

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

Date: February 2, 2021

Board Members

in Attendance: Cynthia Mattson
Diana Allison
Sandra Crosland
Jim Harvey

Board Kathleen Jensen

Members Excused: Reed Spencer
Spencer Stokes

Others

In Attendance: Bryan Baron, Legal Counsel
Phoebe Carter, Assistant Library Director
Marcia Harris, Library Development Board
Connie Laitinen, Librarian
Holly Okuhara, Assistant Library Director
Julia Valle, Library 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 January 5, 2021, Meeting Minutes:

Mattson called for comments on the January 5, 2021, meeting minutes. Hearing none, Allison moved approval. Crosland seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner did not have anything to report, but invited questions from the Board. There were none at this time.

February Training Vignette – Kathleen Jensen:

Jensen reported on the history, programs, and services available at the Ogden Valley Branch (OVV), focusing on the role libraries play in a rural community and noting how she hoped community members in the northwestern area of the County would soon be able to look forward to a library to serve their families.

Jensen reminisced about how she relied on biweekly stops of a bookmobile to provide access to reading materials while operating a preschool in the Valley. While the bookmobile was useful and welcome, it was not a library, which became evident in 1996 when the OVB opened as a full service library and community center. The new OVB provided so much more, including neutral ground for people to gather and enrich their lives. Over time, Jensen reported that she had attended and participated in everything from piano recitals to government meetings, exercise and yoga classes to book discussions. She still appreciates the gallery exhibits and recently purchased a painting on exhibit for her home. The Branch was the first library in Utah, and one of the first in the nation, to offer public computer access to the Internet. The technology has evolved and changed, but she still enjoys borrowing audio books to listen to while driving and now also downloads eBooks and streams movies. Her family enjoyed watching the Christmas movie filmed in and around the Branch.

The OVB is a meeting place for training offered by governmental groups, including the U.S. Census Bureau, Utah State Division of Finance, and the Social Security Administration. Community groups and Library staff have partnered to offer concert venues for dozens of performance groups and regular practice space for groups including the Old Time Fiddlers. Other programs and events have included cowboy poetry gatherings, movie screenings, dance classes, holiday parties, chili cook-offs, night sky parties, and science camps.

Retirees have especially benefited from a Library in the Valley where services, typically reserved only for those who have access to a senior center, are made available. For example, The Department of Aging serves hot meals weekly where attendees enjoy the conversation and companionship of friends and neighbors while also taking advantage of special seminars on topics of interest such as Medicare, social security, and various health wellness topics. Health care professionals bring special services to the Branch, including flu shots and pedicures, to help seniors stay “on their toes.”

When the elementary school closed in Huntsville and moved to another location, the Branch reinvented itself, focusing on functioning as a small retreat center. This new focus complemented its role as a community meeting center. For example, Jensen noted her spouse serves on the Valley Land Trust Board which meets at the Library to discuss conservation easements. Since the building has flexible meeting spaces, a robust technology infrastructure, and is centrally located, it facilitates involvement by those not comfortable or able to meet at a church or in a home. The Branch can be rented during or after hours and has hosted small conferences, weddings, retirement parties, and memorial services. It also welcomed a community group that held their church services on Sunday while they were constructing a worship center in the Valley.

Many other groups, such as the Sons of the Utah Pioneers, meet at the Library and the community has come together there to learn more about local history and life in the Valley. Two of the most memorable presenters were Halvor Bailey, Weber County Deputy Sheriff, and the Abbott from the Monastery, Abbey of Our Lady of the Holy Trinity.

The Branch is served by a 150-seat auditorium with cinema quality projection and surround sound; a community room and commercial kitchen; a board room; a study room; and two outdoor presentation areas. The outdoor garden offers a shady assembly area under a bosque of trees while the new bowery, The Roost, includes a more robust gathering place that can easily seat 144 people

around picnic tables, or an even larger crowd in various other seating arrangements. The bowery features a large portable movie screen, LCD outdoor projector, and surround sound system, as well as a large gas barbecue. The bowery was designed to encourage Valley residents, and others, to come home to roost.

Jensen completed her presentation by noting her mother read to her and all her siblings. In reflecting on her childhood, she has grown to appreciate and value more and more this time they spent together and the values reading instilled in her family. It was an impetus for Jensen to read to first graders while she was teaching, and to her own children and grandchildren, all of whom now love to read for fun and information. Her mother taught her that reading is fundamental to learning.

