

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

Date: September 3, 2019

Board Members

In Attendance: Diana Allison
Sandra Crosland
Kathleen Jensen
Cynthia Mattson (via conference call)
Reed Spencer
Spencer Stokes

Board Members

Excused: Jim Harvey

Others in

Attendance: Lynnda Wangsgard, Library Director
Phoebe Carter, Assistant Library Director
Julia Valle, Business Office Manager
Haley Van Vlack, North Branch Manager
Holly Okuhara, Main Library Manager
Deborah Smith, Pleasant Valley Branch Manager
Bryant Reeder, Library IT Manager
Evelyn Bertilson, Friends of the Library
Bryan Baron, Deputy Weber County Attorney
Ryan Arbon, Weber County Sheriff
Brian Rowan, Community Member
_____, Carlos, Community Member

Allison called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. She asked each person at the table, along with others in attendance, to introduce themselves. She then invited Van Vlack to take the group on a walk-around of the Branch Library.

Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

Approval of August 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes:

Crosland moved approval of the August 6, 2019, meeting minutes. Spencer seconded the motion. Allison asked for corrections, deletions, or changes. Hearing none, she called for a vote. All voted in the affirmative.

Letters of Concern Received from Brian Rowan:

The most recent letters from Brian Rowan expressing concerns about Library services were distributed and reviewed by the Board. Mr. Rowan had been invited by mail and telephone to be in attendance to discuss the issues raised over time. Allison noted they had received several other communications from this gentleman and wanted to hear his concerns and entertain his suggestions for improvement, if any.

Mr. Rowan began by stating he was concerned that children's behavior at North Branch would result in an accident or injury to other patrons, especially the infirm. He did not believe employees were diligent enough in maintaining proper decorum. He alleged children were climbing up the walls of the stairway as if it were a gymnasium and that there was no response from employees. This behavior created a liability for the County, he contended. Rowan said he wondered what happened to a library where people understood common courtesy and realized that some were using the facility for serious purposes and should not be distracted by children and people speaking loudly on cell phones and playing music.

Rowan also voiced dissatisfaction with the way in which time on public computers is allocated. Thirty minutes, with repeated warnings that the time was about to expire, was disruptive and distracting to him. He alleged seeing two students whose sessions were dismissed in mid-session while taking college entrance tests. Something similar happened to him while engaged in an online competitive chess competition. In California, he noted, people in libraries were playing chess and he was engaged with them in contemplation, uninterrupted by children who do not know how to behave or by computers that interrupt play with repeated shutdown warnings.

Spencer shared an observation based on his career in public education, noting the Board had discussed Mr. Rowan's communications over time and contemplated "where the fine line is" between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. The Library has to be welcoming to all and create an atmosphere that is inviting to children while, on the other hand, promoting civility. Spencer assured Mr. Rowan the Board will continue to discuss ways to provide a welcoming place for everyone as well as a place where care-givers keep children in check. He acknowledged his own experience in working with kids, finding it challenging to engage them in a meaningful way and still keep them quiet. Safety is a primary concern, Spencer noted, and the Board certainly does not want to tolerate conditions where anyone might be hurt.

Mr. Rowan asked the Board to revise Library policies to address disruptive behaviors that disturb others.

Allison noted she grew up at a time when libraries were dark and quiet, adding she sees it as a blessing we don't have that type of library now. Gesturing to the North Branch public service area, she said, "This is so much more inviting." "As the Board toured the facility before the meeting, we saw children, their parents, and siblings engaged in a multitude of learning activities in all the different areas," she noted. Allison asked Mr. Rowan if he, too, thought this type of library was much better.

Rowan agreed and noted his pleasure with the transformation of the lower level to the learning environment children now enjoy.

Allison indicated the Main Library is her “home” library. All different types of folks frequent the facility; they come with diverse needs, they come seeking help. This is what this new kind of library is all about. Opening our eyes, and libraries, to diversity requires give and take, she continued. Allison acknowledged problems in the nation growing out of a loss of civility and said she could relate to and understands that there are issues with excessively loud persons on cell phones. They present a tight rope the staff has to walk in terms of when to intervene.

