

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

**5:30 p.m. via Zoom
and in-person**

Chehalis Timberland Library
400 N Market Blvd
Chehalis, WA 98532

Brian Mittge, *President*, Lewis County

Dustin Loup, *President Elect*, Grays Harbor County

Mary Beth Harrington, Thurston County

Toni Gwin, Pacific County

Hal Blanton, *At-Large*, Lewis County

Vacant Position, Mason County

Vacant Position, *At-Large*, Thurston County

Present Board: Brian Mittge, Dustin Loup, Hal Blanton

Present Board Remote: Mary Beth Harrington, Toni Gwin

Present Staff: Andrea Heisel, Brenda Lane, Paige Preston, Kandy Seldin, 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 = 65 Zoom/30 In-person

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 – Hal Blanton led the pledge.

3. OPENING BOARD COMMENT – at 2:49 of the recording Trustee Harrington shares that it is National Library Week as well as National Volunteer Week with the previous day as Library Worker’s Day. Harrington also shares that she and Trustee Gwin are attending the hybrid meeting virtually not because they fear that libraries are unsafe, but rather because a small group of people have expressed themselves by verbally assaulting individuals outside of their home, having work and home addresses posted online and encouraged to go picket, changing our grocery schedule or be accosted in an aisle, stalked online tarnishing reputations, and even told to commit suicide. We will not be bullied or blackmailed into making decisions that we feel are not in the best interest of TRL. Trustee Gwin shares her enthusiasm for hybrid meetings and adds that it is an important next step for inclusiveness in the future. Trustee Blanton shares his experience of intense fellowship and great conversation at the Centralia, Friends of the Library (FOL) meeting he recently participated in. Trustee Loup comments that he is happy regarding the layoff rollback announcement last week and would like to recognize the collective work of everyone for that achievement. Loup adds, being mindful of how we proceed, increase revenue via a levy lift, and review draft financial projections. Trustee Mittge acknowledged Library Worker’s Day and welcomed the audience.

4. CORRESPONDENCE – at 14:58 of the recording Rose Enos-Weedmark, Executive Administrator, shares that there were 54 written public comments regarding the budget, 4 thank you’s, 1 legal, and 1 meeting question.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS – at 15:27 of the recording the following individuals made a verbal public comment: Judi Brummett, Hallie Ralls, Edna Fund, Kylie McQuarrie, Brent Caron, Rachelle Martin, Siera Painter, Milo Spivak, Sean Swope.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – at 44:16 of the recording

26-033 – HAL BLANTON MADE A MOTION TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO INCLUDE UNDER NEW BUSINESS B) LEVY LID LIFT. DUSTIN LOUP SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 5).

Trustee Loup asks for confirmation that the large payments in the vouchers, approximately \$20k are for separation, vacation leave payouts. Paige nods in confirmation.

7. TRL UPDATES – at 46:57 of the recording Andrea Heisel, Library Services Director, introduces Muriel Wheatley, Regional Manager to discuss the Chehalis Timberland Library.

Heisel goes over the report highlights:

- Grand re-opening of the North Mason Timberland Library May 19, 2026
- Financial drafts to Board
- Collection budgets were reduced 37% across all areas and now you will see an increase in expenditure
- Library Giving Day raised \$18,364.50, a big thank you to our donors
- Revised open hours for branches and dates in effect
- Currently preparing and training staff for the kickoff of the Summer Library Program (SLP)

TRL Updates Discussion – at 1:05:05 of the recording Trustee Blanton asks about the total net sales from merchandise, etc. Anna Lisa Rasmussen, Communications and Media Coordinator, shared that the net profit of all 363 items sold was \$2,300. Trustee Loup asks about the structure of open hours and trying to preserve as many Saturdays as possible. Heisel shares that Monday’s patron traffic vs Saturdays was a big consideration. Trustee Mittge asks about the 37% cut to collection from 5.1 million in December. Heisel shares that with the cut it is now 3.2 million. Mittge also asks about the free book giveaway during the SLP. Heisel and Preston confirm that we provide one book, paid from gift or FOL funds.

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS – at 11:11:53 of the recording Andrea highlights the month ending March 31, 2026:

- **General Fund** - \$915,608.31 in property taxes were received; Timber revenue - \$162,167.05 were received; and \$100,831.63 in books and materials were purchased.
- **Technology Fund** – Had minimal activity.
- **Unemployment Fund** – Had minimal activity.
- **Gift Fund** – Had minimal activity.
- **Building Fund** – Payment of \$12,043.74 to Elite Mechanical Services was processed for backflow installation at the North Mason branch.

