

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

May 7, 2024

Board Members
in Attendance:

Diana Allison
Sandra Crosland
Jim Harvey
Reed Spencer
John Watson
Wendy Ogata
Shannon Sebahar

Others

in Attendance:

Bryan Baron, Deputy Weber County Attorney
Phoebe Carter, Assistant Director
Shari Creer, Friends of the Library
Marcia Harris, Library Development Board
Holly Okuhara, Assistant Director
Christy Meiners, KUER Station Manager
Ja'Naye Payne, KUER Director of Development
Spencer Stokes, KUER Board Member
Julia Valle, Business Office Manager
Lynnda Wangsgard, Director

Public Comments:

Sebahar called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and invited public comments. There were none.

Approval of April 2, 2024, Meeting Minutes:

Sebahar called for questions, comments, or corrections to the April 2, 2024, meeting minutes.

Hearing none, Crosland moved approval of the minutes as distributed. Allison seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Lease Agreement Between the Weber County Library and KUER:

Sebahar welcomed representatives from KUER Radio and asked those present to introduce themselves.

By way of framing the agenda item and discussion, Allison noted that two years ago, several community members were asked to participate in a KUER listening tour. The goal was to talk

about what was going on in Ogden and what KUER should know about our community and northern Utah. Allison and Ogata were invited to participate.

Payne and Meiners said KUER has a reporter based in St. George to improve its coverage of southern Utah and wants to also base a reporter in Ogden as part of its commitment to also improve its coverage of northern Utah and its Spanish-speaking community.

Knowing the Main Library is a center of activity in Ogden, Allison thought it would be a great place to host a KUER reporter. She presented the idea to Wangsgard and others on the board, who agreed the library should explore a partnership in bringing a reporter to Ogden.

Meiners and Payne expressed a continuing desire for the station to hear from communities and for the station to represent all the different areas of the state. The Story Corps journalists who visited Ogden during 2022 expressed that the community and Friends of the Library made the Main Library a favorite stop on their tour. The opportunity arose to possibly work together again as funding from Report for America, a Peace Corps type of organization for journalists, became available. The mission of Report for America is to help put reporters into communities where there is a lack of local news. This is how a KUER reporter was first assigned in southern Utah. KUER applied for additional funding, which was granted, a large group of reporters applied for a position in a new Northern Utah Bureau. There was an opportunity for a great match. The individual selected, Macy Lipkin, has reported from places as distinct as Los Angeles and Ecuador.

Now that the startup funding is in place and the reporter is scheduled to arrive July 1, 2024, station management wants to ensure the reporter will be embraced and has the community-based resources needed to be successful. There will be a community dinner next week to detail information about why a reporter is needed in Ogden and how community members can provide a warm welcome. Board members were invited to attend and get the word out to others who may be interested in participating.

Meiners and Payne said the part where the library can be helpful in supporting the project is in providing space to house KUER's Northern Utah Bureau. The reporter will be working in the community most of the time, but will need space to operate out of; that is, do interviews, meet people, and keep work files. Access to a facility like the library would also help provide a valuable connection to the community.

Station managers had provided details for a draft agreement that had been honed by Baron and distributed to the interested parties. Baron reviewed the draft, noting the agreement called for the library to provide office space, secure internet access, parking, and access to a breakroom for the reporter. In return, KUER will provide \$600 in air time each month for the library to inform community members of the services offered and events hosted. It was a three-year agreement, commencing July 1, 2024.

Baron called for questions.

Sebahar asked what kind of air time does \$600 buy?

Payne and Meiners replied that the library would have 18 spots, 15 seconds in length, that would be aired on a rotating basis. The information would also appear on the KUER website. The spots may promote events or provide general information about the library. Library staff would work with the KUER messaging team to work out the details.

Harvey wanted to ensure that KUER has a secure network; that is, that they would not compromise the library's network security.

Meiners noted the reporter would be using a University of Utah laptop and a virtual private network connection.

Harvey said he was pleased KUER recognized the need for additional coverage for northern Utah.

Watson asked what a normal spot typically costs.

Payne replied, spots usually cost between \$90 and \$100.

Watson noted the more people who get the message about library programs and services, the better it is for the community and this is one new way to get the message out. What is the listening demographic, he asked.

The listening audience is statewide, with a core along the Wasatch front. Payne said Salt Lake City is the largest demographic with Weber/Davis counties second. The station has a strong donor base, with listeners being college educated, professionals, 45-75 years in age.

Crosland asked if the person hired will be an investigative reporter.

Meiners said no, the reporter will be general assignment focused on issues such as politics and community events. The reports will vary and highlight what is going on in northern Utah so residents have a voice.

Crosland asked how the reports are going to be presented.

Meiners said the reporter will focus on general issues and reports will begin to flow into general programming, although they could include a feature or a story. She anticipated two or three on-air reports per week. The reports will be featured on Morning Edition, the KUER website, and the daily podcast. The website can offer links to library programs and services.

Meiners also noted that station KCPW, a Salt Lake City area station, had struggled for some time with financial difficulties. As it discontinued service, KUER was able to purchase this license, with help of the University of Utah, to ensure it stays in the non-commercial arena. A program director had just been hired for that station and it was renamed KUUB. It will feature a bilingual music format with designs to bring in news and public affairs of interest of the Hispanic community. A construction permit from the Federal Communications Commission

(FCC) will allow expansion of wattage to extend the signal and push it up as far as Ogden. News from Ogden can also eventually be represented on KUUB.

Sebahar asked if the library staff would submit information for KUER to record and present.