Allison noted the Board regularly reviews and revises policies and will continue to do so. She expressed her appreciation for Mr. Rowan making the effort to point out policies not working for him. Allison concluded by emphasizing that she was not diminishing his concerns but rather questioning if his expectations were realistic in this time.

Spencer advised that the Board certainly does not want children climbing up the stairway walls. Radical civility is practiced at the Library and staff try to be true to the goal of treating everyone with due respect. Spencer assured Rowan that Board members appreciate his communication and want to address them with civility. He also assured Rowan there was no criticism of his concerns, no disrespect for his point-of-view.

Crosland said if children are running, that should be addressed. She asked Van Vleck if the staff tries to stop children from running.

Van Vleck responded in the affirmative.

Crosland noted, that since computers are formatted for the average user, a person taking a test has to assume some responsibility for asking employees to provide an extended computer session. Exceptions can be made for test-takers, but users with special needs must communicate them to the staff. There is a procedure by which exceptions may be made for obtaining a longer session and this procedure had been communicated previously to Mr. Rowan.

Mr. Rowan agreed and noted it would be nice if there were an advisory of this option at signup.

Stokes thanked Rowan for making an effort to attend the meeting and noted staff were present, open, and willing to listen to his suggestions for improvement. Stokes invited Rowan to, in the future, express his concerns directly to the Branch staff, so incidents can be addressed immediately, rather than sending letters the Board. While communications to the Board are welcome, it would be more effective to work directly with the staff. Stokes asked that Rowan simply speak with the librarian and ask for intervention if he sees something that needs attention. The Board will support the need for civility and the need for parents to take charge of their children. They also recognized that extra time for testing, filing taxes, and other one-time projects is appropriate.

Allison asked if Mr. Rowan had anything else to add.

Rowan said he did not and thanked the Board for the invitation to attend and voice his concerns during the meeting.

Weber Reads Kickoff:

Carter invited Board members to the Weber Reads kickoff program, scheduled at 3 p.m., Saturday, September 14, at the Main Library. Adam Johnston, professor of physics at Weber State University will present a program titled, "The Wonders of Water" and demonstrate the unique properties of this life-giving liquid.

Warranty Replacements:

Wangsgard reported on meetings with representatives of a local company that supplied original lighting for the reading area at the Headquarters/Southwest Branch. Almost every fixture had failed and needed to be replaced under the manufacturer's five-year warranty. The manufacturer had engaged an electrical subcontractor to install replacements that were shipped to the local supplier. Some of the replacement fixtures were damaged in shipment, however. The original installers were not manufacturer's choice to install the replacement fixtures; their bid may have been too expensive as they were well aware of the challenges that would come with completing the project. The manufacturer's installer of choice was not as well informed, if informed at all.

The manufacturer's electrical subcontractor arrived at the pre-installation meeting without a business plan. They were asked to go back to their office and prepare a plan that addressed the challenges of installing fixtures that must be ganged together in order to span areas over book stacks, the installation of which will require the use of personnel lifts on a raised floor in a facility that is open seven days a week until 9 p.m. The electrical subcontractor said the manufacturer had not told them the replacement fixtures were to be installed on a raised floor or that work had to be done after hours, above a scrim, etc.

Wangsgard said she expected resolution of the fixture failure to be challenging for all concerned.

Spencer asked if the problem was with the original installers.

Wangsgard said the original installers did a commendable job. The failure was being attributed to a component part, a controller, the manufacturer acquired from an outside source. Apparently, there had been other problems with this component as the manufacture is now using controllers produced in-house.

The silver lining, if there is one, Wangsgard noted, that the replacement fixture provides 140 lumens per watt while the original lighting consumes a watt and produces only 95 lumens. The lighting throughout the Headquarters/Southwest Branch is technology centric; that is, tied into its own computer network. When the controllers failed, all the energy saving capacity that results from the ability to turn on-off, dim-brighten, individual fixtures according to time of day, or other conditions, was lost.

