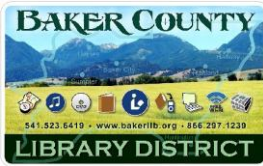


# Baker County Library District Library Board Regular Meeting Minutes

Nov 14, 2023

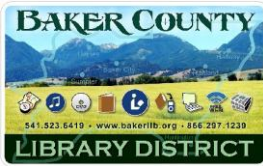
<p><b>Call to Order</b></p>	<p>The meeting was held in the Riverside Meeting Room at the Baker County Public Library, 2400 Resort Street, Baker City, Oregon, the administrative building for the District.</p> <p>Directors attending the meeting in person include Kyra <b>Rohner</b>, Joan <b>Spriggs</b>, Beth <b>Bigelow</b>, and Betty <b>Palmer</b>. Also attending in person are Perry <b>Stokes</b>, Director and Christine <b>Hawes</b>, Business Manager. Attending through Zoom is board member Ashley <b>McClay</b>. A quorum is present.</p> <p>Meeting called to order at 12:04 pm by Rohner.</p>
<p><b>Consent Agenda</b></p>	<p>Rohner asked if there were any additions or deletions to the consent agenda. There were none. Any changes to the minutes from the previous meeting. No changes were given.</p> <p><b>Bigelow made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Spriggs seconded; no discussion; motion passed unanimously (4 yea: Rohner, Bigelow, Spriggs, McClay) by those present.</b></p>
<p><b>Conflicts of Interest</b></p>	<p>Rohner asked if there were any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest to be declared. There were none stated.</p>
<p><b>Public Comment</b></p>	<p>Rohner asked if there are any public comments. No public present. Stokes reported he responded to the email discussed at the previous meeting about the library's Freedom to Read promotion. There was no further discussion.</p> <p>Palmer arrived at 12:06pm.</p>
<p><b>OLD BUSINESS: New Directions Northwest Needle Disposal Proposal</b></p>	<p>Rohner moved to the first agenda item, asking Stokes to present the proposal. Stokes recounted that at the October library board meeting, Bob Forsythe, of New Directions Northwest, presented a proposal for placement of a sharps disposal container on library grounds for safe collection of used medical needles. A few used syringes had been found on our grounds prior to the significant pruning of foliage. Since then we have had no findings reported. In Forsythe's presentation he talked about the success of drop box programs in Malheur County of reducing the littering of syringes.</p> <p>Bigelow commented that she felt that it was a compelling presentation. Stokes talked about possible locations for a receptacle, and concerns about an cluttered appearance with additional "civic sculptural" items on the grounds . He has plans to place an outdoor water fountain with a dog bowl in that same location. Stokes said he would prefer to see the sharps box elsewhere, perhaps</p>



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	<p>near the restroom in the park, or near the utility shed which is adjacent to the pathway and Madison Street and has a dumpster. Rohner asked if Forsythe said whether or not the park would allow placement. Stokes said that the parks committee told NDNW to talk to the Library, so he assumes that was no.</p> <p>Stokes said if the board wishes to entertain the proposal further, he would like to suggest we conduct a public survey. Rohner asked if there have been needles found on the grounds recently. Stokes said not for the past two years. Rohner said she doesn't necessarily disapprove of the placement but understands the concerns. McClay felt that Forsythe's argument was compelling. She liked the idea of a public survey. And she thought it would be good to check with other libraries on what their experience has been. Stokes confirmed that he will move forward with the survey. Rohner said we will defer action on this topic pending public comment and additional information.</p>
<p><b>NEW BUSINESS:</b>  <b>Resolution</b>  <b>adopting Audit</b>  <b>Division Plan of</b>  <b>Action</b></p>	<p>Stokes said this resolution is for a Plan of Action to address the deficiency noted in the management letter at the January 2023 meeting. When our auditor, Rob Gaslin presented the 2021-22 financial statements, he said that the deficiency is not something we can do anything about. However, the State Audit Division wants us to submit a plan of action to address it. Apparently, this will be an annual requirement since we can't fix the deficiency.</p> <p>Some discussion on the deficiency comment.</p> <p><b>Palmer made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-24.05 Resolution Adopting Plan of Action for Audit Division; Bigelow seconded; no further discussion; the motion passed (5 yea; Rohner, Bigelow, Palmer, Spriggs, McClay) unanimously.</b></p>
<p><b>Revised Wage</b>  <b>Scale (Tabled)</b></p>	<p>Stokes said that due to a projected revenue shortfall, he is temporarily withdrawing the comprehensive Wage Scale revision he had intended to propose. The revision will entail a reclassification of several employees, for which sufficient funding will be needed to implement. With the shortfall, the District won't have the funds for the revision this year.</p> <p>Stokes added that has learned that the State of Oregon has tied the state minimum wage to the rate of inflation. It will continue to be raised annually. This may force the district to apply an overall payroll increase by that amount every year.</p>
<p><b>Special Reports:</b>  <b>Budget Projected</b></p>	<p>Stokes had special reports to review with the board.</p>



