

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

November 5, 2024

Board Members

in Attendance: Sandra Crosland
Caitlin Gochnour
Reed Spencer
John Watson

Board Members

Excused: Jim Harvey
Wendy Ogata
Shannon Sebahar

Others

in Attendance: Bryan Baron, Legal Counsel
Phoebe Carter, Assistant Director
Callie Croft, Associate Computer Manager
Shari Creer, Friends of the Library
Alex Greenwell, Associate Business Manager
Marcia Harris, Library Development Fund
Holly Okuhara, Assistant Director
Bryant Reeder, Manager Information Technologies
Julia Valle, Business Office Manager
Lynnda Wangsgard, Director

Public Comments:

Gochnour called the meeting to order and welcomed those present, noting Harvey, Ogata, and Sebahar had asked to be excused. Gochnour then called for public comments. There were none.

Request for Review of Procedure for Charging Materials Damage Fees:

Wangsgard distributed a note, summarizing a phone call expressing concerns about the way in which library staff were charging for damaged materials. It was one of about a half dozen communications from individuals, most of which identified themselves as “home-schoolers” who said they were being moved to action as a result of shared concerns voiced by way of a social media network. At Wangsgard’s bidding, a recent caller had followed up with a written communication concerning this issue.

Wangsgard distributed the written communication from the concerned community member along with the administrative procedure used to implement the board Circulation Policy. The procedure outlined the minimum steps that were to be taken to determine charges for materials damaged beyond reasonable wear. Ogata had reviewed a draft response before the meeting and will be available to sign a final version once it is approved.

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Administrative Procedure

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING DAMAGE FEES*

Category/Criteria	Examples	Disposition	Range of Fees
Light Damage Little staff time required and few materials needed to restore item to condition it was in when last checked out.	Plastic cover is loose or needs replacing but paper dust cover undamaged; item is dirty but can be cleaned; page(s) creased, torn or marked with pencil, etc.	Circulation staff clean/mend/re-process item and continue to circulate.	Charge 0.00 - \$2.50 depending on amount of time and materials needed to repair. Do not make damage notation on book or in item record.
Moderate Damage Detailed staff work required to mend item or some repair required. Long-term usability and attractiveness of item is reduced.	Barcode or pocket removed; ownership stamps defaced; lead or color pencil marks on numerous pages; two or more pages torn; very, very slight (as in any) water damage; packaging (cases) damaged/broken, etc.	Circulation staff clean/mend/re-process and continue to circulate. Do not make a notation in the book or in the database. OR: Professional staff evaluate for repair, binding, or replacement.	Charge \$2.00 – 1/2 of replacement cost of the item depending on time and materials needed to repair. Professional staff adds notation in item record IF the material is put back into circulation.**
Severe Damage Damage will require significant staff time and materials to repair, or item will need to be rebound to be used.	Damage to audio materials requiring splicing; cover chewed by animal child but pages undamaged; new binding broken; writing in item in ink, crayon, or highlighter on one or two pages; water damage, etc.	Circulation pulls the item and sends to professional staff. Professional staff evaluates for repair, binding or replacement. If repaired, it is sent to the Main Library for work to be done.	Charge \$5.00 - 3/4 of replacement cost of the item depending on the time and material needed for repair, age of the item, etc. Professional staff adds notation in item record IF the material is put back into circulation.
Unsalvageable Damage cannot be repaired with reasonable cost, if at all. Item is completely unusable in a library setting and is of no value to the System.	Cover and pages warped; writing in ink or highlighter on more than two pages; pages missing; audiovisual items broken and not repairable; food or other substance spilled on pages; animal child chewed pages; smoke damage, etc.	Circulation staff discard and give to patron or recycle (do NOT place in book sale inventory). Professional staff determines if item can should be reordered.	Circulation, in consultation with professional staff, charges the full replacement cost of the item, including \$5.00 processing fee.

* Fees are not charged for normal wear.

** Notations in the bibliographic record may be made only by professional staff.

Considerations When Determining Damage Charges

Incline toward lower charges ← BACKGROUND CRITERIA → Incline toward higher charges

Older/50 or more ← *Age of Item/Number of Circulations* → Newer/less than 10

Worn ← *Preexisting Condition* → Unworn

Minimal ← *Resources Needed to Repair* → Significant

Minimal ← *Value of Future Use* → Significant

Full replacement cost is equal to the amount required to purchase the item in today's market, not the original cost of the item.

Fees for rare, valuable, or out-of-print items may be charged at going auction or rare book collector rates.

If the specific title cannot be found in current bibliographic sources, the following minimum charges will apply (includes \$5.00 processing fee):

CD	15.00	Hardback	20.00
Recorded Book	25.00	Paperback – small	10.00
Equipment	75.00	Paperback – large	15.00
DVD Blu-Ray	20.00	Magazines	7.50

If a specific set title cannot be found in current bibliographic sources, replacement costs will be based upon the original purchase price, and decided upon by a librarian. Processing fees for sets will be as follows: \$15.00 for materials that are part of a set costing \$250 or less; \$20.00 for materials that are part of a set costing more than \$250.

