



UMATILLA COUNTY SPECIAL LIBRARY DISTRICT

Strengthening our community libraries

PO Box 1689
425 S Main Street
Pendleton, OR 97801

Phone (541) 276-6449

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

November 20, 2025, at 5:30 pm

District Office (425 S. Main St., Pendleton Oregon) & via Zoom

ATTENDANCE BOARD

Judy Bracher
Nick Nash, President
John Thomas

Caty Clifton
Kathy Thew, Vice President

ATTENDANCE STAFF

Heather Estrada, District Director
Dea Nowell, Technical Services Manager (via Zoom)

ATTENDANCE - VISITORS

Susie Hansen, Umatilla Public Library Director (via Zoom)
Melissa Ince, Finance & Administrative Service Director, City of Umatilla (via Zoom)
Zach Ratkai, Community Development Director, City of Umatilla (via Zoom)
David Stockdale, City Manager, City of Umatilla (via Zoom)

CALL TO ORDER

Board President Nick Nash called the regular Board Meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

CALL THE ROLL & ESTABLISH QUORUM

Heather Estrada stated that we have Board Members John Thomas, Caty Clifton, Nick Nash, and Kathy Thew in the office, so we have a quorum. [Judy Bracher arrived shortly after the roll was called.]

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Heather Estrada stated that she had just received the audit and Nick Nash needs to sign it. It was suggested to add it as the last item under New Business. John Thomas moved to approve the agenda with the addition. Kathy Thew seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (voting for: Judy Bracher, Caty Clifton, Nick Nash, John Thomas, and Kathy Thew).

PUBLIC COMMENT

The visitors from the City of Umatilla were welcomed. There was no public comment.

MINUTES

Board Meeting: October 23, 2025 - John Thomas moved to accept the October 23rd minutes as presented. Kathy Thew seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention (voting for: Judy Bracher, Nick Nash, John Thomas, and Kathy Thew; abstaining: Caty Clifton, as she was not present at the meeting).

ALSP Review Meeting: October 13, 2025 - John Thomas moved to accept the October 13th minutes as presented. Caty Clifton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (voting for: Judy Bracher, Caty Clifton, Nick Nash, John Thomas, and Kathy Thew).

ALSP Review Meeting: October 20, 2025 - Kathy Thew moved to accept the October 20th minutes as presented. Judy Bracher seconded the motion. The motion passed with two abstentions (voting for: Judy Bracher, Nick Nash, and Kathy Thew; abstaining: Caty Clifton and John Thomas, as neither were present at the meeting).

CALENDAR UPDATE

Heather Estrada reminded everyone that next month's Board meeting will be at noon on December 18th.

CORRESPONDENCE

Heather Estrada shared that she received a nice note from Dave Slaght. He noted that he appreciated the support and words at the recent City Council meeting. She also received a note from Annette Kubishta after Heather sent her a note following the ALSP Review, in which she stated that Heather and the District Board are so supportive, she loves sharing to a fan club. Heather also shared a video from Roundhouse Foundation that they had put together recently with snippets from interviews with 3 of our libraries and several others around eastern Oregon. One of Roundhouse Foundation's focus areas is libraries, and in cooperation with LEO the videos were put together to promote why we have libraries and show support for the funding they all receive. There are more videos available than the one Heather shared with the Board on their website [www.roundhousefoundation.org/library].

REPORTS

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & BANK RECONCILIATIONS – October 2025

Heather Estrada shared that we have not yet received the accountant's report, though she shared the reconciliation reports.

