

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

September 24, 2003

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Art Blauvelt, President; Edna Fund; Peggy Meyer; Dick Nichols; Gene Weaver; Janelle Williams

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED: Pat Shults

STAFF PRESENT: Corine Aiken; Bette Anderson; Liane Bascou; Ellen Duffy; Susan Hanson; Corene Jones-Litteer; Tina Roose; Cherie Rusk; Sandra Sebbas; Jena Thrasher; Mike Wessells; Art Wuerth

GUESTS PRESENT: Dave Campbell; Melody Dempewolf; Arlene Gardner; Mel Johnson; Bill Moeller; Mary Myhre-Pancake; Kristi Nelson; Steve Pack; Bob Roesum; Bob Spahr; Doris Walker; Bob Willey; Brian Zylstra

President Blauvelt called the regular meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM  
NO.

- 1 Introductions were made.
- 2 Approval of Agenda

There were no additions or amendments to the Agenda.

- 3 Welcome to Local Library

Chehalis Mayor Spahr welcomed the Board to Chehalis and thanked TRL for the job it does and for bringing the library business to the people. Since we are living in interesting times with constant changes, he said it is good to bring issues to the people. Mr. Spahr said service to our community, no matter how we do it, whether on a library board, on a city council or planning commission, is what makes our society work.

Chehalis City Manager Campbell welcomed the Board. When he first came to Chehalis 15 years ago, he considered it a privilege to be working close to the library and able to take advantage of its services. The library is still available to him, but with changes in technology, he uses the library in different ways and has it listed as a favorite on his computer. Mr. Campbell said he hopes in the future to be able to welcome the Board to a newly remodeled facility that will include the library.

Chehalis Community Librarian Corine Aiken thanked the City of Chehalis for allowing TRL to use the City Hall for this meeting since the library is not ADA accessible. She said the Chehalis Library began as a Carnegie library with a grand opening in 1910. She showed photos of the community coming out for the opening of their library and the minutes' book of the Chehalis Library Board of Trustees that included minutes of its first meeting on July 15, 1908. The library's archives contain receipts for the original building including a receipt from the Library of Congress for library cards. The first book acquired by the library was "Tillicum Tails" by the Seattle Riders Club. The book is still in the library's Northwest collection. In addition to the continuity of the

3 library, there is continuity in the people. A 92-year-old volunteer, Agnes Ambsdorf, helps process the periodicals two days a week, and was a library assistant in the 50s at the Chehalis Library. The library staff appreciate the work she does as well as the work of all the other volunteers. The Chehalis City Library became part of TRL on January 1, 1970. The building was remodeled in the 30s with an addition in the back and upstairs. An earthquake in 1949 destroyed a great deal of the building losing much of the architecture on the outside. The building has not been touched substantially since 1949. An average of 500 people a day visit the Chehalis Library with an annual circulation of 125,000. Several programs are held in the library including children's programs, early childhood literacy programs during the summer and school year, and Page Turners, an adult reading group. Several different groups use the library. For example, the Boy Scouts will come to the library tomorrow as one of their badge requirements. The YMCA daycare uses the library's meeting room for their craft time and to check out books. Other daycare centers visit the library as well. Several people traveling through the area visit the library, not just to use the Internet to check their email, but also to sit in the library and read. A fundraising campaign to remodel the library has been launched. A training session with the fundraising consultant will be held on Saturday. The Chehalis Friends recently held a book sale and raised over \$1,600 in two days.

4 Public Comments/Board Comments

A. Certificates of Appreciation

Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Steve Pack and Bob Willey of the Chehalis Valley Amateur Radio Society. This is a group of ham radio operators in the community who help out in emergencies and work with community groups. They also hold a field day in Stan Hedwall Park where they practice connecting with people around the world to make sure their equipment is working properly and can operate from generators. Ms. Jones-Litteer said ham operators go on local and distance expeditions and try to connect with as many people as they can for which they receive points. On August 2 these gentlemen spent an hour at all of the TRL libraries in Lewis County. They talked about each library and about TRL and its services, and other ham operators listening in at the time checked in. Ms. Jones-Litteer thanked them for bringing the ham radio world to TRL libraries and for helping to publicize TRL's services in a way that has never been done before. Mr. Pack and Mr. Willey thanked TRL for this opportunity. They wanted to know how well their communications work in the county. They are called out to do rescues. Their club has a rather large contingent that are well trained. They consider themselves professional communicators. At each of the Lewis County libraries, they asked people to check in and give them a signal report. They had a great day and commended the library staff for their help.

B. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

C. Board Comments

Ms. Fund said in recent travels she visited libraries in Austin, Texas and Shreveport and Bossier City, Louisiana. At the Shreveport library, a city policeman is stationed at the door. Ms. Fund asked them about their strategic plan and the response was that it is probably in the archives. She was taken aback since they are in the midst of building seven new libraries. She likes to search other libraries' websites, and finds TRL's much more user friendly than Shreveport library's site. They are now charging 15 cents a copy for printing. She asked the people in Bossier City about their taxes. They are providing good library service with nice buildings. A house of \$160,000 costs \$170 in taxes. Ms. Fund received an email from a patron in Thurston County who uses a wheelchair and said her husband is blind. Her husband likes to check out CDs but finds it is

- 4C difficult to do so on TRL's website. He deals with accessibility issues in his job with DSHS and would be willing to help TRL. Ms. Fund provided Ms. Roose with the woman's name and phone number. Ms. Roose said she would contact them.

Mr. Nichols recommended two articles from the September/October 2003 issue of *Public Libraries*, "The Fragile Future of Public Libraries" that addresses issues that impact libraries' ability to serve, and "Bridging the Value Gap" that talks about planning from the customer's point of view. These are timely articles considering TRL is going to update its strategic plan.

5 Approval of Minutes

- 03-51 PEGGY MEYER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TRL BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 27, 2003, AS DISTRIBUTED; DICK NICHOLS SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- 03-52 GENE WEAVER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TRL BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2003, AS DISTRIBUTED; PEGGY MEYER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- 03-53 EDNA FUND MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TRL BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2003, AS DISTRIBUTED; DICK NICHOLS SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6 Unfinished Business

A. Director Search

Ms. Thrasher reported that an agreement has been reached with Jodi Reng who will begin as TRL's new Director on November 3, 2003. Ms. Reng will also be attending All Staff Training Day on October 13. Ms. Thrasher reviewed the search process that began in January 2003 with a Pre-Search Committee composed of two TRL Board members and herself. The Search Committee was composed of representatives from the TRL Board, the Foundation Board, the Staff Association, TRL staff, and local library Board and Friends representatives. The position was advertised nationally. There were nearly 50 responses requesting information about the position. About 20 qualified applicants were considered, 8 of whom were included in the first round of interviews by the Search Committee via telephone. Five semi-finalists were chosen to proceed to the second round of in-person interviews. Ms. Reng was identified as the finalist. Public forums were held in each of the counties with an additional forum held at the Service Center.

There was discussion of holding public receptions to introduce Ms. Reng throughout the district. Board members recommended that receptions be held in each of the counties during the second and third weeks of November, including a reception at the Service Center. It was agreed to schedule the Service Center reception prior to the November 19 public hearing on the budget and regular meeting. Staff will work with the Trustees to determine the best dates for other receptions in their respective counties.

7 New Business

A. Resolution Recognizing and Thanking Donors to Timberland Regional Library

TRL encourages giving from individuals, corporations, and foundations, and uses such gifts to enhance library facilities and services provided to its patrons and in agreement with the mission of

7A the library. The TRL Board joins the TRL Foundation Board in recognizing donors for their support.

03-54 JANELLE WILLIAMS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 03-05 IN RECOGNITION OF LIBRARY DONORS; PEGGY MEYER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Blauvelt announced that there is a donor appreciation event on September 29, 7-9 p.m., at the Service Center.