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**Shortfall, Statistics,  
Ingram Collection  
Diversity Audit**

**Tax Revenue Shortfall**

Per the FY2023-24 report released in October by the Baker County Assessor, the growth rate of Total Assessed Valuation (TAV) of county property dropped to slightly less than 1%. The Assessor says the drop is primarily due to a \$43 million decrease in specific assessed lands that include utility corporation and tech company properties. This will mean a reduced revenue for the District of about \$43k. Stokes has alerted staff that discretionary expense categories will be reduced. He is working on a Supplemental Budget to propose at a future meeting.

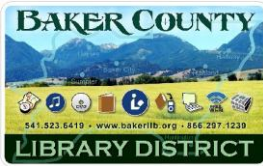
Stokes said every year we budget conservatively. We budgeted 4%; Last year the growth was 5.5%; the year before was 4.8%; this year it has plummeted to 0.08%, so slightly less than 1%. Stokes called the County to ask about this. The drop is due to corporate owned lands that file their own valuations. At least two large corporations devalued their own lands in Baker County resulting in a \$43 million valuation decrease. That created a reduction in tax revenue. Kerry Savage said that while they are able to do that every year, typically they do not. Discussion on how that works. Stokes said the Assessor doesn't have an appeal mechanism for the devalued claims. This revenue unpredictability makes budgeting a greater challenge.

Stokes displayed a shortfall worksheet and potential adjustment areas. This is still in progress. He highlighted the main items. A \$45,000 COVID expense reimbursement from FEMA is still forthcoming which will go into the Capital Investment Fund. This shortfall is not happy news as it impacts reserve funds. Palmer said this will affect other agencies as well. Some discussion. Next year Stokes says he will budget conservatively with a growth rate of no more than 3%.

**2022-23 Statistics Report Review**

Stokes submitted the district's annual statistics report to the State Library of Oregon in October. Compared to prior years, FY22-23 data shows moderate recovery of library usage from pandemic lows.

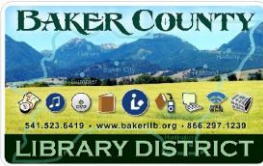
Stokes logs annual statistics on a spreadsheet to review historical trends. For Sage Interlibrary loans BCLD continues to loan out more than the amount borrowed, which demonstrates success in keeping our collection responsive to local interest. Patron visitation which had plateaued around 125,000 prior to the pandemic plummeted to 28,000 in FY21-22, and now has rebounded somewhat back up to 80,000. He reviewed circulation data by audience and genre. Children's usage is strong. The number of patron accounts is at a 10 year low. Computer session time has been increased from 90 minutes to 2



