

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES

Date: August 2, 2022

Board Members

in Attendance: Sandra Crosland, Chair  
Jim Harvey  
Wendy Ogata  
Shannon Sebahar  
Reed Spencer  
John Watson

Board Members

Excused: Diana Allison

Others

in Attendance: Bryan Baron, Deputy Weber County Attorney  
Karen Burton, Ogden Valley Branch Manager  
Phoebe Carter, Assistant Director  
Shari Creer, Friends of the Library  
Kathy Gambles, Friends of the Library  
Jennifer Hankins, Librarian  
Marcia Harris, Development Board  
Susan Meagher, Librarian  
Randy Mueller, Professional Business Manager  
Holly Okuhara, Assistant Director  
Julia Valle, Business Office Manager  
Lynnda Wangsgard, Director

Public Comments:

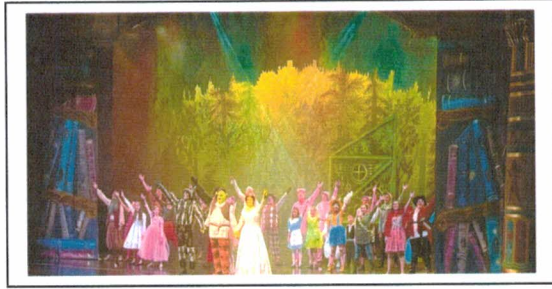
Crosland called the meeting to order at 5 p.m., noting there was no one present who wished to make a public comment.

Approval of July 5, 2022 Meeting Minutes:

Watson moved approval of the July 5, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. Sebahar seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Commissioner's Report:

Harvey reported on County-hosted summer activities. He was looking forward to speaking to America Reads volunteers the following Friday afternoon, thanking them for their service. He also enthusiastically announced a wonderful opening of "Shrek: The Musical" at Perry's Egyptian Theater. The play was being staged by Ogden Musical Theatre which, Harvey noted, was in its fifth year and doing extremely well with local support.



Shrek is a comedy appropriate for any age group, Harvey said. It features a wonderful local cast, costuming, and lighting. It opened to great reviews and feedback. The show runs through August 13 and tickets are still available. Bring the kids and grandkids for a fun evening, he concluded.

Photo credit: Angelika Brewer, Special to the Standard-Examiner

The Weber County Fair will kick-off August 10 and is continually improving as staff attends national fairs and incorporates trends into the local event. They are planning for great crowds. One of his favorite events, Harvey noted, is the Junior Livestock Show and Auction. Young people work over a period of 14 months to raise their animals and then compete for prize ribbons at the show and earn money from the sale. Local community members contribute almost \$900,000 to the sale, most of which kids use for schooling. Harvey said he is proud of what goes on in the community under the umbrella of Weber County government.

Harvey acknowledged tax notices had been mailed and truth in taxation hearings scheduled by a number of entities where elected officials will discuss needs and take input. Weber County is not proposing a tax increase at this time, having approved a small increase last year for the Library and stormwater management. Harvey encouraged people to attend the hearings, noting it will be an ideal time to learn that while the County Assessor may have increased their property valuation, it does not mean in itself that their taxes will be increased. Taxes increase when the rate is adjusted upward by a vote of elected officials in a public meeting and then only after holding a truth in taxation hearing.

Harvey concluded by saying elected officials are kicking off the budgeting process as well as preparing for the upcoming legislative session. They are preparing the soil and planting seeds to obtain a bountiful harvest.

#### Director's Report:

Wangsgard noted positive trends continued with both revenue and expense line items detailed on the financial report. The report was generated at a point 58% of way through the year. Almost 54% of budget had been encumbered or expended. There were no questions.

The output measures report illustrated enthusiastic use of the Library during the month of June with collection usage totaling 215,412, a benchmark high for the year. Summer literacy activities drove a 16% increase in the number of attendees during June, 2022, over that of the previous year.

