

FORT VANCOUVER REGIONAL LIBRARY DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Public Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2022 – Stevenson Community Library/Hybrid Meeting

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Higgins called the regular meeting to order at 6:02pm.

ATTENDEES:

Board Members Present: Jane Higgins, Mary Ann Duncan-Cole, Penny Love-Henslee

Board Members Virtual: Vikram Kotwani, Olga Lukomsky Hodges

Board Members Excused: Megan Dugan, Kristy Morgan

Administrative Team: Amelia Shelley, Executive Director; Mary Abler, Deputy Director; Lee Strehlow, Human Resources Director; Lynne Caldwell, Collection & Technology Services Director; Justin Keeler, Outreach & Community Partnerships Director; Tak Kendrick, Communications & Marketing Director; Attar Bhangal, Finance Manager; *Special Guests:* David Wyatt, Stevenson Branch Manager; Rick Smithrud, FVRL Foundation Director; *Recording:* Sami Bretherton, Executive Assistant

2. **AGENDA**

The agenda was amended to reflect that Jane Higgins reviewed the bills for the month in place of Mary Ann Duncan-Cole.

MOTION: Penny Love-Henslee moved and Mary Ann Duncan-Cole seconded approval of the amended agenda. The motion carried via roll call of Trustees present.

3. **CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Higgins welcomed Bill Yee as a special guest attending the meeting. Yee was the FVRL Board Trustee who represented Skamania County for 14 years (2006 – 2019). Higgins also discussed meeting protocol and public comments.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Kathy Edwards, President of the Friends of the Stevenson Library welcomed the Trustees and guests to Stevenson.

Derya Ruggles and Quill Onstead spoke in support of Drag Queen Story Hour and the value of diverse programming in the library.

Margo Logan and Gary Wilson spoke in opposition to Drag Queen Story Hour.

Written comments opposing Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) programming in the library were received from: Henry Harbert, Monty Winton, Phil Hogan, Barbara Hogan, Judy June, Marilyn Roggenkamp, Anna, Lori Judkins, Anonymous

5. **REPORTS**

FVRL Organizational Report, Administrative Team
The Administrative team updated the Board on their work and projects.

Branch Report: Stevenson Community Library, David Wyatt
Wyatt reported on the Stevenson Library, North Bonneville and the Bookmobile activities for the past year.

September Financial Statements, Attar Bhangal
Bhangal shared an overview of the September revenues and expenses.

FVRL Foundation Report, Rick Smithrud
Smithrud reviewed the events of the Foundation.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- 6.1 Minutes Approval – September 19, 2022 meeting
- 6.2 Minutes Approval - October 3, 2022 meeting
- 6.3 FVRL Expenditure Approval: Reviewed by Jane Higgins in place of Mary Ann Duncan-Cole
- 6.4 VLCFA Expenditure Approval: Reviewed by Jane Higgins in place of Mary Ann Duncan-Cole

The consent agenda was amended to reflect that Jane Higgins reviewed the expenses in place of Mary Ann Duncan-Cole.

MOTION: Jane Higgins moved and Penny Love-Henslee seconded approval of the amended consent agenda. The motion carried via roll call.

7. BUSINESS

7.1 Policy Committee

Placement of New Library Facilities - first reading

The Policy Committee has combined two existing FVRL policies concerning the siting of new libraries; Purchase, Lease, Exchange, and Sale of Real Property, and Provision of Library Service to New Areas into a single revised policy: Placement of New Library Facilities Policy. They have also revised the procedures associated with siting new facilities and services to include using the equity lens as a guide for site selection and criteria for closing an existing location. This policy will be brought to the November meeting for a second reading.

Collection Policy – Review

The Board has been requested to review the existing Collection Policy. Provide feedback to the Executive Director or through the Policy Committee Chair (Jane Higgins) prior to the November committee meeting.

7.2 Finance Committee

Allocation of 2021 Unassigned Funds

Shelley reviewed the allocation of 2021 excess revenue into the District's assigned and unassigned reserves. She requested an increase to the Operations Center remodel budget of \$500,000.

Resolution 2022-21: Allocation of 2021 Unassigned Funds

MOTION: Penny Love-Henslee moved and Mary Ann Duncan-Cole seconded approval of Resolution 2022-21. The motion carried unanimously via roll call excepting Olga Hodges who was having technical difficulties.

2023 Preliminary Budget (first reading)

Shelley reviewed the details of the 2023 Preliminary Budget. This budget will come back to the Board at the November Board meeting for a second reading and an approval of the 2023 levy which includes a public hearing.

7.3 Operations Center Construction Contract

Contracts over \$350,000 need Board approval before moving forward. Union Corner construction was the low bid for the project at \$2,520,000 including sales tax

Resolution 2022-19: Operations Center Construction Contract

MOTION: Penny Love-Henslee moved and Mary Ann Duncan-Cole seconded approval of Resolution 2022-19. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.

8. BOARD COMMENTS

Penny Love-Henslee thanked the Foundation for their work.

9. NEXT REGULAR MEETING

The next meeting is Monday, November 14, 2022 (Washougal/Zoom)

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.

