

**Salt Lake County Library Board of Directors**  
**WebEx Meeting**  
**October 25, 2021**  
**Approved December 13, 2021**

**Attending:** Kristin Covili, chair; Cindy Mecklenburg, Kaati Tarr, William Scarber, Sam Klemm (for Richard Snelgrove), Chelsea Lindbeck, Hollie Pettersson

**Excused:** Nancy Thorne, Sandra Osborn

**Others:** Holly Yocom, Jim Cooper, Don White, Erin Rigby, Erin Sanderson, Jennifer Fay, Kathy Christiansen, Leslie Webster, Lynn Hausermann, Maggie Mills, Matt McLain, Nyssa Fleig, Pamela Park, Russell Snow, Sara Neal, Trudy Jorgensen-Price, Rachel Richardson, Megan Smith, Tyler Curtis, Christina Walsh

**Welcome** – *Jim Cooper, Library Director*

Jim Cooper welcomed new board members and invited them to visit West Jordan and any of our other buildings.

**Action Item** – **Approve minutes** from the June 28 and August 23 board meetings and the August 25 electronic board meeting

*Cindy Mecklenburg made a motion to approve the June 28 and August 23 board meeting minutes and the August 25 special electronic board meeting minutes. Sam Klemm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Cindy Mecklenburg – aye

William Scarber – aye

Kaati Tarr – aye

Sam Klemm – aye

Chelsea Lindbeck – aye

Kristin Covili – ayr

**Public comments** – None

**Correspondence** – None

Jim Cooper reported on the 65-year anniversary celebration held at Smith Library on Saturday, October 23. Patrons commented on the wonderful services Smith Library has provided. For others it was the first time they had visited the library. Smith will be closing and staff and services will be moving to the new Granite building in Spring 2022.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Introduction of New Board Members** – *Jim Cooper, Library Director*

Jim Cooper invited the new board members to introduce themselves.

- William Scarber lives in West Valley City. He and his family moved from Arizona seven years ago. He attended law school and is a compliance officer for Goldman Sacs.
  
- Kaati Tarr is a Salt Lake County native who lives in Sandy. She has a private practice as a clinical social worker.

Current members of the board introduced themselves.

- Cindy Mecklenburg lives in Cottonwood Heights and has been a board member for seven years.
- Kristin Covili is the chair of the board. She lives in South Salt Lake City and Smith Library is her home library.
- Chelsea Lindbeck lives in Sandy and has a Masters of Library Science degree.
- Sam Klemm is Councilman Richard Snelgrove's Senior Policy Adviser
- Sandra Osborn lives in Daybreak.

### **Board/Library Overview – Jim Cooper, Library Director**

#### History

- The county library was established in 1939. At the time Salt Lake City and Murray City already had libraries.
- Ruth Vine Tyler was the first library director.
- Jim Cooper is the fourth person to serve as library director since then.
- State statutes and County ordinance established the county library.
- The library has its own fund. Money collected for library services can only be used by the library.
- The library must follow GRAMA requirements concerning patron records.
- The County Council is responsible for approving the library's budget.
- The board reviews the budget and recommends it to the council.

#### Decision-making roles

- The board makes policy decisions, recommends hiring the library director, makes real estate recommendations, and reviews the budget. It can have up to nine members. We'll be selecting additional board members in 2022 to fill Kristin's, Chelsea's, and Cindy's vacancies when they complete their two four-year terms.
- The library director implements the decisions, vision, and strategic direction the board has laid out.
  - Makes decisions about operations of the library consistent with county and board policies.
  - Serves as the board's executive officer.
  - Serves as the purchasing agent for the library.
  - Recommends the annual budget and oversees expenditures.
  - Develops long-term capital and operating budget.
- The library leadership team consists of associate directors and senior managers.
  - Jennifer Fay – Associate Director Public Services supervises branch managers and Senior Manager Collections Christa Warren.
  - Matt McLain – Associate Director Community Engagement supervises outreach programs and the jail, South Main Clinic, the Viridian, and Marketing Manager Sara Neal.
  - Leslie Webster – Associate Director Finance and Operations supervises facilities, IT, and Human Resources Manager Pamela Park
- General Management consists of department heads and branch managers who make recommendations to the leadership team and run day-to-day operations.
- We operate our own IT, Facilities, and Human Resources departments.
  - For IT security purposes

- To receive \$200,000 to \$300,000 a year from federal grants
- To manage the infrastructure needs of 18 branches plus an Operations Center and the Viridian Event Center.
- To manage the needs of 600 employees

#### Strategic Focus

- Reviewed the County Library Strategic Focus handout – why we exist, our vision, where we focus, our platforms, and the outcomes we want to achieve.