Jensen concluded by noting that she is grateful for the OVB. It has enriched the quality of life for her family and for the community and she hopes the Library Board and County officials can work together to bring a library to those living in northwestern Weber County.

Director's Report:

Wangsgard focused on three items during her report:

1. A review of the 2020 statistical report to review how the pandemic impacted usage;
2. A preview of the 2021 operating budget; and
3. An introduction to the Flexible Meeting and Training Schedule.

In-house reference services totaled 553,835 during 2020, compared to 829,112 the previous year – a decrease of 33%. The decrease was driven by closure March 17-May 11 because of the coronavirus pandemic, and the subsequent reopening with more than half of all public computers, including all commons computers in the literacy area of the Main Library, closed for social distancing.

Twenty-twenty program attendance, 965 groups and 23,828 individuals, was also less than the 2019 total of 3,616 and 94,442 groups and individuals. Meeting room comparisons of 1,453 groups and 24,899 individuals (2020) and 4,643 to 113,098 (2019) were down even more significantly due to March – December prohibitions on community gatherings, and then limits on the number of individuals outside of a family group who could assemble in one location.

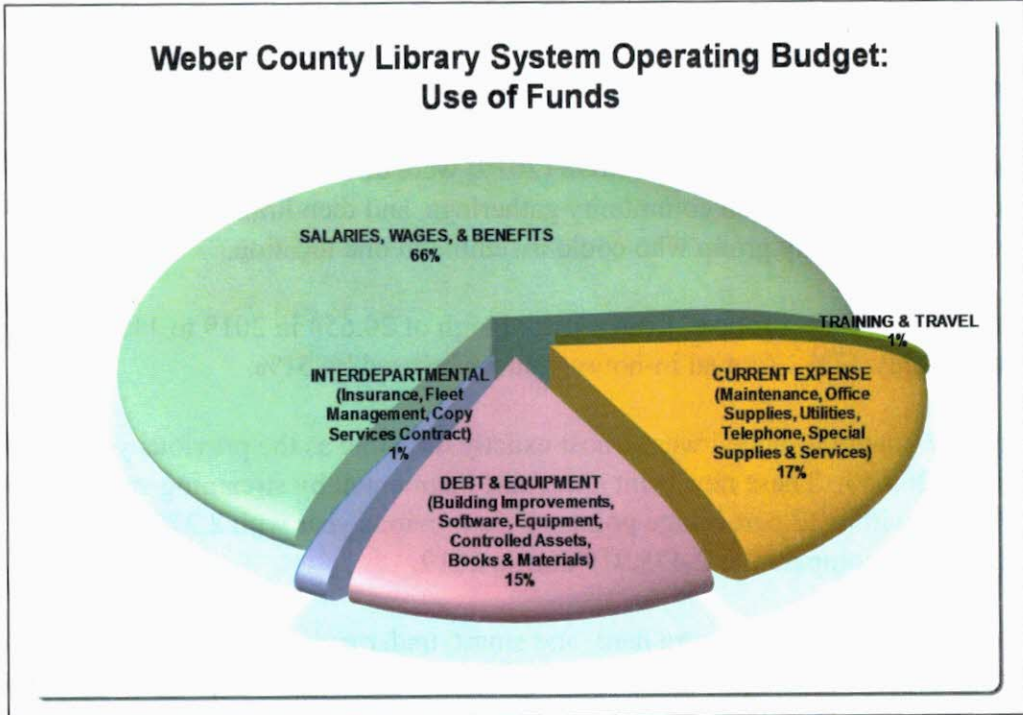
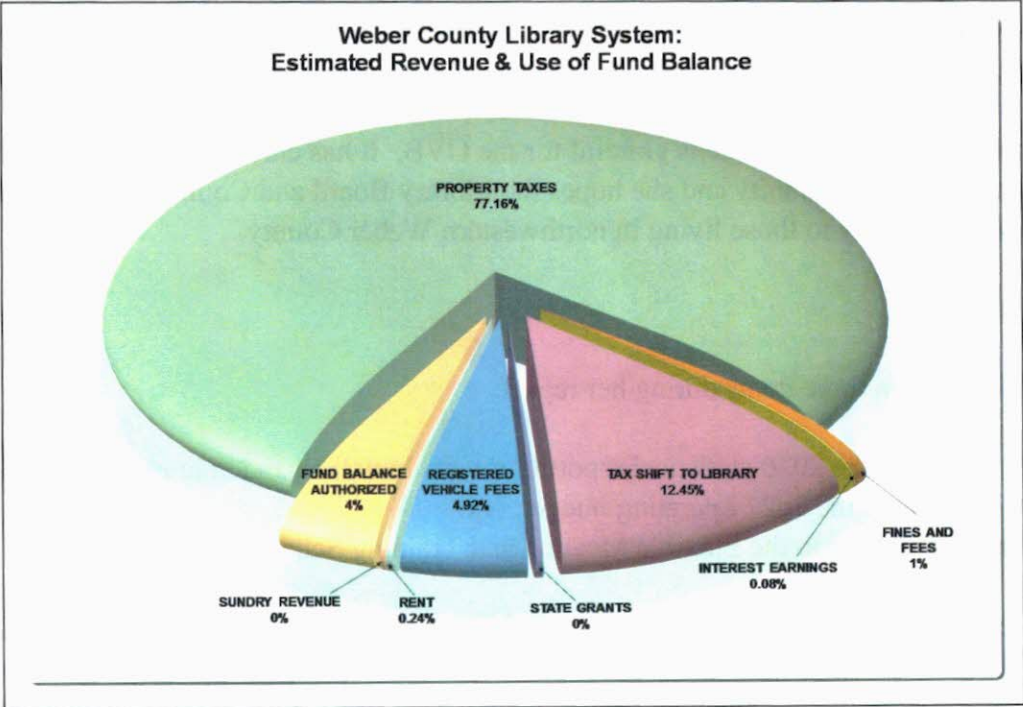
Issuance of new library cards dropped from a record high of 20,654 in 2019 to 11,132 during 2020 – a decrease of roughly 47%. Annual in-house visits decreased by 51%.