8 Voucher Approval

03-55 DICK NICHOLS MOVED TO APPROVE PAYROLL AND PAYROLL RELATED VOUCHERS NO. 34833 THROUGH NO. 35057 FOR AUGUST 2003 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$806,215.38; PEGGY MEYER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

03-56 EDNA FUND MOVED TO APPROVE VENDOR VOUCHERS NO. 73540 THROUGH NO. 73806 FOR SEPTEMBER 2003 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$336,353.00; GENE WEAVER SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mr. Wuerth highlighted some savings including a \$3,285 rebate for telephone service due to cost-savings within the Department of Information Services, and a 33% discount on our email licenses because we are an educational institution. TRL is being assessed \$7,896.31 by the US Treasury for a late payment of the June federal tax liability. Mr. Wuerth explained the process that TRL has to follow but a transfer of funds was missed because of a holiday and two-day weekend and was not noticed until two days after the due date. Mr. Wuerth's request for abatement was denied but he intends to file an appeal to try to scale back on the assessment. He has set up new procedures and three staff will be checking the process to make sure the transfer actually occurs.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

9 Board Reports

A. Budget Committee

The Budget Committee of Mr. Blauvelt, Ms. Meyer and Mr. Nichols met with staff on September 17. A preliminary budget was presented for the general fund, including a detailed departmental budget. This preliminary budget continued the earlier assumptions of Initiative 747 restrictions on property tax revenue and included updated timber revenues. Even with significant limitations on revenues, estimated expenditures exceed estimated revenues by only \$241,000, well within the parameters of the stable level-of-service budget model presented to the full Board in June. Mr. Blauvelt added that the preliminary budget has no changes in service hours, allocation for books, or changes in staffing levels. He said Mr. Wuerth was asked to cost out more activities in the various departments. Mr. Nichols said that staff has put together a good plan to deal with the property tax limitations and decline in timber revenues, which will give TRL more flexibility prior to TRL going out for a levy lid lift.

B. Policy Review Committee

Ms. Fund reported that the Policy Review Committee would bring to the Board next month for its review a Naming Policy. The committee is currently working on a Public Participation Plan and

- 9B reviewing the resolution establishing a policy for public access to library records adopted by the TRL Board in 1985.

C. Regional Planning Councils

Mr. Wessells reported that the Grays Harbor Council of Governments (GHCOG) has commended the TRL staff for the in-kind service TRL provides to GHCOG in lieu of dues by helping them organize and convert their materials. The Regional Issues Sub-Council that Mr. Wessells chairs prioritized some of the regional issues GHCOG wants to review. One of the high priority items is telecommunications. It will be of benefit to the library when residents will have easy access to high-speed communications.

Mr. Nichols reported that the Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) held a meeting at the Port of Olympia offices as a result of the Port Commissioners questioning the value of the Port's membership in TRPC. This meeting provided an opportunity to acquaint TRPC with what the Port does and should lead to some discussions on what these relationships mean. Mr. Nichols said that although people in general like libraries and use them, he is not sure that public officials or others are aware what a phenomenal resource the library system can be to the business community. He said one of our strategic plan challenges could be to figure out ways to work with groups like this. One of his goals is to spread that word to TRPC members. He considers TRL's participation with TRPC to be important, even as an associate member.

10 Director's Reports

A. Financial

The August 2003 Revenues and Expenditures report was presented. In response to a question that Mr. Nichols had at the Budget Committee meeting, Mr. Wuerth estimates that the 2003 ending fund balance will be approximately the same or slightly more than the 2002 ending fund balance of \$5.05 million. General fund receipts are slightly under budget at this point of the year. Timber revenues continue to decline.

B. Public Services

The August 2003 Statistics were presented. Ms. Fund commented that some of the statistics are down compared to August 2002, although remote access continues to climb. She noted in particular Lacey's circulation. Ms. Anderson said that she checked and found that there appears to be a connection between library use and good weather. There has also been road construction in the Lacey area that may have had an effect on Lacey's statistics. However, it is difficult to determine the reasons for differences in individual months. Mr. Blauvelt noted the large drop in connect boxes. Ms. Duffy said a lot of connect boxes went out in July and they are kept for 8 weeks so she anticipates there will be an increase in September. There has been no change in the program itself.

