

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

Date: July 7, 2015

Board Members

In Attendance: Scott Spencer  
James Ebert  
Brent Innes  
Eric Jacobson  
Kathleen Jensen  
Tom Taylor

Board Members

Excused: Spencer Stokes

Others in

Attendance: Matthew Bell, Weber County Commissioner  
Lynnda Wangsgard, Library Director  
Scott Jones, Assistant Library Director  
Kevin Wilson, Professional Library Property Manager  
Julia Valle, Library Business Office Manager  
Bryan Baron, Deputy Weber County Attorney  
Evelyn Bertilson, Friends of the Library  
Marcia Harris, Development Board  
Thomas Brennan, EDA Architects  
Sam Hammack, EDA Architects  
Jay Lems, Prescott Muir Architects  
Prescott Muir, Prescott Muir Architects  
Lisa Arnett, Prescott Muir Architects  
Brent Taylor, Mayor, North Ogden City  
Toby Mileski, Mayor, Pleasant View City

Some public officials in the audience did not sign the attendance sheet.

Public Comments:

Spencer called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. noting, that because a previous public meeting had been held to gather input on the topic of the North Branch Library renovation versus building on a new site, the Board would not take general public comments on the same issue during this meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to hear reports and make a determination on the future course of the project.

Spencer noted that, in deference to certain elected officials who had to leave early to attend to other obligations, the items on the agenda would be reordered, unless there was an objection. Hearing none, Spencer welcomed Bryan Baron, Deputy Weber County Attorney, who had recently accepted an assignment as the Board's legal counsel. He then moved to the last item on the agenda in order to allow mayors from northern communities adequate time for participation.

#### North Branch Library Renovation vs. New Facility:

Spencer introduced Jay Lems, Prescott Muir Architects (PMA), and Tom Brennan, EDA Architects. Architects, engineers, and others employed by these two firms had been asked to gather information and report on two North Branch building options.

Prescott Muir Architects designed the Ogden Valley and Pleasant Valley Branch libraries. They are currently responsible for the design and construction oversight for the new Southwest Branch/Headquarters Library. Their charge was to report on the feasibility of building a new library on the now unused North Ogden City public works site as proposed by City officials.

EDA Architects was retained during 2012 to oversee renovation of both the Main Library and North Branch. Their expertise in renovations, including the recent work at Ogden High School, was especially relevant in renovating Main and North Branch. They were also the architects for the Herriman Library, which opened during 2009 in Salt Lake County. EDA's charge was to report on the plans for upgrading the current North Branch Library structure.

Lems began by reporting on two studies that had been undertaken by experts employed by PMA to complete preliminary environmental and geotechnical assessments of the City proposed building site. The Weber County Surveyor was also currently completing a survey of the property and as of the time of this presentation, no property survey information has been shared with PMA.

The preliminary environmental assessment found nothing of major concern, Lems reported. The site currently hosts public works buildings constructed in time from the 1970s - 1990s with a pump house built in 2005 and a communications tower in the late 1990s. Above ground fuel tanks are also currently located on the site. A former underground hydraulic lift at the west center bay of one of the buildings may exhibit some subsurface contamination. Further investigation will need to be done when the buildings are removed to determine the extent of the soil contamination.

There is a railroad right-of-way through the site that was active between 1889 and 1944. The former Utah Idaho Central Railroad right-of-way access crosses the center of the site in a 30-foot wide parcel. Additional work would need to be done to determine if the right-of-way is still active.

The age of the two main buildings indicated they likely house asbestos and lead.

Underground storage tanks were removed in 1989 and 1993 and a leaking underground storage tank file was opened in 1993 during removal. The file was closed in 1996 with no further action required. The environmental assessment report noted that the closed file is considered a

historically recognized environmental condition not requiring further investigation.

A reconnaissance and database search of other properties in the vicinity of the site found no evidence of facilities or environmental conditions that have adversely impacted the property.

