

**Whitman County Library**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
Public Meeting (via Zoom)  
April 18, 2020

**Present:** Cindy Alred, Kristie Kirkpatrick, Steve Balzarini, Bob Bates, Heather Lustig, Suzanne Schmick, Shirley Cornelius, Sheri Miller, and guest Colleen Cross joined about 10 minutes into the meeting.

Chairman Steve Balzarini called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

There were two additions to the agenda at the end of new business but with no new modifications to the agenda.

**New Business:**

Kristie updated the board on the current status of library services during COVID-19. Outside of current online services, WCL plans to begin in-building services as soon as we can do it safely for the staff and public. First phase will be to mail materials to residents, maybe by Monday. The biggest hurdle for months to come is enough cleaning/safety supplies and the scheduling of staff. WCL is implementing Zoom staff training/meetings and exploring it for public programming as well.

The library is working to change our service model, from in person programming to online products and services; a challenge without additional funding to do it. WCL's website and social media are providing as many free products and links as staff time can accommodate. Thanks to James Morasch for handling the increased IT workload that has resulted and thanks to staffer Sarah Phelan and a number of branch managers that are delving into online programming.

Thanks to Catalina Flores and Sheri Miller for keeping the staff scheduled, busy, and working throughout the service phase down, stay at home order and now as we resume services. Library administrators believe WCL has benefited by keeping our staff training and working during the building closure, as it will be less costly than training new staff and increased unemployment claims.

At this point in time, WCL cannot forecast what the financial impact of the virus will be, related to property taxes, Friends donations, or new costs like unemployment claims, PPE and cleaning supplies, mailing books to patrons, and additional technology needs. WCL is tightening any spending we can.

**Continuing Business:**

Kristie's retirement will be announced Thursday to the local media and the director position will be advertised on our website starting today. The job will be advertised locally and regionally through the end of May and nationally in a few free publications. In early June, Joy Neal will be in contact the board with the ranking of the candidates using the criteria laid out previously.

At that time, she'll work with the board to decide if prescreening steps (like Zoom pre-interviews or email interview questions might be in order to narrow the field.) Joy will also work with the Board on interview questions and processes for final candidates. In July Joy will come to Colfax to assist the Board in interviewing or other areas they need assistance. A decision and job offer will come after that. We hope to have a new director at work by September 1 to train with Kristie for one month.

A Board training for supervising and evaluating a library director is set for Thursday, May 28, from the Washington State Library. This meeting may very likely be via Zoom with the option of socially distancing for the training in the Tech Center. The regular May Board meeting is scheduled for May 19 at 4 p.m. via Zoom.

After 15.5 years in our tech department, Don Appel retires on April 30 creating an opening for a Tech Assistant. Also there is an opening for the Oakesdale branch manager. The current manager's last day is April 29.

A grant of \$10,000 has been received from the METER foundation to improve the Albion branch.

Two added items for the agenda include a report on the cooperative project with SEL to provide 400 STEM bags to K-6 students in selected schools in the county. Thanks to Nichole for her work on this project, made possible by a \$1500 donation from SEL. There is hope to expand the project to all the schools in the county that the Library serves.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> project reported on is in cooperation with The McGregor Co. and engineer Chris Hille, who is producing face shields with WCL's 3D printer. McGregor Co. has supplied funding for all materials with shields going to WHMC, Ladow Court, The Courtyard and other local care providers. WCL may also use these shields when the library reopens.

### **Monthly Business:**

Minutes from the March 2020 meeting were reviewed and approved by a vote of the board.

Financial reports including the April payroll and accounts payable vouchers of \$94,316.03 were presented to the Board. There was no additional discussion and Resolutions #2020-09 and #2020-10 was approved by a vote of the board.

Because WCL is closed on March 16, stats were compared with the same 2-week period in 2019. The reports show that 2020 program attendance was already declining as classes and events were cancelling and people were starting to avoid crowds. The 1,662 attendees represents about a 26% drop from 2019.

Circulation for the first half of March was the same as 2019, 10964 uses of traditional materials. Digital and databases were just a little bit higher than last year. The monthly stats do not include all of the correct circulation numbers so until they are corrected, we can't tell how much circulation has dropped or how many books were able to mail out before staff was required to go home and stop mailing books. The good news is that the use of eBooks, databases, Facebook, Twitter, and blogs all have increased and we expect the trend to continue.

Online Trivia had 75 attendees last week, online book club has met, and a few branches are tackling online programming as well.

**Upcoming Board Meetings and trainings:**

The next board meeting will be on Tuesday, May 19 at 4 p.m. via Zoom meeting  
Board training on May 28 from 4 to 7:30 PM  
June 16<sup>th</sup> board meeting

**Guests:**

Meeting guest Colleen Cross was allowed 5 minutes at the end of the meeting to speak, adding that she appreciated the ability to join the meeting in the online format.

**Steve adjourned the meeting at 4:42 p.m.**

---

Shirley Cornelius, Secretary

---

Steve Balzarini, Chair