

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

Date: September 1, 2015

Board Members

In Attendance: Scott Spencer
James Ebert
Brent Innes
Kathleen Jensen
Spencer Stokes
Tom Taylor

Board Members

Excused: Judith Jones

Others in

Attendance: Lynnda Wangsgard, Library Director
Scott Jones, Assistant Library Director
Julia Valle, Library Business Office Manager
Bryan Baron, Deputy Weber County Attorney
Marcia Harris, Library Development Board
Evelyn Bertilson, Friends of the Library

Spencer called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

Selection of Chair:

Taylor nominated Spencer to serve as Chair through June 30, 2016. Ebert seconded the motion. Spencer called for discussion; hearing none, he indicated his willingness to serve another term and then called for a vote. All voted aye.

Director's Report:

There were no questions concerning the Director's report mailed with the Board packet. Innes moved acceptance, Taylor second the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

The Weber Reads Kickoff was scheduled for September 12th at the Main Library. Utah Children's Theater will be the guest performers. Margaret Rostkowski will introduce Weber Reads to the Board during the November meeting.

Valle called the Board's attention to Weber Reads announcements on UTA buses.

Commissioner's Report:

Ebert had spoken with Ogden Mayor Mike Caldwell and Mark Johnson, City Chief Administrative Officer, about the Lester Park envisioning process. Both Caldwell and Johnson were excited about moving forward to develop a plan for revitalizing Lester Park. The Mayor will inform members of the City Council concerning the plan to engage with the Utah Young Architects' Forum in gathering community input, and of the Library Board's generous pledge to provide funding for the design competition prize. Board members received copies of a proposal delivered to the Ogden Rotary Club, seeking a cash contribution toward the prize award.

City officials had agreed to ask the Ogden Planning Commission to review revised plans for proposed Main Library parking as soon as new renderings are available.

Stokes asked about Commissioners' plans to respond to mayors from northern communities who continued to request County officials overrule the Board's decision to renovate the North Branch.

In response to Stokes' question, Ebert summarized the events of the previous two months, noting the cities had still not reported any success in raising private funding to offset the \$3.5 million in the cost of their plan, but continued to voice a strong request for a change of scope, building a smaller North Branch with the hope of constructing additions if future funding becomes available. The Library Board was not comfortable moving forward under these conditions.

In an attempt to leverage a Commission decision to intervene and change the Board's stated course of direction, some city officials then moved their request to area residents via social media and phone calls. In response, Commissioners had made it clear they were going to support the Board's decision to renovate the North Branch.

In deference to these northern area officials, however, Ebert again presented their position to the Library Board during the August meeting. However, the Board was not persuaded to change their course of action by Ebert's heartfelt restatement of the mayors' point-of-view, and reconfirmed their plan to continue moving forward to accomplish the goals detailed in the bond initiative language; namely doubling the space available to the public. Timing was of the essence as the Board did not want to lose the buying power of the \$5 million approved by public vote. That is, they did not want inflation to negatively impact what could be delivered to Library users in the North Branch service area.

Ebert noted the Commission is supportive of going forward with the Board's decision, but will continue to vet reasonable alternatives if presented. They do not, however, plan to try to undercut the authority of the Library Board.

Adams Avenue Project:

Board members reviewed pictures of the Adams Avenue widening project as it impacted the safety, durability, and curb appeal of the Pleasant Valley Branch. The resulting disruption for Library users and burdening of the staff in fielding complaints had continued since the first

demolition of sidewalks and entries, which were still not put back together after three months of upheaval. Work had been torn out and done over several times as a result of poor workmanship that did not meet the standard called out in contract documents.

The curb and sidewalk are now eight inches higher than the original construction removed by the current contractor. Sod laid without correcting the resulting change in ground slope had created ponding and unsafe conditions for pedestrian traffic and library maintenance employees when they mow lawns and remove snow. In addition, sprinkler heads had not been put back where they needed to be, and the bus pad was “pop-corned” and had a dangerous drop-off. Pictures detailed, among other issues, cement curbs that had been replaced by blacktop, sidewalks that were not straight, and Kentucky bluegrass in place instead of drought tolerant fescue. Thirteen trees removed because of the new curb height still had not been replaced.

In an effort to help the construction crew and save Washington Terrace City money, Kevin Wilson, Library Professional Property Manager, had consistently pointed out issues that needed corrective action, being especially gracious in attending meetings and asking for adjustments as the work was progressing and there was still time to make corrections without undue expense. He was not, however, given a respectful response. City officials were threatening to go over the heads of Library administrators in an attempt to persuade County Commissioners to settle on the public’s behalf for less than the contracted, agreed upon, acceptable work.

