

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

Date: April 6, 2021

Board Members

In Attendance: Cynthia Mattson, Chair
Diana Allison
Sandra Crosland
Jim Harvey
Kathleen Jensen
Reed Spencer
Spencer Stokes

Others

In Attendance: Bryan Baron, Legal Counsel
Phoebe Carter, Assistant Library Director
Holly Okuhara, Assistant Library Director
Bryant Reeder, Information Technology Manager
Julia Valle, Business Office Manager
Lynnda Wangsgard, Library Director

Mattson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Public Presentations:

There were no public presentations.

Approval of March 2, 2021, Meeting Minutes:

Mattson called for comments or corrections to the draft minutes. There were none. Allison moved acceptance. Crosland seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Commissioner's Report:

Harvey reported exciting discussions were underway concerning a branch library to serve northwestern Weber County residents. Debt on the Pleasant Valley Branch had been retired early, utilizing money in the Library Fund (savings account). In addition, a Library capital account had been established, also drawing upon Library savings. The operating budget had been bolstered by a \$1,500,000 transfer. All of this was leading up to solidifying plans for the new library. Scott Parke, County Comptroller, will report during the May Board meeting, detailing funding options.

Commissioners had previously met with the Director of the Weber-Morgan Health Department to explore options for dealing with the April 10 end to the State required mask mandate as required by

H.B. 294. To date, Utah had given out 1,000,000 vaccinations, but must vaccinate 1,600,000 residents before the transmission index will change from orange to yellow, moderate to low. It is anticipated that this goal will be reached sometime during the second or third week of May. Governor Cox is requiring that masks be worn in State buildings until the end of May, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to police a face covering requirement. People enter with a mask but then pull it down under the nose or take it off. Confrontations are not infrequent as employees work to enforce the mandatory requirement. In preparation for the mask mandate retirement, Commissioners exercised a plan that offered opportunities for County employees to receive their COVID vaccinations. Vaccinations are now readily available to all area residents who qualify.

Commissioners were planning to meet with Health Department staff, during their April 12 work session, to get the most recent number of test positivity rates, case rates relative to intensive care facility capacities, and the number of vaccine doses administered. These three numbers will be the primary consideration in determining the way forward.

Harvey concluded by noting there is more support and a different feeling about the Library from what there was five or six years ago. The Board is on the right path and Commissioners are excited about the work being done.

Allison asked to what he attributed this change in support and feeling.

Harvey, said people are now better educated concerning the role libraries play in the community. Residents have to be given information and be allowed to decide. To this end, the first ever County-wide, all employee staff meeting was being planned. It will be a Zoom meeting and every department will have two or three minutes to inform others about what they do. These little splashes of information will be made available to the entire community so the meeting will be a chance for everyone to learn what the County does. A lot of people do a lot of wonderful things and when the public is informed, they offer support, Harvey concluded.

Allison wondered if the change in feeling could be attributed to the public's appreciation for the dynamic programs and services provided in the County's visionary "third place" libraries in contrast to what could be accommodated in the old, dark libraries.

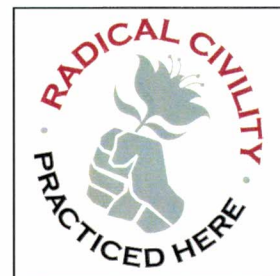
Jensen said County Commissioners have recently been more supportive and it has helped create a more positive atmosphere among area residents.

Wangsgard said when good news comes from elected officials people listen and take note; when negative comments are made, people also listen and take note. She was very appreciative of the support Commissioners and other elected officials provide as they speak about Library employees and services.

March Training Vignette – Sandra Crosland:

In introducing her training topic, Crosland distributed lapel buttons and business type cards printed with the logo, "Radical Civility." Civility is missing in our public discourse, she said, and our society is suffering as a result.

Library guiding principles underpin the concept of radical civility and it is one big reason for earning a reputation as the County's crown jewel. Employees go above and beyond what is expected to engage with people and help them achieve their goals. For example, staff figured out a way to reopen quickly, get people in, and keep them safe during the coronavirus pandemic while most other libraries in Utah and throughout the country shuttered their services.



