

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

October 1, 2024

Board Members
in Attendance: Wendy Ogata, Chair
Sandra Crosland
Caitlin Gochnour
Shannon Sebahar
Reed Spencer
John Watson

Board Members
Excused: Jim Harvey

Others
in Attendance: Bryan Baron, Legal Counsel
Kristi-Lyn Blamires, Librarian
Phoebe Carter, Assistant Director
Shari Creer, Friends of the Library
Marcia Harris, Library Development Fund
Holly Okuhara, Assistant Director
Julia Valle, Business Office Manager
Lynnda Wangsgard, Director

Public Comments:

Ogata called the meeting to order and welcomed those present, noting Commissioner Harvey had asked to be excused.

She called for public comments; there were none.

Approval of September 3, 2024 Meeting Minutes:

Ogata inquired about the minutes, asking if there were any questions or corrections. Hearing none, Spencer moved approval of the September 3, 2024, meeting minutes. Crosland seconded the motion. All voted approval of the motion.

Director's Report:

Wangsgard called for questions concerning the financial and activities reports, noting there were no anomalies from previous monthly trends. Materials borrowing, electronic and in hard copy, totaled 222,448 for the month of August, an increase of 6% over the previous year. Visits were up by almost 4.5% and meeting room use had increased by more than 8%. In fact, every output measure was on the rise.

Expenditure line items and budget totals were within expected parameters, although transfers among operational expense categories will need to be made during November to accommodate equipment breakdowns and yearend projects.

Board members discussed the budget hearing with county officials that was scheduled for the following day, reviewing the commitment made when community members were asked to approve general obligation bonds to build, and later to provide on-going revenue to operate, “third space” libraries. The bond measure was approved and the county has since held up their end of the bargain. While the library tax rate is moderate, well within the margins of what is provided for peer libraries in the state and region, it has proved adequate to keep pace with public demand for services.

Wangsgard noted that Weber County’s libraries are professionally structured and staffed, nationally recognized, and flexible enough to accommodate challenge, growth, and change. They are high-tech, flexible gathering spaces and are among the most sophisticated resources owned by the public. As such, they offer a high rate of return on investment.

However, costs are increasing Wangsgard said, increasing not just as a result of the ever-growing demand for service, but also because of inflation; aging buildings that are no longer under warranty when systems fail and need to be replaced or repaired; and because of rapidly developing information technology, such as generative artificial intelligence.

Wangsgard distributed a number of documents to help put the board’s fiscal year (FY) 2025 budget into context. First, was a comparison of all Utah public libraries 2023 expenditures per capita.

Library	Expenditure per Capita		Library	Expenditure per Capita	
Helper City Library	12.92		Panguitch City Library	35.84	
Saratoga Springs Public Library	13.44		Mendon Library	37.27	
Santaquin City Library	15.47		Springville Public Library	37.43	
Hyrum Library	17.60		San Juan County Library	38.76	
Richfield Public Library	18.84		Orem Public Library	38.93	
Lehi City Public Library	19.22		Brigham City Library	39.63	
Highland City Library	19.50		Beaver Public Library	39.83	
Eagle Mountain Public Library	19.67		Mt. Pleasant Public Library	39.87	
Smithfield Library	19.98		Murray Public Library	40.61	
Cedar City Public Library	20.50		Manti City Library	40.66	
Davis County Library	20.74		Parowan Public Library	40.94	
Morgan County Library	21.30		Richmond Public Library	41.14	
Washington County Library	22.39		Wasatch County Library	41.17	
Pleasant Grove Public Library	22.83		Uintah County Library	42.03	
Nephi Public Library	23.11	1st Quartile = \$23.44	Milford Public Library	44.18	3rd Quartile = \$44.40
Grantsville City Library	23.55		Provo City Library	45.05	
Tooele City Public Library	27.58		Gunnison Civic Library	45.39	
Payson City Library	28.54		Duchesne County Library	47.43	
Monroe Public Library	28.56		Weber County Library System	48.48	
Tremonton City Library	29.28		Summit County Library	50.31	
Lewiston Public Library	29.37		Minersville Public Library	50.54	
Kanab City Library	29.39		Delta City Library	51.95	
Spanish Fork Public Library	31.03		Salt Lake County Library System	55.43	
Salina Public Library	31.43		North Logan City Library	56.40	
Salem City Library	32.18		Newton Town Library	63.28	
American Fork City Library	32.96		Emery County Library	102.07	
Price City Library	33.88		President Millard Fillmore Library	114.99	
Ephraim Public Library	34.38		Grand County Public Library	132.36	
Logan Library	35.34		Salt Lake City Public Library	138.05	
Garland Public Library	35.65	2nd Quartile = \$35.75	Park City Library	222.79	
		(Median)			
			Utah Average	\$46.45	

