indicate that the absence is for an authorized purpose and explain why verification would result in an unreasonable burden or expense. Within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the request, the Human Resources Manager will work with the employee to identify an alternative for the employee to meet the verification requirement in a way that does not result in an unreasonable burden or expense.

REASONABLE NOTICE OF ABSENCE

If an employee's absence is unforeseeable, the employee must contact their supervisor as soon as possible. When the need for leave arises before the start of their shift, the employee must notify their supervisor of their inability to work at least one (1) hour prior to the beginning of their shift. When possible, the notification should include the expected duration of the absence.

If an absence is foreseeable, the employee will provide notice at least ten (10) days, or as early as possible, before the first day paid sick leave is used.

RETALIATION PROHIBITED

WCLS will not discipline or retaliate against an employee for the lawful use of paid sick leave.

SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

If an employee separates from employment, there will not be a financial or other reimbursement to the employee for accrued, unused paid sick leave at the time of separation.

REINSTATEMENT OF HOURS UPON REHIRE

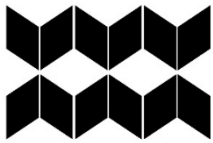
If rehired within twelve months of the date of separation, the separated employee will have 100% of unused paid sick leave accruals reinstated. If rehired in the following year, WCLS will reinstate no more than 200 hours of a rehired employee's previously accrued unused sick leave.

RELATED POLICIES: [Attendance and Punctuality Policy 12.14](#); [Management Benefits and Leave Policy 12.20](#); [Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21](#); [Family and Medical Leave \(FMLA\) Policy 12.23](#); [Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24](#); [Emergency Closure Policy 12.35](#); [Time and Attendance Records Policy 12.40](#).

STATUTORY REFERENCE: [RCW 49.46.210 Paid sick leave](#)—Authorized purposes—Limitations—"Family member" defined.

APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
December 19, 2017	Approved.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
March 19, 2024	Revised to clarify sick leave guidelines for all staff.	Jackie Saul & Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Matthew Santos
December 17, 2024	Revised to update “family member” definition.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	



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TEMPORARY REASSIGNMENT POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.15

SCOPE

All employees of the Whatcom County Library System.

When, due to the absence of another employee, a WCLS employee is assigned to a position of higher pay level for three (3) or more consecutive open days and takes on the total responsibilities of the higher classification, the employee shall be paid at the entry level of the higher pay level that represents a pay increase of no less than 3% for all hours worked, when the assignment is less than 30 days.

When the out of class assignment will exceed 30 calendar days, their own job responsibilities may be filled with an interim placement. The employee while remaining will remain eligible for out of class pay. The employee will be paid any leave at the higher rate for leave taken during that period. When the temporary assignment includes a weekly schedule of twenty-four (24) or more hours per week and exceeds 30 calendar days, non-bargaining unit employees shall be eligible for holiday pay, pro-rated based on the schedule of the temporary assignment. In times when a vacancy is filled temporarily with fixed hours for a defined period of time, a non-bargaining unit employee will not have those hours counted toward their annual bargaining unit eligibility, with Union approval.

When an employee assumes significantly higher responsibilities due to the absence of another employee, but not the total responsibilities of the higher classification, a reasonable pay increase may be negotiated with the employee (and Union Representative in the case of Bargaining Unit Employees).

When an employee is assigned different tasks within or below the employee's classification no pay increase or decrease occurs. Temporary reassignments will not exceed nine months.

Employees who have been assigned temporary duties of a higher classification shall have the reassignment noted in their personnel files as evidence of their training and abilities.

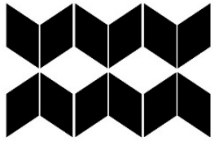
RELATED POLICIES: [Substitution Policy 12.16.](#)

APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
April 1988	Adopted.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
March 17, 1993	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/
May 15, 2007	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Amory Peck
November 16, 2021	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke

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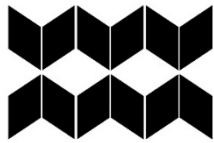
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November 16, 2021	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
December 17, 2024	Revised to add interim placement language.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	



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OVERTIME PAY/COMPENSATORY TIME POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.43

SCOPE

This policy applies to all WCLS employees.

Overtime and/or compensatory time will be earned only in extraordinary circumstances. Except in emergency situations, those circumstances should be defined and pre-approved by the appropriate department head.

The following provisions shall apply for non-exempt employees. Those who work more than 40 hours in a work week will receive compensation not less than one and one-half times their regular rate of pay, to be taken as pay or as paid compensatory time. Employees shall inform their supervisor whether the overtime will be compensated with 1 ½ pay or 1 ½ time off. Compensatory time off shall be used within the calendar month earned, or within ~~three~~ succeeding calendar months. Extensions may be granted with the Supervisor’s approval.