NewNow charges, for both print and DVD Blu-ray, are different than the regular collection. A patron should be charged full price for a damaged item. However, the patron can opt to pay a lesser charge and the Library will keep the item and return it to the vendor.

NewNow – Patron keeps Full price

NewNow – Library keeps \$10.00

If the item is damaged, the following minimum repair/reprocessing charges will apply:

Item Repair Replacement Costs:

Barcode	\$2.00	CD Gut	1.00	Media Bag – small/medium	7.00
Book Jacket	1.00	CD Lid	1.00	Media Bags – large	10.00
CD Book x 12	3.50	CD/DVD Insert	5.00	Multimedia Case	15.00
CD Book x 24	5.00	CD Page Pocket	1.00	Toy Card Replacement	3.00
CD Book x 30	6.00	DVD Case – Single	2.00	Pocket	2.50
CD Case – single	2.00	DVD Case – Double	3.00	Protector	1.00
CD Case – double	3.50	DVD Case – Triple	5.00	Spine Label	1.00
CD Case – triple	5.00	Toy Guide Replacement	5.00	RFID Label	2.00

Rebinding Charges:

Regular	\$12.00
Oversized	17.00

Crosland asked about the practice of charging a \$5.00 processing fee for unsalvageable items, asking if a processing fee was charged for less severe damage.

Wangsgard noted the processing fee is charged only if the item has to be replaced.

Wangsgard continued, noting that every book is collated when it is returned to ensure no one is charged for damage that occurred before it is again loaned. In this way, if employees find torn pages, scribbles or underlining, water damage, grease marks, bodily fluid stains, or other damages, those who had last possession of the materials are required by policy to accept responsibility. Policy statement on damaged items:

- A. Borrowers are responsible to inspect materials for damage prior to check out. If damage is present, the patron must notify circulation staff prior to check out.
- B. Charges for materials returned damaged will be based upon periodically established rates as determined by Library Director.
- C. Damaged items will be held for 45 days after the patron's account has been charged and the patron has been notified by phone and/or mail. After that, the items will be repaired and put back into circulation or discarded. The fees will remain on the patron's account until paid.

The second and third page of the administrative procedure used to implement the board policy detailed consideration taken into account when determining damage charges. The staff tries to put back into unblemished condition every item returned, using their special training and materials to maintain the useful life of the item and ensure its enjoyability for future users. The staff errs on being gracious to those who have issues while still upholding the board's policy.

Spencer asked if it is possible to see how much a particular user has been charged.

Greenwell said it is possible, but not always practical. A manager's login is required to view this level of detail because library circulation records are classified by state law as private records.

Harris said those checking out should appreciate borrowing nice books. The materials borrowed are public property. If children are not able to take care of them, they should be used under supervision.

Wangsgard noted there are those who subscribe to a point-of-view that the level of care taken by library employees goes beyond good stewardship. For example, they may feel a book with scribbles does not deter the next borrower from reading the story; that it is really just regular wear and tear and should be considered the cost of doing business. Likewise, water damage is not an issue if it does not have visible mold. From the library perspective, these damages do have a cost since other community members may not want to handle them and the next user may rightfully reason that stains, scribbling, underlining, and water damage set an unwelcome example for their children. Reshelving these damaged materials makes a statement about what is expected of the next user, these community members reason.

Watson noted a similar way of thinking in the private sector. For example, if an automobile is rented and then returned showing signs that kids were allowed to eat hamburgers and spill drinks in the back seat, there is damage that has to be mitigated. Some routine cleaning is to be expected but there is a price to pay for damage that takes extra time and money to mitigate.

Spencer wondered if any one staff member might be extra persnickety.

Wangsgard turned to Okuhara who oversees circulation training and asked for her response.

Okuhara explained that the professional in charge of overseeing circulation services for the five libraries conducts regular training on policy and procedure, since issues do come up that need to be standardized across all five locations. However, library employees go the extra mile, regardless of the level of damage to ensure consistency and fairness and more than one person is involved in assessing damage charges. As materials are returned, they are collated, page by page, and those with damage are set aside. Those damages that can be mitigated by trained circulation staff are addressed and the item is put back into circulation. If the staff cannot mitigate the damage, the item record is reviewed to determine how many times it has been loaned, how many copies are in the collection, and other factors that are routinely considered in damage fee assessment. While this process is being completed, employees do not know who returned the item, so there is no opportunity for personal bias concerning borrowers. The damaged item, along with the detailed information gathered from the item record, is then reviewed by the person in charge of circulation at the returning location. In this way, there is a second look at the item. If it is determined that a charge should be assessed, the item is sent to the professional librarian in charge of the collection. This professional assesses the charge and returns the item to the circulation manager who then looks up the account of the last borrower and contacts them concerning the damage. The responsible community member is given 45 days to review the item at the loaning location and address the charge.