Radical civility as a public service benchmark flows out of an understanding of the difference between principles and values and how they fit within an applicable system of public ethics. Principles, Crosland explained, are those things nature encompasses and, therefore, are true independent of human intervention. It is a principle that the earth is tilted on its axis and revolves around the sun. Values, on the other hand, are conventions of a particular culture. They encompass those things that are true only because some person, or persons, say they are true. For thousands of years, people in different cultures watched the sky during late December and engaged in elaborate rituals to coax the sun to return. The sun did return each year, not because of the values of a particular culture, but because the length of day is determined by a principle of reason, rather than opinion.

Ethics are the yardsticks by which we measure our values, to determine if they are just or unjust. Values change over time, but principles of reason such as fairness, integrity, tolerance, honesty, dignity, and respect do not.

Civility belongs in the realm of ethics. It is not an abstraction. It is a principle of decency to be applied in everyday life. Radical has a connotation of engagement among people with different points-of-view. The first rule of radical civil engagement is to discipline the ego and look beyond the confines of its immediate needs. The second rule is to be aware of oneself and ask for help, or intervention, when you feel your ego may get out of control.

Crosland reviewed the Library Vision, Mission and Goals statements, the guiding principles upon which the provision of radically civil public service is based.

Vision (Excerpt):

The Library System is grounded in the general principles upon which this nation was founded; that is, the right to Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. The more closely the Library aligns itself with the principles of reason – such as truth, fairness, compassion, integrity, self-control, courage, generosity, tolerance, honesty, dignity, prudence, and respect – the more effective it will be in providing programs and services that empower users to live their lives in a manner that brings fulfillment and happiness.

Mission (Excerpt):

Ultimately, this vision leads to the heart of the Library's 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.

It's amazing, Crosland noted, that we have an institution in our County that is focused on helping people find happiness.

Primary goal (Excerpt):

The primary goal of the Weber County Library System is to provide access to a rich amalgamation of relevant information resources, programs, and services, enabling users to make meaningful decisions in their lives and participate as full-fledged members of our democratic society.

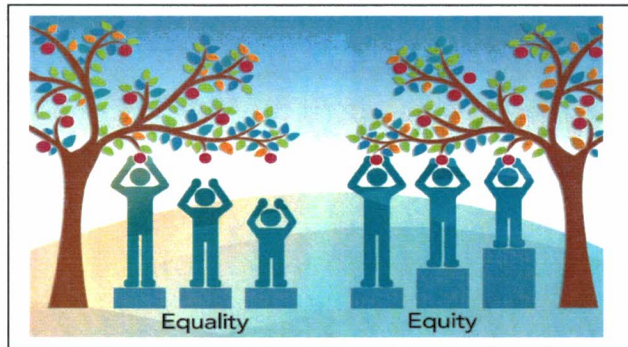
Secondary goal (Excerpt):

The secondary goal is to bind people together in a sense of community.

Crosland reported on her experience interviewing staff in three libraries concerning what radical civility means to them. She noted that each one sees radical civility a little differently.

Main Library.

Randy Mueller said radical civility changes the way you feel about your job. It is empowering and validates that it is okay to go above and beyond what is expected. The phrase connotes the need to give equal service first and then ensure each person gets equitable value. Equal and equitable are not the same thing.



Janice Dalley viewed civility as basic politeness, respectfulness, and paying attention. Radical is going one step beyond; making eye contact with homeless people, for example, and helping them become all that they can be. It requires that we not get negative and that we engage in conversation to help them see our side as we listen to their side, she concluded.

Josh Clemens noted radical civility is being respectful of all opinions but also requiring patrons to respect each other. Civility is not passivity. Free speech is limited in public space. In order to maintain a radically civil place, employees have to stand their ground so no one infringes on others' needs.

Ogden Valley Branch.

Haley Van Vlack saw radical civility as treating patrons in ways that are fair, which may not necessarily be equal. At its root, it implies, "How can I help them fulfill their life mission."

