

TIMBERLAND REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Chehalis City Hall, 80 NE Cascade Ave., Chehalis, WA 98532

March 24, 1999

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MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Peggy Meyer, President; Art Blauvelt; Jean Davies; Bill Lawrence; Doug Mah; Glen Nutter; Janelle Williams

STAFF PRESENT: Liane Bascou; Sharon Brunk; Jinny Burns; Gwen Culp; Corene Jones-Litteer; Thelma Kruse; Doug Ross; Carol Saynisch; Kitty Schiltz; Sandra Sebbas; Mary Thornton; Edmunda Waller; Mike Wessells; Harriet Whisler

GUEST PRESENT: Ken Bragg; Sheila Griffith; Don Hewitt; Mel Johnson; D. Eric Jones; Pat Maninfior; Pam McEachern; Mary M. Myhre-Pancake; Nina Perozzo; Michael Petra; Mike Pettit; Paul Telford; Bruce Trumbles; Mary Varain; Doris Walker; Donna Wisner

President Meyer 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

Ms. Meyer announced that there will be a special meeting of the TRL Board on April 20, 6:00 p.m., at the Service Center, regarding Internet services. Comments regarding Internet were as follows:

Sheila Griffith: Anyone has the right to look at pornography on the Internet in the privacy of their own homes and at their own expense instead of using the public library's facilities. A community has the right and responsibility to set standards of decency. Adults have every right to view pornography, but sex is a private act. They do not have the right to expose her or her child to their sexual interests. Ms. Griffith related her experiences at the Olympia Library last week. Several men were congregated in front of the library harassing patrons coming into the library. She suspects that these men would also enjoy shocking patrons inside the library by blatantly bringing up the porno sites and waiting to see who might look over. Even if it is not their intent to shock others, to anyone, and especially a child, who does catch a glimpse of pornography on the library computers, it is just as violent and frightening an act as having a man expose himself. She asked how safe we are when we let men arouse themselves in the public library. It adds insult to injury when she realizes that her tax dollars are being used for this purpose.

Paul Telford: He is glad the Board has scheduled a special meeting to address this item specifically. We as a society have decided to regulate pornography. Unfortunately, libraries, and especially Timberland, have a policy of a porn shop. He doesn't think there is any excuse for the TRL Board to ignore this issue. He did some searching on the Internet last week and by keying in certain words, he received several hundred to 3,000 sites. When one dials into one of these, you

- 2A seem to get into a loop and cannot get back out unless you exit the server entirely. Most have revealing samples and there are descriptions of what is offered. Although he is no prude, there is a lot more available than he imagined. He referred to the Tacoma Public Library policy which states "The library's acquisition of Internet materials to be made available to library patrons does not include graphic materials depicting full nudity and sexual acts which are portrayed obviously and exclusively for sensational or pornographic purposes." This should be a start for Timberland. We need to get this issue under control and be serious about it. Now is the time to take some action.

Mike Pettit: He was in law enforcement for six years while in the Army working in vice and prostitution. People are talking about pornography on the net, but there are other things on the net, one of which is snuff, which is the torture and killing of people. When we provide access for people to come into the library, punch in their credit card number, access a site, we are perpetuating that kind of activity. He does not want our tax dollars used for this. Pornography is bad enough, but snuff is worse. Once you open that window to the world within the compounds of the library, you let in all of the filth and trash available into it. He thinks there are two types of people we need to look out for in our library system. One is our children who are trying to get a better education and better themselves. We also have our employees of the library system who should not be exposed to this. He referred to an incident where a man was dismissed because of a magazine he brought to work. Yet, TRL is requiring its employees on a daily basis to put up with what people are able to access on Internet. Think about your customers and the people who pay your bills, but also think of your employees.

An unidentified speaker: We have been presented with this problem time after time. It is an individual problem and will continue to be an individual problem. She doesn't think the Board should be the ones who say what is right or wrong or when and how. If we are going to stop pornography on the Internet, we will have to stop talking about parts of our bodies. Where do we stop? We have never been able to work it out as a society and she does not want to start with the library saying we can't. The library is here to say we can, whatever it is. We need to have accessibility. If we don't know, we can get in trouble. We need to tell people this is out there and give them a chance to avoid it. Don't just say we have to do something because that is not the solution.