Financial Discussion - at 1:12:53 of the recording Trustee Loup confirms that we are seeing the separation payouts in the financial documents and Paige nods in confirmation. Loup asks about tracking revenue currently. Paige shares that we ended March at \$937,000 in the general fund with an additional \$2.2M from all of the counties except Thurston County as of April. We anticipate Thurston’s revenue to be available the first week of May. We are also averaging \$2.2M in expenditures monthly. Trustee Harrington asks for confirmation that the Lacey Gift Funds are only for library improvement and as special fund cannot be used for salaries. Paige shares that there was a \$1M dollar donation in 2023 or 2024, that was to be used for the Lacey Library. As it is a one time donation, it cannot be used for ongoing costs like salaries.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS at 1:18:23 of the recording Trustee Loup shares that in order to prevent a quorum of the Board, Trustees Gwin recused herself from the Facilities Committee meeting.

A. Facilities Committee – Gwin/Loup/Blanton

1. Library Updates

- a) Aberdeen – city led refresh/remodel, funds coming from the Sherk Fund, hoping for the city council approval on May 13, 2026. Some of the improvements will include lighting, HVAC, bathrooms, elevator, fire alarm. TRL will be refreshing non-structural items such as shelving,

and furniture.

b) South Bend – a fire happened, also lead and asbestos were found in the building. The TRL insurance claim to replace the damaged items was denied due the coverage not covering toxins and mold. TRL can look into filing a claim with the city’s insurance. The committee asked to check whether there was anything of historical significance that may have been contaminated and can be recovered. The committee also wanted to be sure TRL and the city are in communications regarding the building and if needed the Board can intervene.

2. Local Character and Refreshes – Trustee Loup shares that Brenda has provided the Policy Committee with the framework for how refreshes happen and we want to identify any gaps in that framework. Having community input, Friends of the Library, local branch staff, etc. improving the process and using the new process for all further refreshes. Trustee Gwin shares that it was her understanding that the local library manager would have discussions with their community and share with Brenda, but making that a more transparent process would be helpful. Trustee Mittge comments that it is his understanding that we will not move forward with other refreshes, like Aberdeen and Lacey, until after this process is completed. Loup and Mittge offer that they would like to continue to see the quirkiness of Aberdeen in its remodel. Trustee Harrington adds that some of the discussions are beyond the jurisdiction of the Board and urges a policy with clear guidelines to be set and followed.

3. Future Agenda Item Requests

10. NEW BUSINESS at 2:00:49 of the recording

A. Auditing – Trustee Mittge shares that an internal assessment of how TRL arrived at a budget crisis and how to avoid it in the future. Trustee Loup adds that financial management and workplace environment assessment would be reviewed by external process in an ad hoc committee with the potential to have some members of the public, but believes the financial portion should remain internal due to sensitive information. The Board can consider looking for external firms and potentially draft a framework and put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) to help if needed and is affordable. Brian Mittge mentions that the Ad Hoc Assessment Committee would provide a sense of trustworthiness of TRL to support a levy. Trustees Loup and Gwin volunteer to be on the Ad Hoc Assessment Committee.

26-034 – BRIAN MITTGE MADE A MOTION TO CREATE AN AD HOC ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE. HAL BLANTON SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 5).

B. Levy Lid Lift – Trustee Mittge suggests there needs to be research and a timeline. Trustee Harrington suggests that the Board review other recent campaigns that other libraries have done. Mittge adds that he suspects at some point this committee would need to include the public, Friends of the Libraries, and other advocates. Trustees Blanton and Loup volunteer to be on the Ad Hoc Levy Lid Lift Committee.

26-035 – HAL BLANTON MADE A MOTION TO CREATE AN AD HOC LEVY LID LIFT COMMITTEE. TONI GWIN SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 5).

11. OLD BUSINESS at 2:26:37 of the recording

A. Financial Transparency and Planning Policy – Trustee Mittge shares that this policy was shared at the last Policy Committee which has been reviewed by staff and legal counsel. Trustee Loup adds that Paige and her team will provide recommendations, and it will go back to the Policy Committee and then to the monthly Board meeting to finalize.

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – None.

13. FINAL BOARD COMMENTS – at 2:31:19 of the recording Trustee Harrington reminds the board to complete their NEOGOV trainings. Trustee Blanton thanks the audience for their attendance. Trustee Gwin expresses gratitude that we are moving forward. Trustee Loup thanks the staff for speaking up. Loup shares that he would like to see a library system where people feel the ability to share ideas openly moving forward. Trustee Mittge shares that he wishes that libraries continue to make happy memories for people for generations. Mittge also shares that the Board continues to interview candidates for the Interim Executive Director, then move forward for a regular Executive Director. Mittge adds that the Board will continue to meet with Friends groups because those relationships with our Friends groups are so valuable.

26-036 – MARY BETH HARRINGTON MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. BRIAN MITTGE SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED (Unanimous 5).

14. ADJOURNMENT at 8:11 p.m.