



**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2022
4:00 P.M.**

The Board met in regular session in a hybrid format via Zoom webinar and in person.

Chair Holland called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

1) ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Wayne Holland, Jean Stoess, Frank Perez, Zanny Marsh,
Amy Ghilieri

Board Members Absent: None

County Staff Present: Assistant District Attorney Herb Kaplan, Assistant County
Manager David Solaro

Public Present: None noted

2) PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

a. Approval of Minutes from the Library Board Meeting of February 16, 2022

On motion by Trustee Marsh, seconded by Vice Chair Ghilieri, which motion duly carried, the Board approved minutes from the February 16, 2022 meeting. All in favor, none opposed.

4) OLD BUSINESS

None

5) NEW BUSINESS

a. Library Director Strategic Plan Update

Library Director Jeff Scott reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was provided in the agenda packet, regarding progress made over the past month and recent updates to the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.

Trustee Marsh and Chair Holland wanted to know more about the Library System's book displays; Director Scott explained how various material displays were planned with the "stimulate imagination" strategic goal in mind to encourage patrons to browse and discover new materials.

Director Scott anticipated there would be updates regarding the new bookmobile van soon, and he described how determining the materials to be housed in the bookmobile was part art and part science. He detailed the renovations at the newly reopened Northwest Reno Library and noted the ribbon cutting ceremony had been a success, with news coverage and members of the public, staff, and Library Board in attendance to celebrate. He noted renovations at the Sparks Library were on schedule, with asbestos remediations now complete; plans were to host a ribbon cutting ceremony at 3:00 p.m. immediately preceding the next Board of Trustees meeting on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, to show off the long-awaited improvements to one of the Library System's oldest branches.

Director Scott noted monies for installing special earthquake shelving at the Sparks Library had come from the Tacchino Fund, which was right on target for expenditures within the allotted time frame. He also described the upcoming renovations of the Senior Center and Sierra View Library branches. He explained that currently, social services clients who traveled to the State of Nevada offices of Welfare and Supportive Services or the Children's Cabinet had to walk quite a distance around the building and through a large parking lot in order to get to the library branch in the shopping center right next door. The planned renovations would address this, creating direct access to the Sierra View Library from the parking lot of the State offices, and improving community members' ability to utilize critical library resources before or after their appointments.

This would also serve to improve the Library System's partnerships with other community social support services; individuals applying for public assistance, for example, could benefit from quicker access to the Sierra View Library's public computers, Wi-Fi, job searching resources, and reference materials, as well as the

proximity of both the Library and the Welfare and Children's Cabinet offices to nearby public transportation.

Staff were working to plan and prepare for improved workforce building services in conjunction with the American Job Center, the Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce, the Northern Nevada Literacy Council, and other local groups, businesses, and nonprofits focused on working together to help citizens achieve and maintain gainful employment, both regionally and statewide.

At the Downtown Reno Library, Director Scott remarked, planning was in process to construct a new family restroom in the children's area, which would improve family safety as well as providing much-needed Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant restroom access on the main level of the branch. Currently, the Downtown Reno Library was required to close its doors whenever the aging elevator went out of service, since there was no other restroom for patrons on the main floor to access without having to use the stairs.

Director Scott also reviewed an upcoming partnership with the American Association of Retired Persons which was anticipated to launch towards the end of June 2022, with the goal of reaching out to isolated senior citizens in the community to make them aware of various programs and services available through the local libraries, and if funding could be obtained, to assist these vulnerable individuals with transportation to and from branches. Staff were searching for potential grant opportunities for this initiative.

Director Scott noted staff had celebrated Women's History Month with various book and material displays, planned activities, and a featured segment on the On the Shelf radio program. He also stated several staff members would be attending the upcoming Public Library Association conference in April 2022, where there would be further discussion regarding the 2024 tax initiatives, ways to further promote public awareness of the need to renew this critical source of funding for the Washoe County Library System and the important resources it provided to community members.

6) REPORTS

a. Library Director's Report

Director Scott reviewed the Library Director's Update, discussing updated guidance regarding specific "zones" or designated areas at each branch for petitioning, gathering signatures, and campaign-related activities. He noted there had been some recent slowdowns with various County departments and services due to turnover, retirements, and loss of experienced staff throughout the County as an organization, though he agreed it was always good to have new employees.