#### County Library Profile

- 620,000 library card holders in Salt Lake Valley
- We have reciprocal borrowing with the City and Murray City Libraries. Citizens in these locations can use our services but aren't taxed for them. Does this remain an equitable agreement?
- In addition to our branch locations we operate services at the Adult Detention Center, Oxbow, and South Main Clinic. At the clinic children receive a free book to introduce them and their parents to reading and learning.
- Our model is to have branch locations within a two-mile radius and a five-minute drive of each other.
- Many of our card holders visit multiple branches.

#### 2019 Key Indicator Report

- Demonstrated the statistical information that we gather and use for decision-making.
- We are 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation for the number of items we circulate. In 2019 it was 13 million items.

#### 2020 - Effects of and Response to COVID-19

- We closed the system in March for three months.
- We were open with various degrees and types of limited services for seven months.
- We pivoted to virtual programming and e-services.
- Columbus Library, housed in the South Salt Lake Center, closed permanently when the Center decided not to reopen. Staff were redeployed and the collection was redistributed to various other branch locations.

#### 2021 – As of August

- We continue to return to normal operations.
- We'll continue to offer virtual programming in addition to in-person programming because it has extended our reach.
- We've already reached the number of 2020 physical visits and circulation numbers.
- We've started circulating Hot Spots, Chromebooks, and tablets.

#### Performance Audit

We have been requested by the county council to undergo a performance audit in 2021 to evaluate our processes and internal controls, and to express an opinion on the quality and effectiveness of communicating performance results. In August the auditor began the process by requesting documents and scheduling an entrance meeting with members of the audit and leadership teams. We've followed up with additional information, and have had walk-through meetings on the areas selected for auditing. Currently, all of the walk-through meetings have been completed. Auditors will provide reports for all walk-through meetings and begin to test the

data for accuracy. Their final report will be made available to us, the county council, the mayor, and the public.

We compare our performance to statistics gathered from libraries throughout the nation by the Institute of Museum and Library Service. Out of 9,200 library systems we are twelfth in total circulation.

We report key indicators - number of visitors, collection use, digital use, and early learning outcomes - through CountyStat.

The University of Utah Education Policy Center studied the impact of our Summer Reading Program on the “summer reading slide”. Third graders from the Granite School District were surveyed. The reading scores of those who participated in our Summer Reading Program had a greater increase than those who didn’t.

#### Budget and Finance

- Salt Lake County population growth is trending upwards.
- The library’s purchasing power is being eroded by inflation. We can’t increase our property tax revenue based on inflation.
- There has been no certified tax rate increase since 2013 when the rate was increased to pay for buildings we built in 2012.
- Our revenue doesn’t rise with increases in sales tax. It comes mostly from property taxes.
- Most of our budget is spent on personnel and materials. We evaluate materials expenditures on a regular basis.
- We also pay operating overhead to the county for services they provide.

#### Buildings Update

- We replaced our Operations Center when the previous building failed an OSHA inspection.
- We opened the new 35,000 square foot Kearns Library in December 2020.
- Jim reviewed the Granite and Daybreak construction projects. Granite is a bit behind because of supply chain issues. We hope it will catch up soon. It will serve a high refugee population.

Sam Klemm asked how our hiring process is going with a 2.6% unemployment rate in the county.

Jim Cooper said because of the library’s good culture and benefits for part-time employees people want to work for us.

Pamela Park, Human Resources Manager, said that shelvers and CSS are some of the hardest positions to recruit for even though they don’t require previous experience. Pamela is optimistic that Mayor Wilson’s proposal to go to a \$15 an hour minimum wage would help us be competitive with places that are paying \$17 an hour. Our hardest positions to fill right now are substitute positions. We have a big turnover rate. We have a low turnover rate for permanent employees. Once people join the library they like to stay. We have shelvers who have worked for us for 20 years.

**Performance Audit Update – Jim Cooper, Library Director**  
Covered in Board/Library Overview

**Action Item – Policy Approvals – Jim Cooper, Library Director**

▪ **Fines and Fees**

A technical change – We took out procedural sections, how we collect fines and fees or waive fines. We have also taken fees for reimbursable materials out of the policy and put them into a fee schedule. Rather than having to bring the policy back to the board each time something new is added, we'll add them to the fee schedule and report the change to the board.

