

Baker County Library District

Board of Directors

Regular Meeting Agenda

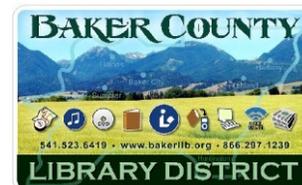
Monday, Oct 11, 2021, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Riverside Meeting Room, Baker County Public Library
2400 Resort St, Baker City

Meeting simulcast via [Zoom](#)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84263326583>

Kyra Rohner, President



- | | |
|---|--------|
| I. CALL TO ORDER | Rohner |
| II. Consent agenda (ACTION) | Rohner |
| a. Additions/deletions from the agenda | |
| b. Minutes of previous meeting | |
| III. Conflicts or potential conflicts of interest | Rohner |
| IV. Open forum for general public, comments & communications | Rohner |
| In the interests of time and to allow as many members of the public an opportunity to speak, the board asks guests to limit remarks to five (5) minutes if speaking on behalf of an individual, or ten (10) minutes if speaking on behalf of a group or organization. | |
| V. OLD BUSINESS | |
| a. Report on Pandemic Response Activities | Stokes |
| VI. NEW BUSINESS | |
| a. Public Survey on Fines Free Policy | Stokes |
| b. Annual Holidays Discussion | Stokes |
| c. Public Complaint Policy | Stokes |
| VII. REPORTS | |
| a. Director | Stokes |
| b. Finance | Hawes |
| VIII. Next meeting: Nov 15, 2021 | Rohner |
| IX. ADJOURNMENT | Rohner |

The times of all agenda items except open forum are approximate and are subject to change. Other matters may be discussed as deemed appropriate by the Board. If necessary, Executive Session may be held in accordance with the following. Topics marked with an asterisk* are scheduled for the current meeting's executive session.

ORS 192.660 (2) (d) Labor Negotiations
ORS 192.660 (2) (h) Legal Rights

ORS 192.660 (2) (e, j) Property
ORS 192.660 (2) (a, b, i) Personnel

Library Board Meeting – Annotated Agenda

Monday, Oct 11, 2021, 6:00 pm

Notes prepared by Library Director Perry Stokes

Annotated Agenda

- I. CALL TO ORDER Rohner
- II. Consent agenda (**ACTION**) Rohner
 - a. Additions/deletions from the agenda
 - b. Minutes of previous meeting

Attachments:

- II.b.i. Board meeting minutes, Sep 13 2021

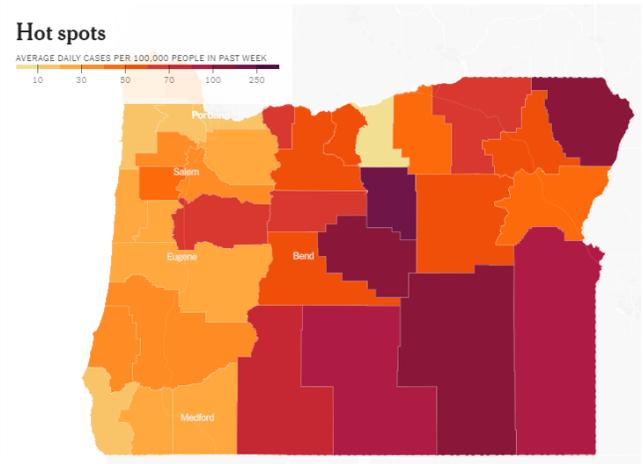
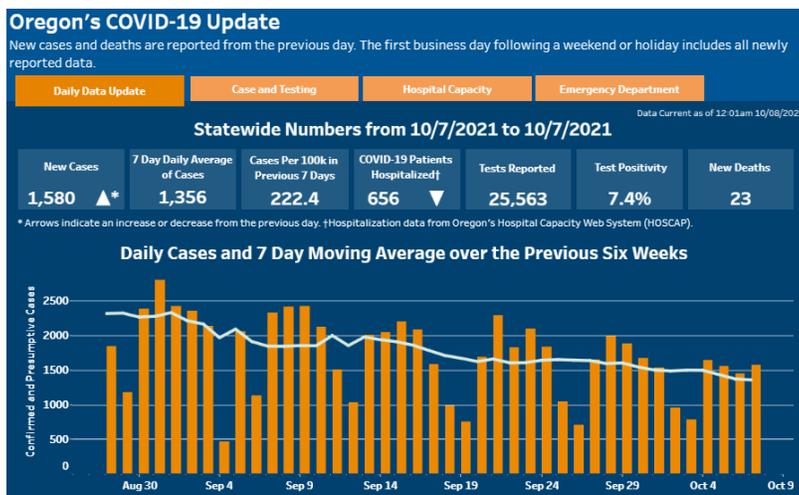
- III. Conflicts or potential conflicts of interest Rohner
- IV. Open forum for general public, comments & communications Rohner

