

**Latah County Library District  
Meeting Minutes  
July 19, 2005  
Deary Community Center**

Attendance: Board – Steve Fischer, Patti Roberts, Sylva Staab; Staff –Debbie Fischer, Jan Welles; Director – Janice McPherson; Visitors – Charlene & Bob Schilling (Genesee), Gail Biggers (Deary), John Welles (Juliaetta), Jackie Kwate (Troy), Sue & Bill Mitchell (Deary), Patty McDonald (Deary), Megan Wright (Deary), Chelsey Byington (Deary), Rachael Sargent (Deary), BethAnn Quirk Applegate (Deary), Diane Rathbun (Deary), Daroy Ghoting (Moscow), Pat & Jan Eck (Bovill), Joanie Galang (Simi Valley, CA).

President Fischer called the meeting to order at 5:38p.m.

Public comment was received. While McPherson did try to field most of the questions Board members did provide input.

**Staab moved that the June 28 minutes be approved as submitted. Roberts seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.**

McPherson explained how the "grant revenue" will largely offset "grant expense" by the end of September. The grant expense that is above and beyond the revenue will be covered by capital funds. Also explained what how the Services & Supplies line has been completely expended with 25% of the year remaining but the Repair & Maintenance – Tech line is significantly under spent. The bottom line for Operations does fall below the YTD level of 75% by 3%, so we will be fine in this expense area. We will be spending into the Discretionary money by August.

**Director's Report**

There were no additions to the report that was submitted. However, Fischer asked McPherson to briefly explain to the public what was covered in the written report.

**Branch Supervisor Report**

Debbie Fischer, Deary Supervisor, reported on highlights of the library service over the past year. A copy of her report is attached to the official copy of the minutes.

**Unfinished Business**

**Budget Discussion**

McPherson emphasized that she is director for the entire Latah County Library District, all seven libraries. She therefore, has to look at the budget and how it can best serve all Latah citizens. The budget proposal as it now stands represents, in her professional opinion, allows the District to serve needs in all the communities. However, there are many needs that the District is unable to meet because of the restrictive revenue stream. McPherson, while recognizing that this is not/cannot be mandated, suggested that county-wide fundraising would help eliminate some of the strain on the budget. A patron recently commented "United we stand, divided we fall" recognizing that the library system will be only as strong and vital as our cooperative efforts to make this the best library district possible. McPherson believes that the "district spirit," while still young is going to blossom and we will all be the better for it.

This being said Roberts brought up a concern that the Potlatch Library, the only building owned by the District, will have no custodial help if this budget is approved. She thought that since the restrooms in the Potlatch Library were considerably removed from the rest of the library that the responsibility for keeping them clean would likely fall on the branch supervisor, since the Potlatch Friends had indicated they were not interested in taking on custodial responsibilities. Roberts suggested it might be worth the effort to ask the City of Potlatch to take on the custodial responsibilities since the city ball field is adjacent to the library and the restrooms are used by players and fans. McPherson indicated that this had been suggested by the Potlatch Friends and she had indicated that she would be willing to ask this of the city council if a group of library friends/patrons supported the idea and would attend the meeting with her. To date the Bovill and Juliaetta councils have been approached. Since all county entities are working on their budgets no decisions have yet been made.

McPherson's stated concerns with restoring money to custodial services were:

- While the custodial expenses that were eliminated (Bovill \$450/yr.; Potlatch \$540/yr.; and Juliaetta \$480/yr.) was not a large amount most of the other reductions didn't amount to much either. Troy, Deary and Genesee already take care of their custodial costs. She noted that the new Bovill Friends group had committed to raising enough to cover the Bovill Library utility and custodial costs for FY 05-06, most of which has already been raised.
- Every library is increasingly reliant upon volunteers to do critical work within their libraries. For example Bovill, Deary and Genesee have volunteers who help shelve and cover the desk during story times. All seven libraries rely upon volunteers to help plan and present summer reading program events. The Moscow Library has over 40 hours a week of volunteer shelving time without which the returned materials could not be shelved.
- Some want more library hours, others want more staff assistant time, yet others want more videos & DVD's at the same time suggestions are calling for the discontinuation of purchasing expensive formats that are easily damaged (namely DVD's). Already the District does not budget for basic services such as programming and shelving staff. These conflicting needs with suggestions on how to trim the budget certainly exemplify the budget conundrum that we are wrestling with. How do we weigh the importance of a clean toilet in one facility with books that don't get shelved in another with the need for more staff in yet another library?
- Competing with toilets and shelving is the need to ensure that staff is trained and able to provide quality public service. Of course there are the behind the scenes activities that are essential to the health and vitality of the library district such as technical services, collection development, payroll, accounts payable, facilities maintenance, website maintenance, computer maintenance, and general administration – all of which cost a significant amount of money. Books do not magically appear on the shelves. This is what the board members and director are struggling with – how to prioritize issues that all represent vital and basic needs?

#### Policy review

**Staab moved that the 7.7 Financial – Bids policy approved. Roberts seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.**

#### **New Business**

More public comment followed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40p.m.

Next meeting – August 23, 2005 in Moscow