Karen Burton built on Van Vlack's concept, illustrating that being radically civil requires inventing ways to serve people regardless of the environment or their current station in life. Opening the Library System during a pandemic provided an opportunity to invent book bundles, virtual homework help, virtual summer reading, and other programs to potentially engage 65,000-70,000 kids, including Head Start and preschools, while dreaming up enticements and prize drawings to encourage them to keep reading and coming to the library for educational materials. To be successful, it had to be done in an inclusive, safe (radically civil) environment. Radically civil service, she continued, required that we continually go above and beyond what was expected with STEAM programs, summer camps, and literacy programs, for example.

Emily Call said radical civility is about avoiding making assumptions based on appearance. If you encounter negativity, don't match it, but rather listen and explain the "why" behind rules so they make sense and are not viewed as arbitrary.

Pleasant Valley Branch.

Jamie Carter Park said radical civility is about treating everyone better than you expect to be treated yourself. It's about not being judgmental. She likes to exhibit the traits of a golden retriever, she said, illustrating she is happy to be here and anxious to offer service that pleases.

Deborah Smith said radical civility is about being respectful, not judgmental. In pursuit of radical civility, on her own time and with her own money, she took a course from the Martin Luther King Center titled, "Be Love." The course focused on doing nonviolent protest work for the common good. Radical civility, Smith noted, provides a standard for a restart and, when internalized, it worked for her family as well as on the job. The knowledge base and skills developed have allowed her to step back and find common ground as detailed in Library goals.

Crosland noted that, in the interest of time, she could not share all of her interviews with staff, but she was proud of each one of them as well as being associated with an organization dedicated to respectful interactions that lead people toward self-fulfillment and happiness. Employees' belief in principled service, and their commitment to making the library a values neutral community asset, is what makes the Library a radically civil organization, she concluded.

Director's Report:

Wangsgard invited the Board to ask for clarifications if they had questions concerning the financial report that had been included in their meeting preparation packets. Hearing none, she noted the February output measure report, which was benchmarked against the monthly report from the previous year, was the last they would receive where there would be "apples to apples" comparisons between current operations and previous year benchmarks. The Library System closed March 17, 2020, and remained closed for the rest of the month. Operating in a pandemic environment for the rest of 2020 skewed statistics that will not be useful in evaluating program and service output numbers during 2021.

Wangsgard noted items borrowed during February 2021 totaled more than 185,000. Another number of interest was reference transactions that topped 66,000 during February of this year, compared to 63,000 a year ago. The increase, no doubt, reflected the way employees have stepped forward, helping to mitigate the deleterious effects of the pandemic by answering overflow calls from the Health Department and registering residents for COVID vaccinations, as well as helping people sign up for insurance under the Affordable Care Act and complete rental assistance applications.

April 4-10 is National Library Week and yard signs were being placed throughout the County to remind people that "Libraries Change Lives." Board members were invited to place signs on their property and then return them during the May Board meeting so they can be repurposed and used again next year.

The thirteenth annual Ladybug Roundup was scheduled for April 24. The Library traditionally partners with the Ogden Nature Center to distribute ladybugs at earth day celebrations. Since the Nature Center is not sponsoring a big event this year, bookmarks affixed with seed paper in the shape of a ladybug were being distributed during smaller gatherings, inviting people to visit the Library and pick up their free packets of ladybugs. The first ladybug roundup was held in conjunction with the dedication of the Pleasant Valley Branch, signifying the building was the first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) facility constructed north of Salt Lake City. The ladybug distribution became an annual tradition and offers an opportunity to educate people about sustainable gardening practices while emphasizing the Library Board's commitment to earth friendly stewardship.

Service Order Number 02 for Use with Master Agreement between the Library and Prescott Muir Architects:

Wangsgard presented service order number two. Service orders were previously recognized as the way forward for authorizing additional work to be completed under terms agreed to in the "Standard Form of Master Agreement between Owner and Architect for Services Provided under Multiple Service Orders." The service order had been included in the Board's meeting preparation packet. Recognizing the time sensitivity of providing a formal evaluation of a proposed donation of land, the service order had already been approved during County Commission meeting earlier that day. Getting the evaluation started immediately was necessary to meet deadlines associated moving the project forward in a timely manner. A formal survey and title search will also be required. Harvey requested the County Surveyor assist the Board with the survey work, saving approximately \$10,000 in costs. Wangsgard will arrange for a title search.

