

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Mount Vernon City Library Board of Trustees
August 9th, 2018**

Board members present: Katy Armagost, Hal Verrell, Frank Replier, Margaret Redfern

Absent (or Excused Absent): Lyne Olsen

Library staff present: Library Director Isaac Huffman, Library Specialist Carissa Mason

Visitors: none

A. Call to order: Mr. Verrell called the meeting to order at 5:33PM.

B. Approval of minutes from the July 05th, 2018 meeting:

Ms. Redfern said under director's reports there is a typo about 6 lines in. Change "State Grand" to "State Grant."

Mr. Redfern moved that the minutes from the July 5th, 2018 meeting be approved as amended. Mr. Replier seconded the motion; all were in favor.

C. Visitors: none

D. Surplus material:

Mr. Verrell reminded the Board that they are no longer approving surplus materials.

Mr. Huffman said they did not withdraw as many books this month, as Kelly Dodd's position is being filled by Mike Bonacci.

Mr. Huffman said that new chairs and tables have arrived, and are currently residing in the Director's Office.

E. Budget reports:

Mr. Huffman said there were no large or anomalous expenditures, expect the Rivista periodicals renewal at about 5 grand.

Mr. Verrell asked if budget-wise they are on track.

Mr. Huffman said yes, they are at 58% for the target. It is 55% in expenditures, which is a little under in revenue as a whole due to tax revenue.

Mr. Huffman said that expenditures look pretty normal. There are some interesting items. Travel and tuition/registration are under. The library received a state grant that will back this money.

Mr. Huffman said that for capital expenditures, digital is on track. They have their Overdrive renewal coming. They are going to hold purchasing new digital content and wait to see where the Overdrive invoice comes out. Mr. Huffman said they are keeping

RB Digital because Central Skagit Library also has this, and it is a move to keep a consistent inter-library database. Mr. Huffman said he is not sure if keeping RB Digital is useful. He does not think its use justifies its price. Mr. Huffman said the Overdrive value is perfect, as digital book costs are high. As the library gets more check-outs digitally through Overdrive, the cost per unit will come down, as more people check out items that the library has already paid for.

There is a new resource they are trying: Hoopla for digital. There is a hard user-base at the library that uses it and wants to use it more. Mr. Huffman is not sure if it is cost effect. 10 grand a year seems like a lot. However, some staff are really pushing for it. Mr. Huffman said there is not really a great vendor in the movie digital space yet. There is no good specialty niche yet for library content. Mr. Huffman has experimented with alternate items like a hotspot that gives you 5 movies. However, it felt like they all had too hard of a use case. A Wi-Fi toggle for example had too many set-up steps.

Mr. Verrell said Netflix does not really have a library component?

Mr. Huffman said no, but it is a smart idea for vendors to develop it.

Mr. Huffman said one other note; there is slight error where furniture and equipment were charged to wrong item. Additionally, they are a little higher in part time labor, but lower in full time.

F. Approval of Disbursements: The disbursements from Period 7 in the amount of \$24,105.56 are certified as reviewed.

G. Monthly Statistical Reports:

Mr. Huffman said there was an error in statistics because they did not get numbers from Parks and Recreation back in time.

Mr. Huffman said programs are doing well. They had a paint party that was a capstone to their teen art series. About 35 kids were fighting with paint in the park. Mr. Huffman thinks it is the most successful teen event in the library's history. A large part of this is due to Callie Shoemaker's planning and to working with other people like Betsy Riser, who taught and designed the art classes. There is a general decline in item circulation, but not huge. Digital check-outs continue to go up. Mr. Huffman said they are going to talk more in the fall as how library cards operate. This they will do in alignment with national Library Card Month. Mr. Huffman wants to: 1. Extend the check-out period for library card renewal. Current cards expire every year; he wants to have a card valid for three years. 2. The current requirements for a card are for living in Mount Vernon. Mr. Huffman wants to discuss a "live or work in Mount Vernon" card.

Mr. Repplier asked Mr. Huffman how many people he thought that might include.

Mr. Huffman said it is not a lot of new users, but people who live just out of the district.

Mr. Huffman knows that this is how Whatcom and Seattle libraries work. It will help library usage as a whole.

Ms. Armagost said she recently had an out of state guest. They received a packet from the Post Office with mainly commercial advertisements. Mr. Armagost asked if the library could have a single sheet / brochure to advertise to newcomers.