Wangsgard reminded the board that peers are those the Weber County Library competes against for talent. To be a peer, the library may be similar in size, services offered, population served, organizational revenue, or geographic proximity.

Libraries with a similar structure and focus include: UTAH: Salt Lake County Library and Salt Lake City Library. COLORADO: Arapahoe Library District, Boulder Public Library, Pikes Peak Library District, Pueblo City-County Library District. IDAHO: Boise Public Library. None of the Arizona, New Mexico, Montana, or Wyoming libraries meet the data driven criteria for comparison as peer libraries.

	Salaries & Benefits				Collections			Other Operating Costs			Total Costs		
	Total	% of Total	Per	FTE per	Total	% of Total	Per	Total	% of Total	Per	Total	Per	
		Exp.	Capita	25000 Pop		Exp.	Capita		Exp.	Capita	Amount	Capita	
Wasatch Front Libraries:													
DAVIS COUNTY LIBRARY	\$5,454,685	71%	\$14.74	5.7	\$841,624	11%	\$2.27	\$1,375,183	18%	\$3.72	\$7,671,492	\$20.74	
MURRAY PUBLIC LIBRARY	\$1,268,275	63%	\$25.64	8.5	\$338,049	17%	\$6.83	\$402,561	20%	\$8.14	\$2,008,885	\$40.61	
OREM PUBLIC LIBRARY	\$3,008,904	81%	\$31.37	12.0	\$375,368	10%	\$3.91	\$349,897	9%	\$3.65	\$3,734,169	\$38.93	
PROVO CITY LIBRARY	\$3,124,713	61%	\$27.52	13.0	\$633,076	12%	\$5.58	\$1,355,887	27%	\$11.94	\$5,113,676	\$45.05	
SALT LAKE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM	\$16,344,325	58%	\$79.86	26.4	\$3,305,023	12%	\$16.15	\$8,604,317	30%	\$42.04	\$28,253,665	\$138.05	
SALT LAKE COUNTY LIBRARY	\$34,588,095	69%	\$38.31	13.5	\$6,558,624	13%	\$7.26	\$8,903,318	18%	\$9.86	\$50,050,037	\$55.43	
WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM	\$9,472,182	72%	\$35.14	11.3	\$1,262,088	10%	\$4.68	\$2,335,230	18%	\$8.66	\$13,069,500	\$48.48	
Wasatch Front Average - 2023		67%	\$36.52	12.9		12%	\$6.64		21%	\$11.63		\$54.79	
Utah Average - 2023		67%	\$31.28	11.7		12%	\$5.48		21%	\$10.06		\$46.81	
National Average - 2022		66%	\$29.00	Not Avail.		11%	\$4.68		23%	\$10.06		\$43.75	

When reviewing how funding is allocated as compared to other libraries, the statistical report illustrated that Weber County Library (WCL) reflects frugal management. WCL operates with a lower salary and benefits expenditure per capita, and fewer full-time equivalent (FTEs) employees, than do peer libraries and the average of all libraries located along the Wasatch Front. However, the percent of budget allocated to salaries and benefits, 72%, is well above that of peer libraries and the Wasatch Front average of 67%. The staff is working hard, and smart, Wangsgard said, but the ever-increasing demand for service is usurping an ever-increasing portion of the budget for salaries. Without good people to do the work, the funding for other two major categories of budgeted expenses will not be used wisely, Wangsgard noted.

