

TIMBERLAND REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Service Center, 415 Airdustrial Way SW, Olympia, WA 98501

January 22, 1997

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AGENDA ITEM

NO.

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January 22, 1997

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Janelle Williams, President; Art Blauvelt; Jean Davies; Carolyn Dobbs; Bill Lawrence; Amory Peck

STAFF PRESENT: Liane Bascou; Jinny Burns; Jim Heitzman; Cheryl Heywood; Lorrie Kovell; Thelma Kruse; Tim Mallory; Jim Morgan; Sally Nash; Joanne Riley; Tina Roose; Mary Strohl; Barbara Winfree

GUESTS PRESENT: Kenneth Bragg; Dean Hooper; Ruth Jacobson

The board met in Executive Session 6:20-7:02 p.m. pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(g) for the purpose of setting the 1997 salary of the Library Director. President Williams called the regular meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM

NO.

- 1 Introductions were made.
- 2 Correspondence and Public Comments

A. Public Comments

Mr. Bragg expressed appreciation for the letter he received from Ms. Kruse answering some of the questions he raised. He has been actively following the plans for the new Olympia library by attending Olympia City Council meetings. He distributed copies of the comments he has made to the council.

Ms. Jacobson said she and other Yelm Library Friends have been involved for the past several years in raising money for a new library. She referred to her December 18, 1996 letter to Helen Timm, previous President of the TRL Board, which included discussion points and questions. She said she has not yet received a response to this letter. In their research, the Friends have found no laws which preclude the TRL Board from using timber revenues for incorporated communities. They had been under the impression that timber revenues could only legally be used for buildings in unincorporated areas. The Yelm Friends request that the TRL Board give priority consideration to the need for a larger library in Yelm and make a budget commitment to Yelm in 1997 or at the latest in 1998, which would be supplemented with the funds the Friends have already raised. The Friends are concerned that any further delays will cause them to lose grants and the land which has been donated. Ms. Jacobson referred to one of the discussion points raised in her letter "Funding of non-incorporated communities and non-funding of incorporated cities is an inequitable distribution of tax money." She suggested this point needs to be looked at seriously. Mr. Hooper added that he hopes the board will consider changing its policy of only funding libraries in unincorporated communities. The City of Yelm has indicated it cannot help with a bond issue or community block grant. Some of the foundations the Friends have approached will consider grants when more money has been raised. Mr. Hooper said the response he has heard that if the TRL Board helps Yelm it will have to help the rest of the cities is not logical. Yelm is in a crisis situation. He and Ms. Jacobson urge that a task force be formed to look at the Yelm situation to determine where a new Yelm library will fit into TRL's priorities.

2 B. Board Comments

Ms. Williams provided her January 22, 1997 response to Ms. Jacobson's letter. Mr. Lawrence stated that Timberland is a rural library district and it is true that TRL does focus on the rural area of the district. Perhaps this has been construed to mean that the board has legal restrictions, whereas it is more of a moral obligation. He said the board has made loans to cities which the cities are required to pay back. Ms. Dobbs added that timber revenues are also used for the automated circulation system which is provided in Yelm and other cities in Timberland. Mr. Blauvelt said he appreciates all the work the Yelm Friends have done to raise funds. He disagrees that Yelm has a unique crisis situation because there are other cities in the district which perceive themselves to be in the same crisis situation (for example, Oakville, which shares space with the city council and the court, has been offered land for a new library). He said there is a law which allows cities to go outside their city boundaries for a bond issue to build a new library. This law was not yet in effect when the residents of the City of Elma taxed themselves to build their new library. Residents in the City of Aberdeen turned down a bond issue for a new library. Ms. Dobbs said she would not be interested in a task force whose primary function would be to review the board's policy on use of timber revenue. At a meeting last night regarding the Lacey library, there was a breakthrough where the group was able to step back and look at the space problem in a larger context and come up with some strategies that she thinks may lead to a better and more creative solution in the long term. She would agree to a task force which would continue the creative work which has already begun in Yelm.

