

TIMBERLAND REGIONAL LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING  
415 Airdustrial Way S.W., Olympia, WA 98501

January 14, 1983

M I N U T E S

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dorothy Voege, Chair - Grays Harbor County  
Doris Fourre - Thurston County  
Jean Haakenson - Member-at-Large  
Larry Parsons - Lewis County  
Paul Polillo - Pacific County

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Alice Harris - Mason County  
Donald L. Law - Member-at-Large

STAFF PRESENT:

Louise E. Morrison, Library Director  
Mary Stough, Assistant Director for Public Services  
Sally Loken, Assistant Director for Central Services  
Tom Mayer, Supervisor-Personnel Administration  
Mike Crose, Business Manager  
Rod Claflin, Page, Centralia  
Jo Hagen, Community Library Assistant II, Centralia  
Helga Holmes, Sr. Community Library Assistant, Centralia  
Ione Mason, Community Library Associate, Centralia  
Paddy Mullins, Community Library Assistant II, Centralia  
Marian Osterby, Centralia Librarian  
Patty Reed, Community Library Associate, Chehalis  
Tina Sayers, Community Library Assistant II, Centralia  
Herbert H. Fuller, Timberland Attorney  
Liane Bascou, Board Recording Secretary

GUESTS PRESENT:

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Claflin  
Bruce Craig, Centralia Library Board  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Godsey  
Mike Marler, KITI Radio  
Mr. and Mrs. George Staerber  
Jo Toothaker

Mrs. Voege called the special meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:25 p.m. She stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss Timberland's contract with the City of Centralia for 1983. Introductions were made. Mrs. Voege stressed that it was very important for the Board to have input from anyone who wishes to speak. Before opening discussion with the Board, Mrs. Voege asked if anyone had anything they would like to say. Mrs. Morrison commented that she had been misquoted in the January 14 Daily Chronicle. In the statement that cities are "incidental," Mrs. Morrison said she was quoting from the Public Library Law with regard to intercounty rural library district formation. She said that she had told the reporter that cities are incidental

to library districts because they are not even mentioned in that section of the law. Mrs. Morrison said this was not quoted properly since it was taken out of context.

Mrs. Voege referred to the contract which the City Commissioners from Centralia had presented to Timberland. She said the gist of it was that the city will pay the contract fee on a quarterly basis in 1983, provided, however, that if library services are not provided by Timberland on or after January 20, 1983, then the contract payment will be reduced by the number of days during 1983 that library services are not provided. She said that the city has agreed in this contract to provide suitable quarters and maintain the building, provided that the city shall not be obligated to pay any more than \$119,000 (for the contract fee and maintenance) during 1983.

Mr. Parsons asked if this contract which the City of Centralia has presented to the Board is basically the original contract that every city has with the additions the city has made. Mrs. Morrison replied that this is correct.

Mr. Polillo said that he thinks it should be pointed out to everyone present that all of the Board members definitely want to keep the library in Centralia open. He said that in order to keep it open, the Board must have a contract with the city. Mr. Polillo stated that he personally feels that the Board must treat all of the cities which contract with Timberland the same.

Mrs. Voege asked Board members if they wished to approve the contract which the City of Centralia had presented to the Board. Mrs. Haakenson stated that she does not feel that the Board can approve this contract, mainly because the city has tied in the total figure of \$119,000 and that the city will be willing to pay no more than that in 1983. She said that Timberland's contract fee for Centralia represents over \$99,000 and that Timberland cannot be responsible for the maintenance of the building. She said this is the responsibility of the city and it has to be kept separate from the contract fee. As a Board member, Mrs. Haakenson said that she will do her utmost to see that costs are kept down as much as possible and try to lower certain items such as utilities, but not at the cost of assuming responsibility for those because that would be treating the City of Centralia differently than other cities. She said that she thinks Timberland can be very responsive to the fact that there are areas that can be cut and can be supportive of those cuts. Mrs. Haakenson said that any cost savings to Centralia would probably be beneficial to other cities. She said that she wants the Centralia library reopened as soon as possible. She stated that she was sorry that the library had to be closed and that city residents have not been able to use the library.