Additional reports will provide updates at future meetings and the project progresses.

Director's Report:

Budget authority transfers from one line item to another was not done correctly. The "special services" line item was debited instead of "special supplies." This error will be corrected.

Wangsgard focused the statistical report on usage at the North Branch, noting the phenomenal workload and excellent results achieved by the staff.

Of the 397 library cards issued at the North Branch during July, 239 were issued to brand new users who had not previously frequented a public library. Community members borrowed almost 50,000 items, a new monthly record for the facility. The electronic gate count exceeded 6,000 individuals who, in addition to borrowing books, logged 3,414 computer sessions, and attended 40 Library sponsored programs. All of this work was done with a "revolving door" in terms of employees.

Wangsgard noted they keep hiring part-time employees, but it is increasingly difficult in the current job market to compete with places where part-timers can work a schedule that does not require night and weekend shifts. It takes weeks to hire replacements and, in the meantime, the group has to work short, which means extra nights and weekends are required of employees while slots are being filled. She complimented Van Vleck and her group on the excellent service they have provided while working with positions unfilled.

Crosland asked Van Vleck what it would take to have less turnover.

Van Vleck said the greatest help would be to have more full-time positions.

Wangsgard noted that approximately 60% of the 150 employees work part-time. Many of them would prefer full-time jobs with benefits and leave to pursue other options as an opportunity arises. Those who are looking for an 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. office type schedule often find the Library to be unsuitable. Everyone takes turns working nights and weekends.

Tour of Southwest Branch/Headquarters Library by State Library Officials:

The State Library Board was scheduled to tour the Headquarters/Southwest Branch Library and hold their quarterly meeting there on September 13, 2019. It will be the first opportunity for some of them to see Weber County's new third space facilities.

Proposed 2020 Operating Budget Review/Approval, Capital Budget Review:

Wangsgard presented two proposed 2020 budgets, operating and capital, for Board review.

The summary and comparison spreadsheet presented line item expense by cost center, comparing the 2020 budget request with approved line item allocations for the current fiscal year. Columns detailed proposed increases/decreases in dollars and percentages. Worksheets detailing every item

and projected cost were available to support the budget projections. Board members were invited to ask questions as a brief overview was given for each line item including, but not limited to:

- Salaries and Wages. This line item did not include pay for performance increases. Pay for performance increases will be authorized by County Commissioners later this fall and the amount added to the budget by the County Comptroller.
- Health and Dental. This line item is supplied by a County formula and resulted in an increase of a little more than nine percent (9%). As permission is received to combine some part-time jobs to create full-time positions and bring stability to the workforce, this cost will increase. Part-time employees do not receive health and dental benefits, which is another reason for turnover. It was noted, however, that part time positions are integral for the flexibility needed in scheduling efficiently to provide service during the day and throughout the week.

Other personnel costs, such as FICA, are a percentage of salary and can only be managed by managing salary allocations.

- Building Maintenance. As landscaping, irrigation, and HVAC systems, reach the end of manufacturers' warranty periods, increases in this line item are to be expected.
- Utilities. Utilities were a bright spot in the budget with the Main Library leading the field in energy reduction. The budget for the recently renovated Main Library was \$69,000, as compared to the aging HVAC system at Pleasant Valley Branch (PVB), which was becoming increasingly expensive to operate at \$90,000 per year. This increase in utilities at this location was being addressed in the "improvement to buildings" line item.
- Telephone. The telephone allocation for 2020 was only \$25,000 for all five buildings, including Internet access for 362 public computers. This line item is supplemented by eRate rebates for telecom services at a rate of approximately 68% of the billing cost.
- Building Improvements. New generation controls for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems at the Pleasant Valley Branch topped the list of needed building improvements. The original building controls no longer interface with newer equipment in a way that is energy efficient. Leaks in the roof-top ducting system caused by the hot and cold seasonal expansion and contraction were also addressed in the budget with plans calling for installation of a shroud over the ductwork. The ductwork will be repaired during 2020 and the shroud will be budgeted during 2021. The shrouds were included in the original building construction, but were value engineered out of the plan when construction funds ran low.

