

City of Blaine
Request for Council Action
Meeting Date: January 13, 2020

Subject: **Revising the Library Design Memorandum of Understanding Between the Friends of Blaine Library, Whatcom County Rural Library District, and the City of Blaine**

Department: _____ **Prepared By:** _____
(Digital Signature)

Agenda Location: Consent Agenda Council Action Unfinished Business

Attachments:

1. Draft Revised and Restated Memorandum of Understanding (with edits)
 2. Revised and Restated Memorandum of Understanding (Clean version)
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Background/Summary:

The City of Blaine, the Whatcom County Rural Library District, and the Friends of the Blaine Library entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on April 16, 2019 to facilitate a space planning and design effort for a new or remodeled Blaine Library.

The MOU created a design committee, allocated up to \$50,000 of funds from the Friends of the Library, and outlined a process for conducting the design effort. The MOU also has a clause that states, “The City and the WCLS agree to investigate the option of transferring the Blaine Library to the District in the future based on mutually agreeable terms.”

As the project has moved forward and as the various parties have allocated more time to the visioning, analysis, design, and consideration of future management of the facility, the Library District has determined that they do not wish to move towards a future wherein they own the Blaine Library. They continue to be fully committed to operating the library, and are committed to a partnership with the City for building operations and maintenance, but they do not wish to pursue the ownership of the building.

Library District Board of Trustees, and the Executive Director, feel it would be disingenuous to continue with the library redevelopment project under the terms of the existing MOU given that the District is unwilling to take ownership of a new library building.

The District is proposing a new MOU that rescinds and restates the existing MOU. The revised MOU continues all aspects of the prior MOU and all aspects of the design effort, but it removes the clause “The City and the WCLS agree to investigate the option of transferring the Blaine Library to the District in the future based on mutually agreeable terms.”

The revised MOU is submitted for City Council consideration.

Budget Implications: Current Budget New Budget Request Non-Budgetary

Revising the MOU is not a budget action. However, like many actions it has the potential for future budget impacts. If the existing MOU did lead to the District taking ownership of the future library, that would have reduced City expenses related to library maintenance. Given the terms of the new, proposed MOU, the City would presumably continue to own the library and would have expenses related to maintenance and capital replacement. Because the building has not been designed, it is not possible to quantify or forecast future budget impacts.

Recommendation:

The City Manager recommends that the City Council consider the District’s request and determine how they wish to proceed. Depending on that decision, the Council should either give the City Manager authority to sign the revised MOU or not.

Reviewed By:

City Manager _____ Finance Director _____ City Clerk _____
(Digital Signature) (Digital Signature) (Digital Signature)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

FRIENDS OF THE BLAINE LIBRARY,

WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT, and

THE CITY OF BLAINE, WASHINGTON

This Agreement, dated _____, ~~amends and replaces the Agreement dated April 16, 2019~~ ~~April 16, 2019, is~~ and is made by and between the Friends of the Blaine Library ("FOBL"), a 501c3 nonprofit organization; Whatcom County Rural Library District, doing business as Whatcom County Library System ("WCLS"), a Washington rural county library district; and the City of Blaine, Washington ("City"). Collectively, these entities are referred to as "Parties".

WHEREAS, the City of Blaine has welcomed public library services to its residents since 1911, provided space in the previous Blaine City Hall from 1932 to 1988, and in 1988 converted the Blaine Public Works Garage into the Blaine Public Library for this purpose, and;

WHEREAS, Whatcom County Library System has provided library services to the City since 1961 and;

WHEREAS, the Friends of the Blaine Library was incorporated in 1986 with the mission to foster greater literacy and love of reading; provide valuable resources to encourage learning and that entertain; provide a meeting place for cultural enrichment; and to generally improve the Blaine Library facility for the benefit of Blaine residents and its many visitors, and;

WHEREAS, the City, WCLS, and FOBL share mutual interests in providing excellent library services to people of all ages to connect information, ideas, and community, and;

WHEREAS, the current library located at 610 3rd Street, Blaine, Washington, has not increased in size since 1988, and;

WHEREAS, the population of the City of Blaine has increased by 121% from that year to the present, from 2,450 in 1988 to 5,315 in 2018, and the population of the surrounding area is 20,033 (Blaine Census County Division updated 2015), and the population is projected to increase by an average of 70% by 2036, and;

WHEREAS, the Blaine Library provides visitors with computer, printing, Wi-Fi, and reference services and is situated within blocks of the Peace Arch Border Crossing where over 2.4 million autos cross annually, and;

WHEREAS, the current library layout is insufficient to meet the needs of current library use, from physical library materials checked out numbering 47,642 in 1989 to 196,000 in 2017; from 0 computers in 1989 to 18 computer stations and 13 roving laptops in 2017, and;

WHEREAS, the City of Blaine conducted the Blaine Strategic Economic Initiative survey in 2017 that indicated a strong interest in expanding the library space, and;

WHEREAS, the Parties acknowledge that a newer, larger library in the City of Blaine is desirable and would benefit the City as a driver of economic development, and the public who would have access to this library facility.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE FRIENDS OF BLAINE LIBRARY, THE WHATCOM COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM, AND THE CITY OF BLAINE AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. The FOBL Board of Directors will allocate up to \$50,000 to support WCLS in the development of a library renovation design of the existing site.
2. WCLS will lead the project management process and will bill FOBL for reimbursement of project expenses as needed. Reimbursements will be made within 45 days of billing, following review and approval of said project expenses by the FOBL Board of Directors.
3. Eligible expenses will include professional fees for the selected design firm and marketing firm if needed. Additionally, costs for activities in support of gathering community input such as newspaper ads and events will be eligible for reimbursement.
4. A Blaine Library Design Committee will be formed in such a way that half of the members of the committee are representatives of the Blaine area community. For example:
 - -2 FOBL board members
 - -2 City of Blaine representatives
 - -1 Blaine stakeholder/community member
 - -1 WCLS board member
 - -4 WCLS staff
5. The WCLS Board of Trustees will hold final approval authority over project scope, architect selection, and final approval of work. Decisions will be based on the recommendations of the Blaine Library Design Committee.
6. The project timeline is to begin April 2019 and terminate on completion of the design process unless amended by Parties.
7. If a dispute arises among the parties concerning the performance of any provision of this MOU or the interpretation thereof, the parties will meet and work actively and in good faith to resolve the dispute.

~~8. The City and WCLS agree to investigate the option of transferring the Blaine Library to the District in the future based on mutually agreeable terms.~~

SIGNATURES:

(Chairperson)
Friends of the Blaine Library

Date

Christine Perkins, Executive Director
Whatcom County Rural Library District

Date

Michael Jones, Blaine City Manager
City of Blaine, Washington

Date

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BETWEEN

FRIENDS OF THE BLAINE LIBRARY,

WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT, and

THE CITY OF BLAINE, WASHINGTON

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(Chairperson)
Friends of the Blaine Library

Date

Christine Perkins, Executive Director
Whatcom County Rural Library District

Date

Michael Jones, Blaine City Manager
City of Blaine, Washington

Date