Mr. Parsons said that he, too, wanted to see the library reopened and wanted to do it in the spectrum of fairness to every other city that Timberland serves and every other resident that Timberland serves. Mr. Parsons said he wanted to point out that this was the first time that Timberland had ever closed a city library and as in anything, Timberland needs a contract to keep the library open. He said he felt a tremendous amount of sympathy and sorrow for the residents of Centralia. He stated that other cities had already signed contracts for maintenance agreements the same as the one that Centralia had signed for 1984. Mr. Parsons said he did not feel that the Board could negotiate a \$119,000 figure because it involved the maintenance and operation of the Centralia library. He said if Timberland paid Centralia for maintenance costs, then the Board would be honor bound to pay, at least in the same ratio, every other city library in the district. Mr. Parsons stated that in addition, Timberland does not have a contingency fund from which to spend that amount of money.

Mrs. Fourre stated that she felt the most important thing was that the residents of Centralia get library service. In reading the contract which the City of Centralia had presented, Mrs. Fourre asked what would happen once the \$119,000 was used up. Mrs. Voegel said she is not sure if the city means that the library will close when this amount of money runs out. Mrs. Fourre asked if Timberland had received the city's maintenance cost projections for 1983. Mrs. Voegel replied that she had something which Mayor Moeller gave to her last month which sets out how much the city expects to pay in maintenance costs for 1983. Mrs. Fourre stated that if the Board accepted this contract, it would mean that the Board would have to close the Centralia library when the money runs out or go without heat, lights, water and janitor service, which in effect would mean having to close the library. She asked how the people of Centralia would feel about this.

Mr. Staebler asked how the contract fee of \$99,000 was set. Mrs. Voegel explained that it is the levy amount which this year is 36.22¢ per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Mr. Staebler asked if in 1984 Timberland expects to receive \$99,000 again. Mrs. Voegel explained that Centralia has annexed in 1984 and the residents will be taxed as individuals and the amount would appear on their tax statements. She stated that Centralia had already signed a maintenance agreement for 1984, and the agreement that the Board needs the city to sign for 1983 is the same as the one the city has had in the past and already has for 1984. Mr. Staebler asked if in future years Timberland will adjust the millage to get what Timberland needs. Mrs. Voegel stated that Timberland is ruled by the 106% limitation and the levy rate has been dropping every year. Mrs. Voegel explained that the contract fee is arrived at in a uniform manner and in addition, cities are obligated to furnish and maintain the city-owned buildings.

There was some discussion on how the City of Centralia arrived at the figure of \$119,000 for the special levy. Mr. Crose stated that at the time this figure was set, the city did not know what its contract fee would be for 1983. Mrs. Voegel said that in 1982, Centralia's contract fee was \$66,000 and it cost the city about \$25,000 to maintain the building. She said that Centralia was reassessed, which was expected since this is done in a four-year cycle.

Mr. Staebler asked if Timberland owns and maintains its own libraries and how the cost of the maintenance is handled. Mrs. Voegel explained that the libraries which Timberland owns and maintains are in the unincorporated areas. She said it is the charge of the Board to provide library service to the unincorporated areas. She explained that Timberland also receives timber taxes from those unincorporated areas. Mr. Staebler stated that the rural users get a bargain because they do not have to pay maintenance costs. Mrs. Voegel stated that that may be true, but that city contract fees are only about 30% of Timberland's revenue. She said that in 1981 it cost the City of Centralia about \$91,000 for the library but Timberland's cost for running the Centralia library in 1981 was about \$285,000. She said that extra money is coming from the people who live in the unincorporated areas district-wide. Mr. Staebler said that if Timberland pays for maintenance of some libraries and not others, then the burden is unevenly distributed. Mr. Parsons agreed this might be so, but he thinks there are other things that need to be looked at-- Centralia residents may use any one of Timberland's libraries in the five counties; he is sure there are monetary advantages of having a city library in a regional library district; the Centralia library, he thinks, is the only city library building in Timberland that the city did not spend a dime for since it was paid for with a federal grant. Mr. Staebler said that he hates to see this raised as an argument as he thinks it is irrelevant. He said his argument is that the library is closed.