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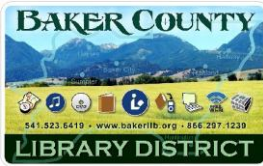
	<p>hours, but that has not resulted in higher average session time usage. It is rare now that the computer room is more than half full. More people have their own devices. IT Manager Bryan Ames is working on getting data on WiFi usage. We are still in the recovery from the pandemic period.</p> <p>Collection Diversity Audit</p> <p>Stokes shared the BCLD iCurate inClusive Collection Diversity Audit results. In mid-October, Ingram (the primary book vendor for BCLD) completed its analysis of the number and percentage of “diverse” items in the district's collections in three categories: adult, youth adult and children. This work was made possible by a grant from the Roundhouse Foundation. Overall, the share of “inclusive” items in the collections is at or above the average for public libraries. The report does provide suggested purchasing lists for specific categories where we can make improvements. We submitted an extrapolation of about one-third of our collection. He talked about what could and could not be submitted for audit.</p> <p>Stokes is happy to report that BCLD is slightly above average overall. Rohner asked if there is a target goal. Stokes said he has not found a standard goal; that is up to us. “How much above average we want to be?” he asked. He reviewed the various categories. Palmer commented that we do not appear to have a specific area in which we are significantly low. Stokes agreed that we are near average or better in most areas, but there is opportunity for improvement.</p> <p>He wants to focus on areas which are somewhat low and have this audit repeated again in about 3 years. The report is available on the library website.</p>
<p><b>REPORTS:</b>  <b>Director</b></p>	<p>Stokes gave the administrative report:</p> <p><b>Administration</b>          Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) - a new intern has begun training this week and will work up to 25 hours a week. Our new hire is Marilyn Duncan.</p> <p><b>Facilities</b>          Baker branch handrails - the support handrails were installed along the inclined sidewalk at the northwest corner of the building, on approaches from the parking lot and from Resort Street. With the elm tree removed a few years ago, these walkways get more snow and ice buildup now. Stokes shared pictures of the work.</p>



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	<p><b>Program &amp; Services</b></p> <p>Clue Game Murder Mystery activity - Stokes commended staff Heather Spry for a successful community program. He had thought it was a prepared program we replicated. However, the interactive mystery activity was invented by Heather. It engaged and entertained staff and the public for the month of October. About 40 people participated in solving the mystery. Several staff participated by role-playing characters. The last week of October there was a clue style treasure hunt in the library. Participants who successfully solved the mystery were entered in a drawing for prizes. The feedback was very positive.</p> <p>LearningExpress cancellation - the program is no longer provided by the State Library of Oregon. This has been a great resource that offers practice tests, learning software. It was cut because it wasn't getting used. He would like to offer this independently, but considering the revenue shortfall, we are unable to do that.</p> <p>New Resource - LOTE4Kids (L.O.T.E.= Languages Other Than English) is an online storytime in world languages and sign languages. It provides videos of books being read in the chosen language or sign language.</p> <p>Kajeet Hotspots discontinued. The student focused units were very limited in permissible use They will be recalled from branches and placed in storage. It appears we do not need to return them. We will continue to offer the Verizon hotspots which are very popular and provide more functionality.</p> <p>Record Courier bound volumes are being moved to the Reference Room for preservation. They are available for public access by request.</p> <p><b>Personnel</b></p> <p>IT Manager regular schedule resumed - The district's IT Manager has resumed his regular schedule of 32 hours a week.</p> <p>De-Escalation Training Series - the Ryan Dowd training courtesy of the Oregon State Library, has been assigned to all public service staff with completion deadline of November 17. At this point, about half of the staff have completed it. Some feedback about being uncomfortable with approaching people which he suggests. There is a balance to be friendly but not overly friendly. It is a 5 hour course. Next year, we will look at diversity training.</p> <p>Palmer left the meeting at 12:42 pm.</p>
<p><b>Finance Report</b></p>	<p>Hawes reported on the financial reports. Copies of the reports have been handed out and electronic copies are available.</p>



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The **General Fund** received its first large tax turnover on November 2nd totaling \$76,326.63. There is another tax turnover scheduled for November 14th of \$259,404.68; the details haven't come so the deposit is not included in these reports.

