



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2024 – 6:00 PM Regular Meeting
Ridgefield Community Library
210 North Main Avenue
Ridgefield, WA
Alene Wodaage Community Room
Hybrid/In-Person

Kristy Morgan, *Chair*, Clark County At-Large
Olga Hodges, *Vice Chair*, Klickitat County
Marie Coffey, *Secretary*, Clark County At-Large
Mary Ann Duncan-Cole, Skamania County
Mary Williams, City of Vancouver
Vacant Seat, City of Vancouver
Vacant Seat, Clark County At-Large

Present Board: Kristy Morgan, Olga Hodges (virtual), Marie Coffey, Mary Ann Duncan-Cole, Mary Williams

Absent:

Present Staff: Jennifer Giltrop, Executive Director; Alicia Gomori, Deputy Director; Justin Keeler, Outreach and Community Partnerships Director; Sean McGill, Branch Manager; Catrina Galicz, Finance Director; Andrea Scherer, Human Resources Director; Miranda Holtmann, Executive Assistant

Remote Access: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3852820936> • Meeting ID: 385 282 0936 • Passcode: 070150 • Phone Access 206-337-9723

Fort Vancouver Regional Library Business Meeting Minutes

AGENDA:

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** - Chair Kristy Morgan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 2. CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS** – the chair had no announcements and moved to the next item of business.
- 3. AGENDA APPROVAL** – At 6:00 p.m. Mary Ann Duncan-Cole made a motion to approve the agenda. Marie Coffey seconded. Motion approved with 5 out of 5 votes.
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS** – At 6:00 p.m. public comments began with the following speakers:
Katherine Gardner of Vancouver made a public comment about intellectual freedom.
Emily Losness of Vancouver made a public comment about equity and diversity.
Jude Jacobs of Vancouver made a public comment about equity and diversity.
Quill Onstead of Portland made a public comment about drag queen story hour.
Tim Dawdy of Ridgefield made a public comment about FVRL.
Gary Wilson of Clark County made a public comment to thank the board for their service and service to children.
- 5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**– At 6:12 p.m. Mary Williams made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda which included the minutes of the September 21, 2024 meetings. Mary Ann Duncan-Cole seconded. Motion approved with 5 out of 5 votes.
- 6. REPORTS**
 - 6.1. ORGANIZATIONAL REPORT** – At 6: 12 p.m. Alicia Gomori started the organizational report by introducing Greg Raquer the new Safety and Security Manager. Greg will oversee the security guards at Vancouver and Cascade Park and will build an infrastructure of protocols around safety and security across the district. Greg Raquer provided information on his background and fielded questions from the trustees. Gomori and Jennifer Giltrop provided the following highlights of the report:

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Library locations: Battle Ground, Cascade Park, Goldendale, La Center, North Bonneville, Ridgefield, Stevenson, Three Creeks, Vancouver, Vancouver Mall, Washougal, White Salmon Valley, Woodland, Yacolt, Yale



- Battle Ground hosted 60 first graders, teachers and parents from Yacolt who learned about library resources and signed up for library cards.
- Cascade Park tabled at the Peace and Justice Fair, the Veterans Stand Down event, and at Fred Meyer for community outreach.
- Goldendale presented at Centerville School's teachers meeting on resources available at the library for teachers and students.
- Following a nomination from the branch manager, the Stevenson Carson School District was awarded free books from the Washington Rural Library Project.
- The Vancouver branch is partnering with Goodwill to offer ESL classes and citizenship classes which continue to be well attended.
- Vancouver Mall participated with a table at CouveCon, a mall-wide pop culture event.
- The Foundation held the 2024 Authors & Illustrators Dinner, which was a successful event. The proceeds are still being calculated from that event.
- September was Library Card Holder Month. The district is at 29% of resident hold library cards. The district's target goal is to reach 32% (a growth of 3%) by the end of December.
- The Woodland Grand Opening was held on October 12 with almost 600 people attending the event. The branch is welcoming about 175 people per day.

6.2. BRANCH REPORT: RIDGEFIELD COMMUNITY LIBRARY – At 6:24 p.m. Sean McGill provided an update on library activities around the Ridgefield Community Library.

Library Staff; McGill highlighted the jobs and talents of branch staff.

Programing; Storytime, Music & Movement, bilingual Storytime, Clark Cowlitz Fire Rescue Storytime in the spring, Build It! English Conversation Circle, Community Builds Program. Ridgefield had the most entries submitted for the 2024 Bookmark Contest with over 1300 submissions, each of which were proudly displayed.

Summer at your Library; about 1200 "Bloop" craft kits provided to kids, yellow submarine display endured vigorous play but lasted the whole summer, window painting contest.

Community Engagement; YMCA partnership provided lunch at Davis Park to low-income children, the library provided crafts. The Y provides an instructor for a weekly Gentle Strength and Stretch program for active seniors. Monthly homeschool meet up. The library hosted a Community Resources Fair in August.

Outreach; National Night Out, the Back-to-School Bash, the Multicultural Festival, Trunk or Treat. The library is going to start visiting Compassion 360 regularly, a non-profit that supports families with food and clothing. Also, the library does outreach at the Early Learning Center in Ridgefield.

Friends of Ridgefield Community Libraries; National Night out, Trunk or Treat, reading to students at South Ridge and Union Ridge elementaries. Storybook Adventures, an event which will include seven activity stations for kids all book-themed, to take place in July 2025.

6.3. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS – At 6:37 p.m. of the recording Catrina Galicz provided the financial statement highlights for the month ending August 2024.

