



King County Library System  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Videoconference  
5pm ♦ October 27, 2021

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**MOTIONS APPROVED**

**PRESENT**

**KCLS Board**

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

**KCLS Staff**

Julie Acteson  
Maria Bassett  
Angelina Benedetti  
Nicholas Lee  
Cynthia McNabb  
Dominica Myers  
Danielle Perry  
Sergio Razo  
Lisa Rosenblum  
Ken Ryals  
Greg Smith  
Tracey Thompson

1. Board Meeting agenda
2. September 29, 2021 Board Meeting minutes
3. Payroll expenditures
4. General Fund #0010 expenditures

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Ron Higgs called the meeting to order at 5:08 pm.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Srinil Raghavan moved approval of the Board Meeting agenda. Anne Repass seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

**APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES**

*Pamela Grad moved approval of the September 29, 2021 Board Meeting minutes. Robin McClelland seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Helen Stanwell stated that she is representing a group of library patrons who have organized themselves to save our libraries. She stated that the 2021 Budget Narrative presented by the Director is intentionally misleading. The Budget Narrative states that the region is due to have slow or negative growth in the next five years, as reported by the King County Office of Economic and Financial Analysis (OEFA). However, she said the opposite is true and quoted the Seattle Times and her own King County Assessor's statement showing current increases in assessed valuation. She said that on the whole, the economy in Washington State continues to out-perform the broader U.S. economy. She says the Director is purposely providing misinformation to the Board of Trustees so that it will agree to go to the voters for a levy lid lift. She cites KCLS' budget surplus, which was over \$12 million at the end of August, and wonders why two high-paying deputy director positions were added at the headquarters while library hours continue to be reduced and mission-essential employees bear the brunt of forced reductions.

At the Board's request, Helen agreed to provide follow-up information via written statement to the Board. The Board also asked her to provide the libraries she is closest to and the name of the group she represents.

**STAFF REPORTS**

**SUMMER READING RECAP**

Rekha Kuver, Manager of Youth and Family Services stated that while a second year of pandemic Summer Reading was not expected, there were many lessons learned from 2020 and there were many successes to share. She thanked the Community Relations department for facilitating work with local artist Amy Hevron for the second year in a row.

Since the pandemic began, Summer Reading has shifted to emphasize a virtual reading challenge through the Beanstack online interface. The total number of readers for 2021 was 8,387, which was very close to the 2020 figure. However, staff worked hard to get readers more involved and engaged this year, and the total minutes logged increased dramatically: from 3,766,300 in 2020 to 5,066,903 in

2021. In addition to the online interface, library locations distributed nearly 100,000 all-ages print logs and over 26,000 preschool logs. The log was featured in the *ParentMap* publication.

Through generous support from the KCLS Foundation, KCLS was able to distribute over 17,000 books and 4,200 STEM activity kits to over 100 sites throughout King County, including community centers, schools and other service organizations. All were very appreciative.

Library programming continues to be virtual, and there has been substantial growth in the quality and breadth of programming that is offered. In total, there were nearly 600 programs this summer, including author visits, art and STEM events, reaching over 7,000 patrons. Patrons are much more comfortable with virtual programs than last year.

StoryWalks are a relatively new type of outdoor engagement for patrons. They are stories printed on sign boards placed along park and other pathways so that patrons can read a story, chapter by chapter, as they walk. Many StoryWalks are adjacent to libraries.

Cedar Region Teen Services Librarian Tandra Solvey described her efforts working with the Maple Valley Teen Advisory Board (TAB). Maple Valley TAB worked to design and deliver programs for their peers and for the community at large. Responding to isolation experienced during the pandemic, the teens created a virtual summer camp where they could reconnect over new activities and shared interests. The event happened over three days in July 2021 and served 192 tweens, ages nine to 13. There were themed days on the topics of nature, arts, STEM and more.

#### **CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM/ITS**

ITS Director Sergio Razo gave an overview of the ITS Capital Investment Program (CIP) for 2021. The ITS CIP is a five-year process for large-scale projects, which include software development and replacing assets. ITS takes into consideration what new trends in technology KCLS wants to adopt when outlining projects for the CIP. All desired projects are defined in terms of job cost. Short and long-term supply-chain issues continue to affect current project completion. Across the country 30-year inventory levels are at an all-time low, and nearly every industry sector has been disrupted by supply-chain delays.

The 2021 CIP budget is \$1.5 million. As of the end of September 2021, KCLS has incurred \$681,000 in expenses year-to-date; only 46.8% of the budget has been spent. There are many pending orders that vendors keep pushing back.

The ITS CIP can be broken into four major categories: network upgrades, staff and patron equipment, network improvement, and systems improvement. There are projections for which locations are going to be targeted for upgrades each year so that plans can be made with the vendors and suppliers.

