



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 19, 2025 – 6:00 PM

Stevenson Community Library

120 NW Vancouver Ave

Stevenson, WA 98648

Hybrid/In-Person

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

Present Board: Kristy Morgan, Marie Coffey, Megan Dugan, Mary Ann Duncan-Cole, Olga Hodges (remote), Irina Kakorina (remote), Mary Williams (remote)

Absent:

Present Staff: Jennifer Giltrop, Executive Director; Catrina Galicz, Finance Director; Andrea Scherer, Human Resources Director; Miranda Holtmann, Executive Assistant; Julian Mendez, Communications and Marketing Director; Justin Keeler, Outreach and Community Partnership Director/Public Records Officer; Lucien Kress, IT Director; Devon Laing, IT Manager; David Wyatt, Branch Manager, Stevenson Community Library

Remote Access: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83558837140> • Meeting ID: 835 5883 7140 • Passcode: 610362 • Phone Access 971-247-1195

Fort Vancouver Regional Library Special Meeting Minutes

AGENDA:

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - Chair Morgan called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
2. **AGENDA APPROVAL** – At 6:01p.m. Marie Coffey made a motion to approve the agenda. Megan Dugan seconded. Motion approved with 6 out of 7 votes.
3. **CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS** – the chair had no announcements.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – At 6:02 p.m. public comments began with the following speakers.
 - **Katherine Gardner** of Vancouver made a public comment about her family’s experiences at FVRL branches.
 - **Charles Forrshew** of Vancouver made a public comment about how great FVRL Libraries are.
 - **Gary Wilson** of Clark County made a public comment about library programming for children.

At 6:08 p.m. the chair closed public comments.

5. **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**– At 6:08 p.m. Megan Dugan made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mary Ann Duncan-Cole seconded. Motion approved with 7 out of 7 votes.

6. **REPORTS**

6.1 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS – At 6:09 p.m. Catrina Galicz presented the following highlights for the month ending March 2025.

Statement of Cash: The cash balance at the end of March is just over \$14 million. This is an overall drawdown from January 1 to March 31 of just over \$4 million, as to be expected in the first quarter of the year. Revenues are received in April and October when the district receives the bulk of property tax revenues. The 60 – 90 day operating cash policy, the 60 day target is met but the 90 day target is not met. This is expected given the timing of the bulk of revenues.

Statement of Revenue: Revenues in March are meeting expectations. As property tax is the primary operating revenue source for the district and the intake of property tax is in April year to date annual budget percent of total property tax sits at 8% in March. April’s financials will look very different when

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those property taxes are received. Other taxes are trending slightly over projection. Revenues from services are trending higher than expected at 37% of the year-to-date budget percentage. These charges are equipment use fees, non-resident fees and lost/damaged materials fees.

Statement of Expenses: The most significant operating expense is the personnel budget which is at the end of March coming in at 21% of the annual budget, or 4% under budget due to vacancies that are expected to be filled. The supplies budget trending at 33% of annual budget is driven by technology with BiblioCommons purchased early in the year. Professional services line item is at 18% which will pick up in a quarter or two as the facilities master plan and strategic plan move forward. Galicz pointed out the \$500,000 intergovernmental services line item in the budget. This is where those election costs for all the different counties are budgeted. This will be an item of note when discussing the levy later in the agenda. Overall financials are meeting expectations either based off of time in the year or flow of revenues/and anticipated and budgeted expenditures at the end of March.

RECEIVE AND FILE MARCH FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – At 6:14 p.m. Mary Ann Duncan-Cole made a motion to approve receiving and filing the March 2025 financial statements. Megan Dugan seconded. Motion approved with 7 out of 7 votes.

6.2 ORGANIZATIONAL REPORT – At 6:15 p.m. Alicia Gomori provided the organizational report which included the following highlights.

- Goldendale Community Library partnered with the Goldendale Grange and hosted an OMSI Science Festival for the primary school. The event was made possible due to a one-time memorial donation through the foundation.
- La Center Community Library held a Fairy Garden program promoting early literacy. The Friends of the Library provided books children could take home.
- Ridgefield Community Library engaged with local elementary school teachers to bring classes to the library for Summer at Your Library promotion.
- A local physician in the Three Creeks Community Library service area includes library information in his after-visit summaries with kids and parents, linking to the FVRL website.
- The youth services staff at our Vancouver Community Library attended a cultural fable and fairytale-themed family night at Roosevelt Elementary connecting 45 families with library resources.
- Washougal partnered with Washougal School District Family Resource Center on a four-week reading and action program which brings together families for dinner, a book discussion, and an activity.
- Woodland Community Library's Friends of the Woodland Community Library were recently awarded the Washington Library Association's Volunteer Merit Award for their fundraising toward the new Woodland library.
- Staff from the Outreach and Community Partnerships department participated in the PUD Home and Garden Fair on April 26th. Staff were able to engage with more than 500 people at that event.
- In celebration of the 75th anniversary of the district, the passport program has launched and response has been very positive. Also, the library card design competition launched on April 30. The library card design competition is intended to generate community participation and creativity and support library card signup month in September.