In response to Mr. Bragg's question regarding use of timber revenues, Mr. Morgan said construction costs come entirely from timber revenues. Almost all of the timber revenues come from forest lands in the unincorporated areas. Some timber revenues are placed in the operating budget which funds the operations of the entire district so in that respect, timber revenue is helping libraries in the incorporated areas as well. The board could choose to use property tax revenue for construction, but that could create a situation where we would end up with a new library we could not afford to operate. Ms. Dobbs provided some history of why the board established its timber revenue policy. At one time the district mixed the timber revenues in with other revenues and used it for the operating budget. The district was using interest bearing warrants to pay salaries the first few months of the year. There was a crisis in the district where the board had to make large cutbacks including laying off staff. The board decided they could no longer operate the district the same way because timber revenue was too unpredictable. The board decided that property taxes would be the basis of the district's operations and timber revenues would be used predominantly for one time only expenses. The board has maintained this principle.

Mr. Blauvelt said he supports a task force, but suggests a task force which would benefit all of the small communities in the district which are having similar problems as Yelm. Mr. Lawrence asked what kind of support the City of Yelm is offering. Mr. Hooper responded the city has pledged \$14,000 a year for maintenance and utilities, and help with the permits. An architect will reduce his fee if we adapt an existing design. Mr. Lawrence suggested that it be clarified with the city that a building built inside the city limits will be owned by the City of Yelm.

C. Correspondence

Refer to the Agenda Item 2B regarding the 12/18/96 letter from Ruth Jacobson.

D. Certificates of Appreciation

Ms. Williams presented Certificates of Appreciation for Robert Venemon, Chehalis, and Pat Owen and Patricia Davidson of Winlock, who have completed terms on their respective local library boards.

3 Approval of Minutes

- 97-01 ART BLAUVELT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TRL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF DECEMBER 18, 1996, AS DISTRIBUTED; AMORY PECK SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4 Unfinished Business

A. 1996 Tax Levy for 1997 Collection

Timberland's assessed valuation for 1997 taxes is \$18,781,826,871. In comparison, the 1996 assessed valuation was \$17,333,450,794. The increase in Timberland's assessed valuation for 1997 over 1996 is 8.4%. TRL's 1996 levy rate for 1997 collection will be 46.76 cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation.

- 97-02 BILL LAWRENCE MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 97-01 SETTING THE 1996 UNIFORM PROPERTY TAX LEVY RATE AND LEVY AMOUNT FOR COLLECTION IN 1997; CAROLYN DOBBS SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Non-Resident Borrower Fee for 1997

All residents of the unincorporated areas of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, and Thurston Counties pay a uniform tax to support the provision of library services. Through annexation or contracts, the residents of most of the cities within this five-county area pay the same amount for TRL services. The annual non-resident fee for 1996 has been \$49. Payment of this fee enables all family members in the same household to borrow materials from Timberland. The non-resident fee is calculated based upon the total property taxes and contract fees levied in the district divided by the number of households. The Board made a motion at its December 1996 annual meeting that the amount of the non-resident borrower fee for 1997 be set at the same meeting as the levy rate is set for 1997 upon recommendation of the library director.

- 97-03 AMORY PECK MOVED TO ESTABLISH THE NON-RESIDENT BORROWER FEE FOR 1997, BASED ON THE USUAL FORMULA, AT \$52 PER YEAR EFFECTIVE JANUARY 23, 1997, AND TO CONTINUE TO AUTHORIZE NON-RESIDENTS THE OPTION OF PAYING FOR A NON-RESIDENT BORROWER CARD WHICH IS GOOD FOR SIX MONTHS FOR HALF THE ANNUAL FEE; BILL LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5 New Business

A. 1997 Salary for Library Director

The TRL Board met in Executive Session prior to this meeting to discuss the 1997 Director's salary.

- 97-04 ART BLAUVELT MOVED TO GRANT, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 1997, AN ANNUAL SALARY OF \$86,000 FOR THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR, PLUS THE PAYMENT BY THE EMPLOYER OF THE PREMIUM AMOUNT FOR THE EMPLOYEE'S HEALTH AND HOSPITALIZATION TO A MAXIMUM OF \$195.36, AND THE PREMIUM AMOUNTS FOR DENTAL, VISION, LIFE INSURANCE, AND LONG TERM DISABILITY, PLUS A CONTINUATION OF EXISTING BENEFITS; BILL LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- 5A Mr. Blauvelt requested further discussion in Executive Session in regard to personal transportation reimbursement to the Director for district related business and that this matter be placed on next month's agenda.