The geotechnical soils report illustrated the site was predominately clay with relatively low soil bearing pressures. As a point of reference, Lems noted the structural requirements of the Southwest Branch that is currently under construction in Roy allows for load bearing pressures between 1,700 and 4,000 pounds per square foot (PSF). Most of the building is designed at 4,000 PSF. Two feet of NEW structural fill extending down to undisturbed natural soil at the proposed public works site would provide for an allowable load bearing pressure of 1,500 PSF; four feet of structural fill would accommodate 2,500 PSF. If a library were designed on the site, engineers would weigh the cost impact of additional excavation and importing fill vs. increasing the footing size by two and one-half (2.5) times.

One to two feet of gravel overlay would be required during construction activities. There is now one (1) to four (4) feet of fill on the site, overlaying the clay and silty sands. There is between three and forty-two inches of road base course across the site. Subject to compliance with the geotechnical report's criteria for imported fill, some of the on-site granular fill may be used for structural fill. The natural clay and fill consisting of clay are not recommended for use as structural fill. The on-site fill and natural soils may be used as site grading fill in proposed pavement areas or as utility trench and building wall backfill if the organics, debris and other deleterious materials are removed.

Underground fuel storage tanks were removed from the northwest area of the site and it should be expected that there is significant fill at these locations. Surrounding soils will need to be assessed further to determine if any additional environmental remediation is required.

The water table is high. Boreholes found subsurface water levels varied from between one (1) foot to about nine (9) feet across the property and was likely at its highest elevation at the time the soils investigation was carried out. The site storm water retention system currently in place had not been evaluated, as the report from the County Surveyor detailing the location and its capacity was not yet available. Cost implications concerning the storm water retention system have not been evaluated at this time.

The site would require dewatering for excavation below the water table, and then appropriate fill would need to be put back in place. Water proofing and below grade drainage systems would be required where the building and slab areas occur below the adjacent finish grade.

None of these issues are a cause not to build on the site, but they add costs not accounted for in the preliminary cost estimates, Lems noted.

Based on cost comparisons for the Pleasant Valley and Southwest Branch libraries, which were constructed on relatively flat sites, building a new, 22,000 square foot library of the approximate size anticipated of a renovated North Branch, was estimated to cost approximately \$8.5 million. Lems noted that additional site costs related to the soils and environmental findings reported, as well as the anticipated site grading work required due to the sloping, could add to this total.

Lems reminded the Board that site costs can add up quickly and would be in addition to the work pledged by North Ogden City to deliver a buildable property. The \$8.5 million cost anticipated the current buildings on the site would be torn down and other general site remediation accomplished and paid for by North Ogden City before the Board took ownership.

Lems called for questions. There were none at this time.

Brennan presented schematic designs for renovation of the current North Branch and expansion into the lower level to address growth in the community. The renovation can be accomplished within the current budget as approved during the public vote on general obligation bonds. Cost estimates for the renovation were \$3.8 million for construction and \$1.2 million for architectural fees, new book stacks and furniture, as well as building permits and other soft costs, bringing the total to \$5 million. Brennan noted the cost for renovation of North Branch is significantly lower than for new construction of a building the same size.

The scope approved during the bond election included the full range of amenities, modern library spaces, and technology infrastructure that can currently be seen at the Pleasant Valley Branch in Washington Terrace.

The proposed public spaces on the main floor include, but are not limited to, a café, gallery, new materials and lounge area, public computer area, multipurpose room, small meeting rooms, restrooms, and adult collection and reading areas.

An atrium and stairs, as well as a new elevator will serve to connect the two floors midway on the north side of the building. The north wall around the atrium is glass, offering views of Ben Lomond peak from proposed lounge seating.

The split level design of North Branch will allow windows on the lower level to be added the length of the south side. This level will house a teen center, large children's library, public restrooms, family restroom, large activity center/auditorium, and building service areas. Lounge seating at the north end of the floor will offer WiFi and other amenities to those wishing to work collaboratively. A children's entrance will provide easy access on the south side of the Library.

Brennan reviewed the site plan that included an outdoor garden and reading area as well as options for additional parking on the current site. He noted there are 46 places in the north lot, an additional 35 possible in the area now occupied by the skateboard park, and a possibility of 30 diagonal street parking places if the connector road to the Senior Center was reconfigured, for a total of 111 available to Library users. He noted there are an additional 200 stalls in the immediate area that could be used by arrangement for exceptionally large gatherings.