Wangsgard noted there was often no one from the City at the site supervising the contractor who then did not perform to standard; in her opinion, the contractor let the City down. The quality of work in front of the Library is unacceptable and the workmanship is an embarrassment to all concerned.

After viewing photographs of the work and voicing their concerns about the obvious issues depicted, Wangsgard was instructed to hold the City accountable for the quality of work done by their contractor on Library property, making sure the area was restored to its original condition.

Appointment of Site Recommendation Committee for Northwest Branch Library:

Wangsgard suggested that former members of the Library Board, who did not serve during the time the current capital plan was authorized, be invited to review and rate sites for future branch libraries. An initial slate of possible committee members included:

Michael Burdett
Gary Dohrer

Marlene Barnett
Jane Renstrom

Martha Richards
Richard Sadler

Wangsgard suggested that those Board members who, upon invitation, may be found to have a special interest in a particular site, not be included. She also suggested the Board invite Marcia Owen to serve as Chair of the committee. Owen is the former Weber County Purchasing Director, and as such has expertise in vetting proposals and keeping processes transparent and legal.

Spencer asked how Wangsgard envisioned the process proceeding.

Wangsgard suggested the committee be empaneled over lunch and given an orientation as to the

scope of their charge and an overview of what is known about each of the sites – zoning, etc. Committee members should then visit each site together, as a group, in order to complete a checklist of site evaluation criteria put forth by the Library Administration and Management Division of the American Library Association.

Spencer asked how many should serve.

Wangsgard had suggested seven names, but not all had been contacted to see if they were able and willing to serve. Fewer would be acceptable. Additional names of previous Board members could be added, if needed.

Ebert noted it should be made clear that the committee's scope will be to complete a general checklist and rating of site characteristics and then make a recommendation to the Board. Considerations should include projected population growth, not just the geographical center of the service area.

Wangsgard noted the checklist is designed to facilitate citizen participation. It is understood that their ratings and recommendations must then be further vetted in light of additional criteria. The Board may need to take these additional criteria into account before making a selection and recommendation to the Commission. The goal of the committee is simply to vet the sites. Owen will be chair and will not vote, but will summarize the work of others and present their findings to the Board, in aggregate.

Spencer would also like to see future population growth numbers considered during the process.

Jensen said it would be nice to have the library located next to a school.

Bertilson asked how the Board's interest in selecting a site was advertised.

Wangsgard said letters were mailed to the mayors of all incorporated communities in the service area, and an article was placed in the local newspaper. Ebert responded that there was a need to move forward, and ample opportunity had been given for community and interested individuals to respond.

Spencer emphasized that the committee should understand that they may reject all the sites and recommend the Board keep advertising. Others agreed.

Ebert moved acceptance of names and proposed plan for citizen evaluation of the sites. Taylor seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, all voted in affirmative.

2016 Budget:



Wangsgard likened the annual budget preparation to a soma cube puzzle she had at the table. The cube consists of seven pieces, each made up of all the irregular shapes that can be formed by combining no more than four cubes, all the same size and joined at their faces. These shapes can be combined, she noted, in more than 240 ways to form a larger cube.

Like the soma cube, the Library's seven management areas (collection, fiscal, personnel, programming, property, public service, and technology) are put together differently each budget year in order to get the results called out in the annual management plan. During 2016, for example, the management plan calls for opening the Southwest Branch/Headquarters Library, closing two floors of the Main Library, and readying North Branch for remodeling. Accomplishing these goals will call for changes in every budgeted management area.

The budget process begins with draft spreadsheets that detail items requested for each cost center. Justifications are written for every item requested and then managers meet to explain and defend their entries. Valle and others in the business office produce spreadsheets of actual costs for utilities and other line items, as well as document actual costs as invoices are paid throughout the year. Each cost center budget is then scrubbed and the results entered into a large summary and comparison spreadsheet that was distributed to the Board.

Wangsgard reviewed this spreadsheet, detailing changes in cost centers that resulted from support services being moved from the Main Library to the new Headquarters, as well as converting the current Southwest Branch into System storage.

Summary columns illustrated the overall increase in requested budget authority for 2016 was only \$19,148 over that authorized for 2015, an increase of less than one quarter of one percent (0.22%).

Line items that showed an increase over the previous year were detailed and explained as follows:

Salaries and Wages. Additional hours for substitute employees had been allocated in order to facilitate moving library contents among buildings during renovations, saving significant potential costs for contract services.