Guidelines regarding compensatory time for exempt, bargaining unit employees are outlined in the current bargaining agreement. Guidelines regarding compensatory time for management employees are outlined in Management Benefits and Leave Policy 12.20.

RELATED POLICIES: [Hours of Work Policy 12.12](#); [Management Benefits and Leave Policy 12.20](#); [Time and Attendance Records Policy 12.40](#).

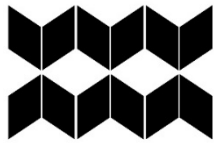
STATUTORY REFERENCE: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); [RCW 49.12 INDUSTRIAL WELFARE](#).

APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
April 1988	Approved.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/
May 15, 2007	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Amory Peck
Jan. 21, 2009	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Janneth Hunter

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
Jan. 18, 2011	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Deb Lambert
July 5, 2016	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
Sept. 17, 2024	Revised to distinguish between exempt and nonexempt employees.	Beth Andrews and Jackie Saul	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Rod Lofdahl

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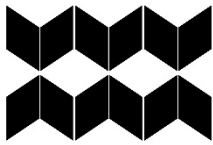
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Sept. 17, 2024	Revised to distinguish between exempt and nonexempt employees.	Beth Andrews and Jackie Saul	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Rod Lofdahl
Dec. 17, 2024	Revised to extend the timeframe to use comp time.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	



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Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	12/17/2024
Committee or Department:	Administration
Subject:	2025 Addendum to Foundation Agreement
Prepared By:	Christine Perkins
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 the 2025 Addendum to the Whatcom County Library Foundation Agreement.

Suggested Motion for Consideration: Move approval of the 2025 Addendum to the Whatcom County Library Foundation Agreement.

Summary: This document updates our annual agreement which sets the financial responsibilities of WCLS and WCLF, particularly in regard to the salary of the Foundation Development Director. The Foundation Development Director’s 2025 pay rate was adjusted according to the COLA and proficiency increases determined during union negotiations.

Alternatives: N/A

Fiscal Impact: Minimal change over 2024.

Comments: N/A

**ADDENDUM NO. 14 (2025) TO FOUNDATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT
AND WHATCOM COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION**

Purpose

The purpose of Addendum No. 14 is to identify specific services that the Whatcom County Library Foundation (the "Foundation") will provide and specific activities that the Foundation will undertake for the benefit of the Whatcom County Rural Library District (the "Library") during the Library's fiscal year 2025, including, but not limited to, the estimated distributions that the Foundation will forward to the Library. The effective date of this addendum is January 1, 2025.

Services and Activities

The Library's Mission is: *"Connecting information, ideas, and community,"* and the Vision is *"An engaged community where curiosity is cultivated, literacy flourishes, and democratic ideals thrive."*

The Foundation's Mission statement is, "We create dynamic opportunities to support the library as the heart of a democratic community."

In addition to its fundraising purpose, the Foundation:

- Attracts people and resources to build upon and leverage taxpayer support to strengthen and supplement, not supplant, public funding for the Library.
- Engages and stewards a community of Library supporters who understand and effectively advocate for the Library's purpose, goals and services to be the community's choice for information needs.
- Communicates community awareness of the Library's value as the largest provider of free books and information in Whatcom County. Educates and informs the community of Library services in all branch locations and online.
- Encourages and promotes opportunities for children and adults to learn and enrich their lives through library programs and services.
- Builds community by connecting people from diverse backgrounds to resources that are relevant to their lives.

Library Staff Support, Supplies and Office Estimated Distribution to Foundation

Whatcom County Library System will provide staff support, supplies and office space as outlined below:

1. Staff services:
 - .45 FTE Foundation Development Director plus business travel expenses: \$49,065.29 + \$150.00 = \$49,215.29
 - Administrative Support: \$2,500.00 Administrative Fee to allow Foundation to sell surplus books and other collection items \$10.00
2. Printing, postage, office supplies, accounting software: \$2,000.00
3. Office space and furnishings (includes utilities, computer and phone, 64 square foot cubicle, shared meeting space, storage closet) approximately \$500.00

Foundation Estimated Distributions to WCLS

The Foundation will make estimated distributions to the Library from gifts, grants, donations, and/or endowments solicited by the Foundation for the benefit of the Library, as described in the Foundation's 2025 Plan and Budget.

In 2025, the Foundation will provide the Foundation Development Director an additional .05 FTE above the .45 FTE provided by the Library, to be paid to the Library by January 31, 2025 for monitoring and disbursement as part of each month's regular payroll. The value of this contribution is \$5,451.70.