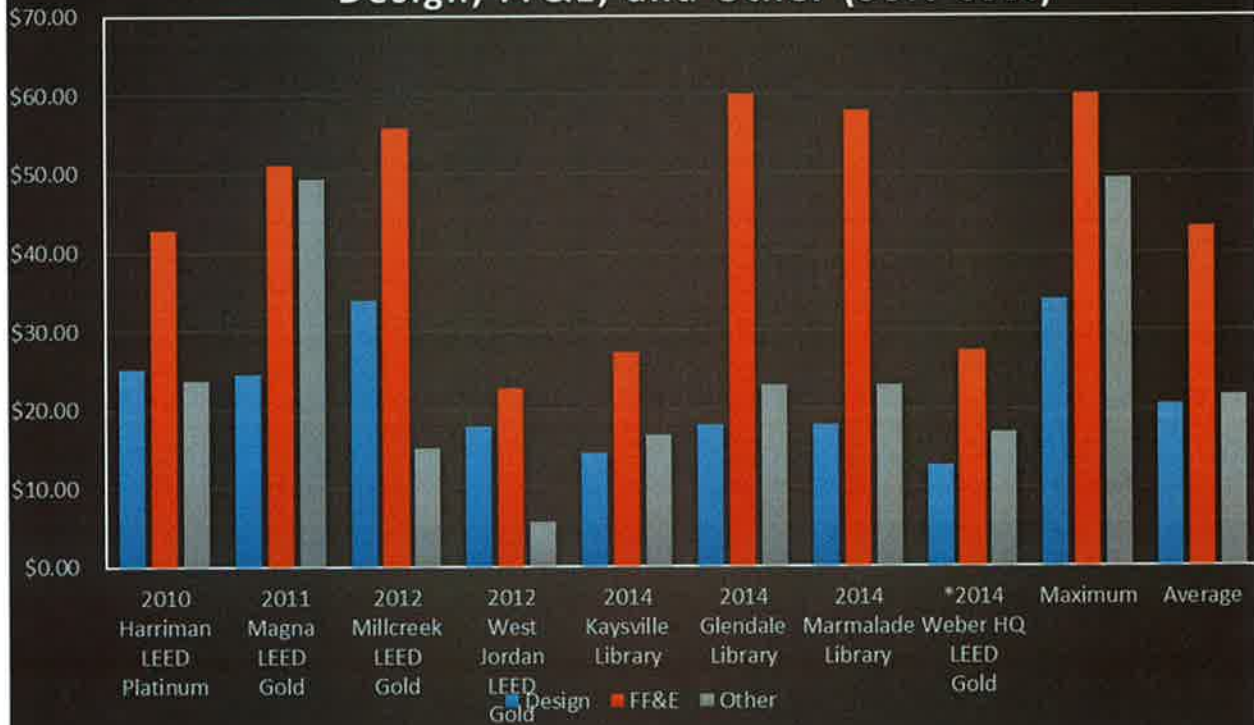
Brennan noted the cost estimates for renovation of North Branch took into consideration that building costs were escalating by an average of five to ten percent (5-10%) per year. Assuming construction documents were completed this year and the project gets underway next spring, the funding available is adequate to complete the project. Beyond that point in time, inflation in construction costs will cut into the scope of what can be accomplished.

Brennan presented a comparative study of library building costs along the Wasatch Front.

## Library Comparative Cost / Square Foot Analysis Construction, Total Cost (Hard Cost)



## Library Comparative Cost / Square Foot Analysis Design, FF&E, and Other (Soft Cost)



Costs per square foot ranged from a low during tough economic times, when the Salt Lake County Harriman Library was constructed, to a high projected for the Marmalade Library scheduled to open later this year in Salt Lake City.

By comparison, construction costs per square foot for the Southwest Branch/Headquarters Library in Roy will be in the low to mid \$200s; the point being, Brennan said, that the Weber County Library Board is not building Taj Mahals. There is no real opportunity to cut costs without significantly changing the scope of services promised to the public as they voted to authorize the sale of general obligation bonds.

Brennan noted that a building that cost \$209 per square foot in 2009 would cost \$240 per square foot to build today, because of inflation. As the economy heats up, construction costs will climb until the potential for the funding currently available for the North Branch will be seriously compromised. The Southwest Branch/Headquarters Library will be within \$4 per square foot of the least expensive facility built during a period when construction costs were at their lowest ebb.

