Whitman County Library

Board of Trustees Meeting

Public Meeting at the Colfax Branch of the Whitman County Library

October 20, 2026

Present: Cindy Alred, Heather Lustig, Colin Haffner, Sue Kreikemeier, Steve Greene, Catalina Flores, Christy Hughes, and Naomi Slavish

Chairperson Lustig called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Minutes of the September Board Meeting were approved by a vote of the Board. Resolution 26-30 was added to the agenda.

Reports

September financial documents were presented to the board and a brief explanation about them was given. Finance Manager Steve Greene reviewed various expenditures including OCLC Cataloging fee, and expenses that would be reimbursed through grants such as the WCIF Wellness Challenges and Innovia. The "Education and Training" category is high due to attendance of the JCLC Conference; this expense is reimbursed through grants. There was a discussion surrounding the "early pay" features for employees and fees on the Paychex Flex app. The Credit Card statement was reviewed including a large purchase made by Systems Administrator Morasch, and the purchase of paint for The Center from Sherwin Williams. There was a discussion surrounding the E-rate program. Account balances were reviewed.

Resolutions 26-28 and 26-29 (Payroll and Accounts Payable) were unanimously passed by Board votes.

Finance Manager Greene reported that work has begun on the 2027 Budget. Finalizations are awaiting the results of the Levy Lid Lift vote. Items that the 2027 Budget will take into consideration include an increase in minimum wage, cost of living adjustments, and potential increases in insurance and utility costs. The 2027 Budget will be brought to the November Board meeting for approval. The approved Budget needs to be submitted to the County by November 22.

Resolution 26-30 FMLA [Family Medical Leave Act] Policy update. Finance Manager Greene presented updates concerning WCLs policy compliance with the Family Medical Leave Act. This includes a language update. WCL is currently in compliance with the 50+ employee standards; this update merely brings the official policy up to date with WCL's conduct. After discussion concerning the financial implications of the policy, Resolution 26-30 was passed by a vote of the Board.

Director Christy Hughes reported on library and director activities. An overview was given of the Community Conversations covering the Levy Lid Lift at the effected WCL Branches. Key features of the Community Conversations included community input and appreciation of Branch

Managers, program highlights and a community member who prepared a significant amount of questions. Director Hughes reported that the Conversations were productive and fairly positive. Upcoming events include Branch Operations Manager Catalina Flores' work on the Energy Assistance Project, and Adult Services and Marketing Manager Cydney Selk's Resource Package Project for Caretakers. Continuing Youth Services programs, including involvement in the Super Colfax costume give-away event were covered. The WCL Friends sent out a mailer in support of the Levy Lid Lift. The Meet the Artist for the "Make them Real" display in The Center brought in some appreciative youth. Director Hughes wrote a letter in response to the FCC's call for support to continue the E-rate program. The new HVAC system was installed at the Garfield Branch using Avista's NCIF grant funding. The LCIP grant for Palouse is still in the review process and has not been approved or denied yet. A contractor has bid for the Rosalia branch renovations, and another will review the facility to bid on the 21st. Branch Operations Manager Flores reported that multiple Branch Managers have reported issues with cleaning staff (a service contracted by/to the towns). Director Hughes requested creative solutions. Board Member Lustig inquired about the possibility of Branch Managers taking on the responsibility. Branch Operations Manager Flores commented that while some may be able to, others have physical limitations that prevent them from taking on cleaning responsibilities. Spokane PBS will be partnering with WCL to host three events in January with the intent of fostering community connections.

The Town of Malden has contacted WCL with financial concerns pertaining to the library building in Malden. Finance Manager Greene requested more information from the town, and Director Hughes attended a town meeting to discuss their concerns. The Rosalia mayor was present at the meeting and helped clear up some of the misunderstandings the Town had concerning WCL as a public entity. The Town of Malden uses the internet provided by WCL and would also like WCL to start covering the cost of electricity. The Board discussed the implications, precedents, and potential costs of this proposition to change contracted terms. For now, the Town of Malden has agreed to continue to pay for their building utility costs per contract agreement.

Garfield Branch Manager Andrea Mills alerted Director Hughes that the Levy Lid Lift Ballot Measure was not on ballots for many Garfield town residents. Further investigation by Director Hughes revealed there were five towns that were not registered according to the County Assessor as part of the WCL district, despite WCL receiving tax funds from them and providing services to them. The Levy Lid Lift Ballot Measure was missing from these towns' ballots. Director Hughes used WCL files to fix the registration issue with both the County and the State, and special ballots were sent to residents of the effected towns.

Branch Operations Manager Catalina Flores presented branch updates. On October 31st, Shelver Marva Smith will retire after 35 years with WCL. A Retirement reception will be held on October 28th from 3-6pm. The Fall Branch Managers' Meeting will be hosted by the Endicott branch on October 28th. The meeting will include Branch Managers Kathy Isaacs' and Christy Vogel's overview of their experience at the JCLC Conference, a training webinar, and a discussion concerning the process of hiring substitutes. Albion is hosting a Hike and Poetry event at Klemgard Park. St. John and Colfax will host volunteers to assist in the Medicare during Open Enrollment, and a Molina mobile unit will be present at the Colfax branch for check-ups.

The Energy Assistance event will include weatherization kits. In November, Tekoa will hold a Turkey Trot to raise funds for Youth Programs. Palouse and Garfield will partner with Geist Farms to host wreath making events.

Branch Operations Manager Flores gave an overview of September's Library usage and statistics. September saw a 25% increase in traditional circulation compared to September 2025. Database usage saw a 74% increase, and Libby use saw a 9% increase. In-person program attendance increased by 40%, and Newsletter interaction decreased by 27%. Social Media and SEO use increased.

Continuing Business

Municipal Contract discussions with Endicott remain at a stand-still while awaiting any response or information from the Mayor or the team of Town Counsil members he assigned to review the matter.

A new Library Board Appointee has not been chosen. Director Hughes mentioned the need during the Community Conversations. David Olson expressed interest, but did not attend the meeting.

New Business

Upcoming 2027 Budget will be presented at the November Board Meeting.

An Endicott community member proposed purchasing the building currently used by the Endicott branch. The board discussed the proposition. After review, the Board determined that the proposal would not be viable at this time.

The Youth Services job will be posted on November 2nd. Director Hughes gave an overview of the extent of the interview process and hopes to have the position filled by mid-December. There will be an update during the November Board Meeting.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:14 PM by Chairperson Lustig.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, November 17th at 4:00 PM at the **Colfax** branch of the Whitman County Library.

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Steve Greene, Finance Manager Heather Lustig, Chair