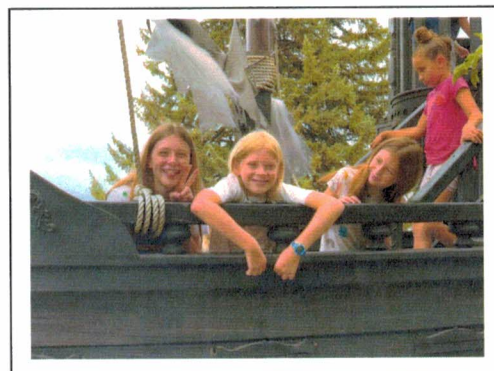
America Reads was in its final week. Seven-hundred thirty (730) students enrolled and participated in a total of 4,800 sessions, provided by 49 tutors who contributed 3,130 volunteer hours. Young people and the families of those who had spent the summer reading with tutors were being treated to a celebratory magic show.





There were so many students enrolled that two magic shows needed to be scheduled to accommodate everyone. Every reader also received a completion certificate and a book for their home library. Tutors were being honored at a dinner later during the week. Harvey and Crosland will represent the County and the Library.

Children were being rewarded with a final week of fun activities for their participation in an “Ocean of Possibilities” themed Summer Reading Club. Events include a pirate party where they are making pirate masks and pirate finger puppets, playing games, and touring a pirate ship.



Even though in-house summer reading events for young people were winding down, incentive prizes were still available to encourage young people to keep reading right up to the beginning of the school year, and beyond. Meagher will report on adult summer reading later during the meeting.

In addition to planning for “Library Square at the Fair” August 10-13, preparations were also being made to host the annual book and surplus property sale August 27.

Draft copies of HB471 were distributed. Wangsgard noted the purpose of the proposed bill was to require background checks for all library employees. The bill was introduced last session and did not pass. The sponsor is rerunning the bill and the Utah State Library has been tasked to gather input from Library boards and employees. Weber County hosted a meeting today to flesh out issues that should be presented to our senators and representatives. Wangsgard asked the Board to weigh-in on their thoughts to share with County representatives as well as State elected officials.

Watson asked if Wangsgard was in favor or against the legislation.



Wangsgard said she was not in favor of the bill as it is presently written. The State Library staff is working with the sponsor to see what changes can be made. There is concern in the library community that it is an unfunded mandate that targets library employees with requirements that are different in kind from those of others who work with children, such as parks and recreation employees and those who work with older populations.

Ogata asked if there were costs associated with the bill.

Watson noted there was no request for an appropriation so implementation and ongoing costs would fall on local libraries.

Watson asked if there was a particular problem the sponsor was trying to address.

Wangsgard said no one was aware of any specific action or incident, nor was it a national trend to require criminal background checks for library employment.

Crosland asked if the sponsor was addressing similar bills to other departments.

“Not to our knowledge,” Wangsgard replied.

Watson said the County Commissioners are very well connected and may be able to find out what is being proposed and why.

Wangsgard requested the Board discuss HB471 and compose a coherent response during their next meeting so it can be forwarded to the Utah State Library and shared with those who will represent the County’s interests during the next legislative session.

Crosland asked that each Board member read HB471 carefully and forward concerns to her. She will pool the responses and forward them to Wangsgard.

Federal Grant Update, Emergency Connectivity Fund Decision Letter, \$357,000 Award:

The Library had been selected to receive a \$357,000 Federal grant to fund hotspots loaned to the public through 2023. Bryant Reeder, Manager of Library Information Technology, was working on details for administration of the funds in order to determine if the State will take responsibility or expect the Library to oversee this grant. If the Library is required to handle the administration process, the County Auditor may need to be asked to help account for the funds. In-house administration may come with some staffing and budget implications.

Sebahar asked if matching funds were required.

Wangsgard said there was no match required.

American Library Association Annual Conference – Trip Reports:

Wangsgard introduced those who attended the annual conference of the American Library Association, inviting them to share their experiences with brief reports.

Baron said he had wanted to attend this particular conference for several years and the opportunity did not disappoint. The multi-day event showcased vendors, authors, and experts who gathered to discuss all things library. After registering, he began looking at available courses and found a variety on relevant topics of interest. He selected presentations that pertained to legal topics and, if nothing pertaining to his position as legal counsel was available that hour, he attended other sessions to better understand the mission and roles of libraries.