To these ends, the Foundation will undertake the following additional services and activities for the benefit of the Library:

Communicating the Library to constituents

The Foundation will support library communications to constituents in the community and update them about what's happening in the Library. Vehicles for communication may include, but are not limited to:

- Articles according to the Library's communication schedule
- Mailings to donors and prospects
- Annual Appeals
- Planned Giving brochures and program letters
- Stewardship calls to donors
- An annual report or statement of progress to the Library Board
- A framework and process that builds collaborative grants with Friends Groups, branches and Administrative Services staff

Using Technology for infrastructure, such as:

- A donor/prospect database
- Facebook presence for Foundation
- Foundation page of the Library's Website

Bringing awareness of the Library Foundation's Programs to local businesses

The Foundation will contact businesses to secure sponsorships for programs, upon approval by the Library's Executive Director.

Promoting the Library through events

The Foundation will organize and host donor events including, but not limited to:

- National Library Week event – Library Giving Day or other fundraising event
- Major fundraising event
- Special Events
- Personal Solicitations
- Direct Mail Appeals

Attracting and growing a cadre of loyal library supporters

- Board of Directors: The Foundation will recruit and build involvement among a volunteer board that is passionate about the library.
- Volunteer support: The Foundation will collaborate with the Library to recruit volunteers who have an interest in serving the Foundation’s mission.
- Donors: The Foundation will cultivate prospective donors and steward donors who have made previous gifts to support the library.

Promoting the Library through Advocacy

- Foundation Director and/or Board Members speak at service clubs and other community meetings.
- Actively promote intellectual freedom with activities such as Banned Books Week or “Freedom to Read.”

Whatcom County Library Foundation

Signature

Printed Name

Title

Date

Whatcom County Rural Library District

Signature

Printed Name

Title

Date

Reviewed in form by Daniel S. Gottlieb, Gottlieb Fisher PLLC, 1501 Fourth Avenue, Suite 2150, Seattle, Washington 98101-3225, October 10, 2012.



Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	12/17/2024
Committee or Department:	Administration Department
Subject:	2025 Meeting Locations
Prepared By:	Christine Perkins
Impact upon Budget?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Recommendation or Request: Approve 2025 Meeting Locations as presented, or decide to hold all 2025 Board of Trustees meetings at Administrative Services.

Suggested Motion for Consideration: TBD.

Summary: In the past, several Board of Trustees meetings per year were held at various libraries across WCLS in addition to Administrative Services. We suspended this practice during the pandemic, and some trustees indicated an interest in reviving this practice in order to be more accessible to people in each community and for trustees to get to know each library and branch staff better.

At the November Board meeting, at least one trustee indicated that it would be difficult for them to attend meetings in person if they were held at locations other than Administrative Services.

Fiscal Impact: Some cost to reimburse staff and trustees for mileage to various locations.

Comments: It has been our experience that regardless of location, few members of the public choose to attend board meetings.

PROPOSED LOCATIONS OF 2025 BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETINGS

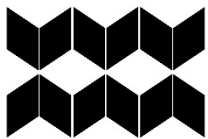
Date	Location
January 21	AS
February 18	BL
March 18	AS
April 15	SW
May 20	PR
June 17	NF
July 15	IS
August 19	AS
September 16	AS
October 21	AS
November 18	AS
December 16	AS

Trustees will have multiple opportunities to visit different WCLS locations during the Budget Listening Sessions in February and March 2025.

SCHEDULE OF BUDGET LISTENING SESSIONS

Wed. 2/5 - 6-7:30 pm - DE
Sat. 2/8 - 10-11:30 am - SU
Mon. 2/10 - 6-7:30 pm - LY
Thur. 2/13 - 6-7:30 pm - EV
Tues. 2/25 - 6-7:30 pm - BL
Thur. 2/27 - 6-7:30 pm - NF
Sat. 3/1 - 10-11:30 am - SW
Sat. 3/1 - 3-4:30 pm - IS
Wed. 3/5 - 6-7:30 pm - Zoom Meeting
Tues. 3/11 - 6-7:30 pm – FE

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Executive Director's Report

December 2024

COMMUNITY

The Friends of the Deming Library hosted their annual Holiday Tea on December 7, featuring three musical acts and plenty of coffee, cookies and good cheer. Thank you to the Friends for building community in Deming and getting everyone in a festive mood.

ACCESS

We keep hearing that it's going to be a snowy Winter in Whatcom County, and branch managers and our Mobile Services Manager are already discussing how to balance staff and patron safety on the roads with access to library services. We recognize that there are many microclimates across the whole county and decisions need to be made based on local conditions. We pay close attention to what school districts are doing, and recommendations from the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office. We consider delaying opening in the morning until we are certain that plows have been out and parking lots cleared.