#### **2022 PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

Lisa Rosenblum gave an overview of the four high-level focuses of the 2022 budget. These include increasing the library open hours in January or February of 2022, transforming the operational staffing to increase full-time positions, restoring the Capital Investment Plan and focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion. The initiatives are based on the strategic focus work done between 2016 and 2017, and align with KCLS' strategic goals.

The budget process, which begins in May and June, is where projects and priorities are identified by directors and discussed with staff. Between July and September, the Finance team provides projections, which are revised and edited. In October, the preliminary budget is presented, followed by a period of questions and deliberations by stakeholders and the public. The final budget will be presented for approval at the December Board meeting.

Finance Director Nicholas Lee stated that property-tax revenue accounts for 96% to 98% of our total revenue each year. The amount fluctuates based on the other types of revenue received each year. These can include grants, investment interest and intergovernmental revenue such as timber tax. Revenue is expected to grow by 4.4% in 2022.

KCLS is a budget-based property-tax system, and can only increase the amount collected by 1% per year. There is an additional boost through new construction, which accounts for an additional 1.5%,

bringing total growth to approximately 2.5%. Current inflation is much higher than that amount. Even if property-tax valuations go up by 50% in a given year, KCLS still will get only 1% more than the previous year, plus any new construction.

Expenses also are expected to grow by 4.4% so the budget will be balanced. Approximately two-thirds of the budget is staffing costs, which increase by 3.3% and allow for a 19% increase in opening hours in 2022. The data driving the number of projected opening hours in 2022 includes decreases in foot traffic and PC usage from pre-pandemic levels. Physical circulation, which corresponds with desk activity, is up slightly since the libraries have reopened, but is far from pre-pandemic levels.

Non-personnel costs account for roughly one-third of the total expense budget and include facilities, technology and collection materials. These costs are forecasted to increase by 3.2%. The hope is that the supply-chain issues will not impact the service level, which has been promised to patrons.

There will be a Finance committee meeting in November as well as a public budget hearing during the November Board meeting. The final budget will be put together after input from all stakeholders has been received.

#### **FINANCE REPORT - NICHOLAS LEE**

General fund revenue year to date in September was \$73.2M, including \$71.9M in current-year property tax payments. This matches budget projections. As is projected, there will a spike of revenue around October as the final property-tax payments are due. Remaining budget to be collected in 2021 is approximately \$56.8M.

At the three-quarter mark for the year, total general-fund expenditures year-to-date in September were \$80.3M, which reflects 61.7% of the total budget expended. Expenditures are lower than projections by approximately \$15M. Expenses are lower in all three categories: staff, non-staff and CIP.

Year-to-date expenditures in the Capital Investment Program are \$1.4M, which represents 35.2% of the budgeted amount. Lower than expected expenses can be attributed to the supply-chain shortages.

#### **APPROVAL OF MONTHLY EXPENDITURES**

*Harish Kulkarni moved approval of Payroll expenditures for September in the amount of \$2,544,983.28: (09/03) Ck#00200739-00200756; 420709685-420710855; (09/17) Ck#00200757-00200772; 424034359-424035517. Lalita Uppala seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

*Pamela Grad moved approval of General Fund #0010 expenditures for September in the amount of \$4,216,366.51: Travel Advances - 0; (09/08) Ck#5012772; (09/08) Ck#1135513-1135570; (09/09) Ck#5012773-5012781; (09/09) Ck#1135571-1135613; (09/17) Ck#5012782-5012785; (09/17) Ck#1135614-1135620; (09/17) Ck#1135621-1135722; (09/22) Ck#5012786-5012795; (09/22) Ck#1135723-1135821; (09/29) Ck#1135822-1135903; (09/29) Ck#5012796-5012799; (09/29) Ck#1135904-1135906; (10/04) Ck#1135907-1135968; (10/04) Ck#5012800; Voids - Ck#1135897; 1135612. Anne Repass seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Lisa Rosenblum gave kudos to the KCLS leadership team and the grants team, under the direction of Cynthia McNabb. Grants, especially government grants, are complex and require application. The grants team helps to write the grants and ensures proper protocols are followed. The team collaborates with the Foundation in the process as well.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant will help KCLS outfit study rooms with equipment so that patrons can use them for remote meetings. It also will help KCLS offer a hybrid Board meeting option.

The Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) grant will allow KCLS to purchase Wi-Fi hotspots and laptops.

KCLS won a GovTech Technology Innovation Award for its work with TeleConnect, materials pickup lockers and outreach laptops and hotspots. Lisa is proud of the work that has been done by staff and the recognition received from a non-library organization.

## TRUSTEES REPORT

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:54pm, President Ron Higgs announced that the Board would convene in Executive Session for approximately 45 minutes. He noted that there would be no action taken by the Board at the conclusion of the Executive Session. The agenda noted the purpose of the Executive Session as per RCW 42.30.110, Section 1(g).

### RECONVENE REGULAR SESSION

At 7:57pm, Ron Higgs reconvened the regular session.

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:57pm.

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Ron Higgs, President

  
Anne Repass, Secretary