



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING

Administrative Service Center

415 Tumwater Blvd. SW.

Tumwater, WA 98501

Wednesday, October 10, 2018

5:30 pm

### MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Hal Blanton, Bob Hall, Brenda Hirschi, Jenna Noll, Corby Varness, Joe Wheeler, Brian Zylstra

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED: All present

STAFF PRESENT: Cheryl Heywood, Allison Grubbs, LG Nelson, Jeff Kleingartner, Eric Lowell, Walter Bracy, Andrea Heisel, Josh Jordan; recorder

President Zylstra welcomed everyone to Tumwater and called the Special Board meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

### AGENDA ITEMS

1. Brian Zylstra led the pledge of allegiance.
2. Welcome and self-introductions.
3. Public Comments - At this time, President Zylstra called for public comments. The Board took public comments for 45 minutes where numerous people expressed how important libraries are to their communities.
4. Board Comments – Trustee Blanton noted that it was good to see so many people, as there is lot of intensity and emotion. He asked how we move forward and use our energy to come up with ways to do things that will keep the system intact. Trustee Noll stated that she appreciates everyone

that came out to share support for libraries. It is important to hear from the public. During her visits to libraries during the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration she saw empty libraries. She noted that it is important for the public to share comments so the board can learn how important libraries are to the communities. Trustee Varness read a letter from a community member. She then stated that TRL has not made decisions based on tax contributions from each area and the board is entrusted with following the mission of the library district. Trustee Hirschi stated that she will save her comments for the CFP discussion. Trustee Hall questioned the increased FTEs over the years, that the board did not know and he asked to see the compensation of the leadership team. It was noted that this is lined out in the budget document. He also noted that there was a wrong perception that the Ocean Park library was being closed but appeared to be a change in management. He noted that he listened to the South Bend City Council meeting and it wasn't clear that the proposal suggested consolidating South Bend and that it wasn't just the building issues. He also asked about changes to courier routes. Where the \$700K number came from, and Cheryl stated that it was the difference between projected revenues and the budget in 2019. Trustee Wheeler thanked the communities for the letters. He also asked to hear specific ideas to help. He is glad that Administration brought it forward when it did because next year would result in library closures. He also mentioned that library usage numbers should be used and encouraged everyone to use their library so it would be harder to justify closing buildings.

5. Facilities Committee – Trustee Varness recommended rejecting the proposal as it stands and to use the document as a background document as we work through committees. The board has only known about it for a few weeks. Need to deep dive into ideas and the board hasn't had an opportunity to discuss. All changes (open and close libraries) need to go through the facilities committee and then to the board.

18-40- CORBY VARNESS MADE A MOTION TO REJECT THE PROPOSAL.  
BOB HALL SECONDED.

## DISCUSSION

Trustee Noll stated that there are a lot of good ideas and doesn't want to entirely reject the proposal. She has more questions and would like to see a request for proposal from the library.

Trustee Hirschi stated that she is excited about the proposal but has two concerns. A letter from the public pointed out the fund balance has increased and an article in The Chronicle in 2008 pointed out a levy lid lift was needed. Not convinced a financial crisis is immediate but payroll costs increase higher than property tax. Second concern involved facilities policy and references to service point analysis (dated 2005). Recommend that policy committee work on service point analysis. Give the public opportunity to review and provide feedback. Library Director and staff need clearer direction. She believes that a moratorium on any service point change should be enacted until this happens.

Trustee Hall noted that the document was originally called The Reimagined Library. It contained staffing recommendations, courier changes, but didn't include the math that would show how the change would save money. Should put a pin in losing libraries. However, need to reverse the increased staff changes that happened in the early-mid 2000's. That may include attrition, retirement or possibly RIF. Will likely reduce hours and days open. May save enough through staffing changes to try some of the new ideas. He would like to research putting a Wi-Fi station where there isn't a library.

Trustee Wheeler stated that he does not want to reject outright. He would like to table it for 3-4 months in case we can't find a solution. Create a committee to work on it and reach out to the communities to try and solve these problems. Suggest an Ad Hoc committee that is central to this problem and have some Saturday work sessions. Suggest tabling and allow administration to look into some of these solutions. We have been talking about a levy lid lift and discussions to prepare the communities for the need to increase funding. Challenge the audience and communities to build support for a lovey lid lift.

Trustee Hall pointed out that the reason to run a levy in a general election so the cost is shared among more groups. Doesn't know if there is enough trust in the communities to pass a levy.

Trustee Wheeler thinks Thurston County will support. We would ask the public to help us succeed.

Trustee Varness stated that she is hearing that we don't want to vote yes on the motion but to pause? Trustee Wheeler stated yes to stop it, but don't leave administration with nothing to do.

Trustee Varness stated that she wants to let communities know what the current status is. Make it clear to administration that we are putting it on hold.

Trustee Noll asked if we cut staff and the remaining are tethered to a building, how will we reach out to other rural communities?

Trustee Varness noted that we see increased outreach every month. Proposed shortfall is less than 3%. It is a continuing issue, but not a cliff.

At this time, Cheryl called up Eric who noted that the Fund Balance policy requires two times the biggest deficit of the year. 2019 is about \$735K in the red.

Trustee Varness stated that the budget committee should talk about this.

Trustee Zylstra clarified that the shortfalls will continue and sustainability is a concern? Eric stated that by next year we'd be cutting into the beginning fund balance that would make it difficult to pay bills due to property taxes being received twice a year.

Trustee Zylstra appreciates comments from board members. He and Trustee Blanton attended the Randle meeting and was clear the public did not want their library closed. He does not want to see any libraries closed. TRL is facing difficult budget challenges and we have to address them but closing buildings should be last resort. He did note that there are some good elements in the plan. Understand anger in Hoquiam after renovations. Small libraries probably matter more to the people in those communities. If board wants to put the plan on hold, should consider libraries closing last.

Trustee Hirschi asked if there is a reason that the service point analysis doesn't go into detail for closing – it hasn't been a cultural option? Recommends that the policy committee look at specific criteria in case closing is necessary.

Trustee Hall stated that we need to see some clear vote for if libraries are closing through 2019 (except if SB facility is unusable).

Trustee Hirschi likes what Trustee Wheeler suggested. Like to see in ad-hoc committee review the CFP.

At this time Trustee Wheeler made the following motion.

18-41 – TRUSTEE WHEELER MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THE CAPITAL FACILITIES PROPOSAL UNTIL AUGUST 1, 2019, AND DO NOT MAKE SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES TO HOW LIBRARIES ARE RUN EXCEPT STAFFING AND HOURS IF NEEDED. THIS INCLUDES THE CREATION

OF AN AD HOC COMMITTEE THAT REACHES OUT TO THE COMMUNITY AND LOOKS FOR ALTERNATIVES TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM. BOB HALL SECONDED. ROLL CALL VOTE – ALL VOTE AYE.

6. Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30, if needed or called for –
  - A. Library Director Evaluation Discussion

At 7:25 pm President Zylstra called for Executive session and noted that it would be 30 minutes.

At 7:55 pm, President Zylstra announced to the audience that the Board would need an additional 5 minutes.

At 8:03 p.m., President Zylstra called the meeting back to order.

7. Adjournment –At 8:04 p.m., with no further business, President Zylstra adjourned the meeting.

  
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Brian Zylstra, President

  
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Cheryl Heywood, Secretary