



King County Library System Board of Trustees Meeting

KCLS Service Center
5pm ♦ May 29, 2019

PRESENT MOTIONS APPROVED

KCLS BOARD

Angélica Alvarez
Ron Higgs
Robin McClelland
Pamela Grad
Anne Repass
Lalita Uppala

KCLS Staff

Julie Acteson
Beth Castleberry
Jenny Engstrom
Maria Hatcher
Nicholas Lee
Tess Mayer
Cynthia McNabb
Jed Moffitt
Lisa Rosenblum
Bruce Schauer
Greg Smith

1. Board Meeting agenda
2. April 24, 2019 Board meeting minutes
3. Payroll expenditures
4. General Fund #0010 expenditures
5. Capital Project Fund 2005 #3070 expenditures
6. Resolution 2019-02 Surplus Real Property (Vehicles)
7. Resolution 2019-03 General Fund Balance Policy

CALL TO ORDER

President Lalita Uppala called the meeting to order at 5:05pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Pamela Grad moved approval of the Board Meeting agenda. Angélica Alvarez seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Pamela Grad moved approval of the April 29, 2019 Board Meeting minutes. Anne Repass seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Locke read the following statement:

Dear members of the King County Library System Board of Trustees,

We come here tonight because you are the governing body of the King County Library System and care about its funding.

In your April 2019 meeting minutes you talked about the need for a levy lid lift:

"Library Advisory board members gathered at the Service Center on April 13 to learn about the current political and financial environment at KCLS in anticipation of a potential levy lid lift."

The levy rate was \$0.37 per \$1,000 assessed value last year and is currently at \$0.33 this year, and you no doubt would prefer to raise it to the cap of \$0.50 (a 52% increase.) The last levy lid lift came before voters in 2010 and passed with only a 52% majority. The average voter looks for a reason to vote 'NO' on any increased taxes. The Drag Queen Story Hour clearly gives them one.

The 'Friends of the Library' may be paying the drag queen, but as many as a dozen taxpayer-paid employees work the event, and paper costs, building expenses, etc., are all taxpayer-funded.

MRSC stands for 'Municipal Research and Service Center.' They believe the most effective government is a well-informed local government. MRSC's Executive Director Tracy Burrows writes in an article about Voter Approved Tax Measures: "The most significant factor in whether a local ballot measure will succeed hasn't changed over time. When there is organized opposition to a measure its chances of success diminish significantly."

This is a pledge to vote 'NO' on any tax for the library if 'Drag Queen Story Hour' is allowed to continue. I've heard there's a small army who will get signatures.

Margaret Mead said: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has".

What you have to decide in the near future is how committed are you to the Drag Queen Story Hour? Are you committed to it enough to seriously risk the FUTURE FUNDING of the Library?

Lynn Meagher said that several audience members have emailed the KCLS Board of Trustees to express their feelings about Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) and all have received a uniform response indicating that the program has been well received based on positive comments from families who have enjoyed it. She posed two questions to the Board: first, if members of the taxpaying community gave different feedback about DQSH, would their input be as welcome as those who express pleasure with the program? Second, what is the process for background checks? She said the public deserves answers in light of a recent discovery that a registered sex offender read to children at the Houston Public Library as part of DQSH. She said it was members of the public, not the library, who discovered that the individual had not provided documentation, making it all the more unfortunate.

Rosanna Menck stated that she also objects to exposing children to DQSH. She said her generation had childhoods where they weren't exposed to materials of a sexualized nature. When children hear queen, they think 'princess' and don't know the sexual connotation of the word. Queens should be in an adult venue, not in a library where children should be learning to love books and love reading. She said the program is not family-friendly as described. Little children will have a good time when someone is dressed in sparkles and is called a queen, but drag queens are for adults. She welcomes anyone who reads to children if they are not pushing an agenda, even if it is a male dressed like a Disney character. She said the program is clearly indoctrinating children at a very young age.

Rachael Cantlin said she is opposed to DQSH in any library in any part of the country. When she raised her children they enjoyed visiting the library and if this was happening at the time, she would have stood up against it. She said DQSH affects and confuses children and hopes that the Board will hear the voices of those who oppose it and reconsider the program.

Cheryl Ford is a King County taxpayer with two grandchildren who have always loved Story Time. She hates the idea of having to tell them they can't attend anymore because of what she believes is an agenda. She says DQSH has no place where there are preschoolers or small children present.