Mr. Huffman said he should look into it and what demographic advertising to do there. Mr. Huffman said that advertising is not a line item the city has had before.

Mr. Verrell said he had not yet given the changes to Kevin Rogerson.

H. Director's Reports:

- a. Budget 2019:** Mr. Huffman said that it is budget season. Mr. Huffman said that his generally philosophy is that the Library budget should increase a little in the coming year, but not a lot. They need to work on the revenue because as it stands it is a little weird. He wants to back out of operation of out of district cards, fines, and fees. On what to ask for in the budget: 1. Keep technology improvements high, about 7 grand. Mr. Huffman feels it is necessary to get caught up in technology. Mr. Huffman said he thought about doing a big technology expenditure, but in reality there are a few more things to fix before starting a giant project like this. Most recently, the library's old label printers were not compatible with any operating system. They have to buy new label printers. Mr. Huffman will be asking for more money for digital collection. He anticipates higher costs here. They will be putting in 20,000 for general/ consulting preparations for the new library face. They will also continue the library furniture project, which rests in the facility budget. They are working on replacing chairs in the break room, a new table for conference room, new computers carrel in Children's. They also might rotate around furniture chairs.

Ms. Armagost asked if current furniture purchases are going to be usable in new building as well.

Mr. Huffman said yes, they are buying furniture for the new space. It is hard to say without a floor plan yet, but there is a general budget increase. Mr. Huffman sees two challenges in this budget season 1. What health care is going to cost. 18% of GDP is spent, which is the same as housing. They cannot exceed this number; there is no industry beyond 18% in any nation at the maximum. There has been 10 years of volatile health care for a while. 2. They do not know what the 2019 economy will do. Some big city-planning people say there might be a big market slow-down related to import/export. Mr. Huffman said that housing is slowing down and that the city is aware of this.

- b. Big Event Planning:** The library is doing a Car-nival event on September 14th. The library has never used more than one department devoting their staff to an event. This will be a bit of a challenge, so Mr. Huffman is predicting it will come out okay-ish. They have 14 stations plans. They will start promotions in the next week. The largest challenge has been getting food trucks to show up.
- c. Collaboration with Skagit Libraries:** Mr. Huffman said he thinks the goal of big promotion is really important. However, this is not a philosophy held by other Skagit libraries. Mr. Huffman thinks that collaboration is an essential part of library success. Mr. Huffman also thinks there is some inefficiency in the way

Skagit libraries run as a whole. For example, all programs between libraries work independently. This makes no sense because they could get speakers more likely to come if they had more venues to hold events at. Mr. Huffman thinks collaboration with Central Skagit district is going on path of 1. A sharable collection 2. Common digital platform 3. Interlinking between materials between the sites. This includes matching barcodes for check out and common library card numbers. Mr. Huffman said that the fact that the mobile catalogue is not mobile friendly is detrimental.

Skagit Reads formed a committee to choose the next Skagit Reads book. They came to two titles: *Lawn Boy* and *The Orchardist*. Two weeks after they made a decision, they announced a new book *Soul of an Octopus*. They said that all the libraries needed to pay together so that the author could come to an event. Mr. Huffman thought that the Skagit Reads was not about the author, but about drawing in users. The purpose was that the free book was an incentive to come to library. The first 300 people to sign up get a free book.

Ms. Armagost said that there is a difference in community between Mount Vernon and La Conner. Mount Vernon has a much broader population than La Conner.

Ms. Armagost asked what the Skagit read book ended up as.

Mr. Huffman said they are doing *Soul of an Octopus*. La Conner is going to have the author at an event at their library. They figured out financing from mostly La Conner with some support from Anacortes.

I. Around the Table:

Ms. Redfern had a question about the new art piece outside the library. Mr. Huffman said it is a project from the Skagit Valley College Welding Club. They all use standard frame and mount braking. This is the fifth one given to city. The library was open to receiving this because they can rotate the pieces and public art is cool for libraries to have. Mr. Huffman said that one interesting part is that it is powered coded and textured two levels of green. The piece has been well received by people.

Mr. Replier had company from Melbourne that commented how much they enjoyed a new policy their library had. They brought in quilters and all this information came and passed from one generation to the next.

Ms. Armagost said she does not have anything other than about the newcomer idea that she previous mentioned.

J. Board Chair's Report: Mr. Verrell passed.

K. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 PM. The next meeting of the board of trustees will be on Thursday, September 6th, 2018 at 5:30 PM at the library.

Minutes by Carissa Mason, Library Specialist