Mrs. Voege said that she would like to clarify a few things. For instance, the citizens of the City of Olympia passed a bond issue to build a new library. She said Centralia's library was paid for by a grant. In addition, Mrs. Voege said that in 1983, Centralia's contract fee is being paid for through a special levy that was voted on last fall. She said she thinks this is what Mr. Parsons is alluding to--the fact that Centralia has paid considerably less for library service than other cities. In addition, Mrs. Voege said the contract fee for library service in 1983 in Centralia is about 1% of Centralia's total budget. Mr. Staebler said he does not think they can argue about the City of Centralia's finances. He said this seems to be an immovable object meeting an irresistible force and there ought to be a way out of it. Mr. Staebler said that the only thing he can say in justification of the city's position is the fact that Timberland does own some buildings and maintains them from tax revenues and in cities that own libraries and provide the building and maintenance that is an extra cost that the people of the city bear over and above the contract fee. He said he understands Timberland's position in that other city libraries pay their own maintenance costs and contract fees and that helping Centralia with its maintenance costs would set a precedent. Mr. Staebler said that he would think that Timberland would be more fearful of setting the precedent of closing the library.

Mr. Fuller stated that Timberland did not close the library but rather the City of Centralia closed the library by not signing the contract. He said that Timberland has no right to be in that building without a contract and he thinks it is time that this be pointed out. Mr. Fuller said that he thinks the City Commissioners have taken advantage of this and made it seem as though Timberland has locked the doors on them. He said it is a matter of semantics as to who has actually closed the library. Mr. Fuller said that Timberland needs a contract. He said he feels strongly about the library in Centralia and he also wants to see the library reopen and that is why this special meeting has been called.

Mrs. Toothaker asked if she is correct in understanding that the Centralia Commissioners are saying that they want Timberland to pay maintenance costs for the areas occupied by the bookmobile and other such non-city services. Mrs. Voege responded that at the November Board meeting, Mayor Moeller appeared and asked for \$25,000 for maintenance of the library and at that time he mentioned that Centralia was the center for the unincorporated area and for bookmobile service. In December, she said Mayor Moeller came back and asked for \$6,000 and at that time, as she recalls, he did not tie it in with the bookmobile. Mrs. Voege said that it is interesting that Mrs. Toothaker has mentioned this because bookmobile service is being removed from the Centralia library. Mrs. Toothaker said that at the Commissioners' meetings, the subject came up that the city was paying maintenance costs for areas that were not solely city-related services. She said that she thinks this is one point that needs to be clarified. Mrs. Osterby stated that she thinks the fact sheet about the bookmobile which was prepared by Mrs. Morrison and presented at a meeting of the Commissioners showed fairly conclusively that county services can be nothing but a boon for Centralia. She said that people who come from the county use other services of the city. Mrs. Osterby recalled a survey made by the Friends of the Library and they were staggered by the number of non-residents using the library. She said it is about 50/50. One of the questions asked was if the people were there solely to use the library and in most cases, the people said they had other business in Centralia and because the library was there it encouraged them to come into town. Mrs. Voege reviewed some of the benefits set out on the bookmobile fact sheet--the city residents have many more materials; the larger collection attracts non-residents to Centralia; about one-half of the time allocated to bookmobile staff is actually used working in the library; 2 bookmobile staff members reside in

Centralia and pay taxes locally; the bookmobile is serviced at Oakes and gasoline is purchased from LeDucs, both local businesses; the Centralia payroll (which includes bookmobile) totaled \$166,196.64 in 1981 for salaries only and most of this remains in the city and is processed through local banks; other services are provided in the Centralia building because the bookmobile is housed there (film service, reference service, children's services, outreach services); and Timberland pays for all telephone services from the building which in 1981 totaled \$4,347.56, and provides a Xerox copy machine and maintains Centralia-owned equipment such as typewriters, microfiche readers, microfilm reader, microfilm reader printer, electronic film cleaning machine, 16mm projector. However, Mrs. Voegel stated, the bookmobile is being removed from the Centralia building.

Mr. Parsons stated that Timberland's reason for being is to provide library service to county residents of the five counties. Indeed, he said that Timberland does maintain some libraries. For instance, he said that there are no cities which contract for library service in Mason County and Timberland has two libraries in unincorporated Mason County. Mr. Parsons said the Friends of the North Mason Library bought the land and deeded it to Timberland. He said that Timberland inherited a building in Packwood from the Coombs estate. Timberland also provides libraries in the unincorporated areas of Amanda Park and North Beach, among others, where there is a long distance to a contracting city library, and he can see why Timberland should maintain these buildings.