Dawn Land is a resident of Milton, which sits on the boundary line between Pierce and King Counties so her family utilizes both library systems, especially her daughter. She said she is not opposed to drag queens and honestly thinks they are awesome, but libraries are not an appropriate venue for them. She said the City of Milton hosted a drag queen brunch for residents 21 and older that she didn't protest because the event was age-appropriate for the audience. She understands that June is Pride month and the time to celebrate different cultures, but DQSH is a completely implausible façade hiding behind the banner of inclusivity. She said the program promotes sexualization of very young children and is not even appropriate for her youngest son who is 12. She said it's not about reading "Heather Has Two Mommies," it's about finding more appropriate ways to celebrate Pride Month. The library needs more family-friendly programs. DQSH is not one of them and she hopes the Board will look into it.

Christine Cree disagrees with DQSH and thinks it is damaging on many levels. She said librarians and teachers are role model to kids and noted that the DQSH website states that the program "gives kids unabashedly...queer role models." She said drag queen Dylan Pontiff admitted that DQSH is grooming the next generation. She said another stated that children will be seduced in their own schools and come to crave and adore (drag queens). And another admitted to having an LGBTQ agenda to indoctrinate children and was unapologetic about it. Ms. Cree said that the program isn't about inclusion. Drag queens are free to visit the library like anyone else, but DQSH is about an agenda and indoctrination. She said a recent performer at three drag queen story hours in Houston was found to be a convicted sex offender who assaulted an eight-year old girl. She asked if KCLS has conducted background checks on Aleska and Cookie, and wondered what a lawsuit would do to KCLS for inviting potential pedophiles to perform before children.

Denova Weaver read the following comments, spoken on behalf of another person's account of a Drag Queen Story Hour held at a different library system:

"They played 'I'm Coming Out' right before the program started. There were a couple of employees who lead the group in songs between three books the fully-dressed drag queen read. He read 'Teddy's Favorite Toy' about a boy whose favorite toy is a doll. "Every Day Dress Up," about a girl whose mother suggests that instead of dressing like a princess, she could dress up as famous women in history, like Amelia Curie, Ella Fitzgerald, etc. The last one "Worm Loves Worm" was the one with the heavy hand. Two worms want to get married, but who will wear the tux and who will wear the dress? One ends up wearing the dress and a top hat, the other wears the tux and veil. Then it was the time for the dance party and crafts such as crowns and rainbow colored ribbons. (It was noted that they didn't do the create your own drag queen name or choose your pronouns exercises done at other drag queen events, maybe next time). The part that bothered me the most though, was the end. They put on music for the dance party and started the crafts. As we walked out I looked around and could better see the people, all the smiling, the laughing and dancing, and it felt like a victory party where they had won and the children were the spoils. And it was really disturbing".

Except for some personal embellishment at the end, this is by all accounts an accurate description of that libraries <sic> first and as of yet, only Drag Queen Story Hour.

Let's be clear. The real matter at hand is the children, the three-, four-, five-, six-, seven-, eight-year olds.

I'm not determining if a person being a Drag Queen is right or wrong. That is their personal decision, and no matter how another person feels about it, I don't believe it is going to change their decision in the slightest, nor would I try to anyway.

The real matter here is the target audience, the three-to-eight-year olds (the spoils if I may). The library even encouraged the children to dress up themselves as the opposite sex. Three-year-olds are still being potty-trained and trying not to suck on their thumbs and the library wants them to question their gender? This is a concept far beyond their reasoning and will do irreparable damage and it is irresponsible for the library to promote and facilitate this gender-confusion ideology.

Do I have a right to say that the eyewitness account that was accurately described above is wrong?

I believe I do. Because it's about the kids, the children, the three-year-olds, the four-year-olds, the five-year-olds, the six-year-olds, the seven-year-olds, the eight-year-olds ... (the spoils if I may).

Sincerely, One Person's Response

Mercer Island resident Gary Robinson noted that the meeting agenda includes a resolution to approve a new general-fund balance policy, and pointed out that there is no longer a column referencing a 'Reserves' account in the KCLS Budget. He posed two questions to the Board: first, what is the current amount of KCLS reserves and why is there a need for the policy? He said he was under the impression that the Reserves account was to help smooth out the revenue needs of KCLS' funding cycle. Second, he asked how a 120-day minimum ending-fund balance is supposed to work. He also noted the addition of a new social worker and cautioned the Board about mission creep, which he said is not unusual in organizations, but generally should be avoided. He said KCLS' work to generate economic development in the community is a worthwhile goal, but hiring a social worker exceeds KCLS' mission. He said many cities and King County have social-work programs and would be pleased to have KCLS assume the responsibility. He doesn't think they should.

