



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
PIERCE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM  
MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 11, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Jamilyn Penn called to order the regular meeting of the Pierce County Rural Library District Board of Trustees at 3:31 pm. Board members present were Pat Jenkins, Pam Duncan, Neesha Patel, and Abby Sloan. The meeting was conducted in person, with the option of virtual attendance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Lakewood resident Casey Crook provided comments regarding the Lakewood Library.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of Minutes of September 13, 2023, Regular Meeting
2. Approval of Minutes of September 18, 2023, Special Meeting
3. Approval of September Payroll, Benefits, and Vouchers
4. 2024 Fleet Funding Encumbrance Approval

*Trustee Duncan moved for approval of the consent agenda as presented. Trustee Sloan seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

There was a question regarding the availability of Narcan in the Library System. Deputy Director of Public Services Connie Behe noted libraries across the country are experiencing impacts from the opioid use crisis; Narcan is becoming more readily available to aid those experiencing overdose.

There was a question about the expected outcomes of the Nash Leadership Training. Deputy Director Behe mentioned that, during the final day of training, participants will be tasked with identifying organizational commitments and pinpointing leadership development topics that require special attention. The training sessions have emphasized top-down responsibility ownership, including leadership's acceptance and accountability for their behaviors and actions, as well as the provision of clear expectations and feedback. The program also places a strong emphasis on how supervisors can enhance and expand their skillset. Although this training is not exclusively focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), it does incorporate cultural competencies and awareness topics throughout. There is a separate development plan for EDI training intended for all staff that is part of the 2024 work plan.

The Trustees conveyed their appreciation to Deputy Director of Operations Melinda Chesbro for her dedicated service to the Library System as she prepares for her impending retirement. They extended their congratulations and expressed their gratitude for her invaluable guidance, acknowledging her significant contributions to both the Library and the Board. Her exceptional

knowledge and expertise were highly regarded and recognized. She was commended and thanked for her many years of exemplary service.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Downtown and Interim Lakewood Libraries Update – Trustees inquired if Library administrators had addressed the recent concerns regarding the removal of trees at the interim Lakewood Library. Deputy Director Chesbro noted some trees require removal and that the Library would bring additional information to the next meeting.

The Trustees raised questions regarding the artifact referred to as "the Big One." Collaborative efforts with the City of Lakewood are underway to secure a suitable location for it. The City has generously volunteered to assume responsibility for the artifact. The Library is prepared to cover the expenses associated with relocating it, whether to storage or for public display. This relocation will be coordinated as part of the building demolition phase of the project.

Interim Lakewood Library HVAC Controls Installation – *Trustee Sloan moved to approve a purchase order in the amount not to exceed \$71,000 with ATS Automation. Trustee Jenkins seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

Strategic Planning Contract and Purchase Order Approval – Trustees asked how long the engagement with the consultant would be. Deputy Director Behe noted the engagement would begin on November 6 through early 2025, as the implementation of the plan takes place. The Library last conducted a strategic planning process in 2016.

*Trustee Patel moved to approve a purchase order to Coraggio Group in the amount not to exceed \$110,000 for this project. Trustee Duncan seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

### **2024 Budget and Work Plan**

Preliminary Levy Certificate and Implicit Price Deflator – Finance Director Mary Stimson noted the Library is anticipating an increase in property tax revenue of approximately \$1 million.

2024 Preliminary Budget – Director Stimson reported the Library will bring forward a draft balanced budget in November. Trustees inquired about personnel budget projections. Stimson noted the Library builds in a 3.5% reduction to overall personnel costs to account for vacancies. The department conducted a recent analysis of budget projections from the past 10 years, which indicated the projection should be closer to 4.5%.

2024 Annual Workplan Summary – Deputy Director Behe emphasized that 2024 will be a year primarily dedicated to long-range planning. This includes significant projects, such as development of the Strategic Plan and Facilities Master Plan, opening of the new Sumner Library, and ongoing planning for the long-term Lakewood Library. Some of the tasks outlined in the plan will extend into the following year.

Deputy Director Behe further mentioned that the Public Services Department will maintain its commitment to the safe management of customer behavior and public spaces, while also

working to enhance its capacity to redesign services with a focus on outcomes-based planning and evaluation. Additionally, six EDI-related projects from the EDI pillar teams' recommendations have been selected for implementation in 2024. The Trustees expressed their satisfaction with the Library's initiative to launch Employee Resource Groups. Library administrators plan to provide quarterly workplan progress updates throughout 2024.

#### Policy Review

Library Rules of Conduct (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading) – *Trustee Duncan moved to approve the Library Rules of Conduct policy as presented, effective November 1, 2023. Trustee Sloan seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

Conflict of Interest (1<sup>st</sup> Reading) – Trustees inquired about the last revisions to the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics policies, which were June 12, 2013, and February 11, 2015, respectively.

Public Comment (1<sup>st</sup> Reading) – Trustees asked for clarification on language in the policy regarding the Board's discretion when addressing disruptions. Staff clarified that only the comment session would end but that the meeting may continue. Trustees also inquired about the amount of public comments received during meetings. Deputy Director Behe noted there has been a significant increase in citizen engagement since the pandemic. It was noted that libraries that hold meetings in the evenings consistently have more public comments.