Baron noted there were two items of special interest that added to his knowledge base and confirmed Weber County Library is already doing things correctly.

The first session was a workshop where incredibly knowledgeable presenters reviewed the legal requirements to qualify for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code. Friends of the library and library foundations are typically organized under 501(c)(3) provisions, requiring that they not be operated to benefit private interests, attempt to influence legislation, or participate in campaign activity for or against political candidates. Donations to 501(c)(3) organizations are tax deductible.

Organizations with another entity IRS designation, 501(c)(4), can engage in lobbying and advocacy. They may also engage in fundraising, but donations to these entities are not tax deductible.

A third type of IRS designation of interest was a 509(a)(3), the purpose of these so designated entities is to support other exempt organizations. These entities are able to handle all the paperwork and other management responsibilities associated with a 501(c)(3), lifting the burden and considerable time it takes to successfully run these tax-exempt entities.

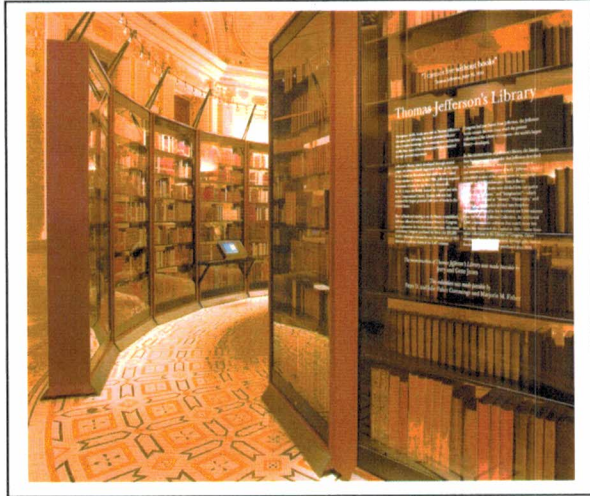
Baron also participated in a session about people who engage in trying to remove books from libraries. One of the strategies employed by those who wish to remove books is labeled a “First Amendment Audit.” These people go into governmental offices with a camera and try to goad employees into making comments that they then post on social media. In some cases, they may do this for profit. Presenters talked about how to prepare for these “audits” in order to protect the integrity of the library. Baron and Wangsgard had already worked on a policy and procedure that was adopted by the Library Board to cope with these disruptions.

Baron noted that he works with an extraordinary team of legal professionals in the County Attorney’s Office, but they are not familiar with issues that are unique to libraries. It was helpful to meet with and hear from experts that Weber County Library is on the right track. Baron concluded his report by saying it was an awesome conference and that he especially appreciated the opportunity to get to know Friends of the Library and staff.

Wangsgard thanked Baron for attending, noting he added a meaningful dimension to the group, as did Friends of the Library. A robust group with different responsibilities and points-of-view made the conference experience all the more beneficial, she said.

Creer said attendance was an amazing opportunity. She especially appreciated the preplanning that juxtaposed meetings, tours, and discussions to make attendance even more profound.

Creer's most vivid experience was a tour of the Library of Congress (LC). Even after visits to Europe and experiencing the magnificent buildings in Italy and France, for example, the LC stood out as the most beautiful place she had ever seen. It is home to one of the world's largest collections of more than 25,000,000 books and 170,000,000 other digitized items, including 2,600,000 recordings



On exhibit was the Thomas Jefferson collection as it was originally donated to Congress. A total of 6,487 books were made available after the British torched the original library during the war of 1812. The special exhibit offered an opportunity to see what Jefferson learned and valued from the pages of books. “We are the grateful recipients of Jefferson’s gift. Libraries continue to be the keepers of this collection, keepers of history,” she noted. “It is the responsibility of libraries to make books available so others may use this collective knowledge to enlighten and uplift themselves.”

Visits to the monuments on the National Mall and the graves at Arlington National Cemetery, were emotional experiences that brought forth a deeper realization of how many sacrificed so much so that we have the freedom to read, Creer said. These experiences were truly amazing.