Beth Daranciang opposes DQSH. She said it is a form of child abuse because it sexualizes children. Drag queens are very sexual and erotic and usually perform in adult clubs. DQSH is not an appropriate program in a venue with young children. Further, she objects to drag queens dressing as women and likens it to performing in black face. She said that dressing outlandishly and play-acting as a woman in front of children is offensive to her as a woman and kids don't understand it. She asked the Board to rethink the program.

Ann Streit said her first job was as a library page who used to make sure books were shelved neatly and in order. Sometimes she would overhear a librarian giving someone the wrong name of an author and would find the book herself and give it to the patron. She said she would sometimes get into trouble for it, but thinks patrons should get what they are looking for when they come to the library. What she doesn't think they are looking for is to learn about alternative lifestyles. She said libraries have a great history as dignified places where kids can learn about history, heroes, and right versus wrong, but are being turned into repositories to indoctrinate children. She said it is cheapening the institution and asked the Board to do what is right, not what is politically correct.

Janet Nelson said she has been shocked to learn about what has been going on in her community. She said she has taken her complaints about the Bellevue Art Museum to the Bellevue City Council and will take the issue of DQSH, as well, since council meetings are televised and one can't trust newspapers anymore. She said she recently heard a five-year-old boy and a three-year-old girl sitting in a car with a doll and talking about if it was alright to touch the doll's vagina. She said it's ridiculous what children are being taught and is glad she attended the Board meeting to learn what she has been missing.

K Wsu said he and his children spend a lot of time at the Kingsgate Library and have always found it to be a place of refuge from a stressful world. He said he would like to keep it that way, but is betting that it won't because of DQSH. He said children of this generation have been sexualized too much and is why there is a problem with human trafficking, an issue with which he's been involved. He said that lowering barriers in children's minds about proper boundaries indirectly contributes to the problem. He said there are educational programs about inappropriate touching, child abuse, and date rape, which everyone would agree are serious problems, but DQSH adds to those problems and he hopes the library will do away with the program.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Online Library Services Librarian Britta Barrett said KCLS' social-media strategy aligns with KCLS' mission to create meaningful connections and is intended to increase awareness of KCLS, provide responsive service to patrons, promote programs and events, and manage KCLS' reputation among online users. KCLS has a presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Yelp, Google, and Linked In. The latter is managed by HR staff.

Britta is part of a three-person Social team serving as subject-matter experts for social media and newsletters; catalog, eBooks, and downloads; and web content management. The team measures the effectiveness of KCLS' social media presence using four metrics: Audience (number of people who see content); Impressions (number of times content is displayed); Engagement (number of interactions, such as likes, comment, or retweets) and Link Clicks (clicks that send the viewer to another page or experience and away from the original post). KCLS has seen growth in all four metrics between 2016 and 2018. KCLS also uses ads on Facebook and Instagram to expand reach, target specific audiences, and combat algorithms that alter what appears on one's newsfeed.

Community libraries maintain their own Facebook pages to share content specific to their local community's needs and interests. They are managed by local staff and supported by the Social team.

The Social team also offers "The Desk Set," a podcast cohosted by Britta and Readers Services Specialist Emily Calkins, which centers on KCLS' 10 to Try reading challenge. The podcast has been downloaded more than 7,750 times since its launch in October 2018.

FINANCE REPORT

Fiscal year 2019 year-to-date revenues received are 44.1% of the Budget. Year-over-year revenues received increased \$576K, or 1.1%, and is mostly attributable to prior year property-tax receipts.

Total general-fund expenditures for the month of April are at 29% of the Budget with 33.33% of the budget year completed. Year-over-year expenditures decreased \$386K, or -1.0%, compared to the previous year.

Capital Investment Plan (CIP) expenditures in April were 5.7% of the Total CIP budget, which includes categories for Major Maintenance, New Construction/Remodels, and Replacements.

As of April 2019, total budget expended for the Kent Panther Lake and Boulevard Park projects is 85% and 85.2%, respectively.

GENERAL FUND BALANCE POLICY

As discussed in the Finance Committee meeting, Finance Director Nicholas Lee said the Board is being asked to adopt a formal policy establishing a minimum ending fund balance equivalent to 120 days of operating expenditures. It is considered a sound financial practice and would be consistent with the fiscal policies of Pierce County Library System and Sno-Isle Libraries. Historically, KCLS has operated with a 60-day reserve as a general budgeting guideline. The General Fund Balance Policy augments the existing practice.