Don Hewitt: He understands what the previous speaker is saying, and perhaps there is no way of drawing the line. But there are pictures he could show her which he thinks she would consider unacceptable for our youth. He thinks there are ways to define what is hard core porn and what are medical types of things. He has read the TRL Board's Internet policy and he finds it unconscionable to have no restrictions. He believes there are items which can be identified and should not be restricted. If unrestricted, he suggested getting rid of the Internet, although he knows that is not acceptable either. He cannot accept the philosophy that we have no ability to define what is hard core porn and what is acceptable.

An unidentified speaker: He knows the library is concerned about censorship, the First Amendment, and freedom of information. The Internet is a fantastic tool, which he and his family use. He can select the schools his children attend, what they watch on TV, and which movies they see, but he is concerned with what his children can access on the Internet. In a way the library already does censor because it does not purchase certain magazines.

Unidentified speaker: Communities will not want to support their library if there is not some action taken to help people protect their children. She is afraid it will backfire if we do not take

- 2A some sort of stand and set standards. It does not look good for the library to say it does not have any policy against making this type of information available.

Unidentified speaker: The library is a public facility. We do not drop our kids off at other public facilities and let them loose. We should all put on our public manners and take on our public responsibilities. We should watch our children and ourselves. Policy is not the law. There is a vast difference.

B. Board Comments

Mr. Blauvelt read an excerpt from a book which chronicles network systems. "A worldwide communication network through cables spanned continents and oceans, revolutionized business practices, gave rise to new forms of crime, inundating its users with a deluge of information. Romances bloomed over the wires. Secret codes were devised. The benefit of the network was relentlessly hyped by its advocates and dismissed by the skeptics. Governments and regulators tried and failed to control the new medium. Attitudes toward everything from news gatherings to diplomacy had to be completely rethought. Meanwhile out on the wires a technological subculture with its own customs and vocabulary was establishing itself." This is talking about the telegraph. We have been struggling with the difficulties of communication devices on which information can be transported from one community to another for more than 150 years. All kinds of communication mediums have caused all kinds of difficulties as they have come online and the Internet is one of those which has raised difficulties. He is certain this Board will work its way through the difficulties as we learn to adapt to this medium.

Mr. Mah referred to a statement made about this Board ignoring this issue. He thinks that is an exaggeration and that Internet has always been of great interest to this Board. He is pleased this dialogue is occurring and will continue to occur because it gives us an opportunity as parents to educate ourselves and our children about the Internet, and helps us assess the library's services to its patrons. If this kind of dialogue results in people becoming more aware of the issues, he considers it a positive step.

Mr. Lawrence raised concern with the comment about people hanging out in front of the library. He thinks this is an unfair generalization and makes a judgment about people that may or may not be correct. If patrons are being harassed in front of the library, it is a different issue and should be dealt with in another manner. Ms. Kruse said that kind of behavior is not tolerated. TRL has a disruptive patron policy and staff will even call in the police if necessary. Mr. Wessells explained further that TRL staff are trained to intervene if one person is disrupting the use of the library by another person. This includes soliciting people to look at something, approaching people who do not wish to be approached, loud noises and any other disruptive behavior which keeps people from using the library. Our concern is people should not be interfering with other people's use of the library regardless of what is on the screen. It has nothing to do with what they are looking at. Every person has the right to use the library unimpeded by others.

Mr. Blauvelt encourages people to attend the April 20 meeting who want to speak on both sides of this issue. There is a significant amount of people who do not want to be told what they can look at. What is pornography to one person is not pornography to another. Even the Supreme Court cannot define pornography.