No public communications to report.

- V. OLD BUSINESS Stokes
 - a. Report on Pandemic Response Activities

No change in library procedures and services.

[New COVID-19 case counts](#) and hospitalizations have fallen for the past 4 or 5 weeks. September logged the second highest month of fatalities, but they are expected to decrease soon also. The hotspot areas continue to be higher in counties with lower vaccination rates. Vaccination rates have improved recently, though not dramatically. The Oregon Health Authority released a new forecast predicting a continued decline in daily cases and hospitalizations through mid-October.



Library Board Meeting – Annotated Agenda

Monday, Oct 11, 2021, 6:00 pm

Notes prepared by Library Director Perry Stokes

The New York Times

Tracking Coronavirus in

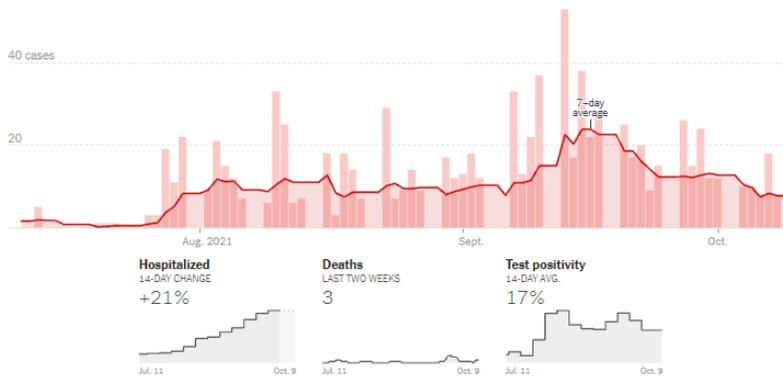
Baker County, Ore.

Updated Oct. 10, 2021

Cases have decreased recently but are still extremely high. The number of **hospitalized Covid patients** has risen in the Baker County area. **Deaths** have remained at about the same level. The **test positivity rate** in Baker County is very high, suggesting that cases are being significantly undercounted.

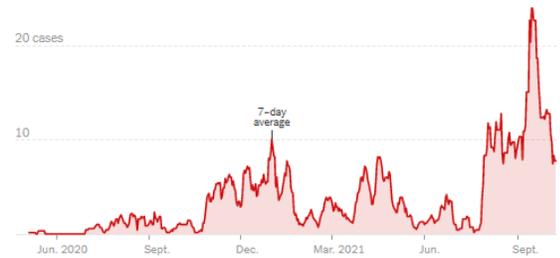
Because of high spread, the C.D.C. recommends that even vaccinated people wear masks here.

New reported cases by day
DAILY AVG. ON OCT 9 7.7 14-DAY CHANGE -37%



Cases have decreased recently but are still extremely high.

New reported cases throughout the pandemic



About this data

An average of **8 cases per day** were reported in Baker County, a **37 percent decrease** from the average two weeks ago. Since the beginning of the pandemic, at least **1 in 8** residents have been infected, a total of **1,948 reported cases**. Right now, Baker County is at an extremely high risk for unvaccinated people. [Read more about risk below.](#)

September 2021 was the month with the most reported cases in Baker County.