6 Reports

A. Long Range Plan - 1997 Implementation Plan

Ms. Heywood introduced the 1997 Implementation Plan. This year's plan is color coded. Staff feel it is a better organized document and will better enable staff to prioritize their work and report on their progress. The beginning of the document includes the 1997 emphasis (tasks that staff intend to complete in 1997) followed by the 1997 core services (includes tasks we wish to continue). The next section includes the Goals and Objectives from the Long Range Plan followed by the preliminary plan for 1998-2000 which includes tasks staff feel we will not be able to address this year. Progress reports will be on the board's May and September agendas. Mr. Blauvelt inquired about the progress on development of a uniform meeting room policy. Ms. Kruse said a committee has been working on the policy and she anticipates the draft will be presented to the board at its February meeting. It has been a difficult process to develop a policy which covers all situations. Ms. Davies, Ms. Peck and Mr. Blauvelt volunteered to work on a committee to review the draft.

B. "Poets in Person" Grant

Lorrie Kovell, Tumwater Reference Librarian, thanked the board for giving staff the opportunity to apply for the "Poets in Person" grant in such a short period of time. Staff are excited that TRL was awarded the grant. She and Joanne Riley, Aberdeen Children's Librarian, are looking forward to going to San Francisco for the training on how to administer the grant. Ms. Riley, a published poet, is excited about the poets who will be featured in this program and pleased to be able to act as the local humanities scholar. She expressed appreciation to the board and administration for recognizing individual staff's contributions and promoting the individual. The grant includes expenses for training, audiocassettes for the 14-part series, support materials, \$750 to pay honoraria for local scholars, and \$300 to purchase modern poetry for the library's collection. TRL already has a strong modern poetry collection which will be highlighted in this program. Ms. Riley said one way to learn about poetry is to write poetry and she hopes to include this in the programs. The first program will be at the Tumwater library and will target youth. Tumwater library held a poetry contest last year which was very successful and produced some outstanding work. Programs will be held in each of the other four counties as well.

C. Director - Thelma Kruse

Payroll and payroll related vouchers for December 1996 amounted to \$550,459.38.

- 97-05 ART BLAUVELT MOVED TO APPROVE VOUCHERS NO. 48646 THROUGH NO. 48906 FOR JANUARY 1997 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$670,389.92; JEAN DAVIES SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mr. Morgan stated the vouchers are much larger than normal primarily due to the large amount of books and materials purchased.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

One of the actions in the Legislature which is of particular interest to libraries are bills to limit property tax values. There is currently a bill in the House and Senate which would limit growth

6C to 106% or inflation and limit new construction to 50%. This would have quite an effect on library budgets since libraries rely so heavily on property taxes. Ms. Kruse and Mr. Morgan have been keeping in touch with legislators and attending hearings. Mr. Bragg commented that the three major cities in Thurston County have traditionally asked for 106% even though they could have taken less. He said because local government won't exercise that kind of discipline, it is now in the hands of the legislature. If the legislature doesn't act, it then becomes an initiative. It has happened in California and Oregon and he hopes that we will exercise discipline with the money available. The December 1996 Revenues and Expenditures report was presented. Expenditures were under budget and revenues were over budget. Timber revenues continue to be strong although 1996 proceeds were less than 1995. Last night TRL Board and staff met with Lacey city officials and library board members to discuss a proposed addition to the library and who will pay for it. As Ms. Dobbs stated earlier, the discussion began to center on looking for other solutions to the space problem. A space planner will be hired to look at making the operation of the library more efficient. City of Hoquiam officials are interested in increasing the hours of opening at the library and possibly paying for the additional expense. TRL staff figured out an hourly cost which turned out to be higher than city officials anticipated. In the meantime, we are looking at possibly adjusting the current hours of opening. Mr. Lawrence commented that a city paying for additional hours of opening seems to be a board policy decision. Ms. Kruse agreed that it would have to be a very clear arrangement and would have to be on a contract basis. It appears that the Aberdeen Sunday hours are successful. The Aberdeen Friends are planning a celebration of Sunday hours on February 2, 1-3 p.m. Building Projects: The Aberdeen City Council approved hiring an architect to do schematic design and cost estimates for a number of projects in the library to meet ADA requirements, including an elevator. This work should not conflict with the implementation of the Microsoft grant for placement of equipment. The contractor expects to complete the work on the Hoodspport library the first week in February. The books will be moved February 28 and the library should be open for business the following week. Tentative plans are to have groundbreaking for the North Mason library and the Hoodspport open house on March 22. Architects are in the process of getting through the Mason County permit process for the North Mason library. As soon as this process is completed, the project will be put out for bid. There will be a meeting of the Olympia City Council on February 28 which several TRL Board members plan to attend, at which the council will discuss the new Olympia library project. City officials are considering hiring a fundraiser and may be asking TRL to help fund the cost. Ms. Kruse will be checking with TRL's attorney on whether TRL can use funds for this purpose. Ms. Strohl said the Yelm Friends want to continue their fundraising efforts and keep the need for a new library visible before the community. There will be a breakfast organizational meeting among community leaders at which they will discuss how to proceed. Ms. Jacobson said E. J. Curry of the Yelm board has agreed to organize the first meeting of this "action group." Mr. Lawrence questioned the difference between this group and the task force referred to in the earlier discussion about Yelm. Ms. Jacobson said the task force would consist of TRL board, staff, Yelm Friends and city officials to resolve the need for a new library in Yelm. The action group will focus on raising money for a new library. Ms. Dobbs said her intention in the earlier discussion was to have one group.