Mirror replacements at Southwest Branch were also a priority item in order to address mold issues caused by moisture buildup behind the glass that was mounted flush with washbasins.

- **Controlled Assets.** The largest allocation in this line item, MakerSpace equipment for public use in the Main Library and Southwest Branch, will be funded by a State Community Library Enhancement Fund grant.
- **Equipment.** Items budgeted in this line item were defined as those that exceed \$5,000 in cost and included:
 1. A core switch for the data center at Headquarters to replace technology that is at the end of its warranted life cycle. All incoming and outgoing traffic flows through this switch.
 2. A laser projector for Pleasant Valley Branch Black Box Theatre to replace a hand-me-down unit from Ogden Valley Branch that was installed in an emergency to facilitate overcoming an equipment failure.
 3. A Ventrac tractor and snowblower to place snow at Pleasant Valley Branch in hard to navigate storage areas and keep the facility safe during winter storms.
 4. An Electric book cutter for dismembering materials for recycling and/or binding.
 5. A multi-touch PC for the youth services area at Ogden Valley Branch to bring this facility up to the standards of other libraries in the County System.
- **Books and Materials.** The book budget had been increased to “catch up” on quality publications that were not procured while buildings were closed and shelving was unavailable. This increase was also needed to purchase a larger collection of eBooks. A best-seller recently had 250 people waiting for a single title.

Board Members reviewed proposed book budget allocations to see how it was broken out and what little funding is available for the variety of resources that are required to meet community needs. For example, core collections were allocated \$6000; this amount will fund only about 300 titles. An additional \$250,000 was being budgeted in the books line item for the 2020 fiscal year.

Wangsgard noted the 2019 materials budget was 11.4% of the total. With the proposed increase, the 2020 allocation would equal 13%. The American Library Association recommends the minimum allocation at a 15%, which was the goal set for 2021.

Spencer asked about collection for NWB.

Wangsgard noted preparations are underway to conduct a complete collection audit and inventory, library by library, to identify those materials that were shuffled from location to location during the building and renovation process and then did not make it back to their home location. While this work is being done, duplicate, core items that are no longer needed will be withdrawn to make space for popular materials. These withdrawn items will be held in storage at Headquarters and earmarked for a Northwest Branch. In addition, donated materials are being evaluated and items

pulled for a new facility. This process will not, however, result in a complete collection for a new branch. At a minimum, \$1,000,000 will need to be allocated to complete the core collection and procure popular items.

Jensen asked if the Board's request for a salary survey had been acted upon.

Wangsgard said, no. The 2020 budget request represented a 4.4% increase over that of the current budget year and did not include allocations to fund a salary survey. The need for full-time slots, more positions, and funding for a salary survey can be presented as separate items during the budget hearing, but cannot be included in the budget request.

In addition to preparation of the operating budget, work was proceeding, at the request of Commissioner Harvey, to develop a business plan for a library to serve those living in the northwestern portion of Weber County. Harvey had asked Allison and Wangsgard to provide defensible cost projections that County officials could use in their long range planning process. Developing a plan for the building site Farr West City had pledged as a donation was the first step in this business planning process.

At the behest of Commissioners during 2015, the Library Board advertised widely for sites, and then appointed an independent committee to conduct an evaluation of three pieces of property. The evaluation criteria were supplied by the American Library Association (ALA). The sites were offered by three separate cities: Marriott-Slaterville, Farr West, and North Ogden. The site selection committee unanimously selected the Farr West site, noting it scored high on all the ALA criteria. The location next to an elementary school and across the street from Wahlquist Junior High School was ideal. A second elementary school has recently opened within walking distance to the site, making it even more attractive.

