

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

5:30 p.m. via Zoom

Administrative Service Center
415 Tumwater Blvd SW
Tumwater, WA 98501

Brian Mittge, *President*, Lewis County
Dustin Loup, *President Elect*, Grays Harbor County
Mary Beth Harrington, Thurston County
Toni Gwin, Pacific County
Vacant Position, *At-Large*, Lewis County
Vacant Position, Mason County
Vacant Position, *At-Large*, Thurston County

Present Board: Brian Mittge, Dustin Loup, Mary Beth Harrington, Toni Gwin

Present Staff: Cheryl Heywood, Andrea Heisel, Brenda Lane, Rose Enos-Weedmark; recorder

Remote Access: Zoom: <https://Trl-org.zoom.us/j/88278787744> • Meeting ID: 882 7878 7744 • Phone Access (253) 215-8782 • Approximate Attendance = 43

Timberland Regional Library (TRL) Business Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL – Brian Mittge called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Brian Mittge led the pledge

3. CORRESPONDENCE – **at 3:46 of the recording** Cheryl shares an email dated December 30th from Evelyn Ellis regarding partnerships. Hilary Dykstra on January 17th regarding expanding the Lacey Library children’s space. Elizabeth Carp on January 28th commenting on tonight’s Board meeting.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS – **at 4:12 of the recording** Mike Yestramanski, Will Mosley, and Jack Spivak commented on the recent budget shortfall announcement.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – **at 10:54 of the recording**

26-001 – MARY BETH HARRINGTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. DUSTIN LOUP SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 4).

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HIGHLIGHTS – **at 11:31 of the recording** Cheryl shares:

- Lewis County approved the appointment of Hal Blanton to the Board of Trustees
- January 10th was the grand opening at the Ocean Park Timberland Library
- Patron customer service survey running from January 16th to March 16th
- Anonymous donation of \$5,000 was received to the General Gift Fund from a donor at the Community Foundation of Puget Sound; anonymous donation of \$2,000 to the Olympia Gift Fund; anonymous donation of \$1,500 to the Olympia Gift Fund; donation of \$1,000 to the General Gift Fund from Lee Hover

Discussion of Executive Director Highlights – **at 13:31 the recording** Trustee Loup comments that it is great news that Hal Blanton will be continue on the Board and asks if it would be helpful to contact their county commissioners to expedite the appointment. Cheryl shares that a phone call could go a long way to expedite.

7. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS – **at 15:38 of the recording** Cheryl highlights the month ending December 31, 2025:

- **General Fund** - \$619,348.82 in property taxes was received; Timber revenue - \$366,049.54 was received; and \$982,534.85 in books and materials was purchased.
- **Technology Fund** – Had minimal activity.
- **Unemployment Fund** – Had minimal activity.
- **Gift Fund** – Payment of \$46,958.30 to Great Floors was processed for new carpet installation at

the Lacey branch

- **Building Fund** – Had minimal activity.

- **Budget Update** – Cheryl shares the following statement:

In reviewing the beginning fund balance, we are facing an immediate budget shortfall through the end of this year, and a projected shortfall at the end of the year due to year-over-year rising costs, decreasing levy rate, and limited annual revenue.

This is not new for us. As we all know, our revenue is limited by the 1% annual cap. We have consistently implemented systems and services to improve and streamline our internal operations and to make the most of our funds.

Our goal since 2019 has been to invest in the foundation of this organization to meet the ever-changing needs of our communities. As with many organizations like ours, we have continually done more with less. We have reached a point where our expenditures are outpacing our revenues, and we must make hard decisions.

These are the key budgetary impacts that will be implemented to reduce expenditures:

- Staffing Reductions
 - Hiring freeze, effective immediately
 - Eliminating extra hours, effective March 1
 - Eliminating substitutes, effective March 1
 - Staff reductions, effective May 1
- Collection Reductions
 - Purchasing less materials with an estimated reduction of \$1.8 million
- Expenditure Reductions
 - Supplies and non-essential purchases
 - Programs and paid presenters, outside district programs (SLP)
 - Travel/conferences/trainings
 - Reducing free printing to \$20 a month, effective March 1

Discussion of the Financial Highlights – at 13:86 the recording Cheryl shares that there will be other elements to the plan that we will be going over on February 10th at 4:30 p.m. Trustee Harrington shares that the timing of this news is a surprise but the Board has known it was coming for a number of years and appreciates the plan that is suggested. Harrington also shares that other local library districts have been experiencing the same constraints. Trustee Mittge shares that TRL has been providing services going on 60 years to the rural areas and the cities. There have been hard times before utilizing the resources we have. Trustee Loup adds that it is a difficult position to be in and we do not take it lightly, we recognize the importance of libraries in our communities.

Discussion amongst the Board about adding another member or two for the upcoming Budget Committee Meeting, February 10th. Trustee Gwin offers to temporarily participate on the Budget Committee.

26-002 – MARY BETH HARRINGTON MADE A MOTION TO APPOINT TONI GWIN THE BUDGET COMMITTEE. DUSTIN LOUP SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 4).

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS at 31:43 of the recording

A. Policy Committee, January 13, 2026 – Mittge/Loup

- 1) Donation of Materials Policy – no changes were made

26-003 – THE SUBCOMMITTEE MOTIONS TO APPROVE THE DONATIONS OF MATERIALS POLICY AS PRESENTED. MARY BETH HARRINGTON SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 4).

- 2) Information Technology Security Policy – no changes were made

26-004 – THE SUBCOMMITTEE MOTIONS TO APPROVE THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY POLICY AS PRESENTED. TONI GWIN SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 4).

- 3) Family and Medical Leave Policy – to follow the RCW laws

26-005 – THE SUBCOMMITTEE MOTIONS TO APPROVE THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY AS PRESENTED. MARY BETH HARRINGTON SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 4).

- 4) Future Agenda Items – None.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – at 36:16 of the recording Cheryl adds that the board can create a Special Board Meeting just to discuss the budget. The Board agrees to have it on February 10th at 4:30 p.m. instead of the Budget Committee meeting.

10. BOARD HOUSEKEEPING – at 39:38 of the recording Rose reminds the Board to complete the OPMA training.

11. FINAL BOARD COMMENTS – at 40:00 of the recording Trustee Loup shares that he is focused and dedicated to the challenge currently facing the Board. Trustee Harrington agrees with Loup and reminds everyone that we are all in this together, the Board, the staff, and administration. Harrington adds that there will be some hard decisions to be made but we will look at all alternatives. Trustee Gwin shares that she is very thankful for the Board that will work through this process and stepping up to the plate. Trustee shares that he appreciates the staff, administration and the union representatives that have come to attend the meeting in support. Mittge encourages everyone to check out the TRL online website, Anywhere Library, and the libraries.

12. ADJOURNMENT at 6:15 p.m.