6.3 LEVY INFORMATION UPDATE – At 6:24 p.m. Jennifer Giltrop provided a levy information update. The information effort has included staff workshops after the last board meeting, attending Friends of the Library meetings to explain all of the levy information, as well as presentations to community groups.

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Giltrop shared some of the 75th Anniversary bookmarks and the two-page levy lid lift information in the May/June News & Events Booklet.

Giltrop reported that the original budget of \$500,000 for the August ballot was based on estimates from the four counties reflecting past primary election trends. However, the actual updated estimate for the ballot has increased to approximately \$833,000, (\$700,000 for Clark County, \$75,000 for Klickitat, \$40,000 for Skamania, and \$18,000 for Cowlitz.) This increase is attributed to the organization being the only proposition on the ballot, which affects cost calculations. The final billing is expected later this year. The additional \$333,000 will likely come from the reserve fund.

Regarding the process Giltrop updated the board that FVRL received a draft of the ballot language that that will appear in the voter's pamphlet which was adopted at the January meeting. There is a vote yes and a vote no committee which had filing deadlines of May 16th to get their statements in. Now it is rebuttal time for each of the committee to file rebuttal statements. Giltrop shared the levy webpage at fvrl.org/levy. The page serves a resource for information about the levy, and highlighted some of the information and tools provided.

Giltrop closed with the emphasis that the library is funded primarily by property taxes which have an annual revenue growth limit of 1% plus new construction. In recent years, this has translated into a 2–3% increase in revenue, while expenses have risen at a higher rate of 4–5%. As a result, the district is currently facing a \$4.7 million deficit for the year, which is being covered using reserve funds. These reserves have enabled the library to maintain consistent service levels, but projections for 2026 indicate a larger deficit of \$7.6 million which is not sustainable as reserves would fall below the 60 to 90 day fund balance target. This fiscal imbalance underpins the district's decision to seek voter approval for a levy lid lift, aiming to secure funding necessary to preserve and grow library services in alignment with the needs of the community.

The board asked if there was anything the library could have done to anticipate the increase in the election costs for the August ballot.

Giltrop responded that the estimate that was given for Clark County for the August ballot was \$325,000. As it has turned out, with the reality of few or no other issues filed, which is not typical for the August ballot. There is no way they could have known. Giltrop added that she appreciated that the county auditor contacted her right away to inform her of the substantial increase.

The board commended the work done on the website, expressing appreciation for the data, the details and the engagement it provides.

6.4 STEVENSON BRANCH REPORT – At 6:44 p.m. David Wyatt presented the branch report for Stevenson, North Bonneville and the Skamania Bookmobile. The team consists of nine staff members including four dedicated bookmobile drivers—now one for each day on the road—enhancing capacity to support programming and outreach. The service area spans from Washougal to Glenwood, encompassing sparsely populated areas with an average of 7.3 residents per square mile, the lowest in the FVRL system. The bookmobile itself is on the road approximately 25 hours per week, focusing especially on Carson, the largest population center without a library building.

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The Friends of the Library remain deeply involved in local cultural and literacy efforts. Notable projects include the annual *Artists of the Gorge* event each October and *Skamania County Reads*, which features community-selected titles. This year's selection, *Itch*, follows a Pacific Northwest Trail hiker and has inspired multiple related programs including nature hikes and educational events. The Friends also support fundraising through community events and product sales and have brought in initiatives such as the Towns to Trails campaign in partnership with the Friends of the Gorge.

Community engagement has seen positive trends, with nearly 65% of Stevenson residents now holding library cards, and 32% of bookmobile service area residents participating—an increase of 6%. In North Bonneville, library cardholders now comprise 35% of residents, an 8% increase. The library has also adapted services for increased accessibility, such as maintaining an automated lending library inside North Bonneville's City Hall for patrons to pick up holds outside of open hours.