Health and Dental. While approximately 58% of Library employees work part time and do not enjoy health and dental benefits, the County instructed all Departments to budget for a 10% increase in this line item.

Bank Charges. As more community members rely on credit and debit cards and avoid carrying cash, service charges are increasing.

Equipment Maintenance. Equipment at Southwest Branch/Headquarters (SWB/HQ) will be under warranty for the first year, but most warranties will expire before year-end and maintenance contracts will need to be negotiated and paid. While the current SWB will be closed to the public, it will be used for storage of core books and other materials removed from the Main Library while it is renovated. Some service contracts, such as building fire and burglar alarms, will still need to be maintained.

Building Maintenance. Costs for maintaining the new SWB/HQ will be substantially more, because of its larger size, than for the library building currently in use. Snow removal, for example, will require a contract service while none is necessary at the current location.

Utilities. Costs for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning at the larger SWB/HQ will exceed those of the current facility. Budgeted amounts were benchmarked using utility costs per square foot at the Pleasant Valley Branch. Energy modeling was also used to provide data incorporated into estimating costs for this line item.

Special Services. Software licensing fees for more computers and users, as well as other costs associated with significantly expanding services at the SWB/HQ, will require an additional allocation in this area.

Equipment. Equipment replacements in public meeting rooms at Pleasant Valley Branch are required to accommodate continued public service at an appropriate level. The digital projectors and other items in these rooms are nine years old and some pieces are no longer operational. Jones noted that the projector in the black box theater, for example, failed and was not worth repairing. It was replaced by a projector in use in the auditorium of the Main Library that was being nursed along and kept in service until later this year when the meeting room will be closed for renovation. The auditorium of the Main Library was then outfitted with a projector that was taken out of the Ogden Valley Branch several years ago because of its age and unreliability.

A garden tractor with mower and snowblower was requested for use at Ogden Valley Branch where extended parking and additional sidewalks require excessive time to maintain and keep safe during winter months.

Equipment, CLEF Grant. Grant funds will be used to facilitate improved public access to digital resources at the SWB/HQ and throughout the Library System. Items to be purchased included server storage, data switching, and an upgrade to the public phone notification system.

Insurance. Increased insurance costs to cover SWB/HQ had been accommodated in the appropriate line item. These costs were estimated on a formula that gives an approximation based on square footage. The facility will actually be insured during 2015 and the premium paid again during the latter part of 2016.

Wangsgard noted the bond used to finance Pleasant Valley Branch (PVB) had been refinanced at a new, lower interest rate. Ebert reported that this refinancing required that the bond be left in place for the next 10 years, resulting in the County officials being unable to increase the number of payment years in order to help finance a new North Branch, as had been suggested by area mayors.

Wangsgard explained these mayors had also spoken, written, and incorrectly informed their constituents that the Board had paid cash for PVB, and the increase in revenue that resulted from a tax rate adjustment to cover the cost of building this facility must therefore be going into either the operating budget or a bank account somewhere. The mayors implied that this extra money could be used to help build a new North Branch. Wangsgard noted the funding is actually budgeted each year to pay the interest and principle on tax increment bonds that were sold to build Pleasant Valley Branch. The 2016 budget illustrated that \$485,557 had been set aside to cover this obligation.

County officials had requested a new capital plan be submitted with the 2016 budget request, but it was not completed. Instead, Wangsgard submitted the following statement:

During 2016, the Library System will begin the third year of an approved five-year capital plan. The funding for the capital plan is supported by a three legged stool.

The first leg provides a stable revenue stream that will be used to maintain public services at their current levels for existing library facilities.

The second leg is the fund balance, which was carved out of previous operating budgets and set aside to cover the increased costs that will accrue as new and renovated libraries come online.

The third leg is the capital funding approved by the voters to cover the cost of building, equipping, and furnishing the new and renovated library facilities.

As operating expenses for the new facility in Roy are benchmarked and validated next year, and as decisions are made relative to a new capital commitment for a branch to serve northwestern Weber County, two vital pieces of information will be available to extend equipment and capital needs projections through 2020. At the time of this budget submission, however, and within the limited timeframe provided for input into this budget, further refinement of the capital needs of the Library System are not possible.

Board members were next given the standard budget spreadsheet as required to report to the County Auditor.