2 A. Public Comments

Mr. Bragg spoke about library facilities in the five TRL counties for both rural and city residents. He referred to the defeated Olympia Library bond issues. He said that after 14 months of planning, the Services and Facilities Community Advisory Committee has not been allowed to talk about square foot space standards or how to finance library buildings. He has determined that as of 1997 there is a shortage of 106,000 square feet of library space in the rural areas and 42,600 square feet surplus in the cities. By 2020 there will be a need for 184,000 square feet of additional space to take care of the present shortage and to provide a 50% increase in population. He said TRL is now planning to meet these space needs but has not acknowledged more than a token responsibility for paying for library space in cities even though city residents pay the same as rural residents for library buildings. He referred to a newspaper feature article about Belfair in which some residents said change may lead to incorporation. If Belfair had incorporated two years ago, it would not have its new library. He considers TRL's present policy unfair wherein TRL contributes to the cost of building libraries in cities through its partnership program but pays the full cost for libraries in the unincorporated areas. TRL has never borrowed to finance buildings yet it has authority to borrow up to 6 year bond terms. HB2500 was introduced to allow libraries to increase their bonding authority from 6 years to 20 years. TRL chose not to endorse this bill because of a fear that the legislature would tack on other items and that TRL's current planning effort should be completed first as if the 184,000 square foot shortage of space would evaporate. He talked to legislative staff to which this bill was referred. Comments he received are that library districts should not have more authority until their governing bodies are elected, trustees won't listen when we complain about pornography on the Internet, and the salary of the director is too high. He was surprised to hear this kind of emotional response. HB2500 was endorsed by the Olympia/Thurston Chamber of Commerce, the Thurston County Taxpayers Association, and the McCleary City Council. The next step is to form a committee to go to City Councils and Boards of County Commissioners in the five counties and talk about the need to urge TRL to adopt a policy to provide library space for every citizen in the district. TRL does not need to wait until the services and facilities planning is done. In fact, not having this policy in place interferes with setting priorities and will make it difficult to get city support for any plan once citizens are aware of how unfair city residents are being treated.

B. Board Comments

Ms. Davies reported on the successful mystery night held recently at the Raymond Library. The staff did a good job and there was good attendance.

C. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

3 Approval of Minutes

99-11

ART BLAUVELT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TRL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF FEBRUARY 24, 1999, AS DISTRIBUTED; BILL LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. ART BLAUVELT, BILL LAWRENCE, DOUG MAH, JEAN DAVIES, JANELLE WILLIAMS AND PEGGY MEYER VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; GLEN NUTTER ABSTAINED BECAUSE HE WAS NOT PRESENT AT THE FEBRUARY 24, 1999 MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.

4 Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

5 New Business

A. Personal Services Contract for Legal Services

The contract with Craig W. Hanson for Personal Services under which he represents TRL is due for consideration in March. The terms of the agreement are the same as in the previous agreement (\$1,200 per month with any hours in excess of 132 during the term of the agreement at an hourly rate of \$135.00). An addition to the agreement is provision of paralegal services if it appears that it would be cost effective for the district to use such services.

Mr. Blauvelt explained that paralegals complete a two-year training program and they are asked to do routine tasks. He considers Mr. Hanson a good attorney with lots of knowledge whose fees are reasonable given the kind of money attorneys in Olympia can make. Ms. Kruse added that we did not do a cost comparison this year with other library districts, but last year's comparison indicated that other large library districts are paying much more for their legal services. Some have separate attorneys for labor relations and other legal matters. Several were interested in TRL's retainer relationship with our attorney.

99-12

BILL LAWRENCE MOVED TO RENEW THE CONTRACT WITH CRAIG W. HANSON FOR LABOR RELATIONS, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND OTHER GENERAL LEGAL MATTERS EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 1999 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2000; ART BLAUVELT SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mr. Mah asked how many hours of Mr. Hanson's services we used in 1998. Ms. Kruse said she does not have this information available but does know that we did not exceed the 132 hours. Mr. Nutter said we still have the issue of whether we would want to pay Mr. Hanson by retainer or by the hour. Which would be more reasonable? Ms. Kruse said the advantage of a retainer is that we are able to call on Mr. Hanson at anytime. If the contract was on an hourly rate, she would probably think twice before calling him. There have been issues which she may not have normally called him about, but is glad she did. She thinks we end up saving on the retainer basis. Other staff also call Mr. Hanson. Mr. Blauvelt said another advantage to a retainer is the attorney's loyalty to the district. A retained attorney tends to respond to telephone calls more quickly. He agrees with Ms. Kruse that she may hesitate to call the attorney if he is on an hourly basis. Ms. Davies said Mr. Hanson has an incredible amount of knowledge about TRL since he has been our attorney for a number of years. Working with public entities is also Ms. Hanson's specialty. Ms. Williams added that the history we have with Mr. Hanson is worth a lot. She views this contract as a good insurance policy. She agrees that Mr. Hanson knows the district, has been very responsive, and we have a good working relationship with him.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6 Reports