The service order also included two additional projects approved in the 2021 operating budget that will require work be put out to bid. The service order authorized engagement of the architect and their consulting engineers to develop specifications needed for bidding the repainting of the amphitheater at the Southwest Branch and installation of electric vehicle recharging stations at the Pleasant Valley Branch.

The fourth and final project covered by the service order proposed designing installation of two additional lights and surveillance cameras at the Main Library to help deter ongoing vandalism. Existing cameras in the generator enclosure were proving insufficient to identify those responsible for repeated mischief. The Golden Hours center was also installing cameras in anticipation of the uptick in vandalism that inevitably comes with warm weather and longer days. Funding for this work was available in the "building improvement" line item as a result of the Library insurance provider covering almost all of the cost for earthquake remediation.

The total cost of the service order was \$21,755.

Mattson asked if there were questions. There were none.

Allison moved approval of the service order. Jensen second the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Renewal of Commercial Lease between Weber County Library and Coffee Connoisseur, DBA Bean-a-Colada:

The lease of commercial space at the Southwest Branch was expiring and Wangsgard recommended renewal for a five-year term. The rental fee would remain unchanged at \$400 per month. Either the Owner or Leasee could make future changes to the agreement after giving proper notice. The leasee had already given approval and signed the agreement.

Spencer asked if they were stable and solvent.

Wangsgard noted they have been very challenged during the past year with the Library closing for six weeks and then traffic being quite a bit lower than during previous years. The owners tried everything possible, including Door Dash, to keep the three locations operational but ultimately, one-by-one, had to settle back to offering service only at the Southwest Branch location. They are currently recruiting staff to reopen the other locations.

Wangsgard noted this is not the time to rebid. The Library's business partner has invested considerable personal capital into the cafes and there is no guarantee another bidder would make a better offer, or if any offer would be forthcoming in the current climate. The owner currently works from opening to closing and is not yet able to make enough sales to hire a second person. The thought is that as Library business picks up, so will that of the café.

Spencer moved approval of the lease agreement. Allison seconded the motion.

Mattson asked if there were other questions that needed to be addressed before a vote was taken.

Harvey asked if the café signage at the Pleasant Valley Branch was addressed in the lease agreement, noting that 3,000 – 5,000 cars per day drive past on Adams Avenue.

Wangsgard said signage is addressed in all of the leases although, without a drive-up window, the café owners have to rely on walk-in traffic.

Baron asked for clarification that the Board understood lease was for five years. They indicated they did.

Mattson called for a vote on the motion. It passed unanimously.

Emergency Response Policy and Administrative Procedure:

Board members reviewed the Emergency Response Policy approved a year earlier, considering the best way forward when face coverings are no longer required by State or local governments. During his Commissioner's Report, Harvey had already shared discussions underway relative to requiring face coverings in Weber County. Mattson invited Board members to share their thoughts and recommendations.

Stokes suggested following the lead of the County Health Department; follow the science, he said. Library users by and large understand science. Tie the use of face coverings to science. He noted

the Board had just received a great training vignette on being radically civil, emphasizing that it means respecting everyone. It is principled to put our faith in science, not in personal values.

Crosland suggested signage letting people know the Library is on top of the issue and is monitoring it every day. Signage can help diffuse anger.

Spencer, suggested creating signs that are like the Smokey the Bear sign in Ogden Canyon. It has an insert that can be changed out to read: high, moderate, or low. People have been through some of the most amazing things, politically and with the pandemic, Spencer continued, they deserve to be able to walk away with a sense that we are going to let the scientists take the lead on things that are science, and let politicians take the lead on things that are political. To make decisions we have to have information and the Health Department will have the most up-to-date information.

Jensen noted that instead of moving from moderate to low, the community may slip back to high if there is a surge. If that happens, we should be prepared to follow the science as well.

Baron liked the suggestion that the decision be based on the expertise in the Health Department. The Board has the authority to post restrictions but to be legally defensible, those restrictions must be made with reasonable reliance on science, he advised.


May Training Vignette Assignment – Evelyn Bertilson:

Bertilson confirmed her plans to present the training vignette during the May meeting.

Other:

There being no further business, Spencer moved adjournment; Crosland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:



Julia Valle

4 May 2021

Date