Brennan called for questions. There were none at this time.

Spencer reminded those present that the Board is a volunteer citizen group consisting of people living in the County who want to make the best decision for Library users. The Board has listened to a lot of input and gone to considerable expense to review options for the North Branch Library. Their responsibility now is to make a decision and move the project forward.

Noting that, over the past three months, the Library Board had listened and talked seriously about North Branch site issues, they now want to hear one last time from elected officials serving in the three major cities served by the North Branch.

Spencer asked if the Board had any questions for Lems and Brennan before hearing from the mayors present. Hearing none, he opened the meeting to public comments from the elected officials.

North Ogden City Mayor Taylor said there was no discussion of parking when the North Branch upgrade was discussed. He wants the North Branch to move so it can have similar amenities as other libraries in the System. Mayor Taylor feels the estimated 24,000 square feet of space that will be available at North Branch if it is renovated is not large enough to house big events in large meeting rooms. The only way to accommodate a facility that is the same size as the Pleasant Valley Branch for the 60,000 people in the service area is to build over the skateboard park and it would be tough for the City to move the park.

Inness asked Mayor Taylor if the funding available would build something comparable in size to the 24,000 square foot renovated building if constructed on the public works site.

Mayor Taylor responded that the new library would be smaller, at about 11,000 square feet. He noted the City was able to build a public works facility for \$4 million dollars and it should be possible for the Library Board to cut costs and build more than 11,000 square feet. He reiterated a pledge made during a public meeting in April that North Ogden City is willing to do a lot of site preparation work to present the Board with a buildable site.

Mayor Taylor had asked Pleasant View Mayor Mileski to gather online feedback from area residents, and approximately 400 responded. Mileski indicated several respondents said they drive to Washington Terrace to use the Pleasant Valley Branch because it has more adequate parking.

Mayor Taylor and Mileski explained they had worked with the Mayor of Harrisville to come up with the plan because they do not feel the renovated North Branch will be remotely on par with other library facilities in the County. The Mayors prefer building what can be accomplished now and then adding on to the facility in the future, when more money becomes available to complete the plan.

Bell noted this was the plan when North Branch was built over 30 years ago, to finish one floor and then expand to the unfinished floor in the future, when more money was available. The chance to expand is just now an option because of the passage of a general obligation bond. The language of the voted initiative clearly stated the North Branch would be expanded and the types of services the public could expect were also detailed. It may not be legal to tell taxpayers throughout the County that the funding is going to be used for something else smaller in size and different in scope. Legal counsel, Bell noted, told the Commissioners to do what they put out to the public for a vote. The bond language stated the intent was to remodel the Main Library, not build a new one; remodel North, not build a new one. The options are constrained by legal ramifications, Bell said.

Mileski suggested there be a vote on a new initiative this fall, asking the public to change the scope of the plan and reauthorize the bond in a larger amount to build 23,000 square feet on a new site.

Jacobson asked Lems how much more money the voters would need to approve to build a library on the new site that would be as large as the renovated library on the current site, if the Board sought to hold another vote this fall, as Mileski suggested.

Lems noted the cost would be approximately \$8.5 million, or \$3.5 million more than the voters authorized. In addition, waiting to build while design and construction documents were prepared would take a bite out of the buying power of the available funding.

Mayor Taylor said they could fundraise for a new building, but they haven't been successful so far because they don't have standing at this point to start moving forward at the new site.

Spencer noted that some legwork had already been done and no large donor had been identified. In order to move to another site, the Board would need \$3.5 million in the bank, not in-kind work pledged to clear the old public works buildings or do general site work. The cost of \$8.5 million already assumed the location would be buildable and without the need for significant site remediation. City budgets are tight and they can't contribute \$3.5 million, only in-kind work. The Board needs a solid financial commitment to abandon their current plan.

Spencer asked what is going to happen to the current library. It has a cash value to the Library and community of approximately \$5 million dollars, he stated. The City is not going to buy it

from the County; they are asking for it to be given to them in trade for the new building site that is of less value to the public.

