

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY LAW LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Thursday, May 13, 2021

The Skagit County Law Library Board of Trustees met on Thursday, May 13, 2021. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting occurred remotely via electronic Zoom meeting. Present were Trustees Merrilee Harrell, Andrew Schuh, Melissa Simonsen and Judge Elizabeth Neidzwski; County Commissioner Lisa Janicki; Court Administrator Lisa West; and Law Librarian Maren Anderson.

- I. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 8:32 am.
- II. **Approval of the Agenda:** Standing agenda was previously approved at the last meeting.
- III. **Approval of Minutes from March 11, 2021 Meeting:** The April meeting was cancelled as there were no immediate issues that required attention, so the minutes for the March meeting were reviewed. Ms. Neidzwski moved to approved; Mr. Schuh seconded; minutes were approved unanimously.
- IV. **Update from the Law Librarian:**
 - a. **Reopening Update:** The law library has been open “by appointment only” since Monday, April 5. Only one appointment has been made (which was later cancelled) but there have been a handful of in-person visits; patrons have called when they are in the courthouse or knocked on the law library door. As is reflected in the law librarian’s month report, there has been a steady amount of reference inquiries; opening by appointment didn’t result in a significant increase of use.
- V. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Reopening Plan:** The Board discussed future reopening options. The law librarian suggested that, as appointments have not seemed to be necessary and the traffic in the courthouse continues to be low, opening with limited capacity (but without the need for appointments) seems like a possible incremental step. Traffic in the courthouse continue to be low; one significant change is Friday’s criminal calendars which usually resulted in a lot of activity in the courthouse. Although it is anticipated that traffic in the courthouse will continue to increase, it likely won’t return to “normal” anytime soon.
 - i. **Motion:** Ms. Harrell moved to transition to reopening the library with limited capacity (but without need for appointments), pending board approval of an updated COVID safety plan. Commissioner Janicki seconded. It was clarified that passage of the motion would allow the library to reopen with limited capacity immediately upon board approval of the updated COVID safety plan but preferably prior to June 1. Discussion surrounded whether law libraries are controlled by the governor’s direction regarding libraries¹ or whether they are considered a component of the court system and controlled by those applicable requirements. Existing plan complies with previous governor’s direction regarding libraries; due to the nature of law libraries and reduced traffic in the courthouse, it is anticipated that the law library could reopen with limited capacity to ensure necessary access to legal information while still complying with the direction for libraries. It was noted that an updated COVID safety plan should be provided to Kayla Schott-Bresler, deputy county administrator who is maintaining COVID safety plans for county entities. There was some discussion about attempting to mirror hours the law library is open to the high-traffic times in the courthouse, although it is unknown at this point whether the high-traffic times are likely to be similar to before the pandemic or whether changes in calendars will also result in changes to courthouse traffic.
 - ii. **Action Step:** Law librarian will request information on current courthouse traffic from court security / county sheriff.

- b. **Annual Report:** A final draft was recently circulated. Any proposed changes should be directed to Ms. Simonsen. If no suggested changes, the annual report can be approved electronically; if changes are suggested, they will be addressed at the next board meeting. Once the annual report is approved, it should be submitted to Amber Erps, who will distribute it to the county commissioners.

- VI. **Next meeting:** The next Board of Trustees meeting will occur on Thursday, June 10. It is anticipated that the July meeting (currently scheduled for July 8) may be cancelled. It is noted that the budget cycle runs approximately from July through October, with initial budget proposals developed in July and final budget decisions generally made in October.

- VII. **Adjournment:** Ms. Harrell moved to adjourn; Ms. Neidzowski seconded; motion to adjourn was approved unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:03 am.

ⁱ Most recent guidance for libraries in Washington State, dated March 22, 2021, can be found here: <https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/COVID19%20Library%20Guidance.pdf>