*Cindy Mecklenburg made a motion to approve changes to the Fines and Fees Policy. Hollie Pettersson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Hollie Pettersson – aye  
Cindy Mecklenburg – aye  
Sam Klemm – aye  
Bill Scarber – aye  
Kaati Tarr – aye  
Kristin Covili - aye

▪ **Viridian Refunds**

During [the pandemic] we had a number of Viridian events that were booked and individuals had paid their deposit. Then we either cancelled because of the Covid situation or we asked them to modify their use of the space and they wanted to cancel. We discovered that our Viridian policy may not allow for a full refund of their deposit in these instances.

We think in these kinds of situations it's fair that we fully refund their deposit. Is this a board policy decision or a procedure?

Megan Smith, the library's legal counsel said the return or waiver of money could be interpreted as something for the council to approve. If we include it in our contracts it could be an executive function that Jim would carry out and seek approval from the board to make sure they are in favor.

Jim Cooper asked for a sense of the board about returning deposits. He said the board had approved broad decision-making authority during the pandemic. He would make decisions at the time of the situation to benefit the customer and let the board know what decision had been made.

Kristin Covili said that for extenuating circumstances such as Covid it's good to refund deposits. These are circumstances out of anybody's control.

Sam Klemm asked how much money was involved.

Tyler Curtis, Viridian Event Center Manager said in this specific case the event was cancelled by the group for safety reasons. Cancellation was within 30 days of the event in which case the contract only allows a 50% refund. Their deposit was \$300 and under terms of the contract they would have only received \$150 back.

Kaati Tarr said we don't want to deter people from cancelling over a few hundred dollars and have them hold an unsafe event. Is this something you'd put in a policy or is it an executive decision? Kaati said making it an executive decision seems fine under these circumstances.

Megan and the board had no objection to Jim making decisions for full deposit refunds depending on the circumstances. Megan suggested putting some guidelines around refunding deposits and bringing them to the board for approval at a later date. For now we'll proceed with this being an executive decision that is reported to the board.

Bill Scarber said he felt it would be a good idea to create guidelines in the future.

Chelsea Lindbeck had to leave at 1:30 p.m. Holly Pettersson and Cindy Mecklenburg had to leave at 2 p.m.

### **Summer Reading and O.W.L. Camp Reports – Nyssa Fleig, Program Manager**

Matt McLain, Associate Director of Community Engagement introduced Nyssa Fleig, Program Manager for Lifelong Learning.

**O.W.L. Camp** (Outstanding Wizarding Levels) is a Harry Potter-themed, S.T.E.A.M.-based summer camp for kids aged 11 to 18. Prior to 2020 it was held in-person. Nyssa has been exploring using Beanstack, an online Summer Reading program tracker. She and her team have also introduced a Winter Reading program.

Nyssa shared the mission and goals of O.W.L. Camp. It is free. There are a lot of kids who can't afford summer camp. This year's O.W.L. camp was a hybrid of in-person Take and Makes and an online platform. Kids could attend a live streaming event or watch a recording later. Partners, including the University of Utah, Natural History Museum of Utah, Clark Planetarium, and Tracy Aviary and Botanical Gardens, provided live or pre-recorded classes.

#### **Outputs**

- 1,000 Take and Make kits given away
- 1,008 Youth grades 5 – 12 registered on Beanstack
- 706 or 70% actively engaged
- 20,896 activities were completed

The cost was about \$8.36 a person. This covered branded t-shirts bought in 2019, O.W.L. Camp letters and postage, Take and Make supplies and a snack for those who picked up kits.

Nyssa is hoping to be able to go back to an in-person experience next year and also offer a gaming experience online.

### **Summer Reading**

Our Summer Reading Program is our largest system-wide initiative. Its mission is to promote love of reading and learning for all ages and to mitigate potential reading and learning loss during the summer. This year's theme was Tails & Tales.

Participation was about 58% of pre-pandemic numbers. The percentage of those who were finishers and earned a free book was about the same as pre-pandemic. The cost of books for finishers was about \$1.70 a book. We purchased about 262 drawing prizes for finishers. About 5,000 people registered on Beanstack.

Our Marketing team worked out an arrangement with the Collaborative Summer Learning Program to be able use and modify their artwork for our Summer Reading materials. We were the first library in the nation to be able to do this.

The Summer Reading Program increases our circulation. We check out more materials in June and July than we do in May or August.

Our Early Learning team did 36 virtual storytime sessions with 1,603 attendees over the course of Summer Reading.

The largest number of participants (13,816) was among ages 6 – 12.

Kids' Café served 5,729 meals at six locations.

20,412 kids participated in Take and Make activities.