C. May-August 2003 Progress Report

The May-August 2003 Progress Report was presented and is attached to the original of these minutes. There was discussion about the self-checkout and self-holds shelves. The goal is to have self-checkout in all of the libraries, although there are space concerns in some of the libraries. Self-checkout is popular. We are experimenting with signage in the self-holds pick up area since some patrons tend to think those shelves are for browsing.

10 D. Foundation

Ms. Roose announced that the TRL Foundation Board made a change in its Bylaws wherein the Foundation Board rather than the TRL Director will appoint its own members, which is similar to most foundations' Bylaws. A written report on the Foundation Board's September 15 meeting was submitted and is attached to the original of these minutes. Ms. Fund requested that these Foundation reports include the names of those in attendance.

E. Literacy in Lewis County

Ms. Duffy commended Pat Owen, Lewis County facilitator for the Mother Goose program, and announced that Ms. Owen is also a recipient of a Certificate of Appreciation for her vision in implementing this program. Ms. Duffy shared a few of Ms. Owen's words about one of the programs she did: "The most challenging and simultaneously rewarding program for me this year was the one presented for incarcerated women at the Lewis County Jail. A total of 26 women attended the program, which was optional to them, all but two of them were moms, and I was told that Mother Goose was the first program of any kind done for woman inmates that was not church-based. Imagine, if you will, my apprehension that first day, wheeling my boxes of books down the dark, narrow halls of the jail, through a succession of locking steel doors and into the library, a dim room with a few paperback books and overhead video cameras, where I joined a crowd of orange-suited woman. Soon, we were all sitting comfortably on the floor, eating animal cookies and taking turns reading the beautifully illustrated book, *Roxaboxan*, which tells the story of children who used their imaginations to create a fantasy community using rocks, boxes and objects from a dump. I was amazed at the women's attention, interest and obvious pleasure in the process of reading the book and afterwards, talking about their own memories of childhood play and imagination."

F. Lewis County Reading Foundation

Ms. Jones-Litteer submitted a report regarding the Lewis County Reading Foundation that is attached to the original of these minutes. Ms. Jones-Litteer and Cherie Rusk are representing TRL on that foundation. Ms. Rusk shared some heartwarming stories about the children who have been touched by the foundation's work and how appreciative the families are.

G. Award of Cultural Diversity Grant

Ms. Roose announced that TRL would receive a federal Cultural Diversity Grant of nearly \$50,000. The Secretary of State Sam Reed and State Librarian Jan Walsh will present the grant to TRL on All Staff Training Day on October 13. The grant is designed to reach out to the Spanish speaking communities in Aberdeen, Centralia, Olympia and Shelton. The grant will be used to hire a consultant to work with TRL staff to learn library related Spanish, to purchase Spanish language materials, and provide Spanish signage. Other than English, Spanish is the most spoken language in the TRL area. We have been adding a phrase to all of our position announcements that speaking Spanish is desirable and since then we have hired several Spanish speaking staff.

Mr. Nichols expressed concern with how TRL will plan after grants expire since there will probably be costs involved. Ms. Rusk said she is going to take a Spanish class this fall at the Centralia College where she expects to make some new connections. Ms. Duffy added that one of our Spanish speaking substitutes is working with Olympia staff to develop a program with the Spanish speaking community.

11 Other

An ESD 113 Update by Judy Covell was presented and is attached to the original of these minutes. The Rochester School District has discontinued its Cooperative Library Center. The grant will continue the remaining sites through April 2004. These sites are in areas that TRL has targeted as underserved areas and funding has been included in the 2004 budget for courier service and provision of the circulation system. Mr. Nichols said that this is an example of a grant that will expire and suggested that the TRL Foundation may be able to help.

Mr. Blauvelt said that since the negotiations with the TRL Staff Association for a new three-year contract are still tentative, he suggested that the TRL Board consider holding an Executive Session at the October Board meeting.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.



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President



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Secretary

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
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September 24, 2003

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