RESOURCES

WCLS partners with Whatcom Literacy Council to provide meeting space for tutor recruitment events and tutoring sessions. Each year, "celebrity librarian" Nancy Pearl speaks at Whatcom Literacy Council's breakfast fundraiser, and WCLS staff immediately post links to all the books she features in her speech: [Nancy Pearl Recommends: Whatcom Literacy Council Breakfast 2024 | Whatcom County Library System | BiblioCommons](#). You can see from the holds lists that if Nancy says it's a good read, people listen!

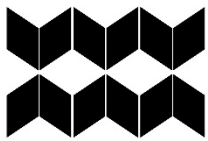
EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Staff recently launched a group who will be learning American Sign Language to interact with deaf and hearing impaired patrons. They will be using Mango Languages' ASL curriculum and meeting online to practice signing.

STEWARDSHIP

Our Foundation Development Director Jennifer Rick will be leaving WCLF at the end of this month, after 13 years as WCLF's first director. During her time at WCLF, Jenn has grown the Foundation significantly, establishing the annual Branch Out fundraiser, Library Giving Day, the Give Every Month (GEM) program and more. WCLF Endowment Funds now total nearly \$600,000 thanks to Jenn's advocacy. She facilitated hundreds of dollars in grants to Whatcom County Library System for key projects like Whatcom READS, Books for Babies, Books Unbound, Pride in the Park and most recently Open Book. We wish Jenn the best for her next chapter!

Christine Perkins, Executive Director



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Deputy Director Report

December 2024

RESOURCES

In 2024, WCLS distributed over 700 6-ride passes for WTA buses. Even more have been allocated to WCLS for 2025. This is one of many community resources being utilized and amplified by WCLS staff.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

A staff committee has formed to work toward improving services to deaf patrons. Due to their work, WCLS recently added an on-demand video translation service for American Sign Language. Simply by following a link found on the staff intranet, a video session is started with an ASL translator. Staff are trained to direct their communication to the patron. This service, often available in places providing medical and legal services, is a welcome addition to our libraries. In addition, WCLS staff have had access to language interpretation services for several years. Using the telephone, staff are able to connect with interpreters to communicate across hundreds of languages. While this service isn't used frequently, it is helpful to have when needed.

STEWARDSHIP

As permitting documents are being finalized for the Birch Bay Vogt Library Express project, we are working to address an encroachment issue along our eastern boundary. No areas planned for development are impacted. A land survey shows WCLS property extends 6'6" beyond the existing fence line. If no action is taken, this area would likely be granted use to the adjoining property as a prescriptive easement. Capturing the full site would allow for easier maintenance, but we have options. We are currently in communication with legal counsel and the property owners to determine the next steps.

According to the Meeting Room and Facilities Use procedure 7.03.01, alcohol is allowed on WCLS premises only after hours and on a limited basis with prior approval from the Library Board. Due to this procedure, I want to ensure the Board is aware of an event being planned by the Friends of the Sumas Library to occur in the adjoining Sumas Community Center. "Saturday, Feb. 15 from 6-9pm, join us for an evening of fun and laughter at the Friends of the Sumas Library adult social! Enjoy a night out at the Sumas Community Center with delicious charcuterie, a selection of alcoholic beverages, and an exciting silent auction featuring fabulous items up for grabs. The highlight of the night? We'll be playing a live version of *The Newlywed Game!*"

Michael Cox
Deputy Director

RESOURCES

Recently Emma Radosevich, Adult Collection Librarian with Collection Services, and Jim Pettinger, Youth Services Assistant at Blaine, traveled to Guadalajara, Mexico for the International Book Fair, the largest book fair in the Americas, and second-largest book fair in the world (after Frankfurt) to select materials in Spanish for patrons of all ages. The American Library Association organizes and subsidizes travel to the fair, simplifying the selection, ordering, and shipping process, and significantly reducing the cost to the library. This opportunity allows us to provide our patrons with materials that would otherwise be unavailable to us, particularly materials that originate in and reflect the Spanish-speaking world in ways that American publishing do not.