Spencer noted the Board is in the same place they were three months ago when the Mayors first proposed the move, and no new information was being presented for consideration that would make building on the public works site more probable. He noted elected officials needed to leave to take care of other obligations and the Board needed to move forward and make a decision.

Ebert asked the Mayors to clarify their point that North Branch serves 60,000 people in the service area. What is the service area?

Mayor Taylor noted the 60,000 represents the future service area.

Ebert wondered when a library is built in northwestern Weber County, will the people in Harrisville and Pleasant View use a building in Farr West, or another location more convenient to them? The purpose of the bond was to double space available to the public at North Branch. With a library on the western side of the County, how many square feet will be needed?

Ebert also explained that there is also a challenge with parking at the Main Library. Ogden City is being asked to help out by making accommodations to expand into Lester Park as well as add diagonal parking on 25<sup>th</sup> Street. Huntsville Town stepped up to help out with street parking at the Ogden Valley Branch. It is not unreasonable to ask North Ogden City to help out with parking at the current skateboard park location and on the connector road. Ebert asked, "Do you build parking for maximum days or coordinate to accommodate big events?"

Building a smaller library may not be in the best interest of the residents, Ebert said. It may be all you ever have. The Board has to recognize that voting for bonds is difficult, and no one can count on approval of an additional initiative for more funding in the future. The Board has to consider what is best in the long run. A new initiative may not pass. If we build smaller the Board may not be able to be expanded the library in the future. That is why the Board is hesitant.

Ebert asked if the City wanted to consider doing nothing at North Branch, and then have a vote for a larger bond, knowing that if it doesn't pass nothing would be done at North Branch, no expansion or renovation.

Jacobson asked what it would cost to reproduce the Pleasant Valley Branch on the public works site.

Lems estimated, based on the current building cost per square foot of the Southwest Branch, that the total would be between \$10.6 and \$11 million. He cautioned, however, that the Southwest Branch included a Headquarters component that increased the number of square feet, giving the building the critical mass to drive costs down. The Southwest Branch site was exceptional. The site work and possible remediation required on the old public works location could also increase the costs.



Jacobson asked why not try to bond for \$12 million and build 35,000 square feet.

Ebert noted that with the largest areas of the County (Roy and Ogden) soon to enjoy new or renovated buildings, there would be little incentive for them to vote for the bond.

Jensen wondered if there was still a possibility of raising the money needed through private sources.

Spencer reiterated that behind the scenes work had been done, and an article in the newspaper detailed the need for large donors, but to date there was no indication that anyone was interested in making a commitment this large.

Mayor Taylor asked for clarification as to what type of initiative Jacobson was proposing.

Jacobson responded that he was exploring the option of building new rather than renovating.

Ebert reminded everyone that voters from throughout the County, not just those in North Ogden, Pleasant View, and Harrisville, would have to be asked to vote on an additional \$6 million bond. It would be a hard sell when voters knew the existing facility could be renovated to meet the scope of services in other libraries for less money.

Mayor Taylor expressed frustration that the Feasibility Study of the Main Library did not consider the North Branch or the needs of those living in Northern Weber County. He felt it was not fair that North Branch was given only a paragraph in the Study.

Wangsgard explained that the team of architects and engineers who were hired to evaluate the Main Library were not given the charge, and therefore were not paid to evaluate other buildings in the Library System. Because of the life/safety issues at Main, the Feasibility Study team was charged with determining if the Main Library could be renovated, or if the infrastructure was in such a deteriorated state that it would have to be torn down and replaced. None of the other libraries in the System were investigated by the Study team.

The Feasibility Study team found that the Main Library was structurally sound and could be renovated for less money than replacing it. The Study team also noted, however, that the lower level would need to be vacated for public services in the future. It was an aside that the Feasibility Study team noted that perhaps a capital improvement bond should also address issues at other libraries, including Ogden Valley Branch, Southwest Branch, and North Branch. This is why North Branch was even mentioned in the Study.

As a result of the Feasibility Study of the Main Library, two additional architectural firms and their engineers, as well as professional construction cost estimators and two local construction companies, weighed in on evaluating the condition of, and made recommendations for, other libraries, including North Branch. The capital plan was not put together by the Board without laborious investigation and expert opinions on all the facilities detailed in the bonding proposal.