97-06

CAROLYN DOBBS MOVED TO RECOMMEND THAT THE TRL DISTRICT PARTICIPATE IN A BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE TASK FORCE THAT WILL CONTINUE STUDYING STRATEGIES TO FINANCE A NEW LIBRARY IN YELM; BILL LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION.

Ms. Dobbs envisions this task force will have Yelm Friends, Board, and city officials, as well as other community members and she assumes that TRL board and staff will be invited to participate to continue to figure out ways to finance a new library in Yelm. Ms. Jacobson said it is important to clarify that the action group is not something the Friends are organizing but rather the idea originated with the Yelm board. Mr. Blauvelt expressed concern with the narrow focus of looking

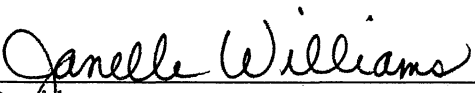
6C at only Yelm's problem because his interest in a task force is to look at the needs of all the smaller communities in the district trying to fund new libraries. Mr. Lawrence said he does not agree with two groups working on the Yelm situation. Ms. Jacobson said the Friends' proposal is to form a task force to work on reviewing the board's policy and budget and come up with a way to fund a new library in Yelm. Ms. Davies responded that the TRL Board governs the entire district and they have to look at the whole district when they make decisions. Ms. Dobbs said she is thinking of modeling the Yelm committee after the Olympia library advisory committee which has TRL Board and staff representation. Mr. Hooper said Yelm needs to know where they are in line in the priority of new libraries. Ms. Davies said there is no line. The TRL Board has already committed \$11.00 a square foot to Yelm; as far as building a new library in Yelm with timber revenues, Yelm is not in line. If TRL is to consider changing its policy, it would have to be broad based that would not focus on only one library in the system. She thinks the motion made by Ms. Dobbs is a good one for a group to focus on Yelm and its situation. She stressed that the Yelm Friends' request that the TRL Board change its policy is a much different issue and needs to be addressed in a different way. Mr. Blauvelt added that the \$11.00 a square foot is a compromise. If this equitable distribution is changed and more money is given to a library in one county than in another, he thinks the board members would be much more politicized. Mr. Hooper said TRL fully funds libraries in the unincorporated areas. Mr. Blauvelt responded that TRL owns those libraries and they are assets of the district. If TRL does not provide these libraries in the unincorporated areas, the needs of the people in those areas would not be met. Ms. Dobbs and Mr. Lawrence withdrew their previous motion and Ms. Dobbs made the following motion:

97-07 CAROLYN DOBBS MOVED THAT TIMBERLAND REGIONAL LIBRARY PARTICIPATE, IF INVITED, IN A BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE TASK FORCE WHICH CONTINUES TO STUDY STRATEGIES TO FINANCE A NEW LIBRARY IN YELM; BILL LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

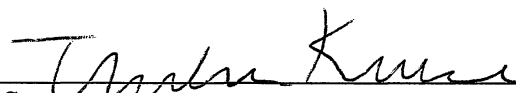
Mr. Blauvelt requested that staff devote time to figuring out what TRL can do to coordinate and share ideas for financing strategies for libraries in small rural communities. He requested this matter be on the board's February agenda under the Director's report. Ms. Peck announced that the Workshop in Library Leadership is scheduled September 24 and 25, followed by the National Rural Libraries Conference September 26 and 27, which may prove to be timely in relation to this discussion.

97-08 BILL LAWRENCE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION; ART BLAUVELT SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The regular meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m. The board met in Executive Session 9:48-10:07 p.m. to continue its discussion of the Library Director's salary.



President



Secretary