



# King County Library System Board of Trustees Meeting

Videoconference  
5pm ♦ May 26, 2021

## PRESENT

### KCLS Board

Pamela Grad  
Ron Higgs  
Harish Kulkarni  
Robin McClelland  
Srini Raghavan  
Anne Repass  
Lalita Uppala

### KCLS Staff

Angelina Benedetti  
Jenny Engstrom  
Maria Hatcher  
Nicholas Lee  
Sergio Razo  
Dominica Myers  
Danielle Perry  
Lisa Rosenblum  
Ken Ryals

## MOTIONS APPROVED

1. Board Meeting agenda
2. April 28, 2021 Board meeting minutes
3. Payroll expenditures
4. General Fund #0010 expenditures
5. Resolution 2021-02 Disposition of Surplus Property (Vehicles)

## CALL TO ORDER

Secretary Anne Repass called the meeting to order at 5pm.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*Pamela Grad moved approval of the Board Meeting agenda. Robin McClelland seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

## APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

*Srini Raghavan moved approval of the April 28, 2021 Board Meeting minutes. Lalita Uppala seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

## PUBLIC FORUM

Former Vashon Teen Librarian Erin Rozewicz shared her personal experience while working for KCLS, including what she described as a pattern of emotional abuse by the now Interim Director of Library Outreach, Programs, and Services (LOPS). She brought her complaints forward, but said they were ignored by the Director of Human Resources. She also alleged that files have been removed from the Human Resources department. She said the Interim Director of LOPS should be removed from her position and called for the Board to launch an independent, third-party investigation into the conduct of the Interim Director of LOPS and the Human Resources department, and that it include a 360-degree evaluation of KCLS' Executive Director and Leadership Team.

Former Skyway Teen Librarian Maggie Block said that LGBTQ+ programming they designed was met with strong opposition from some community members as well as KCLS' Executive Director, who criticized the library's Regional Manager in a cruel manner for allowing the program. The negative repercussions filtered down to Maggie, who was told that any future programming they designed would be closely scrutinized for more defensible content, which felt discriminatory.

Ryan White, who did not indicate an association with King County Library System, said libraries have traditionally been a keystone for the community and that KCLS libraries have always been less about books and more about serving the people who use them. However, drastic staff cuts have changed that. He said that KCLS employed 1,300 staff at the end of 2019 and now has only 850. Those who are left are expected to fill the gaps in service and the increased workload is causing burnout. Librarians, drivers, maintenance workers and other staff have left, and vacancies are not being refilled except for top-dollar leadership positions to which KCLS' hiring freeze doesn't seem to apply. Management also shows no concern for staff who are hesitant to return to buildings before all are fully vaccinated. He said staff no longer are passionate about their work and instead feel like cogs in a wheel.

Lisa Rosenblum noted for the record that KCLS currently employs 1,074 staff, not 850.

## STAFF REPORTS

### REOPENING UPDATE

Library Operations Director Jenny Engstrom said KCLS opened four more libraries in May for limited in-building service and will open two more in early June while planning continues for Phase 4. Washington State has announced that broad public health restrictions will be lifted by June 30, so KCLS is estimating the first week of July for all remaining locations to reopen. Staff was able to discontinue quarantine restrictions based on current guidance and has begun restarting automated materials handling equipment at branches. KCLS will begin communicating to the public in June which locations will reopen and in what order.

### EBOOK SELECTION & ORDER

Selection and Order Manager Nancy Henkel and Selection Librarians Brenna Shanks and Jennifer Fleck provided an overview of how KCLS builds its eBook collection. As it does with print format, Collection Management Services staff apply the same selection criteria to eBooks. Author recognition, usage, cultural trends, current events and patron requests drive demand for titles. The "Big 5" publishers - Penguin/Random House, Hachette, Harper Collins, Simon and Schuster and MacMillan - dictate what titles are available, when they'll be available and in what formats (eBook, audiobook, streaming, etc.) Selection librarians also review self-published titles through Amazon and writing consortiums such as Kobo and Smashwords.

OverDrive also makes recommendations to libraries. OverDrive accounts for 95% of eBook sales to libraries since its platform is the only one compatible with Kindles, but libraries also purchase from vendors that provide specialized services, such as streaming or reference databases. These platform vendors function like wholesalers or bookstores that negotiate with the publisher for content and then sell, lease, manage and circulate the materials to library patrons. Online retailers, like Amazon or Apple, do not offer library-circulation platforms nor sell content to libraries.