Teens are always our smallest group of participants, but we still had 3,602 engage in Take and Makes and O.W.L. Camp.

12,281 adults ages 18 and up participated.

In 2022 we hope to be able to have a kickoff event and do school outreach again. We'll continue to use Beanstack and offer print records.

**Deferred Capital Maintenance** – *Leslie Webster, Associate Director Finance & Operations*

In 2016 the County hired a company to do a facilities assessment of all the buildings in the county. They looked at what needed repair and what would need to be replaced within the next 10 years. What from their study applies to us? Even though the study made observations, it's still at our discretion to say what we will budget for based on the resources we have available.

How we prioritize

- What has failed during the year?
- What is in imminent danger of failing?
- What is at the end of its useful life? We don't replace things just because they are at the end of their useful life.

There were things that weren't included in the study that we have to account for: carpeting, sorters, concrete replacement, slurry seal, and fireplace replacement. Other new items that weren't included in the report: xeriscaping, minor remodels, lighting conversions, and solar expansion.

During 2020 our capital projects budget was greatly reduced in response to a request by our department to make budget cuts. In 2021 we only carried over projects that had been started in 2020. Over the next several years we plan to increase the amount we request for capital projects to make up for these years.

The items that were on the facilities study list that we have not yet addressed from 2017- 2022 amount to \$3.6 million. There were items that we requested in 2022 that were on the list that are in excess of the \$3.6 million. They amount to \$1.3 million. Items on the list for replacement in future years through 2026 amount to \$3.7 million.

From the list we have replaced the old facilities building, which was condemned, and the old Kearns Library, so they are not part of the remaining costs.

Over 50% of the remaining amounts on the list are for buildings we hope to replace or remodel. Many of our 2022 requests are for these buildings. We are hoping to replace four of the six buildings, so we consider how much money we're willing to invest in those buildings. If we're not replacing them now, they still have to be operating and there is a certain amount of maintenance that is needed.

Leslie shared a spreadsheet showing the deferred maintenance costs in today's dollars of \$7.3 million.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Budget Update** – *Leslie Webster, Associate Director Finance & Operations*

Our department and the mayor made no adjustments to our proposed 2022 budget. It now goes to the council for approval. We've requested an additional \$300,000 to cover the \$15 minimum wage recommendation. The council begins deliberating October 26. Final approval will be the end of November. Public hearings are held in December.

Sam Klemm said the council is laser focused on deferred maintenance with ARPA money. If we receive money for deferred maintenance, Salt Lake City and Murray districts would be pressing for money as well. We can only give money to county-wide facilities or we have to give equally to other agencies.

Leslie shared the capital projects we have requested in our 2022 budget as well as our five-year plan. It includes both items from the facilities study and items that weren't part of the report that we are aware of. We requested \$1.575 million for 2022. Of that, \$1.3 million was part of the facilities assessment report.

Through the efforts of Matt McLain, Associate Director Community Outreach, we have gotten more grants this year than we have previously. Many are coming from federal dollars from ARPA funds flowing through the State Library to pay for programming, hot spots, hardware, etc. Grants have created added tracking challenges for our fiscal manager.

We are making our final purchases for the year. We pay for software packages, materials, and databases this time of the year.

Leslie invited new board members to contact her if they would like budget training.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Statistical Report** – *Jim Cooper, Library Director*

Circulation and gate counts are returning to normal. People want to come in and interact with staff. Staff are required to wear masks. Patrons are requested to wear masks.

Bill Scarber asked how many staff members are vaccinated. Jim Cooper said that information is protected by HIPPA. Pamela Park said we are probably a bit higher than the county vaccination rate of 65 – 70 %.



**Human Resources Update** – *Pamela Park, Human Resources Manager*

We currently have 67 vacancies. Thirty-one of those are staff for Daybreak and Granite. About 12 of the remaining 36 vacancies are in active recruitment. The others are in reclassification or we are reviewing the positions.

Jim Cooper explained that we analyze every vacancy position. Is this needed at another location or has the position changed and does it need to be reclassified? We do a workflow analysis, assess critical needs and make staffing decisions from there.

**Marketing Update** – *Sara Neal, Marketing Manager*

- Sara shared media coverage on ABC4.
- Social Media – They are doing Instagram “takeovers” of each branch. They’ve done Taylorsville and Riverton and will continue to do a branch a month.
- There was an extensive article in the Salt Lake Tribune about Naloxone availability at Salt Lake County libraries.

**Finance & Operations Update** – *Leslie Webster, Associate Director Finance & Operations*

Nothing additional to report

**OTHER**

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.