Prescott Muir Architects agreed to produce the tentative site plan for the property in Farr West at no cost to the County, using a combination of programs they developed for the Pleasant Valley Branch and the Southwest Branch. In effect, the proposed 48,000 sq. ft. facility was a duplicate of the Pleasant Valley Branch but with a larger activity center and a teen center similar to those at the Southwest Branch. It also featured a larger garage area for support of building maintenance needs, including housing equipment and storing supplies.

The proposed building site had been given to Farr West City several years ago with the stipulation that at least 50% of the land would be used for a park. Therefore, the site plan shared with the Board illustrated there was room to facilitate the 49,000 sq. ft. library with an outdoor programming space and still have enough property available for the City to develop two high school sized soccer fields. Parking would be shared and serve as a buffer between to the two mixed uses.

Preliminary cost estimates had been projected using the actual bids submitted in 2014 by construction companies who competed to build the Southwest Branch Library. Wangsgard cautioned these estimates of both hard and soft costs were sufficient for preliminary planning purposes but did not yet include information that would come from geotechnical testing of the soils.

The preliminary cost estimate was arrived at by taking the actual costs per square foot for the Southwest Branch, and then adding the intervening escalation in construction costs. Since 2014, costs have increased by 28.6%, and they are projected to increase by an additional 4% during 2020. Therefore, it can be concluded that a Northwest Branch with the same infrastructure as the Pleasant Valley and Southwest branches will cost almost 34% more than it would have had it been bid in 2014. A 49,000 square foot building on 6.2 acres of property will cost approximately \$17,200,000, or \$359 per square foot in hard, construction costs.

Soft costs will add to the total budget needed to complete the project. While some of these costs can be negotiated, others cannot.

If the County performs the plan check, this fee may be waived as it was for construction of the Main Library. Some building permit fees may be waived, but this is more problematic. However, the 1% State fee and utility connection fees cannot be negotiated or waived. Impact fees can be negotiated with the City, but there will be little wiggle room for negotiating the cost of builder's risk insurance. The cost for shelving, materials handling systems, and other technology will go to the low bidder and will not be purchased at 2014 prices.

Architectural and engineering (A&E) fees are a place where negotiation can take place, if the building gets underway during the next year or two. If the same architects and engineers who designed the Southwest Branch are still available, there will be a tremendous saving in the time it takes to develop plans for a new library. Programming fees may be excluded altogether if the same team is available. Wangsgard indicated that in the near term, A&E fees may be negotiated as low as six percent (6%) of the total cost of the facility, but this will require the project proceed expeditiously. Most public buildings are being designed with fees ranging from nine to as high as twelve percent (9% - 12%), or more. In order to get good value at this six percent rate, however, separate line items should be established for LEED gold design and commissioning; civil engineering; AV, telecommunications, and data design in order to ensure the quality of the facility is not compromised. Wangsgard noted most of the geotechnical testing should be done as soon as possible to determine if soils will require dewatering or if fill will need to be brought to the site.

There will be little or no opportunity for cutting costs for special inspections and testing, energy modeling, or building envelope commissioning, none of which should be compromised, she emphasized. These processes identified dozens of opportunities for savings at the Southwest Branch and will continue to pay dividends over the life of the building. In all, projected soft costs for the Northwest Branch totaled \$4,700,000, bringing the overall project total to \$21,900,000, which did not include funding for the collection.

The budget hearing with elected officials was scheduled for October 8 at 4 p.m. This information should be officially presented at this time, stating for the record that these costs are very realistic for a technology centric, institutional quality, public building that will be required to serve a growing population over a period of at least 50 years.

Bertilson asked for next steps.

Wangsgard said the presentation during the budget hearing was to be for information only. There had been some talk that a Northwest Branch could be built for the same cost as the PVB. This was an unrealistic expectation in that PVB was designed during 2006 and bid for construction during 2007 – costs have increased substantially over the past 13 years and will continue to climb. The next step, when elected officials decide to take it, will be to have the architect flesh out the building design to the schematic stage, and then have at least two construction companies provide cost estimates. At that point in time, funding can be arranged, the design and construction documents completed, and the project bid.