For more information see Baker cases report from NYT at

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/baker-oregon-covid-cases.html>

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Public Survey on Fines Free Policy

Stokes

New York Public Library [announced](#) this past week that it was implementing a Fines Free Policy, following a trend in public libraries to not charge overdue fees that has gained steam in recent years. The justification for the policy change is that overdue fees disproportionately impact low-income and other vulnerable communities. Many libraries view a Fines Free policy as part of institutional change toward improved Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and anti-racist efforts, with the goal of encouraging library use and reading, and moving toward "a more equitable society." NYPL reported a surge in new library accounts after their announcement.

A growing number of Sage libraries have also "gone Fines Free," including La Grande, Hood River, and Athena.

Library Board Meeting – Annotated Agenda

Monday, Oct 11, 2021, 6:00 pm

Notes prepared by Library Director Perry Stokes

It's been nearly two years since the BCLD Board last discussed this topic (See [12/9/2019 minutes](#)).

I've had a few informal inquiries about the inclination of BCLD on the matter. To gauge local opinion, I crafted a public survey this past week and shared it via our Wowbrary newsletter and social media.

As of this report, survey response is favorable. Out of 40 respondents, 70% marked "yes" on the question of supporting the elimination of overdue fines, 10% marked "maybe."

I plan to invite more public response with radio and newspaper announcements later this week, as well. The respondents thus far have been regular library users that follow library news. I'm interested to see if there may be a markedly different opinion from "non-library users" in the community.

This is a report and discussion agenda item only at this time. At a future meeting, I will present the survey results, the pros and cons of a Fines Free policy, more details about what a policy might look like for our District, and a policy recommendation for the Board to consider.

b. Annual Holidays Discussion

Stokes

Moving the date of our annual Staff Training Day from the district's traditional practice of holding on Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day has resulted in the question of whether district staff will have the day off with the library closed, or not. This year, we will remain open since district policy is that staff work on the October holiday as trade-off for a 2-day Thanksgiving break.

I recommend the District add Indigenous People's Day as a recognized paid holiday for employees, while retaining the 2-day Thanksgiving holiday tradition, as well. If the Board approves, I will update the Personnel Policy and add this to the list of holidays for 2022.

c. Public Complaint Policy

Stokes

I am still in the process of adapting [school district Complaint Policy](#), procedures, and form to our needs. I expect to have it ready to present at the November board meeting.

VII. REPORTS

a. Director

Stokes

Friends & Foundation

BookPage – The copies of this free monthly publication about newly released and forthcoming books have been going out well.

Library Board Meeting – Annotated Agenda

Monday, Oct 11, 2021, 6:00 pm

Notes prepared by Library Director Perry Stokes

Facilities & vehicles

Bookmobile – minor repair needed, replacing worn out windshield wiper arms and blades.

Drive-Up Window remodel – with the new book drop insert in place, we next need to rebuild the counter workspace in the area. I have been worked with staff on a design that will be contracted out for construction. Ed will install when ready.

Tree pruning – A limb was removed from an overgrown evergreen tree on the library riverbank near the Madison Street bridge. Removal improves visibility to the space for vehicles driving out of the south parking lot, and should also make the space less conducive as a place for littering.

Programs & services

Public 3D printing service – We now have two 3D printers operational and available for public use in the front lobby at the main branch. I'd like to commend Heather Spry for her excellent work to make this happen. PR is yet to come, but we've already had a great response from our regular users.

Art StoryTime – Missy has launched a new creative art youth program. Registration filled quickly.

Personnel

LEO was awarded a state grant to provide a series of Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion workshops. The first will be the morning of 10/19. If any Board members are interested, please let me know.