Our American Girl Doll began eight years ago with 10 dolls, one each of 10 characters. The collection now includes 21 characters, with 112 total dolls and 116 outstanding requests. And over the lifetime of the collection the dolls have circulated more than 9,000 times. The American Girl Dolls involve not insignificant work to manage. On the back end, there is special ordering, processing and cataloging work that needs to happen to get the dolls ready to circulate. Each doll circulates in a bag with a bunch of paraphernalia including accessories, additional outfits, a special hairbrush, an American Girl book, and a journal where patrons can record moments and memories of their experience with the doll. And once they are out in the world, there is even more work necessary to maintain them. Pieces get lost. Hair gets tangled. At any given time, there are 10-15 dolls in the Youth Services area for a glow-up pit stop. Some of them need minor care, having their hair combed or their outfits and accessories refurbished. Others require much more attention, needing “makeup” removal or odor abatement. We have even sent a few away to the doll hospital for limb replacement. But the invaluable opportunities they provide to our patrons more than make up for the attention they require. These dolls are costly, and outside the reach of many families in our area. They offer meaningful opportunities for narrative play, a critical component of emerging literacy. And these dolls are beloved. On the whole, patrons take extraordinary care of the dolls in their care. Many individual dolls have checked out more than 100 times and are still in great shape, faring better than many books with that much circulation. And lots of times, evidence of use is to the good. Some dolls return to us with homemade accessories. Some come back with laundered or mended clothes. But more than anything, the best evidence of just how much checking out the American Girl Dolls means to our patrons is seen in the journal entries. Some kids chronicle everything they did with the doll over the course of their time together. Some kids are too young to write, and either scribble their enthusiasm in the journal, or dictate to a parent. Some kids journal in the voice of the doll herself. Here are a few examples of some recent journal entries to give you a sense of how children are engaging with this collection:

To anyone reading this addy is wonderful and very kind. Her story is amazing and heartwarming take good care of her.
-Addy & Londa


My grandma helped me check out from the library Addy - she is so sweet I hope you like Addy like I do. She went camping with us too.
-mya
5

October 6th

Dear diary,


Hi! today I went to another girls house! we got to her home, we looked through my bag!

She has a kitten, too! called widow! its a black cat w/ orange eyes! Widow has some cool toy from grocery out 'ite! Oh, almost out of space on the paper! Talk to you tomorrow!
today was tubular!!




, 8, 3rd grade April 25, 2018

We read 'Horse' together for only about 10 min. She sat with My dolls, Jan, Julie, and America. She was the most fond of another doll named Gabriella, and she came from the library. They all liked each other, but each loved Josephina the best. Gabriella and Josephina were sad to leave each other, but they had to. It was a sad moment, but I promised that they'd get to see each other sometime. And I will miss Josephina!



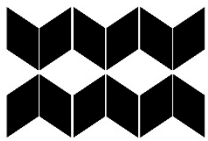
Josephina's
rotating for
Horse!
because
she has a horse!



Dear Librarian
checking in this
Doll,
I made a scarf
and hat for her
since the list said
she was missing a
scarf. I also made
a necklace since that
was missing, too.

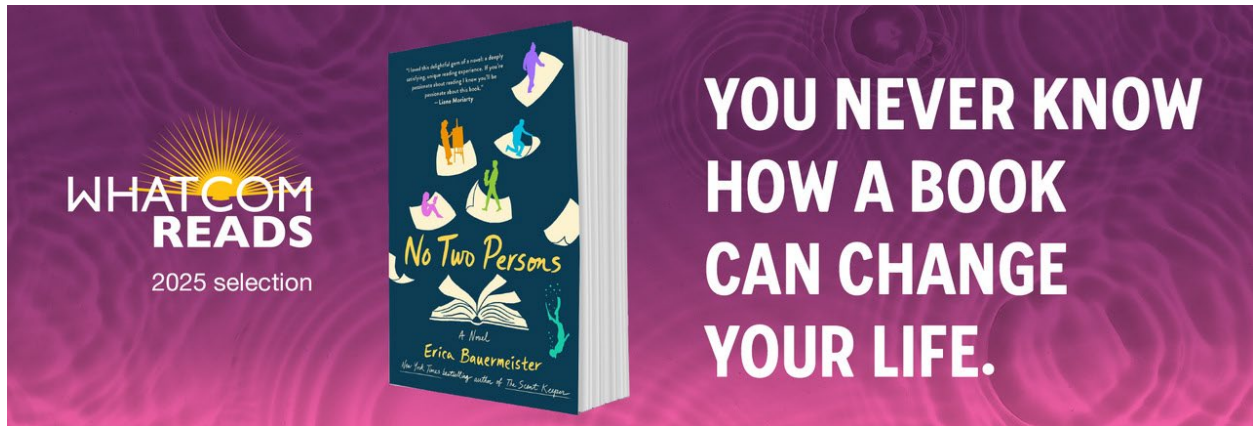
Friends of the Smithsonian
Contributing Member

Thom Barthelmess
Youth Services Manager



whatcom county
library system

COMMUNITY



Library staff and booksellers who organize and present Whatcom READS have announced the literary program's [2025 schedule of community and author events](#), celebrating *No Two Persons* by Erica Bauermeister. The book presents a wide range of discussion and event opportunities leading up to the March 12-15, 2025, in-person author events. Visit whatcomreads.org/events to learn more and to register for events.