The Southwest Branch had no future value as a library. The North Branch and Main did, and this value was leveraged for the public good.

Wangsgard noted that it was understandable that people not intimately involved in this process, which began in 2011, would have difficulty keeping all the details in mind, but the North Branch and the people of northern Weber County were not slighted in the process.

Wangsgard said that, as the Board developed their Capital Plan, they looked at replacing North Branch and building a Northwest Branch, but in asking people to vote to authorize the sale of bonds, the Board had to be frugal and leverage what the public already had in place. It would have been wonderful to build a brand new Main Library and a new North Branch, but it would not have been cost effective. It would have also been wonderful to build a new branch in northwestern Weber County, but after months of public discussion and public meetings, the Board was not authorized to ask the public to vote on these projects.

Spencer acknowledged that the Board needed to seriously explore all possible solutions to make more parking available to those using the North Branch.

Spencer asked if the Board had any additional comments, questions, or if they wanted to make a motion.

Jacobson said the plan has gone too far at this point in time to change locations, and if the Board waits, there is a good possibility of not getting a nice library in North Ogden. If the Board hesitates, cost increases will cause the people in northern Weber County to be left out.

Board member Taylor said listening to the Mayors made his heart break, but the Board doesn't have a realistic opportunity to pass another bond. Asking to spend \$10 million dollars, or more, to build a new North Branch may be credible, but it is not realistic.

Ebert noted that a tremendous amount of time had gone into the Capital Plan and the North Branch was now behind schedule as a result of the request to pause and evaluate another site. What do we miss out on if we wait, he asked rhetorically. I don't want to pare back the building size on a new site and then have to cut services to children, or not have a large meeting room. I am not against moving, he stated, but it may not be in the best interest of the people.

Cost of inflation and construction was built into the timeline, and it was presented to the public as part of the bond plan. There is a dedicated Library constituency that has expectations of the size and quality of services that a building will support.

Innes noted he did not think a new bond will pass.

Spencer said he could see the Mayors' vision for the new site, but the risks are great. He is not personally excited about the particular piece of ground, even though it is large. In the future it may be a good site.

Spencer noted Stokes is at Scout Camp and unable to attend, and wondered if they should wait for the full Board to proceed.

Wangsgard said if the Board decides to move to another site, the decision needs to be made now so the staff and others can get to work on bonding and fundraising, or at least begin the design of

a new library. If the Board decides to renovate, production of the plans needs to get back on schedule so construction can begin next spring. She asked the Board to make the hard decision, whatever it is, and put them to work leveraging the best service possible for the people in northern Weber County.

Jacobson made a motion to proceed with the North Branch renovation as it was addressed in the bond initiative voted on by the public. Innes seconded the motion.

Spencer called for discussion.

Jacobson asked if the time for fundraising could be extended until September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Wangsgard advised that the deadline to begin the design was April 1<sup>st</sup>. EDA Architects do not have the necessary design documents to produce the construction set. The project is behind schedule. To design the building and make it work for the public and staff takes time. The Pleasant Valley Branch is a great facility because everyone took the time needed to get it right. It would be tragic if the building opened and in two years people began to say, we should have done this differently, we didn't think of this.

To design a great library takes time for the staff, community, and councils to review and make suggestions. Waiting two more months will be very costly, whatever the Board's decision. She urged the Board to vote so the public doesn't end up with something less because they put the decision off. There is a need to move forward. Working in the ground during winter, costs more money. Let's get something going in the spring.

Board members had no additional comments or questions for the presenters. There being no further discussion, Spencer asked Jacobson to restate the motion, which he did.

Spencer called for the vote; all voted in favor of the motion except Jenson, who voted no, and Ebert who abstained.

Spencer encouraged City officials to continue looking for large donors that will make a commitment, but it was the intent of the Board to move forward and complete the project as presented to the public.

Spencer thanked the Mayors for their attendance and participation.

Other:

Due to the late hour, Board member Taylor moved, and Jacobson seconded a motion to postpone the rest of the agenda and adjourn at 8:20 p.m. All voted "aye."

Respectfully submitted:    
Julia Valle Date