Creer reported on a conference session focused on current trends in book banning and emphasizing why people should have the right to decide for themselves what they want to read. The session was focused around a panel discussion that included Jason Reynolds, award-winning author; Nancy Pearl, librarian, prolific reader, and instigator of the rule of 50; Christopher Stewart, school librarian; and George Flores, a student guest. The rule of 50, Creer noted, advised that readers should feel free to close the book and move on if it had not engaged the reader at this point. The premise of the session was that people should prepare “elevator” questions and suggested responses that support positive discussions concerning the right to read. These thoughtful comments should be appropriate for sharing in a short amount of time; that is, the time it takes an elevator to go from one floor to another.

Examples of elevator responses could be:

- Books take you somewhere to where you can learn about others.
- You are silencing a voice that someone wants to hear when you remove a book.
- Talking and reading together brings people together to build a community based on understanding and respect.
- Facing up to your own prejudices and setting them aside is hard.
- Librarians believe what a child gets from a book is what they are ready to receive.
- A healthy conversation can fix what you are afraid of in a book.
- Instead of taking a book away from the collection add one.
- Libraries are a source of information; patrons come seeking answers to their questions and it is our job to assist.





Creer said that the size and direction taken by individual libraries and friends groups were varied and unique. Despite differences, “we are all on the same page, all committed to the same goal.”

Attendees at various conference sessions shared ideas of how to make Friends more visible, determine who uses and who doesn't use libraries, and how to meet people where they are and find ways to connect them with library services. There was a special interest in increasing diversity among members of Friends groups, including adding more children and teens. Making libraries more inclusive creates more trust and enables community members to engage more effectively with one another, Creer said.

Creer concluded by saying the conference was an invaluable opportunity that better prepared her for the role of leading Friends of the Library. Now the goal is to implement what she learned.

Gambles noted it was a bonus to be able to attend with Creer. The two were an energetic duo.

Before reporting on the sessions attended, Gambles, said she came home with renewed respect for the foresight and efficiency that is Weber County Library System (WCLS). As someone outside the inner workings of the Library, she experienced first-hand how WCLS achieves ongoing success. The trip began June 21<sup>st</sup>, but preparations for the quest began months before that. “To experience first-hand the organization and leadership skills was amazing. To observe the comfort of things flowing smoothly, individuals knowing and honoring their own responsibility was amazing. For me it was a delightful experience like what I feel whenever I'm in a Weber County Library where people take what they do very seriously. The experience was just terrific.”

Gambles noted that everyone who attended the conference had a special assignment. Friends were to be looking for outreach and public relations opportunities to grow new users. With this focus in mind, she had an epiphany early in the conference about “reframing the conversation.”

The reframing was sparked while touring the Library of Congress where people were wearing vests that invited guests to “Ask me a question.” She did ask one of the docents a question, who then engaged two additional docents in seeking a correct response. Along the way, they engaged another guest and they shared a delightful story about the LC being of such importance that it was the first building in the nation's capital to have electricity. What a neat thing, ask a question and get a neat little story, Gambles thought. The Pleasant Valley Branch was the first building north of Salt Lake City to be LEED (leadership in energy and environmental design) certified. What if WCL had docents who could share neat stories, bringing visibility to the Library System by way of sharing whispers of support.

Gambles shared details of an all afternoon conference session titled, “ABCs of Preserving Intellectual Freedom,” noting the information and insights gained were very beneficial. She learned the opposition is very well organized and well-funded, but there is much Friends groups can do to make sure the right to read does not shift. Much of the action toward censorship is based in fear of the unknown. When we have understanding, it protects the community as whole, not just one group. She is planning to take advantage of a QR tool kit provided by the American Library Association to help shift the conversation from fear to an understanding of how reading works to build understanding which, in turn, builds a strong community.



Another session Gambles attended featured three teens on a panel and brought to mind how Friends can work to bring more young people to WCLS, lending their active and willing voices in Board meetings and elsewhere. Quotes from these young panelists worth pondering included:

- What can't I know, in the age of the Internet you can't censor.
- But we don't get the full picture.
- We need to feel welcome to have a conversation.
- I'm unafraid of what I don't know, but I want to know.

In addition to attending many very interesting sessions, it was a joy to see all the different flavors of librarians. They were a fun group to be with and all were dedicated to offering their users insight into ways to dissolve fear and shift energy away from censorship and toward the vibrance books provide.