Approved:

Dorcas Jane Higgins

Dorcas Jane Higgins (Nov 16, 2022 12:11 PST)

Jane Higgins, Chair

Nov 16, 2022

Date

Mary Ann Duncan-Cole

Mary Ann Duncan-Cole, Secretary

Nov. 14, 2022

Date

Chair Announcements, FVRL Trustees Meeting
October 17, 2002

1. At the beginning of the year, I announced that I hoped this would be a year of jubilation. I wanted people to dwell on and share something they were jubilant about at our meetings. Tonight, I am jubilant that we have a full, seated Board of Trustees. Being able to have full committee memberships should ease everyone's workload. *And I am jubilant to welcome back my friend Bill Lee, who served 14 years on the BoF Trustees representing Skidman County.*
2. It is time to announce the Nominating Committee for next year's officers. This *ad hoc* committee is charged with filling a slate of nominees for the offices of Board Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. The committee will report who the nominees are at the November meeting. At that time board members may submit additional nominees if others want to compete for positions. The board will elect its new officers at the December meeting. The new officers will take office January 1, 2003. The members of the nominating committee are Penny Love-Henslee, Megan Dugan and Mary Ann Duncan Cole. You are to choose a committee chair among yourselves and make your own meeting arrangements.
3. In accordance with our Auditor's consultation, we need a new protocol for Executive Sessions. Executive Sessions must be part of a regular or special meeting. Henceforth, we will begin our meetings at the announced time, usually 6:00 PM. If there is need for Executive Session, the chair or presiding officer will announce, in open session, the purpose or topic of the Executive Session and the specific time the board will return. The board will not return before that time in case someone steps out of the public meeting and hasn't returned. Executive Sessions usually run 15 or 30 minutes. If the Session needs to run longer, the Chair will return to the public meeting and announce the new time the board will return. After the Executive Session the Board will return and the chair will call the regular meeting back to order. This will extend the time of the public meeting by the amount of time spent in Executive Session. I can announce that we will be having an Executive Session next month for the Executive Director's annual review. The session will run at least 30 minutes.

4. Last month in Battle Ground, the meeting was out of control. This meeting is the Trustees monthly business meeting and it will be conducted in an orderly manner in keeping with the laws of the Washington Open Public Meeting Act and the policies and procedures of Fort Vancouver Regional Library District.

Therefore:

Attendance in meeting rooms will not be allowed to exceed the Fire Marshalls capacity, which is posted on the wall. This count includes Board Members, staff, Foundation and Friends attending, legal council, if present, presenters, consultants and others on the program. Remaining seats will be filled by the public. There will be no standing attendance except for security personnel. Guests are to remain seated during the meeting. In large capacity rooms, attendance will be limited by the number of chairs set up. In the event of a health directive from a governing agency, space may be limited and/or spread out as directed.

Applause, calling out or other distractions are not permitted during the conduct of the meeting. Violators will be asked to leave the meeting. Public Comments time is for the public to speak to the board. It is not a question-and-answer time or dialogue time with the board or staff. Board members are reminded to listen, take notes if you wish, but not to interact with the audience. I confess I have violated this in the past.

In accordance with RCW 42.30.050, Interruptions – Procedure, of the Washington Open Public Meetings Act, this board does have the authority to ask disruptive individuals to leave the meeting. If that is not sufficient, we can order the meeting room cleared and finish the meeting, or we can adjourn the meeting to a different time or place. If we clear the room, we may readmit individuals who were not part of the disturbance. The public's business will be conducted in an orderly manner.

And lastly,

RCW 42.30.240 Public Comment

This board welcomes public comment at our meetings. We read all letters received and take public opinions seriously. Every month for the last three years and seven months we have heard and read comments, mostly negative about Drag Queen Story Hours. The three DQSH programs were held in the first half of 2019 as a first step into Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. There is a fact sheet available about the steps we have taken since then. We have been patient with the mis-information, rumors, scare tactics and name calling. The result is that our Public Comment time has become DQSH Complaint time and is now expanding into somewhat related areas. I have personally received many comments from members of the public who would like to speak at our meetings but feel suffocated out by the dominance and intimidation of speakers on DQSH. So, they don't communicate with us and they feel disconnected from their library and that we don't care about their issue. That can't continue.

Nowadays, it is common for aggrieved people to say "They just want to be heard." We have heard people on DQSH story time at length for three years and seven months. The content has become repetitive, some letters are just cut and paste versions of others, with no original thought in them. Nevertheless, we read them thoughtfully and are mindful of the issues. But "We just want to be heard" is being used synonymously for "I am not getting my way." They aren't the same. The district has not hosted any DQSH programs since 2019, has declared in public meetings and in print media it was pivoting away from that to a broader understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, has hired a consultant to guide our journey and now does background checks on all volunteers, vendors and program presenters throughout the district. And still, here we are with same voices leading the same rhetoric as in March of 2019.

So, in accordance with RCW 42.30.240, tonight will be the last time this board accepts oral public comment on DQSH, either for or against, and its related topics. This board will continue to accept

written comments on this topic, at trustees@FVRL.org, before 1:00 PM the day of our meetings. We do have the authority to limit time and topics accepted in Public Comment time. As a courtesy to those of you who have traveled a distance to speak to us on DQSH, we will hear you tonight. But this is the last time on this topic for both sides. And you are always welcome to attend our public meetings and/or write to us.

Here ends the chair announcements.