This year's free community programs include bookmaking workshops, a deep dive into the life of an audiobook narrator (hosted by WCLS's Thom Barthelmess) and a discussion of bibliotherapy (hosted by WCLS's Meagan Wheeler). Many events happen at WCLS locations. WCLS Adult Programming Coordinator Claire McElroy leads the event planning and steers the Whatcom READS committee. In addition to McElroy and staff who host events, WCLS staff members who support Whatcom READS are Christine Perkins, Mary Kinser, Katrina Carabba, Neil McKay and Mary Vermillion. WCLS and the Whatcom County Library Foundation are major funders.

Celebrating its 17th season, Whatcom READS is presented by WCLS, Bellingham Public Library, the libraries at Bellingham Technical College, Northwest Indian College, Western Washington University and Whatcom Community College, and Village Books.

News Releases

- [Whatcom READS announces community programs and author events that explore its 2025 book selection, *No Two Persons* by Erica Bauermeister](#)

Book Reviews

- Cascadia Daily News, Nov. 11, 2024, [The Sweet Blue Distance by Sara Donati](#)
- The Northern Light, Nov. 13, 2024, [Blaine book review: “Beasts of a Little Land” by Juhea Kim](#)
- Cascadia Daily News, Nov. 26, 2024, [Crow Talk by Eileen Garvin](#)
- Bellingham Alive, November/December 2024 (see clip below)

Book Reviews

WRITTEN BY EMMA RADOSEVICH



"The Pairing"
by Casey McQuiston

Kit and Theo have been a lot of things to each other: childhood best friends, romantic partners, and now exes. They broke up four years ago after a trans-Atlantic fight en route to the food and wine tour of their dreams. In a twist of fate, they now find themselves on the same tour—this time as exes trying to prove just how much they've moved on.

A lot can change in four years. Kit is a pastry chef at a top restaurant in Paris and Theo is a sommelier-in-training. What hasn't changed is their mutual love of good food, good banter, and good sex. Theo proposes a hookup competition, and the pair try to sleep their way across France, Spain, and Italy. But each European city feels more romantic than the last, and Kit and Theo find it impossible to push their true feelings aside.

The newest by Casey McQuiston (also known for "Red, White, & Royal Blue" and "One Last Stop") is a luscious second-chance romance worth savoring.



"Little Rot"
by Akwaeke Emezi

Longtime couple Aima and Kalu should have been together forever, but a recent move to New Lagos, Nigeria revealed the cracks in their relationship. The night after their breakup, Aima goes dancing with party-girl friend, Ijendu, while Kalu heads to an exclusive sex party hosted by his best friend, Ahmed. An impulsive decision by Kalu ignites the wrath of a dangerous man, and the friends are pulled into Lagos' seedy underworld.

Over one action-packed weekend, our protagonists hurtle through the underbelly of a city rife with murder, blackmail, and sexual violence. Narrative perspective bounces between characters who face impossible choices about how to protect the people they love. Full of drama and intrigue, this high-octane thriller is a stylistic departure from Akwaeke Emezi's last novel, the romance "You Made a Fool of Death with Your Beauty." "Little Rot" is a stylish, sexy roller coaster of a book that never slows down.

Media Coverage

- Salish Current, Nov. 1, 2024, [Changes at the border: questions remain in Sumas \(mentions Sumas Library\)](#)
- My Bellingham NOW, Nov. 6, 2024, [“Freedge” to be installed in Kendall to help combat food insecurity](#)
- Cascadia Daily News, Nov. 7, 2024, [Mariya Farmagey: North Fork Community Library branch manager](#)
- Bellingham Herald, Nov. 13, 2024, [New community fridge offers free food to rural Whatcom residents](#)
- Lynden Tribune, Nov. 13, 2024, [Red Barn Market in its 14th year \(mentions Lynden Library craft fair\)](#)
- Ferndale Record, Nov. 15, 2024, [Ferndale Library celebrates 10 years in current building](#)



FERNDALE LIBRARY CELEBRATES 10 YEARS IN CURRENT BUILDING

BILL HELM

By Luke Seymour

Staff Reporter

FERNDALE — From 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. Friday, Nov. 15, the Friends of the Ferndale Library will host a celebration to mark 10 years of the Ferndale Public Library's residency in its current building.

Since 2014, the Ferndale Public Library has resided at 2125 Main St. In the years since it was initially established, the FPL has developed a reputation as one of the finest branches of the Whatcom County Library System.

However, President of Friends of the Ferndale Library, Sue Green said the FPL represents much more than just a place where residents can pick up a weekend read.