Unattended Persons (1<sup>st</sup> Reading) – Trustees commended this policy as being well considered and robust, acknowledging its thoughtful provisions for both children and adults who may require the care described in this policy. Additionally, they recognized that the policy offers protection to Library staff as they interact with patrons.

Community Exhibits (1<sup>st</sup> Reading) – There was no additional discussion.

Accepting Unsolicited Materials and Campaign Literature and Political Forums Discussion – Concerns about signature-gatherers' behavior potentially becoming disruptive were addressed by Marketing and Communications Director Mary Getchell stating that staff would enforce the Library Rules of Conduct in these instances.

Trustees inquired about the distinction between access to post information on the Library's website and community bulletin boards within the buildings. The policy clarifies only non-profit entities or government agencies acting within the Library's service area may request to have their material posted on bulletin boards and the Library's website, on a space available basis.

Communication with the Public Discussion – There were no additional comments.

Social Media Discussion – There was discussion about removing acronyms for the Library in the policies and questions about how the Library handles comments.

Director Getchell clarified that the Library currently has three staff members responsible for monitoring social media comments. PCLS brings additional administrators and legal counsel into the decision-making process if there are concerns. Director Getchell also highlighted that such actions are infrequent and not a common occurrence.

Trustees inquired about the criteria the Library employs when selecting social media platforms. Director Getchell explained that Facebook and Instagram have been the primary platforms driving the Library's online presence. The Library previously utilized X (formerly Twitter) but is no longer active on it. Platforms like Tik-Tok and Threads have not been identified as viable options at the moment. LinkedIn and YouTube are primarily used as platforms to promote the business services the Library offers. The Library also monitors additional social media sites when PCLS is mentioned, staying informed about community discussions and engagement.

Deputy Director Chesbro noted the Library would present a report outlining the social media platforms the Library uses in preparation of the final reading of this policy.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

2023 Proposed Amended Budgets – Director Stimson highlighted the amendments to the Capital Fund and the Property and Facility Fund revenue and expenditures.

Deputy Director Chesbro noted the Library does not typically amend its budget. However, with higher than anticipated project bids and supply chain issues, a significant revision to the capital budget was necessary.

There was a question about how the transferred funds impact the Property and Facility Fund. Director Stimson noted these funds were set aside for future use for facilities projects. The remaining account balance will be utilized in future years.

*Trustee Duncan moved to approve Resolutions 2023-14 through 2023-15 as presented. Trustee Jenkins seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

2023 Transfers to Capital Fund

*Trustee Jenkins moved to approve Resolutions 2023-16 as presented. Trustee Patel seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

Director Stimson noted an error in the title of Resolution 2023-17, which should reflect a transfer of \$2.5 million.

*Trustee Jenkins moved to approve Resolutions 2023-17 as amended. Trustee Patel seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

Proposed 2024 Board Meeting Schedule – The options for the meeting schedule were presented. Discussion ensued. Trustee Duncan shared that while she prefers option 2, she has a standing obligation on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm, which would not enable her to attend 5:30 pm meetings in person. Trustees noted virtual attendance is helpful given their other obligations.

Trustees were pleased to see the opportunities to conduct periodic meetings at branches, providing local community members easier accessibility.

Trustees suggested the implementation of option 2, with 3:30 pm start times for virtual and 5:30 pm start times for in-branch meetings. Staff noted that public participation tends to occur when citizens feel they have a particularly compelling reason to attend, regardless of start time. Trustees expressed a desire to hold meetings in some of the less-centralized branch locations.

2024 Trustee Vacancies – Discussion ensued. The Board directed Library staff to submit the recommendation for Trustee Duncan’s appointment to her first full term to Pierce County Executive Dammeier.

National Friends of the Library Proclamation – John Ufford, President of the Friends of the Steilacoom Library and Bob Estrada, President of the Friends of the Lakewood Library, were in attendance for the reading of the proclamation.

Deputy Director Behe announced that October 15-23, 2023, is National Friends of the Library Week, designated to celebrate and acknowledge the Friends who generously volunteer their time and resources to support libraries. Friends play a vital role in advocating for increased Library awareness, fundraising, and providing support for various library activities. It was noted that due to the pandemic, there have been fewer opportunities for the Friends to actively contribute. Deputy Director Behe commended their consideration and understanding, as the Library focused on efforts to rebuild and rekindle its relationships with all Friends groups. Trustees expressed gratitude to the Friends for their commitment to the Library.

**OFFICERS REPORTS**

Summer Reading Program Results – Chair Penn recently visited her local library and witnessed a family engaging in the Summer Reading program. She also appreciated the book recommendations she received from staff. Trustee Sloan shared the story of a local University Place resident who posted a photo of herself and her child receiving their first library card.

Deputy Director Transition – Trustees once again expressed their gratitude to Deputy Director Chesbro.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Trustee Duncan will be excused from the November 8, 2023, meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 pm on motion by Trustee Duncan, seconded by Trustee Sloan.

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*Gretchen Caserotti*  
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Gretchen Caserotti, Secretary

DocuSigned by:  
*Jamilyn Penn*  
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Jamilyn Penn, Chair