Spencer suggested the letter under consideration be revised to include the information that multiple sets of eyes review each damaged item and that the charge assessed is done without any knowledge of who last had possession of the material.

Wangsgard asked if anything else should be included in a revised draft letter.

Gochmour counseled that the letter should note the staff will always strive to do better and that those who feel the process needs revision should be invited to express their concerns directly to the board during a future meeting.

Watson moved to send a revised letter, incorporating the suggested changes. Spenser seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Approval of October 1, 2024 Meeting Minutes:

Gochmour called for questions, corrections, or recommended changes to the minutes. Spencer asked that “third place” be changed to read “third space.” Crosland moved approval with the correction. Watson seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Review of Fiscal Year 2025 Tentative Budget:

Wangsgard distributed relevant pages from the tentative budget that had been posted on the county website. She explained that all of the “additional items” the board requested had been included in the tentative budget. If in fact, these additional items had been included twice. The comptroller had been notified to remove this double allocation when the final budget is prepared so the final budget authority will be less than that reflected in the tentative budget.

Board members reviewed fund descriptions, noting the library fund is separate from the general fund and is considered a “special revenue fund,” that is, it has its own designated source of revenue.

Library Fund: This special revenue fund accounts for the operations of the County’s main library and four branches. The Library Fund’s principal revenue source is property taxes. Source: *2025 Tentative Budget*, p. 14.

Watson asked about the current fund balance of \$3,981,621, the transfer in of \$3,380,000 in restricted balances, and the resulting projected ending fund balance of \$6,910,476. The numbers do not add up, he noted.

Wangsgard said there are at least two items relative to Watson’s question that require clarification.

First, the numbers do not add up because use of fund balance was authorized to balance the current fiscal year budget. The total amount will not be needed, so the difference (savings) will be added back to the total fund balance. That exact number will not be known until sometime during February of next year, after all the outstanding invoices have been paid and the accounts closed.

Second, the \$3,380,000 was being transferred back to the library after being held as a line item in the larger group of departments under the heading of “culture and recreation.” Interest earnings are not yet available and the \$3,380,000 has to be an estimate.

Holding the funds as a line item in “culture and recreation” was not what the board understood was going to happen when the money was transferred out of the library fund balance and Commissioner Harvey was intervening to correct the matter, Wangsgard continued.

The intent, as communicated by elected officials and county financial staff during 2020, was to set up a library capital fund that could be used for future capital improvements, including seed money for a library in northwestern Weber County. The funding was available because all the capital projects, authorized by a public vote of approval to issue general obligation bonds, had been completed under budget. Setting up a library capital account was not what happened.

Rather, the funding was deposited as a line item in the capital fund of a larger group of departments grouped under the heading of “culture and recreation.” Recently, there was apparently some confusion about how this funding could be used and commissioners decided to clarify the intent by transferring the funding back to the library fund balance with a restriction on use, rather than setting up a library capital fund. Wangsgard first learned about the changes when reviewing the tentative budget and then spoke with the comptroller to clarify details. The library capital fund as proposed by a draft ordinance was never established.

It was also noted in the tentative budget that the library position on the county organizational chart had shifted as well. The board should inquire about this change to see if it has a future potential to erode their responsibility and authority for overseeing library operations.

Watson asked what was the original amount that was to be in the capital fund.

Wangsgard, said the amount set aside will need to be investigated, along with interest that should also be transferred back to the library.

Watson asked if the money disappeared into a pot for other things.

Wangsgard said, no, it was held in a line item within this larger chart of accounts and earmarked for the library.

Crosland said the intent was for this funding to be set aside in a separate library capital fund and earmarked for library capital improvements. It resulted from judicious library oversight and management of funding authorized by way of a general obligation bond for library capital improvements. The library is capable of overseeing it and using it in their planning processes.

Wangsgard called for questions about the tentative budget, reiterating that the library is supported by a fund separate from all other county operations, and is governed by an independent public policy board. In this way the funding, and the appropriate use of the funding, has strong oversight. Under Commissioner Harvey’s hand, the county is now transferring the

money to the library fund balance. If the board would like it set aside in a library capital fund, that discussion can be pursued.

The tentative budget hearing will take place at 6:00 p.m., November 26, 2024, in the Weber Center.

Director's Report:

Wangsgard called for questions about the financial and output measure reports, all of which were within expected parameters and would result in completing the year with a surplus.

Wangsgard introduced Reeder, Greenwell, and Croft who had prepared and conducted a presentation on the topic of Generative AI during staff development day. It was so informative that she had asked them to share it with the board.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Update:

Reeder, Greenwell, and Croft showcased their expertise in emerging technologies, sharing an overview of artificial intelligence, demonstrating how it can be used, and providing an opportunity for hands-on experience. A goal for the next fiscal year will be to foster awareness of this transformative technology for library employees and the general public.

Other:

There being no further business, Watson offered a motion to adjourn; Crosland seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted: Julia Valle 1/7/2025
Julia Valle Date