"This is, for all intents and purposes, a community center," Green said. "The building can be used in many, many ways. The large meeting rooms, the smaller conference rooms, the array of stuff that's available there. It's just a place where everyone can come and get involved in all kinds of activities and get involved with the



Ferndale Library employees, from left, LaRayne Blunstein, Joy McGrath and Vanessa Tucker. (Luke Seymour/Ferndale Record)

- The Northern Light, Nov. 20, 2024, [Holiday Harbor Lights to bring holiday cheer downtown](#)
- Lynden Tribune, Nov. 21, 2024, [WHATCOM NEWS: Nov. 20, 2024](#)
- All Point Bulletin, Nov. 22, 2024, [Library quick picks: December](#)

Lynden Tribune, Nov. 1, 2024 (See clip below.)

Golden Apple. Jennifer Bailey, a multilingual English learner specialist at Nooksack Valley High School, and Nicolle Klander, librarian at Everson Elementary School, will be recognized on Nov. 3 with Whatcom County Library System's Golden Apple Educator Award at the Ferndale Events Center Open Book Festival. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))

All Point Bulletin, Nov. 11, 2024 (See clip below.)

Author visit with Stewart Goodings: Thursday, November 14, 5 to 6:30 p.m., Point Roberts Library meeting room.

All Point Bulletin, Nov. 27, 2024 (See clips below.)

Point Roberts Writing Club: Saturdays, November 30, December 7, 14, 21 and 28, 3 to 4 p.m., Point Roberts Library meeting room. Drop by to share and listen along with fellow storytellers looking for feedback.

Let's Make Presents: Tuesday, December 17, 3 to 4 p.m., Point Roberts Library. We'll have all the supplies and ideas you'll need to craft beautiful, meaningful gifts for the loved ones in your life. Teen Corps volunteers needed from 2:45 to 4:15 p.m. Info: [wcls.org](#).

Mary Vermillion
Community Relations Manager

Collection Size	Physical	Electronic	Total
	303,784	375,394	679,178

Circulation	Nov 2023	Nov 2024	YTD 2023	YTD 2024	YTD % chg
Physical Circulation					
Blaine	12,268	14,497	137,579	148,891	8.2%
Bookmobile & Outreach	5,075	3,692	51,292	49,141	-4.2%
Deming	7,631	7,379	86,051	81,880	-4.8%
Everson	8,659	8,566	100,854	97,355	-3.5%
Ferndale	33,323	31,209	356,810	351,552	-1.5%
Island	1,611	1,740	20,678	18,471	-10.7%
Lynden	36,549	34,526	420,958	402,765	-4.3%
North Fork	4,168	3,451	48,790	41,871	-14.2%
NWIC	8	8	107	101	-5.6%
Point Roberts + PRX	2,154	1,833	27,113	25,060	-7.6%
Sumas + SLX	2,011	2,432	22,068	27,521	24.7%
South Whatcom	6,971	7,098	84,975	84,543	-0.5%
NDX	3,741	3,926	35,492	37,525	5.7%
Physical Circulation Total	124,169	120,357	1,392,767	1,366,676	-1.9%
Disc materials: DVDs, CDs	28,685	23,991	301,031	285,205	-5.3%
All other materials	94,184	94,476	1,079,796	1,066,848	-1.2%
Digital Circulation					
eBooks/eAudiobooks	33,079	35,289	355,115	397,589	12.0%
eMagazines	6,039	5,508	28,193	52,106	84.8%
eMusic	12,095	8,897	130,736	108,701	-16.9%
Streaming Video	2,409	1,267	20,592	13,007	-36.8%
Digital Circulation Total	53,622	50,961	534,636	571,403	6.9%
Grand Total	177,791	171,318	1,927,403	1,938,079	0.6%

Visitors (Door counts)	Nov 2023	Nov 2024	YTD 2023	YTD 2024	YTD % chg	Nov 2019
Blaine	6,408	7,446	71,902	78,437	9.1%	8,857
Deming	2,760	2,438	27,693	30,191	9.0%	3,905
Everson	3,109	3,191	33,829	35,572	5.2%	5,668
Ferndale	9,596	11,870	141,088	140,842	-0.2%	17,333
Island	1,025	379	11,547	13,549	17.3%	1,450
Lynden	10,514	10,987	114,395	125,963	10.1%	17,316
NDX	280	300	3,184	3,525	10.7%	
North Fork	2,122	1,655	19,344	20,621	6.6%	2,826
Point Roberts + PRX	1,370	1,260	16,582	17,422	5.1%	1,318
Sumas + SLX	1,166	739	11,656	12,978	11.3%	1,724
South Whatcom	2,563	2,688	25,521	34,320	34.5%	2,207
Total	40,913	42,953	476,741	513,420	7.7%	62,604