Meiners and Payne said the FCC has some specific rules that other, commercial stations don't have to follow but does not see any issues with what the library would likely be submitting. Station staff will record, present, and provide analytics to document the number and time the library spots are aired. She noted, however, that the majority of the audience is accessing content by reading rather than on the air.

Sebahar asked if board members were prepared to take a vote on the agreement, or if they wished to postpone action until a subsequent meeting.

Since the agreement had been included in board meeting packets, there were no objections to voting.

Baron advised that some adjustments in wording had been suggested by University of Utah legal counsel after the draft under discussion was distributed. Additional tweaking may be needed. If a vote is taken, Baron and Wangsgard could be given authority to either approve the final document or bring it back to the board.

Watson made a motion to approve the document subject to final review and approval by Baron and Wangsgard. Crosland seconded the motion.

Ogata noted she is a member of the KUER Policy Board and, therefore, would recuse herself from the vote.

Allison, Sebahar, Crosland, Harvey, Spencer, Watson, voted in favor of the motion.

Sebahar thanked representatives from KUER for their work on the agreement, stating a Northern Utah Bureau is good for both parties.

Wangsgard noted the agreement complements a major library goal for the year: to tell our story with numbers. For example, community members can be encouraged to trade their debit card for a library card and enjoy access to hundreds of thousands of free eBooks and movie streaming.

Director's Report:

Wangsgard reported the library had received an American Rescue Plan Act Grant in the amount of \$152,943.58 to upgrade library Wi-Fi services. The grant will flow through the Utah Education Network and will be coordinated in-house by Bryant Reeder, Library IT Director. Staff in the County Auditor's Office had assigned a special account code to aid in tracking the income and expenses. The equipment will be paid for up front and then application made for reimbursement.

Harvey noted the County has a process in place to make this work flow smoothly.

Carter reported on the County Career Expo that was hosted at the Southwest Branch. She distributed a special brochure produced by staff to help introduce the library to potential new hires.

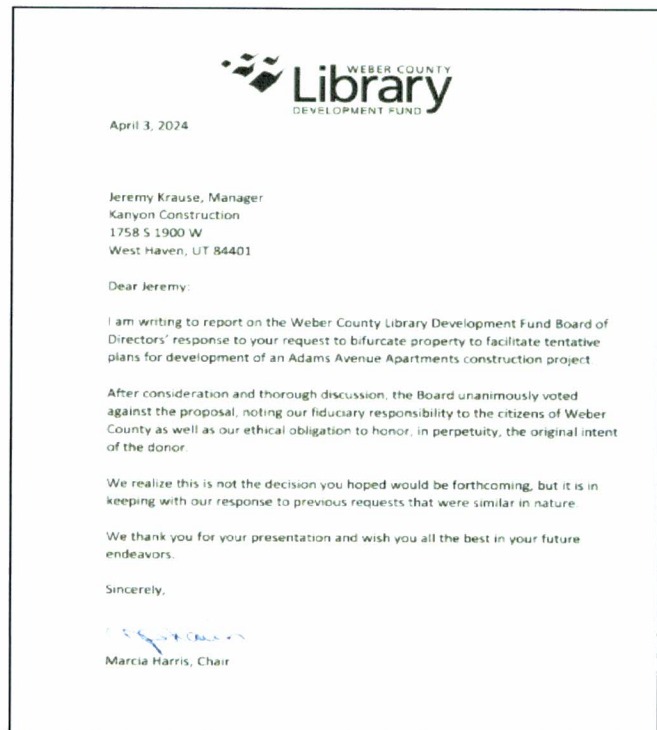
Library Development Fund Report on Bifurcating Pleasant Valley Branch Property:

Harris reported on a Library Development Fund meeting where they discussed an offer to vacate an easement on the southeast parking lot at the Pleasant Valley Branch in exchange for clear title an easement presently used as green space at this location.

She noted the discussion focused on:

1. Resident use of property, including pets, that could lead to contentious disputes;
2. Resident use or misuse of parking, including those places dedicated for library commercial use;
3. Residents loitering on library property;
4. Loss of 50 parking stalls;
5. Loss of staging for green space activities; and
6. The fact that the library does not currently have a sufficient number of parking spaces to meet city code.

A letter had been mailed to the project developer, noting the Development Fund Board of Directors had voted to reject his offer.



Harvey said he would like to see some type of action that would lead to acquiring the property for the library in order to accommodate future growth. The city is anxious to turn the property into something that produces tax revenue. The library brings people into the community, which is a benefit for other commercial establishments, so that is a plus.

Watson asked if there was any discussion about why the library may not want to own this. Is there a reason the Library Development Fund would shy away from acquiring the property?

Harris said that did come up during the board meeting with discussion of the types of development that would not encroach on library property and activities. Professional services would be a good match as would something like a hospice house.

Allison noted it is unfortunate that it is such a strange piece of property. It is hard to conceive of what could be built that would bring a revenue stream to the owner.

Harvey noted there is no place for lunch in that area, so food service would likely be a moneymaker.

Crosland said it would completely change the character of what could be done with the property if the parking were to be given up.

Harvey said he likes the idea of land banking. It is an investment that always pays dividends and as the library continues to grow, the property could be very valuable. He also noted the board has money set aside in a capital fund that might be available to procure and land bank this property. He will pursue finding out the asking price for further deliberations, perhaps in a closed session.

Watson said he was interested in pursuing land banking the property in Farr West to help keep escalating costs down and leverage a branch to serve residents living in that area of the county.

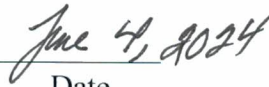
Spencer said this topic should become an item for discussion in the future.

Other:

There being no further business, Spencer moved to adjourn. Watson seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted:


Julia Valle


Date