August Statement of Cash: The cash balance at the beginning of year was just over \$19 million and as of the end of August is \$15.6 million, a decrease of \$3.4 million. This was expected on account of the Woodland Project which had earmarked reserves to spend down for that project. Catrina Galicz noted a \$167,418 adjustment for accrued expenditures. These are expenditures that are anticipated but have not paid out due to state requirements that to be met before releasing the payments.

August Statement of Revenue: Operating revenue is at 63% of the expected 67% year-to-date budget. The contract with Yale was received at 44% in August. Interest revenue and E-Rate revenues both trended above expectation.

Mary Anne Duncan Cole asked for clarification of what E-Rate revenues are. Jennifer Giltrop answered that E-Rate is bundled through the taxes you pay on your phone bill. E-Rate, also known as the Universal Services

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Programming provides a percentage of which goes to schools and libraries to offset costs of internet and telecommunications.

August Statement of Expenses: All operating costs are under the year-to-date percent of the 67% of revenue. Personnel costs are at 59%, driven by vacancies and general turnover. The other categories are also trending below that 67% due to strong budget management, fiscal mindfulness and timing of expenditures. Capital outlay is trending above that 67% at 77.99% due to the timing of the Woodland project.

RECEIVE AND FILE AUGUST FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – At 6:44 p.m. Mary Williams made a motion to approve receiving and filing the August financial statements. Mary Ann Duncan Cole seconded. Motion approved with 5 out of 5 votes.

7. BUSINESS

7.1. FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

2025 Budget (1st Reading) – At 6:45 p.m. of the recording Jennifer Giltrop and Catrina Galicz presented on the first read of the 2025 budget. Giltrop opened by giving the timeline for the budget approval process. This will be the first read of the budget. The November meeting will hold a second reading with a levy rate certification as well as a public hearing. The budget will be on the December agenda for a vote.

Catrina Galicz provided an overview of the revenue budget. Property taxes make up 93% of annual revenues and revenues can only be increased 1%. What will be seen over the course of this budget review is that expenditures are increasing at a rate that outpaces revenue based on that 1%. The revenue budget assumes an operating revenue increase of approximately 2% of 2024 which excludes the impact of one-time Woodland Project associated revenues from the Foundation and Woodland Friends of the Library. The budget also displays just over a \$3.2 million use of reserves anticipated to bridge the gap between the revenues coming in and the expenditures anticipated. Jennifer Giltrop noted that the spending from reserves is in order to continue the same level of service across the district, while revenue is no longer keeping paces with expenses.

Catrina Galicz provided an overview of the expense budget. Budgeted reserves use in 2025 would fund technology needs, all of the district capital (maintenance and repair of existing buildings), and a portion of salaries and benefits. Overall operating budget increasing by 6% which is conservative. Personnel budget increasing by 7%. There is \$1.3 million budgeted for capital outlay for general maintenance and care of owned and non-owned building. A large portion of that has been earmarked for the Vancouver Library's deck which needs to be replaced.

Kristy Morgan asked why the Vancouver deck was determined as important to be done. Giltrop answered that the focus was on safety or systems that need to be replaced. She added that projects not included in this budget to be funded, could be put back in the budget if the revenue were to turn out better than anticipated.

Mary Ann Duncan-Cole asked if there was a difference in those decisions between buildings owned versus buildings not owned. Jennifer Giltrop noted that the library will uphold what is spelled out in the lease agreements in non-owned buildings and will balance financial accountability with the urgency to keep the buildings functioning for staff and patrons.

Catrina Galicz presented on the reserves budget for 2025. While 2025 will start by meeting the 90-day reserves target, by the end of the year the reserves will fall short of that target.



Jennifer Giltrop provided some contextual information about the Washougal Library funds in the reserves budget that was in the 2024 budget and will be carried over into the 2025 budget. Giltrop outlined that there are two goals informing decisions regarding the budget; 1) to keep the same level of service through 2025 and 2) to maintain facilities. Giltrop expressed that the most important take-away from this budget is that after the end of the year, as reserves are used, the district no longer meet the 90-day target of its fiscal management policy.

Catrina Galicz presented the 5-year projection 2025 – 2030. Going into 2026, the district will meet the 60-day test but not the 90-day test. In 2027, with no changes based on current known increases, the district would not pass either the 60- or 90-day test and will quickly operate at a deficit based on current known levels of 1% revenue increase and inflationary increases to expenditures. Jennifer Giltrop noted that the 5-year projection does not include any expenditures on repair and maintenance beyond 2025. In 2024 the district is currently collecting 27 cents per 1,000 of assessed value and the capacity is 50 cents per thousand. So, there is a gap between the District's capacity and statutory limit and what the District is able to levy with voter approval, as discussed at the board retreat.

Kristy Morgan asked when discussions of a levy lid lift would begin. Jennifer Giltrop replied that discussions will begin at the November meeting.

8. BOARD COMMENT - at 7:17 p.m. of the recording the chair opened the floor for any board comments.

Mary Williams commented that with such a big and complicated district, Catrina Galicz's work and spreadsheets make it easy to understand, which is not a small task.

Mary Ann Duncan-Cole asked if there was not an anticipation of big growth in terms of property value increases. Jennifer Giltrop noted that a certain level of growth can be anticipated but, as the district has a stance of conservative budgeting, it will not project what that growth will be.

9. Setting for next regular meeting: Monday, November 18 at 6:00 p.m. at Woodland Community Library. It will be a hybrid (in-person/online) meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT – At 7:19 p.m. Motion to adjourn moved by Mary Williams and seconded by Mary Ann Duncan-Cole.