APPROVAL OF MONTHLY EXPENDITURES

Ron Higgs moved approval of Payroll expenditures for April in the amount of \$2,918,408.25: (04/12) Ck#173712-173773; 150001-151253; (04/26) Ck#173774-173850; 170001-171248. Robin McClelland seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Robin McClelland moved approval of General Fund #0010 expenditures for April in the amount of \$5,234,989.57: Travel Advances - Ck#1374-1376; (04/11) Ck#1116958;1116959-1116990;1116991-1117016; (04/11) Ck#1117017-1117055;1117056-1117105;1117106-1117165; (04/11) Ck#1117166-1117199;1117200-1117203;5010866-5010868; (04/16) Ck#1117204-1117250;1117251-1117344; (04/17) Ck#5010869-5010901;1117345-1117371; (04/18) Ck#1117372-1117414;1117415-1117427;5010902-5010904; (04/19) Ck#1117428-1117436;1117437-1117490; (04/23rd Ck#5010905-5010929;1117491-1117514; (04/25) Ck#5010930-5010932;1117515-1117532; (04/26) Ck#1117533-1117645; (04/29) Ck#1117646-1117666;1117667-1117669;5010933-5010957; (04/30) Ck#1117670-1117704;5010958;1117705-1117758; (05/01) Ck#1117759-1117855; (05/02) Ck#5010959; Voids - Ck#. Anne Repass seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Anne Repass moved approval of Capital Project Fund 2005 #3070 expenditures for April in the amount of \$218,708.24: (04/11) Ck#3073972-3073975; (04/18) Ck#3073976-3073978; (04/26) Ck#3073979; (04/29) Ck#3073980; (05/01) Ck#3073981-3073988. Pamela Grad seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2019-02 SURPLUS VEHICLES

As discussed in the Finance Committee meeting, ***Angelica Alvarez moved approval of Resolution 2019-02 Surplus Vehicles. Pamela Grad seconded and the motion passed unanimously.***

RESOLUTION 2019-03 GENERAL FUND BALANCE POLICY

Pamela Grad moved approval of Resolution 2019-03 General Fund Balance Policy. Anne Repass seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Lisa Rosenblum said KCLS' Year in Review presentation to the King County Council on May 20 got postponed after 90 minutes of public comment caused the meeting to run behind schedule. Councilmember Joe McDermott wrote a note to Lisa and Board Chair Lalita Uppala inviting KCLS back at a later date.

Lisa thanked Trustee Anne Repass for speaking on behalf of the Board at the reopening ceremony of the Boulevard Park Library on Saturday, May 18. She said she particularly enjoyed seeing a young boy carrying a handmade sign that said "it was worth the wait" and enthusiastic staff members wearing Boulevard Park t-shirts that one staff member had made especially for the event. Lisa noted the event was both wonderful and bittersweet, as Boulevard Park marks the end of KCLS' 2004 Capital Bond program.

KCLS has hired a social worker to provide assistance to patrons in need of referrals for housing, health, food, and other social services. She will also work with staff to help them develop mechanisms for coping with the everyday pressures and emotional impacts of serving patrons who are in crisis.

TRUSTEES REPORT

Angelica Alvarez said she would like to see more program information included in the Director's Report to highlight the work that staff is doing each month.

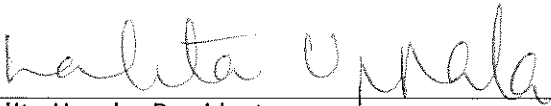
Robin McClelland thanked Lisa for sharing a ULC Leadership Brief on the leadership role of Trustees and suggested that it would be a good topic for discussion at a future meeting. Lalita Uppala agreed and said starting a conversation earlier would be useful to the Board in their roles as library ambassadors.

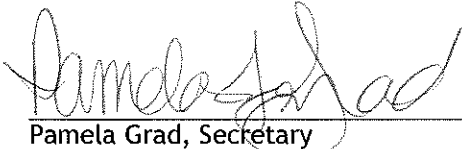
Ron Higgs said he recently participated in the Tech Expo at Bellevue Library as well as a flower show at the Kirkland Library. He expressed the latter group's thanks for allowing them to use Kirkland's meeting room for their event.

Angelica Alvarez asked if KCLS conducts background checks on presenters. Lisa said yes, and would send the Board information on the process for both volunteers and performers.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25pm.


Lalita Uppala, President


Pamela Grad, Secretary