New Borrowers	Nov 2023	Nov 2024	YTD 2023	YTD 2024	YTD % chg
	611	506	7,146	7,165	0.3%

Interlibrary Loan	Nov 2023	Nov 2024	YTD 2023	YTD 2024	YTD % chg
Borrowed from BPL	11,793	11,969	127,224	131,258	3.2%
Lent to BPL	21,440	22,579	241,210	237,361	-1.6%
Borrowed: other libraries	574	571	6,102	6,960	14.1%
Lent: other libraries	538	623	5,249	6,448	22.8%

Electronic Resources	Nov 2023	Nov 2024	YTD 2023	YTD 2024	YTD % chg
WCLS.org Sessions	38,150	33,191	412,731	422,097	2.3%
Bibliocommons Sessions	80,229	84,977	699,117	1,082,146	54.8%
Internet Sessions	3,315	3,593	35,988	40,409	12.3%
Wifi Clients / Sessions	7,876	7,134	78,654	78,739	0.1%

Volunteers	Nov 2023	Nov 2024	YTD 2023	YTD 2024	YTD % chg
	818	712	9,461	9,776	3.3%

Activities	Nov 2023	Nov 2024	YTD 2023	YTD 2024	YTD % chg
Programs					
Adults	49	84	640	800	25.0%
Teens	20	39	208	268	28.8%
Children	100	103	860	1,022	18.8%
Total	169	226	1,708	2,090	22.4%
Attendance					
Adults	1,228	1,789	7,405	10,058	35.8%
Teens	404	861	8,361	10,568	26.4%
Children	2,523	2,289	27,287	31,130	14.1%
Total	4,155	4,939	43,053	51,756	20.2%

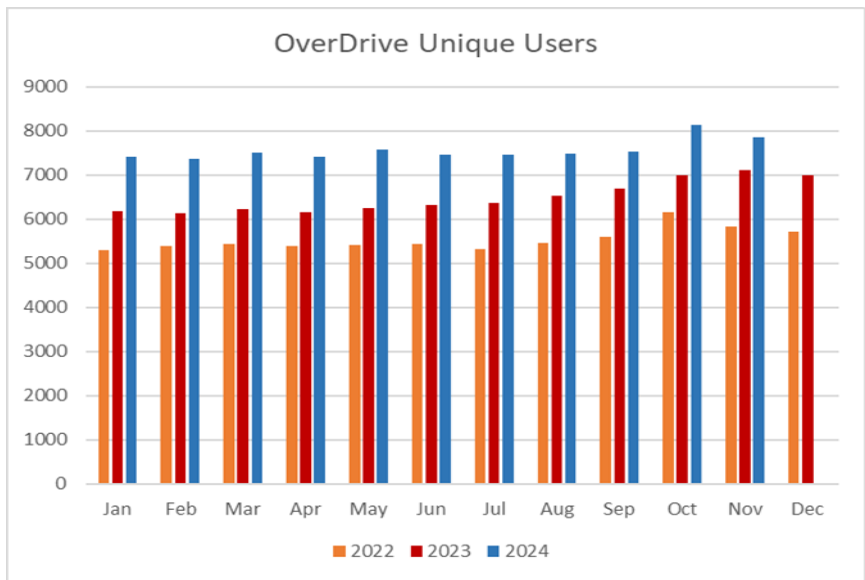
Notes/Corrections:

Jan - Dec 2024 Kanopy stats now track titles played per state library guidance and are not comparable with Jan - Dec 2023, which tracks Kanopoy Views.

Sept - Oct volunteer stats have increased due to a branch reporting their volunteer numbers late

OVERDRIVE UNIQUE USERS

A slight dip in OverDrive unique users in November. *The New Yorker* magazine was the most popular item among WCLS cardholders with 357 checkouts in November. The lists in OverDrive/Libby that generated the most checkouts and holds were Great Reads with No Wait Lists, Always Available Audio, and It's Holiday Reading Time! The most popular eAudiobook was *The Boyfriend* by Freida McFadden (87 checkouts) and the most popular eBook was a tie between *Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros and *The Women* by Kristin Hannah (37 checkouts each).



DATABASE USAGE

Database use typically dips in December during the holidays and this year our dip started a month early in November, driven by less use of school-support databases. Patrons used Creativebug to learn things like how to block print, do creative journaling and make cake toppers. The top language courses accessed in Mango Languages were Spanish, French, Japanese and Punjabi. Besides access to our local newspapers (in order of popularity: *Bellingham Herald*, *Seattle Times* and *Cascadia Daily News*), patrons accessed the *Duluth News Tribune* 121 times in November, *The News Tribune* (Tacoma) 49 times and *Tri-city Herald* (Kennewick) 24 times.