A. Focus on Chehalis

Ms. Schiltz said the Chehalis Library is a friendly place. The Chehalis Library has a long history and the people love their library and appreciate it. The staff is top notch. The staff in the Lewis County libraries help each other out and there is a tight network that Ms. Schiltz doesn't think we see in all of the libraries. There are 4.125 FTE's at the Chehalis Library, 7,226 registered patrons, the city's population is 7,035, circulation in 1998 was over 114,000, with a daily average of 300 people coming through the door. The library is open 43 hours a week, five days a week. The library will be 90 years old next year. It no longer resembles a Carnegie building since it was damaged in an earthquake years ago. The building has several problems. It is not as accessible as it should be. It is difficult for people to get upstairs. The city, TRL staff, and board members have been working toward making this building more welcoming. Ms. Schiltz said there is a strong local library board, but there is a need to revitalize the Chehalis Friends group. Ms. Kruse said that Mark Nelson has looked at the Chehalis Library's space planning needs and we are trying to see if there is a way to make the building handicap accessible. A cost analysis needs to be done to see if this building is worth fixing. Ms. Williams said she served on the Chehalis Library Board prior to coming on the TRL Board. There is not a lack of interest for a new building. Like a lot of cities, many of its buildings are old. The fire department, police department, sewer system and water system are in bad shape as well. There are many needs and not enough money to meet those needs. Ms. Walker, who serves on the Chehalis Library Board, said she feels very strongly that we need to deal with this building at least for the next 10 years. She would appreciate some help from TRL. The city will not be forthcoming for reasons that Ms. Williams has just stated.

B. 1998 Long Range Plan Final Report

The 1998 Long-Range Plan Final Report was presented at last month's meeting. There were no further comments or questions.

C. Services and Facilities Plan

Ms. Sebbas said that the Services and Facilities Community Advisory Committee (CAC) has been reviewing the needs of the district. In the past month, staff have been working to prioritize the recommendations of the working groups. This work will be brought before the CAC at its next meeting on April 14. The CAC will then prepare a document for presentation to the TRL Board at its work session on May 8. The next step will be a cost analysis. Mr. Blauvelt referred to Mr. Bragg's earlier comments that the CAC has not been allowed to talk about square foot space standards or how to finance library buildings. He thought that there have been discussions about ways we measure libraries; that we not only think about the number of square feet but change the usefulness of the building by increasing the number of open hours. Ms. Davies said the services and facilities planning has been done in an orderly fashion and Mr. Bragg knows we will talk about these issues after we have a chance to go through our orderly process.

D. Thurston Regional Planning Council

Mr. Mah reported that he and Ms. Kruse gave a presentation about TRL to the Thurston Regional Planning Council, including an overview of the services and facilities planning process. A representative from the Griffin School District approached him to express interest in TRL's

- 6D partnership activities. At the end of this month there will be an economic roundtable at which the Council will explore economic development issues. One question he will bring up is what the participants in this roundtable consider is the role of the library.

E. Y2K

Ms. Culp reported that TRL has an advantage solving Y2K problems over state or federal agencies, which develop their own computer systems. We purchase from outside vendors. She thinks we have identified all of the systems on the hardware and all of the equipment. We are still looking at building systems. The library system is compliant. The network still needs some upgrades. The business office is compliant. Staff is almost done upgrading all of the PCs in the district. We still need to work through the issues with cities. As long as we have power and telephones, our systems will work. The Public Service Team is looking at contingency plans if any of the libraries are without utilities on January 1, 2000. The biggest issue is if the Service Center is without power or telephone service since that will have an effect on all of the libraries. One possibility is to purchase generators. However, we have to look at the mission of this organization. Is our mission so critical to society that we be up and running on January 1?

F. Director

Payroll and payroll related vouchers for February 1999 amounted to \$698,472.72.

99-13

ART BLAUVELT MOVED TO APPROVE VOUCHERS NO. 56638 THROUGH NO. 56728 FOR MARCH 1999 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$423,970.77; JEAN DAVIES SECONDED THE MOTION.

There was discussion about the leaky roof at the new North Mason Library. Mr. Nutter questioned why a consultant was hired rather than going through the architect since the building is under warranty. Mr. Ross said TRL felt it was prudent to get an independent judgment on how the roof was installed and the construction standards used. The general contractor has the overall responsibility. However, there was some question whether this was a roof problem or an interface problem between the building and the roof. This consultation has been done. Mr. Blauvelt agreed that what TRL is doing is appropriate and this is money well spent. Having our own consultant provides us with documentation in the event there is a dispute of who is responsible. Included in this month's vouchers is the lease payment for Regional Library Manager Corene Jones-Litteer's new office space in Chehalis. The cost is \$100 per month which is a very cost effective way of putting a manager in the field.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The February 1999 Revenues and Expenditures report was presented. Mr. Mah noted that we are already over our budgeted amount of \$10,000 in advertising expenditures. Mr. Ross said last year we spent over \$30,000 for advertising. These expenditures are primarily for job search ads, some of which are quite expensive. Ms. Kruse said we watch expenditures carefully and are able to make adjustments as necessary. In this particular category she acknowledged that it was an oversight not to have budgeted a higher amount. Personnel: Ms. Jones-Litteer introduced Mary Thornton, the new McCleary Community Librarian. Before attending library school, she had worked as a volunteer at the Centralia Library. Ms. Kruse announced that Arthur Wuerth has been hired as the new Business Manager. He is currently Business Manager at the Kitsap Regional Library. His starting date with TRL has not yet been determined. Ms. Kruse reported

