

TIMBERLAND REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Ocean Park Timberland Library, 1308 256th Place, Ocean Park, WA 98640

June 16, 1999

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MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Peggy Meyer, President; Art Blauvelt; Jean Davies; Doug Mah;

BOARD MEMBER EXCUSED: Bill Lawrence; Glen Nutter; Janelle Williams

STAFF PRESENT: Bette Anderson; Liane Bascou; Thelma Kruse; Iver Matheson; Kristine Pointer; Carol Saynisch; Sandra Sebbas; Bill Tubbs; Mike Wessells; Art Wuerth; Michelle Zilli

GUESTS PRESENT: Sharon Ballman; Ken Bragg; Pat Goettel; Sandra Hargrove; Sharon Sattler; Sandra Stonebreaker; Jay Taylor; Barbara Wuerth

President Meyer called the regular meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM
NO.

- 1 Introductions were made.
- 2 Focus on Ocean Park

Iver Matheson, Ocean Park Community Librarian, reported that the library has undergone several positive changes in the past year. Space planning and reorganization of the library has been accomplished, opening up the interior of the library, providing more privacy for patrons in the technology island, and widening the space between the stacks. Staff receive many positive comments about the new configuration. This year the library will receive a new roof. The landscaping will be rejuvenated with volunteer help. The sprinkler system will be fixed. Internet continues to draw new patrons to the library, particularly young people. Internet allows people to take part in support groups which are not always available in small communities such as Ocean Park. Sunday hours have been a success and allow a time for families to use the library together. Weekend visitors to the area appreciate the Sunday hours as well. Population in the area doubles during the summer and these visitors appreciate the opportunity to use the library. Michelle Zilli began as Youth Services Librarian in October. Ms. Zilli is providing great service to youth, including school visits, after school programs, story times, class visits to the library, and monthly family programs. There is good attendance at the programs. Everyone is looking forward to the Summer Reading Program. Ms. Zilli has garnered a lot of community support for this year's program.

3 Correspondence and Public Comments

A. Public Comments

A member of the genealogy society expressed the willingness of the society to help with the growth the library is experiencing. The society would like an area in the library to do their research. Members can help with fundraisers.

Ken Bragg asked if he could see minutes of previous Board meetings before they are approved by the Board. Ms. Meyer said it is a long-standing practice of this Board for the minutes to be sent to Board members and approved at the next meeting. They are available to the public after Board approval.

Mr. Bragg sent Ms. Kruse an email requesting her schedule of meetings at which she plans to present the Services and Facilities documents. Ms. Kruse said she has seen Mr. Bragg's email but has not had an opportunity to respond. Mr. Bragg briefly touched on his written comments which are attached to these minutes.

B. Board Comments

There were no Board comments.

C. Correspondence

The Board acknowledged two letters regarding Internet filters, one dated June 8, 1999 from the Pacific County Commissioners and the other dated June 11, 1999 from Ryan Anderson. Since the letter from the commissioners gives the impression that TRL does not have filters, Mr. Blauvelt recommended we respond that TRL does have filtered search engines on all Internet computers. Mr. Wessells has drafted letters for the Board's review to the commissioners and to Congressman Baird. Similar letters will be sent to commissioners in all five counties. The letter to Congressman Baird is in response to his letter on behalf of one of his constituents regarding TRL's Internet policy. Mr. Blauvelt said he is concerned with the letter from the Thurston County Commissioners received at last month's meeting because it refers not only to offensive material but also access to other material such as how to make exploding devices. He is concerned that some people want to choose what we should or should not look at and a library cannot be involved in picking and choosing what people may look at. Several Board members mentioned that TRL is responding to Internet concerns with technology solutions which will protect patrons' privacy.

Mr. Mah asked about the status of the Internet plan the Board approved last month. Ms. Kruse responded that we are beginning the pilot project of exclusively filtered machines in August. The Pharos software and optional filters are planned for installation in October. Mr. Mah expressed concern with a four-month delay for Pharos and the optional filters. Ms. Kruse explained that we are planning a Dynix hardware upgrade in August and she does not want to have computer staff doing any other major work until that upgrade is completed. Plus it will be more efficient to install Pharos and the optional filters at the same time. Ms. Meyer added that she thinks the Board has heard from a vocal group of people in only one part of our community. She thinks this is a reasonable schedule for Timberland. Mr. Blauvelt asked if we have to go out to bid on the Dynix upgrade and Mr. Wuerth responded that he is checking with TRL's attorney.