Director Scott noted there had been a push to create more public meeting rooms and spaces at various branches. However, at the Downtown Reno Library, which was known for its extensive collection of long-established indoor plants and trees, there was strong opposition to removing vegetation for this purpose. As an alternative, smaller booth-type spaces or “virtual meeting areas” had been proposed, where individuals could conduct private online meetings using video and audio calls rather than meeting in person. This would not only allow the branch to preserve its beloved plant collection but could also be a more cost-effective solution to building large new conference or meeting rooms.

Other points reviewed in the Director’s update included delivery of the long-awaited new courier van and the delay of the bookmobile van due to ongoing supply chain issues, a list of staff members nominated for Washoe Stars awards for outstanding service, integrity, or communication efforts, and the retirement of Development Officer Andrea Tavener.

b. Northwest Reno Library Report

Northwest Reno Librarian I Robin Posniak reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was included in the Board packet. Mr. Posniak highlighted events, developments, and activities at the branch over the preceding two years, including painting and renovations, some recurring facilities issues involving plumbing blockages caused by tree roots, the activities of staff during the COVID pandemic shutdowns in early 2020, and the ways in which the branch had adapted to continue providing services to patrons and community members by utilizing drive-up checkouts and transitioning to virtual programming.

Mr. Posniak noted staff members had received recognition from the Board of County Commissioners for their contact tracing efforts in conjunction with the Washoe County Health Department and the school district in the fall of 2020. Most recently, the branch had undergone extensive renovations, with improvements to the location and layout of shelving and materials, new flooring, a revamped teen area and treehouse space for younger children, and more comfortable and functional furnishings. Community participation in story time activities was increasing, though attendance was still not as high as pre-pandemic levels.

Mr. Posniak noted the branch had also hosted an exhibit with stories holocaust survivors, which had been displayed in conjunction with the extensive holocaust book collection housed at the branch. Going forward in 2022, staff looked forward to hosting new family programs on the weekends and implementing “Teen Tuesdays”. Chair Holland thanked staff for their hard work during the pandemic.

c. Youth Services and Library Events Update

Youth Services and Library Events (YSLE) program staff members Beate Weinert and Judy Hansen conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was provided in the Board packet. They noted the Library System had slowly begun returning to hosting in-person events and programming in the fall of 2021 with magic shows and story times. Though attendance had steadily been improving, a return to pre-pandemic story time activities where hundreds of toddlers crowded together in one area was unlikely; the smaller groups were also safer and easier to manage. There had been events with Santa Claus in December and different branches had hosted Story Time with the County Manager, Eric Brown, which had been successful and well-received by the community. Many staff development activities had also taken place, as well as a YSLE retreat and onboarding and training of several new employees had been hired in October 2021. The Library System had begun participation in the local Children's Cabinet "Safe Place" program, with the largest branches becoming Safe Place sites where at-risk individuals could reach out to trained staff members for help if they were in need. Preparations for the 2022 Summer Reading Challenge were under way, and information regarding the kickoff party would be detailed in an upcoming issue of the Library Explorer publication.

Trustee Marsh inquired regarding the possibility of working with local pediatricians, doctors' offices, or possibly the school district to begin issuing library cards to the youngest citizens of the County as soon as they were born, so children would always have access to library materials and resources without ever having to register. Director Scott suggested beginning this initiative might be as simple as including a box parents could check when their babies were born at a Washoe County hospital, indicating they would like their child to automatically receive a library card. Trustee Marsh shared a story of a family in the Verdi Library that brought their baby and commented with pride that they might have been the youngest patron of the Washoe County Library System.

Chair Holland complimented staff on their energy levels when presenting youth activities; he indicated gaining and keeping the interest of young patrons at various events could be demanding, yet it was likely very rewarding for the many employees who loved those types of interactions.

7) STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Youth Services and Library Events (YSLE) Coordinator Beate Weinert expressed appreciation for the efforts and support of the Friends of the Washoe County Library, adding that their generous donations and proceeds of the book sales activities, as well as the gifts and donations of other patrons and community organizations, were the reason the libraries were able to host the Summer Reading Challenges and provide program materials, books, and prizes; these activities could not be funded with taxpayer monies.

Library Director Jeff Scott provided a brief update regarding the last-mile fiber internet connection project and plans for the Gerlach Library branch.

8) PUBLIC COMMENT

None

9) BOARD COMMENT

None

10) ADJOURNMENT

Chair Holland adjourned the meeting at 5:32 p.m.

Pending Board Approval