The annual Staff Training Day will be virtual, with live programs delivered by Zoom in the morning and staff attending recorded webinars in the afternoon.

b. Finance

Hawes

Report documents to be distributed at the meeting.

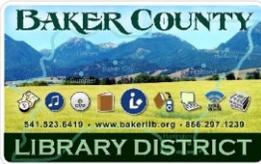
VIII. Next meeting: Nov 15, 2021

Rohner

Audit delivery is anticipated. Please let me know if you have any agenda items to request.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

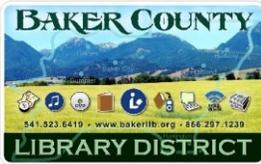
Rohner



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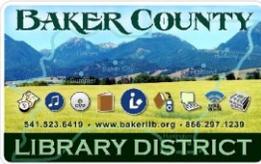
<p>Call to Order</p>	<p>The meeting was held in the Riverside conference room at the Baker County Public Library, 2400 Resort Street, Baker City, Oregon, the administrative building for the District. Those attending the meeting in person are Directors Kyra Rohner, Gary Dielman and Betty Palmer. Also attending are Perry Stokes, Director and Christine Hawes, Business Manager.</p> <p>Those attending via Zoom are: Frances Vaughan and Beth Bigelow. Stokes displayed the Zoom connection on a monitor for the group.</p> <p>President of the board, Kyra Rohner, called the meeting to order at 6:05pm. There is a quorum present with all 5 board members in attendance. .</p> <p>It was noted that the meeting was being broadcast and available to the public with a link posted on social media.</p>
<p>Consent Agenda</p>	<p>Rohner asked for any additions or deletions to the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting. She proposed adding the topic of Library Foundation Liaison under New Business. For the minutes, Rohner also had a minor edit to the minutes. Stokes made notes of the changes. Rohner asked for other additions to the agenda or changes to the minutes. There were none. Dielman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and minutes as corrected; Palmer seconded; motion passed by 5 ye (unanimous).</p>
<p>Conflicts of Interest</p>	<p>Rohner asked if there were any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest to be declared. There were none.</p>
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>Rohner noted that there were no members of the public present. She asked Stokes if he had any correspondence to share. Stokes had none.</p>
<p>OLD BUSINESS: Swearing in of newly elected Directors</p>	<p>Rohner moved to old business. Stokes needed to give Betty Palmer the Oath of Office form and congratulated her on her election victory back in May. Palmer signed and returned the form.</p>
<p>Patron complaint to Board</p>	<p>Stokes said that at the August meeting, the board heard the report of a complaint about library staff which was referred to Board President, Kyra Rohner. Subsequent board actions were pending guidance sought from Special Districts counsel. An update on the matter will be reported for discussion and determination if additional actions are necessary.</p>



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	<p>Rohner said there has been no new communication from either Special Districts or the patron. She would like to have SDAO counsel on a procedure for handling such complaints.</p> <p>Palmer reported on Baker School District procedure. She read excerpts of the complaint process for a complaint against school district staff. The basic steps include the person complaining needs to talk with the employee involved; the employee then responds within 5 days. If the complainant was not satisfied, the second step is to submit a written complaint. If the complainant is still not satisfied with the results, they may escalate the complaint to the board. She read further policy details and said that it cites OAR rules that this follows.</p> <p>Stokes commented that he liked the school procedure, and recommended we consider adopting something similar. Rohner said that she had been unclear as to what the library policy is when the complaint first came to her attention then described the steps she took. Rohner said that at this point, she wants to table it until we get guidance from Special Districts.</p> <p>Dielman said that we do have precedence on how to handle a complaint. He described a prior incident and how it was handled.</p> <p>Rohner stated that she would feel more comfortable with a policy in place. She reviewed the district policies but found nothing relevant. Her intent is to ask Special Districts for an example of a policy.</p> <p>Palmer asked if the patron has contacted the Library again and whether the complaint has escalated. Stokes said he has had no further contact. He will get a copy of the school district policy to look at and other sources.</p> <p>After some further discussion, the consensus was to table the issue pending response from SDAO.</p>
<p>Report on Pandemic Response Activities</p>	<p>Rohner moved to the Pandemic report. Stokes reported that new case counts remain very high, but district policies are unchanged. With masks required indoors, staff are always wearing masks but for the few exemptions such as eating/drinking, or in an isolated space. He reviewed the statistics provided in the annotated agenda. Palmer reported she had been consulting with Nancy Staten of the Baker County Health Department this morning for the school. There have been many new cases.</p>
<p>NEW BUSINESS:</p>	<p>None</p>