New programming efforts include moving one weekly storytime to Saturdays and taking storytime on the road alongside outreach events. Teen programming has expanded to include weekly teen hangouts with varying activities like movie nights and homework help. Other new programming includes English as a Second Language classes held weekly in collaboration with Goodwill, and a rotating tech petting zoo featuring interactive learning tools for families. Infrastructure developments include the installation of an EV charging station, funded by the Washington State Department of Commerce and operated by Energy Northwest. The library receives 15% of revenue generated from charging. A recent light-hearted highlight included media attention surrounding the return of a book 36 years overdue, which was featured in *The Columbian* and on KGW.

The report concluded with a tribute to former Stevenson community librarian Mara Reynolds, who served from 1980 to 2004. She was instrumental in founding *Artists of the Gorge*, originally focused on women artists. A celebration of her life and a month-long exhibit were held earlier in the year to honor her legacy and contributions to the library and broader community.

6.5 Summer Reading At Your Library — At 7:00 p.m. Justin Keeler presented on FVRL's summer engagement strategy, emphasizing cross-division collaboration and community outreach. The summer programming is centered around the 2025 Summer Reading Program, the library's 75th anniversary, and the ongoing Connect Card initiative supporting student success. Planning for summer activities begins in the fall, involving multiple teams including Outreach and Community Partnerships, Communications and Marketing, Public Services, and Facilities. Each team plays a critical role in creating and distributing materials, planning events, developing outreach strategies, and supporting logistics for the expansive summer programming effort.

Summer Reading 2025 continues the use of popular cryptid mascots and includes enhancements from prior years. The program now includes adults and encourages repeat visits through a structured incentive system. Participants are asked to log 40 days of reading between June 15 and August 15 to qualify for prizes. This year, each library location will offer four grand prizes across age groups, and incentives will be distributed throughout the summer in 10-day intervals.

Outreach remains a central focus, with library staff aiming to reach children and families who may not be able to visit a branch, by partnering with local organizations and delivering programming to over 170 external sites like meal programs and housing facilities.

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To commemorate the district's 75th anniversary, each branch is hosting a significant summer event, often supported by Friends of the Library groups, featuring activities such as live performances and screen printing with a special anniversary logo. In addition to traditional programming like storytimes and book discussions, the summer will feature nearly 400 programs across the district, including 65 traveling programs, 92 paid performers, and over 80 one-off events developed by local branches. Outreach is being intensified at major community events, with an estimated 50 large-scale events scheduled between June and August to increase visibility and community interaction.

Keeler also highlighted the Connect Card program, which grants public school students streamlined access to FVRL's digital resources using a modified student ID number. This initiative, launched in response to the 2017 strategic plan, currently serves around 65,000 students across six participating school districts. The program offers continuous access to e-resources regardless of the status of a student's personal library card and features a curated portal aligned with grade levels and subject areas. Challenges to expanding the Connect Card program include a lack of dedicated IT staff in some districts and the need for school board and administrative approval. As feedback comes in through the current strategic planning process it could be determined to further develop the program to address these challenges to support more students in the district.

7. BUSINESS

7.1 Facilities and Finance Committee

Resolution 2025-07 Closeout of the Construction Contract for Woodland— At 7:23 p.m. Catrina Galicz introduced Resolution 2025-07 which deems the Woodland Construction as complete. The new Woodland Community Library opened in October 2024. The district has continued to work through closeout efforts with Bremik, the main contractor, and other vendors since. FVRL is coming very close to issuing the last checks to pay in relation to the project and ready to release retainage to Bremik. Retainage is an amount that is held as progress payments are made through the contract to make sure of compliance with the contract. In order to release retainage, FVRL will have to file a notice of completion, which requires the board's acknowledgement of the project being complete.

At 7:26 p.m. Mary Ann Duncan-Cole made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-07: Closeout of the Construction Contract for Woodland. Marie Coffey seconded. Motion approved with 7 out of 7 votes.

- 8. Executive Session RCW 42.30.110(1i) Litigation** —at 7:26 p.m. Chair Morgan announced that the board of trustees would exit the room to go into executive session, to return at 7:40 p.m.

The Chair called the meeting back to order at 7:40 p.m.

- 9. BOARD COMMENT** – at 7:40 p.m. the Chair opened the floor for board comments.

- Mary Ann Duncan-Cole thanked Giltrop for the thorough information
- Marie Coffey thanked David Wyatt and the Stevenson branch for hosting the meeting
- Chair Morgan commended the levy website for its clear design and ease of use.

- 10. Setting for next Regular meeting;** Monday, June 16, 6:00 p.m. at Ridgefield Community Library.

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- 11. ADJOURNMENT** – At 7:41 p.m. Marie Coffey made a motion to adjourn. Mary Ann Duncan-Cole seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.