

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PIERCE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 12, 2020**



CALL TO ORDER

Chair Daren Jones called to order the regular meeting of the Pierce County Rural Library District Board of Trustees at 3:32 pm. Board members present were Pat Jenkins, Rob Allen, Jamilyn Penn and Brian Thomason. The meeting was conducted by telephone conference due to the Governor's Safe Start Washington Reopening Plan to slow the transmission of the coronavirus.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of July 8, 2020, Regular Meeting
2. Approval of July 2020 Payroll, Benefits and Vouchers

Mr. Allen moved for approval of the consent agenda. Mr. Jenkins seconded the motion and it was passed.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

New Trustee Welcome - Executive Director Georgia Lomax introduced new trustee, Brian Thomason. The trustees welcomed him and expressed their pleasure in having the opportunity to serve with him.

ROUTINE REPORTS

Fundraising Performance Report – Foundation Director Dean Carrell reported he is developing an updated report that provides more details on donor activity. Trustees recommended additional narrative on the report and an opportunity to discuss what may be impacting fundraising outcomes.

Mr. Carrell reported the Foundation will likely not achieve the \$300,000 goal due to the pandemic. Ms. Lomax noted the amended budget approved in July addresses this.

Mr. Jenkins expressed gratitude to the donors who are supporting the Library.

Metrics Dashboard – Ms. Lomax reported the next dashboard will include metrics reflecting how the library is adapting services to limitations caused by the pandemic.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

COVID-19 Update

Cash Status – Finance and Business Director Cliff Jo reported the Library recorded nearly \$1.9 million of property tax revenue, which in total for the first half of the year amounts to about a combined 1% delay. As of August 3, 2020, the Library had \$22.4 M in the bank.

Curbside Service Launch – Customer Experience Director Jaime Prothro reported the Graham, Bonney Lake and Steilacoom Libraries will be open for curbside next week. Plans are underway for outreach and out of building visits. Work will continue on how to safely, smartly and effectively adjust processes as the Library continues to how to serve the public and what their priorities for library services are at this time. The Library will continue to adjust and respond as the needs of the community change.

Ms. Penn noted her appreciation for considering equity in the planning process for how to provide access to the Library's customers.

Communications to the Public in the Event of COVID-19 Infection – Ms. Lomax reported that the Library will communicate proactively should there be a COVID-19 infection.

NEW BUSINESS

2021 Budget and Work Plan – Ms. Lomax reviewed the Library’s levy sustainability plan to maintain services for at least five years per the levy promise. The Library is currently in phase 1, when revenue is more than needed for services and operations and unallocated funds are placed in the levy sustainability fund for withdrawal in the future when revenue is less than that needed for services and operations. She noted the Library will continue to develop its budget in response to the public’s service needs, interest and use.

Ms. Lomax reviewed the Implicit Price Deflator (IPD) which is projected to fall below 1% and limit the Library’s allowable revenue increase unless the Board passes a resolution of substantial need to override it. The IPD will be known in September.

Ms. Lomax asked the Board for guidance about how they would like staff to approach the 2021 budget and whether the pandemic’s impacts on individuals, businesses and the community will require different choices than normal.

Discussion ensued around the possibility of levying at a lower rate but ensuring the Library will still be able to maintain operations in the future as a result.

The trustees agreed due to the uncertainty of future impacts of the pandemic, it would be important to develop a conservative and flexible approach, while balancing the burden on taxpayers with maintaining the long term health of the Library and its services and its ability to serve the public now and in the future.

Mr. Jenkins stated the importance of having the lowest impact on communities as possible, noting the communities put their trust in the Library and are rewarded for that trust with very good stewardship of its funds.

Ms. Lomax asked the Board to share their thoughts on the Library’s service direction for next year.

The trustees recommended the Library remain flexible, monitor changing trends in what the public wants and uses, and learn how it can help those who are most affected.

Ms. Lomax said the restructured Customer Experience department now provide positions focusing specifically on workforce development and technology/digital literacy, two important service needs during the pandemic. She said there is much uncertainty about when the Library can welcome people back into its buildings so the Library will need to determine how to best serve people without technology or who do not have strong digital literacy skills so they aren’t further left behind.

Ms. Lomax added that the Library will need to listen to the public and put its resources into the services most important to the community, and deliver them in the best way to reach the customers and communities they are intended to serve.

BOARD EDUCATION AND SERVICE REPORTS

Racial and Social Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – Ms. Lomax reviewed the Trustee Bylaws, key library laws in the Revised Code of Washington, and the Library’s Mission Vision and Values, stating they provide a foundation for the work of the Board as it relates to equity, diversity and inclusion. Ms. Lomax noted the Library must develop a strategy to guide the work and make decisions in the long term.

The trustees agreed on the importance of updating the Mission, Vision and Values to identify opportunities for improvement and make it more relevant to the work the Library does related to equity. Ms. Lomax will add this to the Board’s 2021 work plan.

Staff Experience Director Cheree Green provided an overview of the work the Library has been doing related to staffing diversity, equity and inclusion. This work is part of a plan that began when Ms. Lomax was selected for the Executive Director position and made this a priority for the organization.

The Library is in its third year of the 5-year strategy, having spent two years assessing demographics as they relate to the community and conducting an internal assessment to revise processes to better increase diversity. The recruiting budget was increased to broaden the pool of diverse candidates and support this strategy. The Library's goal is to continue this work approved by the Board. Plans are underway to identify and select a consultant to review the Library's work and recommend adjustments to the strategy.

There was discussion on the challenges in the library field to attract a more diverse pool of applicants into library schools. Ms. Lomax said the Library's Staff Experience department has been adapting its hiring process to be less library centric so those without library experience can see themselves working for the organization. Changes have been made to position titles and job requirements as a result of this work.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Pierce County Reads event featuring author Amy Stewart, is scheduled as a virtual event via Facebook Live on August 29, at 1:30 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:36 pm on motion by Mr. Allen, seconded by Ms. Penn.

Georgia Lomax, Secretary

Daren Jones, Chair