Mr. Staebler stated that the citizens of Centralia voted \$119,000 in good faith and those citizens are "caught in the squeeze." Board members agreed and stated that that is the reason why the Board is meeting tonight in special session. Mr. Godsey stated that he thinks it has been well established that the City of Centralia is being very rigid in this matter. He said he lives outside the City of Centralia and uses the Centralia library. He asked what has been done by the Board to get service to people like him. Mrs. Voegel stated that he can go to any Timberland library. Mr. Godsey said he is aware of that but the Centralia library is close to him and he has supported and used it for many years. He said he thinks both parties are at fault for failing to compromise and that both groups have taken such rigid stances that someone must back off from where they are.

Mrs. Fourre said that the Board has spent a lot of time discussing this and what the Board can possibly do. She said she feels strongly that the library should be open, but she also feels that the Board has a charge to the people in the unincorporated area of Lewis County. She said that the Board cannot throw their money around to Centralia only. She said that people outside the city limits of Centralia are not being denied service because they can go to Chehalis.

Mrs. Toothaker said she thinks there is a basic misunderstanding between the Board and the City Commissioners. She asked for what area is this maintenance fee intended. She said if the Board takes out the bookmobile service, then the Board is saying to her and the Commissioners that this is the bone of contention. She said the Commissioners will interpret this as saying that if the Board takes out the bookmobile service, then the Commissioners do not have a right to ask for maintenance costs. Mrs. Voegel said this is not the case as the Commissioners have not heard from the Board yet.

Mrs. Haakenson stated that due to the fact that Timberland did not have a signed contract from Centralia, Timberland had been forced to suspend service from the Centralia library. She said that the Board wants to reopen the library as soon as possible.

83-1 JEAN HAAKENSON MOVED TO AMEND THE CONTRACT SUBMITTED BY THE CITY OF CENTRALIA AS FOLLOWS:

"THIS AGREEMENT made and entered into by the Board of Library Trustees of Timberland Regional Library District of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Thurston counties, hereinafter referred to as the "Board", and the City of Centralia, hereinafter referred to as the "City",

"W I T N E S S E T H:

"The Board agrees, according to the provisions of R.C.W. 27.12.180, that it shall render full and complete rural library district service to the City; and in pursuance thereof, the residents of said City are hereby entitled to the same library privileges as are provided for the residents of said Timberland Regional Library District of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Thurston counties under R.C.W. 27.12.090 - 27.12.170.

"In consideration of the foregoing agreement on the part of said Board, the said City hereby agrees to pay on a quarterly basis into the Timberland Regional Library District Fund of the Thurston County Treasurer the sum of money equal to the millage levied for rural library purposes, multiplied by the assessed valuation of property within the corporate limits of said City, PROVIDED, HOWEVER, if this agreement is accepted by the City of Centralia on or before January 19, 1983, then in consideration of the fact that such library services were not provided for a certain number of days, the contract payment set forth in this paragraph shall be proportionately reduced by the number of days that such library services were not provided.

"It is agreed that the said City shall provide suitable quarters for the library, and shall provide satisfactory heat, light, water, janitor service and grounds maintenance without cost to the Board.

"This agreement shall become effective when duly executed by the Board and the City and, in addition, the Board has reopened the Centralia Library and commenced providing the said library services at that location.

"This agreement may be modified only by written agreement of the parties hereto. It shall terminate at the end of 1983.

"IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said Board and the said City have caused these presents to be duly executed by their respective officers on the day and year set forth below."

LARRY PARSONS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mrs. Fourre asked what this would accomplish. Mrs. Haakenson stated that this tells the City of Centralia that the Board wants to reopen the library as soon as possible and this would happen as soon as the city accepts this contract. She said it also shows that since Timberland has not been able to give service to the city residents during the time the library has been closed, that the Board is aware of this and is willing to prorate the city's contract fee for those days that Timberland was not able to give service. She said that she thinks this contract shows that Timberland has acted in good faith by reducing the contract fee for services not performed. Mrs. Fourre asked how much this would amount to. Mr. Crose stated it would amount to about \$4,000. Mrs. Haakenson said that she feels strongly that with this cost savings, plus the cost savings the Commissioners have already initiated and with the utmost effort on the part of TRL employees,

that this will help the City of Centralia balance its budget. Mr. Parsons suggested that Mrs. Voegel or Mrs. Morrison suggest to the city that perhaps the security system could be turned off, since Timberland does insure its own materials. He said that perhaps Mrs. Osterby can think of other ways to cut costs.