Spencer asked if Commissioner Harvey would be given a courtesy update, since he was unable to attend the Board meeting.

Wangsgard, indicated she would certainly meet with him one-on-one to go over the preliminary site plan and cost estimate. The work was being done at his behest in order to get the details needed for the County to prioritize the project within their larger capital plan.

Wangsgard next turned to revenue available to fuel the 2020 operating budget, noting the total projected was \$9,821,350, or approximately five percent (5%) more than anticipated collections for 2019. The proposed 2020 budget was approximately four and one-half percent (4.5%) more than the current authorization. However, this amount did not include pay for performance increases.

The 2019 budget required an allocation of \$2,396,000 from the fund balance (savings account) in order to balance. The 2020 requested budget will require a fund balance allocation of \$1,177,000. It is anticipated 2019 expenses will be considerably less than authorized, perhaps by as much as \$400,000, but this will not be the case during 2020 as increased costs result from new building and equipment warranties expiring as well as the need to meet the public's ever increasing appetite for library services. County officials have acknowledged that the fund balance cannot continue to sustain operations and a tax increase will be needed in the not too distant future.

On the positive side of the equation, Wangsgard noted, Library employees consistently close out each fiscal year with savings and come in significantly under budget, although this trend is resulting in turning back less each year. Revenues for 2020 were conservatively estimated and collections could be higher.

Stokes asked if the Library was using all of the certified tax rate or if some was going to some other fund.

Wangsgard said the current tax rate was .000526. The legal limit is .001, so there is plenty of room for an adjustment. The certified tax rate does go to pay administrative fees for services provided by the general Fund, and it also includes a payment of almost \$495,000 per year to retire the bonds sold to finance the Pleasant Valley Branch. The balance of the revenue collected goes either to the operating budget or to the fund balance. County officials are well aware of the need to adjust the tax rate and are working to produce a plan for a way forward. Savings from capital projects will help, but is a short-term, stop-gap, measure to put off the inevitable need for a rate adjustment.

Stokes noted County Commissioners adjusted the Library tax rate upward in the early 1990s and used the resulting revenue to construct and pay cash for the Ogden Valley Branch, thus avoiding costs associated with bonding. It seems there is enough unused capacity in the authorized tax rate for operations to do the same thing to build and operate a Northwest Branch. Stokes suggested raising the rate and saving for the construction over a period of a few years.

There being no additional comments or questions, Stokes moved adoption of operating budget as presented with inclusion during the October budget hearing of preliminary cost estimates for a Northwest Branch. Jensen seconded the motion. Allison asked if there was a need for further discussion, and hearing none, called for a vote. All present voted in favor of the motion.

Stokes moved to adjourn the public meeting and reconvene in an executive session to discuss the character, competence, or health of a person. Jensen seconded the motion.

Allison conducted a roll call vote:

Spencer voted, aye. Crosland voted, aye. Jensen voted, aye. Stokes voted, aye.
Allison voted, aye. Mattson was no longer available via phone and did not vote.

Allison reconvened the public meeting to address unfinished business.

Crosland suggested the Board thank Mr. Rowan for sharing his ideas for service improvements and ask that the following action be undertaken by Library employees:

1. Provide some type of signage or visual prompting asking users to be careful not to behave in a manner that compromises enjoyment of the Library by others; and
2. Include language on the front screen of the computer signup stations, inviting those needing extra time for special testing to request use of special computers to complete their projects. Staff were to decide what other uses may qualify for extra time, if any.

Stokes asked that drafts of these actions be brought back to the October Board meeting.

Jensen formalized Crosland's two suggestions for improvement in a motion. Spencer seconded the motion. All present voted in the affirmative.

Other:

There being no further business, Crosland moved the meeting be adjourned at 7:50 p.m. and Spencer seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted: Julia Valle 10/01/2019
Julia Valle Date