3C Mr. Blauvelt said that several Board members and staff are planning to attend the ALA Conference. He expects the issue of Internet will be a major issue at the conference. Since this is such an important topic, he would like the Board to schedule a retreat to discuss Internet. The meeting would be open to the public, but the purpose would be to hear about what is happening in other parts of the country. Mr. Wessells will be attending a number of intellectual freedom sessions at the conference. He will send the schedule of these sessions to the Board members attending the conference.

4 Approval of Minutes

Since there was not a quorum of Board members present who attended the May 26, 1999 meeting, the Board was unable to approve the minutes.

5 Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

6 New Business

There was no new business.

7 Reports

A. Summer Reading Program

The theme of this year's program is "Cows in Space." "Galactic Readers: Reading Across the Milky Way" is the title of the program for the younger children and "Go Galactic" is the title of the program for teens. The official start date is June 11. Ms. Saynisch presented a packet of program materials, which contain original art by Tom Bant.

B. Foundation

Ms. Sebbas said the Foundation Board is made up of representatives from the communities in the five-county area. There is a need for a representative from Pacific County. Currently, members of the foundation are talking with businesses in each of the counties and requesting support for the two Chocolate Fest events coming up in September. These events will introduce the foundation and will be a marketing opportunity to share the needs of the library district.

C. Services & Facilities Plan

The Board held a work session on the Services & Facilities Plan in May. A presentation was made at an Olympia City Council meeting at the Council's invitation. Mr. Mah said if there are plans to take the document out to the communities and use it as a framework for discussion, he recommends we retitle it as a Services and Facilities Needs Assessment rather than referring to it as a plan. A plan implies a time frame and specifics whereas in reality the document measures services and how we are meeting goals and expectations of the communities. This change in title was agreeable to the Board. Mr. Mah said Mr. Bragg has talked about the need to identify costs. He asked if we should have more discussions with other jurisdictions of how we are defining

- 7C services before we begin to figure costs. Ms. Kruse said it has always been our intention to attach costs. The services part of the document will be tied to the 2000 budget. There will be input from the Board through their representatives on the Budget Committee. Ms. Kruse said staff will come back to the Board with more concrete recommendations for the facilities needs assessment. She will provide a time frame of the budget process to the Board at their next meeting.

D. Planning Councils

Mr. Wessells said the incoming ALA President has set as one of her priorities for next year the importance of libraries working within the communities and building community ties. TRL is already doing this by its memberships in Regional Planning Councils. People are getting to know the library as an equal player with other members. He is currently working with the Grays Harbor Regional Planning Council on ways to make other members' documents available to the public.

Mr. Mah said he was unable to attend the last Thurston Regional Planning Council meeting. He recommends that TRL approach the council regarding a presentation of our Services and Facilities Needs Assessment.

E. Director

Payroll and payroll related vouchers for May 1999 amounted to \$719,088.36.

- 99-23 JEAN DAVIES MOVED TO APPROVE VOUCHERS NO. 57698 THROUGH NO. 58004 FOR JUNE 1999 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$495,293.70; DOUG MAH SECONDED THE MOTION.


Mr. Wuerth referred to his written report which includes comments on selected vouchers and an update on the Service Center annex project. This month's vouchers include a video surveillance/security system for the Hoodspout Library, which is being installed because of the vandalism problems.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.


The May 1999 Revenues and Expenditures report was presented which indicates that the district is on budget. Personnel: Ms. Kruse announced that Liz Stroup will begin as Reference and Adult Services Coordinator on July 12. Ms. Stroup was formerly Director of Seattle Public Library. Ellen Duffy will begin as the Youth Services Coordinator on August 23. Ms. Duffy is currently employed at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library as Youth Services Manager. Ms. Kruse announced that there is a meeting of the Wahkiakum County Commissioners scheduled on June 22 which TRL representatives will attend. They are discussing a ballot measure there to form a partial county library district. If it passes, the County Commissioners may be contacting TRL regarding a contract for library services. Three TRL Board representatives are needed on the Budget Committee. The time commitment will be two or three meetings, the first one in July. Doug Mah agreed to serve. Janelle Williams was on the committee last year and will be asked if she wants to continue this year. Jean Davies or Art Blauvelt will serve if necessary, and Peggy Meyer will serve as an alternate. The Service Center Annex has been completed, awaiting a final inspection by the City of Tumwater. Ms. Anderson distributed the latest drawing of the Olympia Space Planning project. The proposal calls for using some of the meeting room space for the