The number of new materials added was almost exactly the same as the previous year, 26,045 in 2020 compared to 26,655. These new print materials, augmented by streaming and eMaterials, drove circulation to within 12 percentage points of the previous year with 2,275,989 items borrowed during 2020 compared to 2,475,919 during 2019.

Wangsgard noted the staff worked extra hard, and smart, under trying conditions to produce the above usage numbers. For example, every item loaned was sanitized and quarantined before it was reshelfed and all computers, study tables and chairs, countertops and other surfaces were wiped down and sanitized after every use. Restrooms were also sanitized after each user throughout the

day. They also conducted wellness checks at entrances to ensure those using on-site services wore face coverings and sanitized their hands before handling materials or using computers. These output measures results should stack up positively with those of other Utah libraries and those around the nation, Wangsgard concluded.

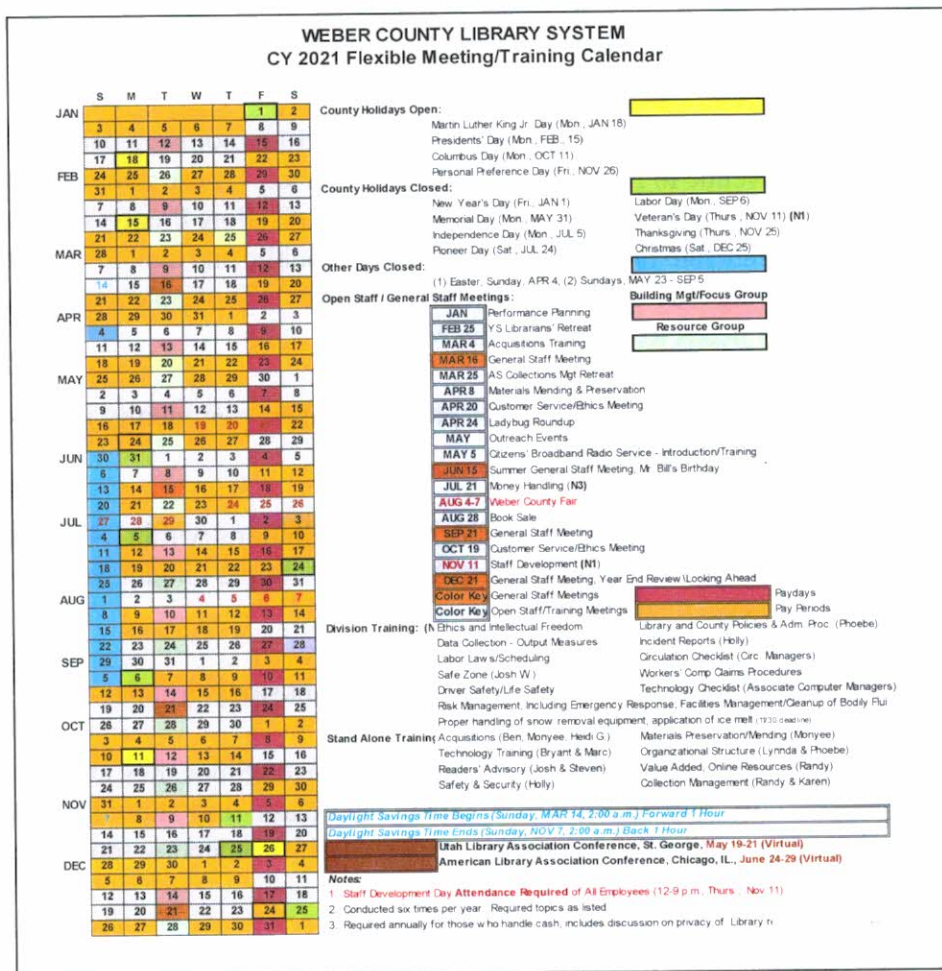
Wangsgard moved to the second item in the budget report, prefaced with a distribution of two graphs detailing the 2021 revenue projections and authorized expenditures.