Allocations for the second category, collections, had remained frozen over the past two years in order to balance the budget. This line item had been increased from 10% to 11.4% in the FY 2025 budget request. This commitment should be maintained, Wangsgard noted, in order to keep waiting lists for popular materials at a reasonable length and replace worn out and dated volumes in core collections.

Operating expenses per capita, \$8.66 for Weber County’s libraries were extremely tight, well below that of the library’s peer group average, \$25.95; the Wasatch Front average, \$11.63; and even below the Utah average, \$10.06. Interdepartmental transfers were the fastest growing line items as a group, averaging more than 9% over the amount billed for the current year.

Finally, board members reviewed and discussed output, or service measures, comparing Weber County Library with peer libraries along the Wasatch Front and then with all Utah libraries.

Service output measures compared very favorably with those of other libraries.

	Physical Item Circ Per Capita Excluding Auto Renewal	Physical Circ Population Served	Physical Circ Excluding Auto Renewal	Physical Items Per Capita	Physical Items in Collection
Wasatch Front Libraries:					
DAVIS COUNTY LIBRARY - Note 1	4.1	369,948	1,528,228	1.5	568,937
MURRAY PUBLIC LIBRARY	5.1	49,463	254,273	1.3	62,946
OREM PUBLIC LIBRARY	8.5	95,910	813,569	3.0	290,643
PROVO CITY LIBRARY	10.3	113,523	1,169,806	2.1	235,343
SALT LAKE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM	Not available	204,657	Not available	2.6	527,453
SALT LAKE COUNTY LIBRARY	10.0	902,874	9,061,953	2.2	1,979,665
WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM	4.8	269,561	1,296,863	2.8	766,906
Wasatch Front Average - 2023	Not available			2.2	
Utah Average - 2023	Not available			2.4	
National Average - 2022	Not available			2.0	

	Live Library Programs, Classes and Events				Total Live Programs Per 1,000 Population	Live Program Attendance	Total Live Program Attendance Per 1,000 Population
	Adult	Young Adult	Children's	Total			
Wasatch Front Libraries:							
DAVIS COUNTY LIBRARY	371	51	1,375	1,797	49	79,537	215.0
MURRAY PUBLIC LIBRARY	170	160	319	649	13.1	15,401	311.4
OREM PUBLIC LIBRARY	121	55	482	658	6.9	42,134	439.3
PROVO CITY LIBRARY	805	127	987	1,919	16.9	58,529	515.6
SALT LAKE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM	523	413	1,532	2,468	12.1	66,616	325.6
SALT LAKE COUNTY LIBRARY	3,249	1,391	5,818	10,458	11.6	305,380	338.2
WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM	2,182	221	2,108	4,511	16.7	167,334	620.8
Wasatch Front Average - 2023					11.2		366.4
Utah Average - 2023					14.0		439.0
National Average - 2022					10.3		199.5

	Public Access Computers	Internet Computer per 5,000 Pop.	Computer User Sessions	User Sessions Per Capita
Wasatch Front Libraries:				
DAVIS COUNTY LIBRARY	114	1.5	88,620	0.2
MURRAY PUBLIC LIBRARY	12	1.2	10,964	0.2
OREM PUBLIC LIBRARY	24	1.3	17,071	0.2
PROVO CITY LIBRARY	88	3.9	37,767	0.3
SALT LAKE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM	235	5.7	144,389	0.7
SALT LAKE COUNTY LIBRARY	269	1.5	245,042	0.3
WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM	269	5.0	146,241	0.5
Wasatch Front Average - 2023		2.5		0.3
Utah Average - 2023		3.5		0.3
National Average - 2022		4.2		0.3