Mrs. Fourre asked that since Timberland will be taking the bookmobile service out of Centralia, will Timberland be removing any other services from the building. Mrs. Morrison said she suspects that what was troubling the City Commissioners the most was the bookmobile service. She said this service has actually been in this building since 1969 and because of it, Timberland enlarged the book collection and added staff. She said she would hate to see Timberland take all of those other services out and make it look as if Timberland was penalizing the city. Mrs. Morrison said she would have to discuss this with Mrs. Stough and Mrs. Osterby. Mrs. Fourre asked if this will be more costly for Timberland. Mrs. Morrison stated that it would. Mr. Parsons stated that he got the impression from Mayor Moeller that the city would like the space that the bookmobile is occupying. Mrs. Toothaker said that when Mayor Moeller was asked specifically what he would use this space for, she said Mayor Moeller could not think of anything. Mr. Poillio stated that he feels Timberland should give Centralia citizens pretty much the same service as they have had in the past. Mrs. Fourre said the Board should be aware that they are charging all the rest of the district for this. Mrs. Voegel stated that as in the past, this would be an administrative decision. Mrs. Stough stated that removing the bookmobile will not necessarily reduce the service. She said Timberland is trying to pull out a bone of contention which Timberland knows does not affect the maintenance of the library, but it has been brought up as a bone of contention and Timberland can take it out and there will be no more arguments about it. She said the other services of the library need not be touched.

Mr. Staebler said that he pays taxes as a rural resident of Lewis County. He asked if the county receives exactly the same bookmobile service after moving the bookmobile to the Service Center, will Timberland's costs be increased and will it be run more efficiently from Olympia? He asked who is biting off whose nose to spite whose face. Mr. Staebler said that the City Commissioners have obviously made a "boner" to use the bookmobile as a pressure point to get money out of Timberland. He asked if Timberland is now going to penalize him as a rural taxpayer. Mrs. Toothaker said she agrees with Mr. Staebler.

Mr. Parsons said that Timberland is not trying to be punitive and that he sincerely believes that the city does not want the bookmobile in the Centralia building. He said if the bookmobile really bothers the Commissioners that much, then Timberland will remove it. Mr. Parsons suggested that perhaps Mrs. Morrison can discuss this with Mayor Moeller and if indeed this is not a bone of contention, then possibly Timberland can leave the bookmobile there. Mrs. Fourre said that Mayor Moeller has made the bookmobile a point at several meetings. Mrs. Haakenson said that she thinks Mrs. Morrison should discuss this with Mayor Moeller. Mr. Craig said that he is not convinced that pulling out the bookmobile will solve any problems. He said that originally the Commissioners said that if the special levy passed, the city would come up with money for maintenance of the building which the city fathers now say they won't do. Mr. Polillo said that there has to be some agreement between the two parties; otherwise the library will be closed down. He said that basically that is what the Board is trying to do: to reach an agreement.

Mr. Parsons strongly urged that the Board support this motion. He said he thinks that the residents of Centralia have been caught in a political play and he thinks that this is a clear statement by the Board to the City Commissioners that the

library was closed, regardless of which faction is responsible, and the Board is willing to compensate the city for this closure.

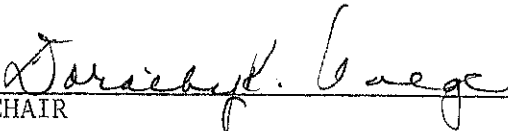
Mr. Craig stated that he would hate to see the bookmobile taken out of the Centralia building. He suggested that something be added to the contract that if this would alleviate any problems, Timberland would be willing to remove the bookmobile and the Commissioners can then decide at that point if it is a bone of contention with them. Mrs. Voegel thanked him for the suggestion but said that Timberland is trying to keep the contract as simple as possible. She suggested that city residents might mention to the Commissioners that parking the bookmobile at the library does not cost anything. Mr. Craig said he thinks it would be best if the city agrees to the Board's terms before they actually decide to pull the bookmobile out. Mrs. Voegel said this is a good point.

Mr. Parsons said previously that he feels sorry for the residents of Centralia. He said he feels equally sorry for the staff at Centralia. He said they are working for a living and they are concerned for their jobs.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m. Mrs. Voegel thanked everyone for coming and for their remarks.

  
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SECRETARY

  
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CHAIR