STAFF MONTHLY REPORTS

Heather Estrada shared that right after the last meeting she went to John Day for the LEO annual meeting as well as attended the County's town hall meeting which was the second public meeting regarding closing the Grant County Library. She noted that no one there understands how taxing works. There is a survey being conducted and a committee is trying to put together a special district; she also shared that the County Court is willing to fund the gap if a district vote passes until funds begin coming in from taxes. She also shared that there were more issues with the State Library of Oregon's funding with the federal government's shutdown – the week of our in-service the Library Support staff received word that they would be laid off. The OLA Board gathered following that and voted to donate to SLO a month's worth of salaries for them – with the shutdown over for now, the donation is not needed. The bullet was dodged for the staff that support libraries. Heather also shared that she received a call from Fred Phillips regarding the Fit just prior to in-service that it smelled so bad that it is not drivable, they think that a family of mice is living in the engine compartment. Heather took it to a mechanic's shop, and they did find a family of mice living in the ventilation system, some live and some dead. After they removed all the mice, Heather bought an ozone product that was suggested by other customers and they sprayed into the system – she noted it is better, but that she had no vents running. IMESD is planning to park it inside over the Thanksgiving holiday with the windows down to air it out some more. The snow tires were also put on the car while Heather had it out.

Heather mentioned that Sherwood Heights Elementary School called Monica [Hoffman] last minute and asked her to come to their literacy night. Pendleton Public Library was planning to be there with their new program, however Jennifer had to cancel. The Takeoff Program was highlighted in the Sherwood Facebook page following the event. Caty Clifton noted good job on the website accessibility project, Dea [Nowell]. And John Thomas asked who Ezmae is in Monica's report – Heather shared that Ezmae is Monica's granddaughter.

BOARD TRAINING: Lithium batteries

Heather Estrada shared some tips regarding lithium batteries in things like cell phones, laptops, and electric/hybrid cars from SDAO on things you can do. It was noted that some fire extinguishers don't work on lithium batteries and that sometimes lithium batteries can unexpectedly reignite after being extinguished.

OLD BUSINESS

URBAN RENEWAL AREA - LATEST

Melissa Ince [Finance and Administrative Services Director, City of Umatilla] shared about their Urban Renewal Area [URA] after asking if everyone had a copy of the sheet they had prepared and given to Heather [Estrada]. She noted that they had discussed their plans for the Urban Renewal Area with Heather and that it is a bit different than what anyone else was doing in Oregon. They are looking to for 2 areas - an east and a west - leveraging the amount coming from the Amazon data center which sits in the middle of the area, to do other things after the abatement, after 2035. She noted that they will not take taxing amounts out of other taxing districts and the impact to the Library District is very minimal - \$200-1,000 per year leading up to 2035. Umatilla will receive in excess of what they can collect, or hit their cap. She stated that between 2036 and 2043 the Library District will receive approximately 2 million dollars from the excess, but this will only partially offset the approximately 4 million the District will forgo to URAs. The URA ends in 2043 when the maximum amount they can collect is reached; they understand there will be impacts to taxing districts, but they want to be good partners.

Caty Clifton asked if they were presenting to the County as well - she would like to hear this again as she is not fully understanding it all. Heather clarified that from 2036-2043, we will lose money, even though tax values are going up. She also stated that she can't figure out what we might be able to ask for that would benefit the other 11 libraries. Melissa stated that they are not limiting requests or ideas to capital, everything goes to the City Council for decisions.

Heather asked about details of the timeline - for dates for requests and public meetings. Melissa stated that an outreach summary report will go to the City Council acting as the Urban Renewal Area Board at their first meeting January 20th where they will get a summary and formal plan. Then feedback and follow-up meetings with taxing districts will take place in the form of 2 recommendations: 1) on the plan itself (to the URA Board), and 2) on the allocation of enterprise zone funds (at the City Council meeting) on April 15th.

Caty Clifton asked how many taxing districts are you talking to? Melissa stated, about 10. She also stated that the City does not need approval from the taxing districts to move forward. There were no other questions, so Nick Nash thanked the City of Umatilla staff for coming to the meeting. [The City of Umatilla staff left the meeting at this point, or shortly thereafter.]

Following the presentation, there was much discussion over confusion in how this was presented and that the tax assessor had not heard anything about this when Heather had visited her. It was asked if it was worth speaking to others about this. Heather will reach out to SDAO, maybe to Mark Mulvihill, and may circle back around to the County with the tax assessor.