	Library Visits			Reference Transaction	
	Total	Per Capita	Method	Total	Per Capita
Wasatch Front Libraries:					
DAVIS COUNTY LIBRARY	688,805	1.9	Estimated	105,650	0.3
MURRAY PUBLIC LIBRARY	155,331	3.1	Estimated	6,084	0.1
OREM PUBLIC LIBRARY	333,157	3.5	Estimated	179,478	1.9
PROVO CITY LIBRARY	505,981	4.5	Estimated	53,300	0.5
SALT LAKE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM	1,069,286	5.2	Annual count	156,897	0.8
SALT LAKE COUNTY LIBRARY	2,627,097	2.9	Annual count	163,120	0.2
WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM	1,040,019	3.9	Annual count	102,773	0.4
Wasatch Front Average - 2023		3.2			0.4
Utah Average - 2023		3.5			0.4
National Average - 2022		2.1			Not Avail.

Finally, board members again reviewed and discussed the library board's FY 2025 line item budget request, one-time additional requests for capital items, projected succession planning and overtime costs, and a capital project evaluation for construction of a library to serve residents of northwestern Weber County.

It was recognized that adjustments would need to be accommodated to fund any cost-of-living and pay-for-performance increases elected officials may authorize. If additional funding is needed beyond anticipated revenue, a transfer could be made from the capital improvement fund up to a total of \$309,665; that is, an amount equal to the total cost of all capital improvements included in the operating budget.

Discussion of the use of capital fund savings led to wondering where a new library falls on the future agenda of county-wide capital improvements. If that were known, planning for operations would be more efficient. Wangsgard noted that with ever-increasing usage, and rising operational costs, either the capital fund will need to be utilized to pay for capital improvements, or a tax rate adjustment will be necessary.

Watson said he hated to see the capital fund used for anything other than a new library.

Wangsgard reminded everyone that the county was good to the library three years ago in granting a small tax increase, recognizing that operating the new and much larger Southwest Branch/Headquarters Library, along with expanded services areas at the Main Library and North Branch, required additional funding. The phenomenal increase in usage, however, cannot be accommodated by this adjustment. The increased workload, along with robust educational program offerings, mean the operating budget cannot continue to be stretched to cover capital expenses. The library capital fund will eventually need to be tapped or the operational tax rate will need to be adjusted.

Literacy Programs Update:

As a continuation of considerations for framing the FY 2025 budget presentation, board members:

- viewed a video of the America Reads celebration;
- learned more about *New York Times* best-selling teen and children's author, Brandon Mull's, guest presentation scheduled later during the week;
- discussed the program calendar, including pre-emergent literacy programs for toddlers and after school programs for school age children;
- reviewed classes for speakers of languages other than English; and
- learned more about Citizen Path classes for those pursuing the goal of becoming naturalized United States citizens.

Watson reported on the Citizen Path program sponsored by Ogden City with the support of community partners. He gave a shout-out to the role library employees play in general, and

Bobby Workman in particular, in providing classroom space, appropriate curriculum, and an instructor who teaches and motivates those enrolled in the program.

Blamires reported on Weber Reads, the library's community-wide reading program, that is now in its 16th season. After summer literacy programs wrap-up, reading and community engagement continues with Weber Reads, Blamires noted. She distributed the program guide for September-November, that included dozens of educational events designed to engage area residents around the theme: Read. Think. Vote.

Blamires focused on cooperation with community partners, including 93 local schools, each of which received a bundle of books on the Weber Reads topic for their school library. The bundle also included the program brochure, age-appropriate lesson plans, and a bibliography of learning materials produced in a variety of reading, listening, and viewing formats. A special invitation to participate, signed by all three Weber County Commissioners, topped off the bundle. The packets were delivered to each school by WCL librarians.

Weber Reads programming and events are funded in part by Friends of the Library and the Ralph Nye Charitable Foundation.

Considering these excellent educational opportunities offered by the library, Wangsgard was asked to briefly summarize financial matters during the budget hearing, and then turn to Crosland and Watson who will share the importance of providing funding for educational programs, focusing on America Reads and citizenship classes. They were best suited to speak to these particular classes since Crosland volunteered during the summer as an America Reads tutor and Watson was immersed in the Citizen Path program. Weber Reads will also be highlighted, noting it has three times been selected "best of show" by the American Library Association.