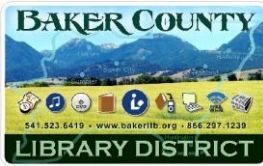
**Personnel Services** is on target with the budget in total. **Materials & Services**, starting in the book budget, a check was written to Ingram for \$1,726.46 for the monthly book order. The invoice included another \$4,200 for the diversity audit which has been paid from Other Funds. A check was written to the Sage Fund of \$16,428 for the Library District's membership. In Facilities, a check to Arros Electric of \$373.47 was to repair outside lights at the Huntington branch. And another \$82.00 was paid on a VISA to renew the post office box in Halfway. There are a few items of interest in the Computer Maintenance budget. A check to Streamline of \$200 for the monthly website. The VISA statement includes GoDaddy.com of \$3,358.08 for the District's 88 email accounts. The check to Verizon of \$772.58 includes \$628.49 for the monthly patron hotspot services. A check was written to Grumpy's for \$1,185.01 for repairs to the bookmobile. In the Library Services budget, the VISA statement included When-To-Work \$220 to renew the staff scheduling software and another \$853.35 to Emedco for weatherproof labels. In Utilities, the heating bill for the Baker library increased to \$689.37 for the month but is significantly lower than the bill a year ago. On page 7, a Transfer of \$7,000 was made to move funds to Other Funds - Grants where it belongs. The grant was received in April from the Roundhouse Foundation for the diversity audit; it was deposited into the General Fund checking account. I had missed moving it until now. And finally looking at the activity in the Capital Outlay budget. It includes the purchase a set of 20 tables from Oregon Corrections at a net cost of \$7,730.50, Marv's Glass of \$7,500.00 for new weather-stripping in the Baker Library window walls, and Marv's Glass of \$2,676.00 to replace the front door at the Huntington branch.

The **Other Funds** received a reimbursement from the Literacy Coalition of \$264.98 for the purchase of a laptop. It also received the grant transferred in of \$7,000 and wrote a check to Ingram for \$4,200 for the collection diversity audit. Another check was written to the Foundation of \$775.00 to move memorial funds to them. An online payment to VISA of \$336.94 for the purchase of a laptop for literacy use and \$71.96 for Amazon book shipping costs.

The **Capital Investment** fund had no activity.

The **Sage Fund** has received membership revenues totaling \$127,417 with more arriving daily; it has received 48% of the membership dues billed to-date. Sage wrote 6 checks to its small couriers totaling \$2,983.15, a check to OCLC of





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	<p>\$1,481.90 for the annual CatExpress subscription, and a check to Kenneth Cox of \$300 for Sage App updates.</p> <p>The Approved Bills Reports were passed around for the directors to review and initial along with the check packets split among those present. The Library District VISA was included with the online payments packet that was passed around for the directors to review.</p> <p>In other news, Hawes completed the draft of the financial report last week. It was submitted to the auditor on Friday. We are a month behind schedule on the audit. Hawes is hopeful that the report can be delivered in January but is unsure. Once our auditor begins the fieldwork, she will have a better timeline to report.</p>
<p><b>Additional discussion on article</b></p>	<p>Stokes had one additional item to added to his report. In the board packet he included' an article recently published on the topic of libraries' traditional reconsideration process being abused for political gain by special interest groups and individual activists. Discussion on the trend affecting libraries and associated costs. Stokes said he is re-evaluating how to maintain a reasonable due process mechanism as required in the constitution while protecting district resources from exploitation. He will be working with the OLA Intellectual Freedom Committee on ideas. Libraries are revising their policies to protect their agencies from being overwhelmed by challenge requests.</p>
<p><b>Next Meeting</b></p>	<p>The next regular board meeting will be December 12, 2023 at noon</p>
<p><b>Adjourn</b></p>	<p>Bigelow adjourned the meeting at 12:57 pm.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p>Perry Stokes Secretary to the Board PS/ch</p>