In conclusion, Gambles invited others to join her at The Kings English Book Store to talk books and share lunch. Just experience a real book store with other readers, she said.

Hankins noted she was a relatively new WCLS employee who benefited from traveling with the group composed of staff from all over the System. Experiencing the conference together facilitated covering a large number of learning opportunities and offered time for discussions that helped everyone better see the whole world of library services from various points-of-view.

Hankins said she focused on conference sessions designed to improve services to marginalized community members whose freedom to read is always in jeopardy. Libraries are for everyone, regardless of their current station in life, she noted.

A session titled, "The Fifth Freedom: Protecting the Right to Read for Incarcerated Individuals," was especially exhilarating. As a library student, Hankin completed an internship for the San Francisco Public Library's Jail and Re-entry Services Program. One of the advisors for the interns was Dr. Jeanie Austin who was on the panel for this conference session. Hankins said the session reminded her of the importance of making sure jails and prisons have a library, or at least access to library services. People imprisoned often have a desire to better themselves through education and reading. Many will return to society, yearning for a better life, Libraries can offer them hope if we defend their freedom to read.

This and other library panels and discussions rekindled Hankins' passion for service and re-invigorated her with ideas of how to improve services. She committed to presenting these ideas to Library managers and perhaps work to implement them in our community.

During an evening tour of national monuments, Hankins was reminded of how important it is for librarians to support each other and get back to their roots, their library missions. In 1963, while accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway, Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits." This quote, among others, was chiseled on the walls of the King Memorial.

I was reminded, she said, of how complementary to King's statement is the WCLS mission: "To empower each member of the community with a sense of personal worth and the self-confidence necessary to undertake and fulfill a unique life-plan; that is, to pursue their individual goals, to achieve their own happiness." Perhaps this quote should be chiseled on our Library walls.

Hankins said she came back empowered and thanked the Board for the opportunity.

Meagher concurred with others, saying she was hired in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and had not yet fully met and integrated with employees at other locations. It was invigorating to attend the conference with people from other WCLS buildings and divisions and have the opportunity to build relationships.

Meagher made time to visit the Renwick Gallery that, due to its small size, mostly offers special exhibits. The theme this time was "Homes for Dreaming." She found "if you substitute the word 'Library' for 'Home,' it sums up nicely what we are about." The tone of the exhibit was set by a quote from Maya Angelou: "The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned." That's what we do at Weber County Library, we aim to create a place where everyone is welcomed, accepted, and assisted wherever they are in their journey through life.

There was a large neon sign at the Renwick reading, "This Present Moment Used to Be the Unimaginable Future," asking what we owe future generations. "What do we want to be proud of when we look back?" This concept has already been used in teambuilding at Pleasant Valley Branch.

One round table discussion found her seated with academic librarians who found that up to 80 percent of incoming freshman that when doing research do not have the digital literacy skills required to vet and analyze resources; triangulate information from different resources and make sure it comes together; broaden or narrow a search; or use "and," "or," or "not" to formulate a search strategy. Working with teens in a public library setting to help them develop these skills offers a rich opportunity to engage them in meaningful learning. Blending this need for teen learning with a session Meagher attended on engaging communities by way of TikTok sparked an idea for how to reach teens with short 15-60 second spots, enticing them to attend programs to enhance digital literacy skills.

Meagher moved from her report on the conference experience to offering a brief adult summer reading wrap-up, reminding everyone that Weber County's summer reading programs were designed for people of every age. More than 2,100 individual adults signed up. They turned in over 5,400 raffle tickets earned by reading hundreds of books, including exploring different genre, graphic novels, and young adult fiction. They read hundreds of books to children. They also earned drawing tickets by looking at art in Library galleries; signing up for a Libby Hoopla, or Kanopy account; and by following the Library on social media. Everyone likes a prize and it was fun to reward readers she said. Her favorite comment was from a parent who said, "I finished a whole adult book!"

Crosland thanked Meagher for her summer reading report and said it was thrilling to hear what went on at the annual American Library Association conference and how group attendance empowered the staff to better serve the community.