ECHO LIBRARIAN SET UP UPDATE

Heather Estrada shared that she, Nick Nash, and Kathy Thew attended the Echo City Council meeting on the 18th. Heather spoke, as well as all the staff being reclassified. She noted that Dave [Slaght] did the work, re-did the job descriptions, and reallocated the FY2025-26 budget. Heather also noted that the mayor was very supportive about needing clearer job descriptions for what all the staff members are currently doing in their positions. The change was passed by the City Council unanimously. Heather noted that she would be doing a director orientation with Anna Lemmon once she officially becomes the library director.

NEW BUSINESS

PENDLETON EMAIL REQUEST

Heather Estrada shared that she received an email request from Jennifer Johnson [Pendleton PL Director] and she is just throwing this out to the Board. She noted it is something similar to what we've done for two organizations in the past (East Oregon Symphony and Pioneer Relief Nursery). The library will be celebrating 30 years in the building in 2026 and are raising money for a new handicap accessible bookmobile and are seeking either raffle item(s) or cash. After a bit of discussion regarding logistics, John Thomas moved to set a limit of \$300 for a raffle item for the fundraising. Judy Bracher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (voting for: Judy Bracher, Caty Clifton, Nick Nash, John Thomas, and Kathy Thew).

FALL IN-SERVICE SHARING AND THOUGHTS

Kathy Thew stated she was sorry that we had a presentation by SLO staff via Zoom, as she couldn't get a read on the person. She thought many of the things were interesting and felt it came off better than expected being remote. Nick Nash stated that he thought it was a good presentation. Caty Clifton thought it was interesting and some people were uncomfortable. She noted it was a different way to get at inclusion and thought she did a good job, especially being remote.

Nick thought the presentation from the teacher, Mr. Sharp, was incredible, so cool - he led the attendees through a mission, vision, and values, and a non-negotiable statement. Caty Clifton stated she learned a lot from the United Way presentation and that the Dolly Parton Imagination Library is one of their biggest projects. Nick also shared that he appreciated the information sharing at the end of in-service and that every library present shared.

POLICY - Retention Schedule Procedure

After a bit of clarification by staff regarding the Retention Schedule Procedure and the retention project, Caty Clifton moved to note that the Retention Schedule Procedure had been reviewed and approved. John Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (voting for: Judy Bracher, Caty Clifton, Nick Nash, John Thomas, and Kathy Thew).

FY2024-25 AUDIT

Heather Estrada noted that she is really happy with the new auditors - they are very thorough. She shared on page 46, that they stated "nothing came to our attention that caused us to believe the District was not in substantial compliance with certain provisions of laws... except for the budget over expenditure listed in Note 1 to the financial statements." Which on page 22 under Budget procedures (continued) states: "The District over expended the budget in the general fund as follows: materials and services by \$48,519." Heather noted that more tax money was sent out to the libraries than we budgeted for and that she had asked Rob Tremper about this, and he had said we didn't need to do anything. Heather talked with Mitch regarding this, and he sent the ordinance of what we need to do regarding this in the future - basically the last month of each fiscal year we need to look at and do a resolution transferring money. In essence, we just need to fix it going forward. Caty Clifton asked Heather if she would go back to our accountant and tell him what the auditor said, she also said this is why we do an audit to fine tune it. Heather stated that auditor wanted us to read it over and then there is a sheet for Nick [Nash] to sign. Judy Bracher moved to approve the audit. John Thomas seconded the motion (voting for: Judy Bracher, Caty Clifton, Nick Nash, John Thomas, and Kathy Thew).

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Board Members and Heather Estrada shared about family and Thanksgiving. The Board noted that they would like to bring Christmas potluck type items to share at the December meeting.

NEXT DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

The next Board Meeting will be on December 18, 2025, at 12:00 pm.

ADJOURN

Nick Nash entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 pm. John Thomas moved, and Judy Bracher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (voting for: Judy Bracher, Caty Clifton, Nick Nash, Kathy Thew, John Thomas).

Respectfully submitted by Dea Nowell