6F she attended a meeting in Wahkiakum County which several people attended who are interested in going out for a vote to create a partial library district and contract with TRL for library service. The County Commissioners have suggested that if a partial library district is created, they would provide a subsidy to help pay the contract fee. Currently the Naselle Friends are purchasing non-resident library cards for Wahkiakum County children who use the Naselle Library. TRL will produce an information sheet for the county. If this issue passes, the TRL Board would then have to approve the contract. Mr. Wessells said there is a very small population involved and most of them already use the Naselle Library so we would not expect much impact in service. Mr. Wessells reported on the vandalism problems at the Hoodsport Library. We have attempted to place security equipment there, but that has been vandalized as well. We are considering video cameras to help identify the individuals doing the vandalism or hiring a security firm. The sheriff's office has responded but are unable to respond quickly. Building Projects: Mr. Wessells reported that the City of Aberdeen has raised several grants and is working with TRL to attempt to qualify for additional grants. The costing of the project is being finalized and he expects the City of Aberdeen will be presenting an application for a TRL Partnership Grant at the Board's April meeting. Mr. Mah asked about the status of the Olympia Library space planning. Staff responded that we have not heard yet from the space planner, Mark Nelson. Mr. Nelson has met with the Olympia staff and requested more information from them which they provided last week. Hoquiam Library space planning is taking place this week. Those libraries that still require space planning are Amanda Park, Aberdeen, Olympia and Chehalis. Olympia presents special problems because the building is so full. Mr. Mah considers the Olympia space planning a high priority and we need to be sensitive to the fact that both the city and the Olympia Library Board need monetary commitments to that project. Ms. Davies said the Board has been asking about the Olympia Library space planning for several months. She understands there are priorities, but if Mr. Nelson requested information from the staff, it should not have taken them as long as it has to get it to him. She said the need is more prevalent in Olympia. We have a responsibility to the patrons, and Olympia at this time is underserved. Ms. Culp explained that the impetus for space planning was placement of computers and getting new computers in the buildings. We needed to rewire Olympia. That has been done and equipment has been replaced. There are so many other issues in Olympia. Ms. Davies said that just because the bond issue did not pass does not negate our responsibility to serve that population. Ms. Williams said there are 27 libraries with 27 varying needs. It seems to her that staff has prioritized these needs and gone through a systematic approach to these libraries, and Olympia has now come to the front. Ms. Davies said we have not done enough in Thurston County. We need to move forward on this and demonstrate our good faith. She said we promised a long time ago that we would make this effort and that we would do our best to serve Thurston County. We should not lose sight of that. If we do, it will hurt the entire district. Mr. Lawrence asked what role Gwen Culp plays and what role Bette Anderson plays in the Olympia project. Ms. Kruse said Ms. Anderson is working with the space planner on the Olympia space planning project. Ms. Culp is the overall space planning manager. The Board requested the Olympia project be on next month's agenda and that Bette Anderson be available to give a report. Ms. Culp reported that the Lacey Library project is almost complete. Mr. Ross reported that most of the earth work is completed on the Service Center Annex. The building is scheduled to be delivered by April 2. The Friends Forum was held March 13 at the North Mason Library. Next year Thurston County will host this event. The Washington Library Association conference begins April 28 and the American Library Association conference begins June 24.

There was discussion of how the April 20 meeting on Internet Services will be conducted. Several recommendations were made: We should be prepared with documentation that we cannot bar people from the library, no matter how offensive they are to others. We should be prepared with figures on the cost of providing Internet services to the district. We should focus on overall

6F services to patrons. We need to determine how we will receive public comments. We should state what our current policy is and how it was framed. TRL's attorney Craig Hanson will make a presentation. It was recommended that Mike Wessells make a presentation on intellectual freedom.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.



President



Secretary