## Book and Surplus Property Sale:

Wangsgard reviewed three policies and procedures used to manage the Library materials collection, including donations and withdrawals that are made available to the public during the annual book and surplus property sale. The following documents had previously been distributed to give Board members an opportunity for study before their September 6 meeting when these items will be on the agenda for consideration and reapproval:

- Administrative Procedure, Guidelines for Evaluating Donation and Library Discards
- Board Policy, Gifts
- Board Policy, Surplus Property

Baron will report during the September meeting on how the Board's policies and procedure fit under County ordinance and make suggestions for change, if needed.

Three Library vehicles and a tractor with implements will be sold separately from the book and surplus property sale in order to ensure they bring the best sale price. The vehicles were being surplussed in order to make needed room in Library garages and to ensure the staff has reliable transportation.

Vehicles to be declared surplus included:

- 1995 Suzuki Sidekick, 113,953 miles
- 2004 Tacoma Pickup, 247,101 miles
- 2009 Ford Van, 207,648 miles

Other assets to be declared surplus included a 1995 Kubota tractor, Model L3010, with snowblower and front-end loader.

Wangsgard noted it was getting increasingly hard to obtain parts needed to keep the Suzuki in running condition. Likewise, the County shops were finding it difficult to make the timely repairs needed on the Tacoma pickup. The Ford van was donated to the Library for use in shuttling community members from downtown Ogden to other Library buildings while the Main Library was under renovation. The van is no longer needed and should be put to better use. The Kubota tractor is too large for the storage area at Ogden Valley Branch and has been replaced with a smaller and more versatile compact tractor with useful attachments.

Wangsgard was consulting with Jason Horne, County Purchasing Director, for advice on how to advertise and sell the surplussed items. Horne recommended a website (<https://www.govdeals.com/>) and welcomed other suggestions from the Board. The vehicles will be kept in service until sold.

Watson said he will be happy to help market the vehicles, noting they hit a sweet spot for parents looking for something for a high-schooler to drive. Their value is maximized right now. They are worth more than they were two years ago, he said.

Wangsgard advised that the car and small pickup truck will need to be replaced. The plan is to sell the three vehicles and tractor with implements, putting the income toward replacements.

Watson reminded that the County may have a small pickup they plan to surplus that would be a good buy for the Library. Buying from the County may be more reasonable than buying on the open market at this time.

Wangsgard agreed, noting the Library purchased a Sprinter van from the County several years ago and it still travels daily among the five libraries, delivering books from location to location so they can be picked up by users at their neighborhood Library. The Sprinter was procured when the number of crates in the daily delivery grew beyond 40, far too many for a single run in the small Toyota pickup.

The vehicles to be sold as surplus were parked at Southwest Branch. Board members were invited to inspect them after the meeting.

Board Priorities, 2023 Budget Preparation:

Wangsgard invited input for FY 2023 budget priorities. Items previously discussed included implementation of the Continuity of Government Operations Plan, starting small and beginning to build toward the infrastructure required for execution when needed; funding for replacement of dated vehicles; and moving the Blue Sky sculpture. In addition to maintaining current collections and services, were there other priorities that should be considered, she asked.

Sabaha suggested prioritizing and perhaps adding a position to handle social media. She recently visited the Boston Public Library and saw a podcast area that was an interesting way to bring people in and engage them as users.

Wangsgard agreed an additional position to handle social media and enhance the soon to be replaced Library Website was a much needed priority. Enhancing the Website has the added potential to develop it into a digital branch, offering 24/7 access to resources. Those currently tasked with promotions are overextended and do not have the bandwidth to enhance digital offerings on social media or maximize value on the Website.

Further suggestions for budget priorities should be forward to Wangsgard during the next couple of weeks.

Other:

Crosland said she enjoyed the experience of a few years ago when Board members made a short report of a program or service during monthly meetings. "Board members have to be connected to what is being done to be effective as policy makers," she said. "The experience of going to a library to meet and talk with staff is worthwhile." Crosland volunteered to in September and then invite others to present during future meetings.

There being no further business, Watson moved to Adjourn. Sebahar seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted: Julia Valle 6 September 2022  
Julia Valle Date