Wangsgard used this spreadsheet to review projected revenues, noting that the use of fund balance (the library's savings account) will be needed to carry the Library system through 2016. This fund balance had been saved over previous years, anticipating the increased costs associated with the expanded services that will result as the SWB/HQ, renovated Main Library, and expanded North Branch are made available to the public. The following budget intent language was distributed, detailing the planned use of fund balance.

The Weber County Library Board of Directors respectfully submits the attached FY 2016 budget, which was approved September 1, 2015 during our regularly scheduled meeting. The budget recognizes the need to balance trends in revenue collections, which are slowly increasing as our local economy moves beyond the recent recession, with much more rapidly increasing public demand for service. The budget plan also addresses the challenges that will be created by an influx of additional users that will occur as new and renovated libraries come online during the next three years.

The 2016 budget has been balanced using an allocation from the Library Fund balance. The use of this Fund balance to augment projected revenue collections was an integral part of the Capital Plan presented to the public for a vote during 2013, and is the basis upon which the Board committed to maintaining current public service levels while also opening and operating the new/renovated Libraries without imposing an increase in the Library tax rate.

It should also be noted, the Board approved 2016 budget, including allocations in preparation for opening a new Headquarters, is only \$19,147.86 more than the original approved budget for 2015. This increase in requested operating expenses recognizes, however, that the 2016 budget may need to have additional allocations authorized as we bring the Southwest

Branch/Headquarters Library online and work to keep contract costs at a minimum while renovating the Main Library. The Board has consciously refrained from “padding” line items to accommodate what is an unprecedented additional workload, wishing instead to approve spending only when justifications are supported by demonstrated need and solid cost estimates.

Just as a fulcrum is needed to balance a teeter-totter when children of different weights are positioned on either end, the Library Fund balance will be used to create equilibrium between slowly increasing revenue streams on the one side, and more rapidly increasing demands for service on the other.

Therefore, this budget submittal comes with a caution: just as a teeter-totter design allows a child to be injured when they hit the ground hard if the kid on one side jumps off, so will the Library System “crash land” if the fund balance is used for purposes other than those for which it was originally identified in the Capital Plan and recently acknowledged and incorporated in the County Commission and Library Board’s “Shared Vision” statement. The Fund balance must be allowed to serve as the necessary counterweight required to keep the Library System in equilibrium as new and renovated facilities create added “weight” on the public demand side of this delicate balancing act.

The continued support of all those in the County who are also working to keep this covenant with the people is very much appreciated.

It was noted that \$85,000 of the Library fund balance was utilized to cover the Library’s share of the cost of new accounting and other computer software purchased for County-wide use.

County officials had asked all Departments to prepare budgets with reductions of one and three percent (1% and 3%). Wangsgard noted that with all the challenges that are on the horizon in opening SWB/HQ and readying Main and North Branch for renovations, the budget as recommended for submission detailed an increase of less than a \$20,000. Nonetheless, she had complied with the request for a reduced budget, first cutting employee salaries and then training. Small cuts were made in other line items as well, but she noted there would be no choice, if these cuts were made, other than to also decrease the books and materials budget. She asked Commissioner Ebert to communicate the integrity with which the budget had been prepared and state the case for not making any further cuts which would necessarily result in a lowering of public service.

To illustrate the austerity with which the Library is managed and the budget prepared, graphs were distributed showing the 2014 operating costs per capita of 11 libraries along the Wasatch Front – Brigham City, Davis County, Logan City, Murray City, Orem City, Park City, Provo City, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Summit County, and Weber County. The average cost per capita was \$44.08. The Weber County Library per capita cost was \$31.76.

A graph illustrating 2014 salary and benefits as a percentage of the operating budget showed the average for these same 11 libraries was 61%. Weber County Library spends 57% of the budget for salaries and benefits, the lowest percentage of any library in the group.

A third graph compared allocations for books and materials as a percent of the operating budget. The average was 13% while Weber County Library spends 17% of the budget on books and materials.

Wangsgard noted that, to some extent, the budget is being balanced on the backs of employees. At some time, in the not too distant future, a salary survey will need to be completed to benchmark staff compensation with other libraries along the Wasatch Front.

Ebert suggested the graphs be extended more than two decimal points so they further reflect refinements in numbers.

Spencer called for questions. There were none.

Jensen moved acceptance of the 2016 budget. Taylor seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

The Board's budget will be presented to County officials at 4 p.m., Wednesday, September 16, 2015.

Other:

There being no further business, Innes moved for adjournment. Ebert seconded the motion. All voted aye.

Respectfully Submitted: Julia Valle 10-6-2015
Julia Valle Date