The total operating budget of \$12,044,727 represented a 2.04 % increase over that of the previous year. The largest increase in expense line items included salaries, wages and benefits and was attributed to the result of funding a market study completed during 2020. Revenues also increased by 2.04%, bolstered by a tax shift of approximately \$1,500,000. Wangsgard noted the current year operating budget was robust and healthy, but reminded the Board of a need to save approximately \$300,000 to balance out increases granted in salaries, wages, and benefits.

Board members also reviewed a summary and comparison spreadsheet of line item allocations by cost center. In this way, she noted, the Board could see the cost of operating each individual library in the County System as well as costs for support and system services. The current cost of operating a new library in the northwestern portion of the County would likely be similar to that of the Pleasant Valley Branch, or about \$1,500,000 she noted.

The third item presented was the Flexible Meeting and Training schedule, which detailed the organizational management structure for the calendar year.



Board members reviewed the operational hours, required trainings, and special events detailed on the calendar.

Meeting Room Policy:

Carter introduced Laitinen who had asked permission to undertake an update of the Meeting Room Policy in order to bring it into line with current practices. The majority of the changes were grammatical, Laitinen noted, but she reviewed those of consequence for the Board.

The first change she recommended prohibited the use of items that create possible liability, or have significant cleanup costs, associated with their use. These included glitter, confetti, feathers, and balloons. Laitinen also fleshed out details concerning the prohibition of bringing food or drink into meeting rooms, including items purchased from Library café. Food and drink service requires prior approval and a fee for cleanup and disposal of waste. Recommended changes also prohibited the general public from tuning the piano. The Library has a contract with a professional tuner and amateurs are not allowed to work on the instruments.

Laitinen went on to present several minor changes, noting the location and manner of posting signs had been clarified. She recognized that a major challenge in scheduling meeting rooms resulted from the assessment of fees for those gathering when their meeting was not truly open to the general public.

Wangsgard said it was a significant challenge to schedule meeting rooms on behalf of community members wishing to use a venue to provide a professional service. These individuals often have a list of clients they want to invite to a “seminar” with the goal of selling them a service. The person scheduling the space may indicate the seminar is open to the public and should therefore not incur a cost. In actuality, the meeting may only be advertised to a select list of potential clients or buyers, in which case the presenter needs to pay a meeting room fee.

Allison asked that a hyperlink be inserted into the policy, advising community members of the location of rental fees posted on the Web site.

Laitinen also recommended allowing for refundable fee cancellations within 24 hours of an event, rather than five days. Allowing refundable fee cancellations within 24 hours was the current practice.

Baron asked about the availability of meeting rooms for student study groups.

Laitinen noted this was a particularly difficult request to manage. Since they are a closed group not advertising to the community or even other members in their class, they should be charged a category two fee. Many saw this as unreasonable, especially if the meeting room was not being used.

Mattson noted there was really no way to tell if the group was actually a study group. How do you decide, she inquired?

Baron suggested that he review the policy and add something about student groups for review by the Board at a later date.

There being no further recommended updates or changes, and since there were no additional questions for Laitinen, Allison moved approval of the draft as presented, including addition of a link to the fee chart, and with the option of Barron bringing forth a statement on use by student groups. Jensen seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

March Training Vignette Assignment – Reed Spencer:

Spencer will present the training vignette during the March Board meeting.

Other:

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

Respectfully submitted: Julia I Valle 2 March 2021
Julia Valle Date