7E youth services area, which is agreeable with the City of Olympia. There will be more shelving space. The technology stations area will provide more privacy and space. The architect, Mark Nelson, is attempting a design that will involve the least amount of expense as possible. Mr. Nelson will be meeting again with the Olympia staff on June 23 and expects to have the final concept done by the end of the month, after which he will do cost estimates. Several reported on their attendance at the WLA Conference in April. The ALA Conference is scheduled next week. Several staff and four TRL Board members will be attending. TRL will be accepting a John Cotton Dana Award for the coverage and promotion of the North Mason Library. Ms. Saynisch reported she has just been notified that TRL will also receive two Best of Show Awards for promotional pieces, one in the adult program category for "PageTurners" and the other in the young adult category for last year's Summer Reading Program "Reading Road Trip."

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.



President



Secretary

Comment on Timberland Regional Library Facilities Plan Issued May 1999

The Timberland Regional Library (TRL) publicized in May 1999 a library facilities plan for its entire 5-County district. The plan includes the space needs of Cities as well as the unincorporated areas. TRL found it could not identify facilities for which Cities should be responsible because library patrons do not use a single library location. From time to time they use various library buildings to access services. In recognition of this inability to determine the area and number of patrons to be served by any of its 27 libraries TRL has abandoned the use a standard of .6 sq. ft library space per resident. Instead the plan arrives at facility needs by estimating how much space is needed by desired services.

In the past TRL has built or acquired 9 library buildings for unincorporated areas including the new 14,000 sq. ft library building for the unincorporated community of Bel Fair in Mason County. TRL provides only token grants of \$11 per sq. ft to Cities for new construction under a process which it calls "partnership".

Since TRL now realizes it can't determine facility responsibility of Cities and since Cities pay the same property taxes or contract fees as residents of rural areas TRL has a clear responsibility to provide facilities for all library patrons of the 5-County district just as it provides library services for all library users of the district.

The TRL has the authority and resources but so far not the inclination to implement this responsibility. Failure to do so is causing, along with issues of Internet access and taxing above the norm of referendum 47, an erosion of TRL's good will and record of outstanding service to patrons. Discussions with public officials at the City, County and Legislative levels indicate serious ideas of reform. These views are of course reflective of growing concern among their constituents. These ideas include:

- 1) Provide for the election of TRL trustees
- 2) Transfer authority from the non-elected TRL trustees to the elected County Commissioners to set annual property tax rates.
- 3) Submit the tax levy to the voters for approval in the same way 911 services are funded in Thurston County.
- 4) Establish a library district for Thurston County which has 50% of the taxing power of the 5-County TRL district.

The TRL has authority to issue non-voted bonds with 6 year maturity although it has never used this authority. The facilities plan lists a need for 85,000 sq. ft of library space during the next five years. This includes a proposal to replace the present 20,000 sq. ft, 21 year old, Olympia library with a new 55,000 sq. ft building and acquire a 5,000 sq. ft library on Olympia's west side. Since it is now economical to operate two libraries in Olympia the present library can be retained and 35,000 sq. ft could be added to the proposed branch library thus reducing the need for new space in the next five years to 65,000 sq. ft. At \$150/ sq. ft this would cost \$9,750,000. The average annual debt service at 4.9% interest rate would be \$1.9 million and could be financed by using 60% of timber revenues leaving 40% and all of the property tax and contract fee revenue for operation and maintenance expense.

There are other items mentioned in the initial five plan facility plan. They are not included in this cost analysis because sq. ft estimates were not provided. It is possible that when these items are included a 6 year bond term may be too restrictive. A twenty year term would enable TRL to use less than half its timber revenues for debt service while financing \$31,100,000 of construction within the next thirty years. At the last legislative session Reps. Alexander, Romero, DeBolt and Wolfe introduced HB 1500 to provide 20 year terms. Failure of passage was aided by the failure of TRL to support the legislation.