All eBook sales models are dictated by publishers, and prices and terms are subject to change without notification. Pricing for purchased titles is based on a model of one checkout / one user and titles must be repurchased after 26 circulations. Pricing for leased titles is metered by time (12 or 24 months) and circulation (26 checkouts or 100 concurrent users)

KCLS has a purchase-to-holds ratio of 1:5 so that patrons do not have to wait longer than three months for popular titles in high demand. Selectors typically purchase print titles based on best estimates and then adjust quantities based on demand immediately after publication. Pricing and leasing models make adjustments for digital formats more difficult.

KCLS was trending at 13% year-over-year growth at the beginning of 2019. In March 2020, that figure had jumped to 21% and stayed at 30-40% growth for the remainder of the year. Year-over-year growth in 2021 is still strong and is trending at 29.1% compared to the previous year. In 2019, digital circulation was 5.6 million checkouts, as reported by OverDrive. KCLS is anticipated to finish 2021 with over eight million.

### FINANCE REPORT

General fund revenue for April was \$49.1M, reflecting receipt of the first semi-annual distribution of property tax revenue from King County. Year-to-date revenue is \$58.0M, which represents 44.6% of the total revenue budget, with 33.33% of the budget year expended. Other revenue is largely state timber tax revenue. Negative investment interest reflects an accounting entry for a market adjustment by the King County Treasurer at the close of its fiscal year.

General fund expenditures in April were \$8.9M, representing a year-over-year change of -0.4%.

Year-to-date expenditures in the Capital Investment Program are \$429K representing 10.8% of the total CIP budget.

**APPROVAL OF MONTHLY EXPENDITURES**

*Pamela Grad moved approval of Payroll expenditures for April in the amount of \$4,014,246.76: (04/02) Ck#00200551-00200567; 385373902-385375137; (04/16) Ck#00200569-00200584; 388518187-388519416; (04/30) Ck#00200585-00200601; 391636586-391637810. Srinu Raghavan seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

*Anne Repass moved approval of General Fund #0010 expenditures for April in the amount of \$5,472,166.17: Travel Advances - Ck# (04/06) Ck#1133099-1133125; (04/07) Ck#1133126-1133172; (04/13) Ck#5012658-5012660; (04/13) Ck#1133173-1133227; (04/15) Ck#5012661; (04/15) Ck#1133228-1133274; (04/16) Ck#5012662-5012665; (04/16) Ck#1133275-1133283; (04/20) Ck#5012666; (04/20) Ck#1133284-1133347; (04/21) Ck#5012667-5012668; (04/21) Ck#1133348-1133402; (04/22) Ck#5012669-5012670; (04/22) Ck#1133403-1133427; (04/27) Ck#1133428-1133430; (04/27) Ck#1133431-1133440; (04/29) Ck#5012671-5012675; (04/29) Ck#1133441-1133442; (04/29) Ck#1133443-1133503; (04/30) Ck#1133504-1133513; (05/03) Ck#1133514; (05/04) Ck#5012676; (05/04) Ck#1133515; (05/04) Ck#1133516-1133569; (05/05) Ck#5012677; Voids - Ck#1133178. Harish Kulkarni seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

**RESOLUTION 2021-02 DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY (VEHICLES)**

*Robin McClelland moved approval of Resolution 2021-02. Pamela Grad seconded.*

Finance Director Nicholas Lee said the Board conferred authority to KCLS' Finance Director to dispose of surplus items valued at \$1,000 or less. Surplus items valued at greater than \$1,000 require Board approval and are subsequently disposed of via public auction through an agency of the State. *There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.*

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Lisa Rosenblum said things are slowly getting better after a year of unprecedented complexities trying to balance health and safety concerns for both staff and the public during the pandemic. Staff is looking forward to reopening all branches in July and getting closer to returning to normal.

KCLS' Summer Reading Program launched June 1 and will be online, since children can't yet be vaccinated. Lisa acknowledged staff who have been planning KCLS' Summer Reading programs since February.

The American Library Association published a special annual report that focused on the essential role of libraries during the pandemic. The ways in which KCLS and the KCLS Foundation responded early to Covid-19 were mentioned in the report.

Lisa joined King County Council members Kathy Lambert and Girmay Zihalay, who visited the Fall City and Skyway libraries, respectively, to observe in-building and curbside services being offered to patrons.

**TRUSTEES REPORT**

There were no Trustee reports.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38pm.

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Ron Higgs, President

  
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Anne Repass, Secretary