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REPORTS:
Director

Stokes highlighted his written reports:

Friends & Foundations – With summer book sale revenues, the Friends’ account balance is up around \$25,000. Stokes is considering future projects to which they may devote those funds. At their recent meeting, Stokes explained how library staff select and order books for the collection. The Friends approved a 2-month trial order of BookPage for Libraries; this is a monthly reader’s magazine which will be offered to the public to promote reading. Friends’ volunteers will add a sticker identifying that BookPage issues are free and sponsored by their group.

Facilities & Vehicles – New book drop inserts have been installed; one at the front entrance and another at the drive up window. The new units are more weatherproof and also “touchless,” which made them eligible for COVID-19 grant funding. In addition, thanks to a donation from Hermiston Public Library, we now have two book bins with spring-loaded platforms to go along with them. The bins should be easier on returned materials, and much more ergonomic for staff when emptying the bins since they don’t have to stoop over as much. Stokes said he greatly appreciates getting the bins from the Hermiston library, and staff efforts to get them in place.

Carpet cleaning – the carpets in public and staff areas at the main branch were cleaned over the labor day weekend. This is done annually.

HVAC system – There have been a couple of mystery outages. Ed continues to work with contract tech support, but availability has been impacted by illness recently.

Signage for grounds – Stokes had Ed post signage near the Memorial Rose Garden asking people not to pick flowers, which some people seem to think they are free to break off and take, unfortunately. Ed also posted new signage to more clearly communicate that parking lots on library grounds are reserved for library users and staff, especially the space reserved for the Bookmobile.

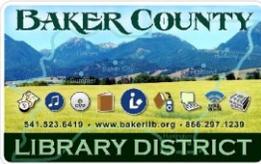
Window tinting for branches - This project for the Richland and Halfway branches is delayed due to contractor coordination difficulties. Ed has found a new vendor out of La Grande.

Programs & services –

Staff report the Summer Reading Program did exceptionally well, with 405 kids signed up for over 5,000 hours. The craft kits were particularly popular. Missy created enough to distribute to the branches.

Stokes approved a request for Bookmobile service to Baker Early Learning Center (BELC) at North Baker. Staff are taking the bookmobile there each Thursday.

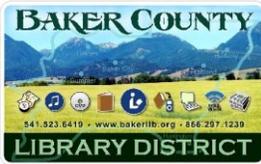
September is “Library Card Sign-Up Month” – Stokes has authorized waiving fees for



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	<p>replacement cards during the campaign. The Circulation Manager, Heather Spry, reordered a stock of library cards. The production cost has come down, so we will reduce the replacement price next month down from \$2.00 to \$1.00.</p> <p>Digitization of newspaper microfilm – A special staff working group is seeking to digitize microfilm rolls. Damaged rolls will first be replaced.</p> <p>Personnel - October staff training event has been moved to Thursday, October 28. Stokes would like to hold it annually on the last Thursday of October instead of on the Indigenous Peoples / Columbus Day holiday. Thursday is the least busy day for the library, according to traffic counters. Covid-19 safety precautions will be in place.</p> <p>Safety & Security – an additional security alarm sensor will be added to the door in the Facilities work room.</p> <p>Technology - no developments to report</p> <p>Palmer asked if the library will be running the Battle of the Books program again. Stokes confirmed that we are; he believes signups are in October.</p>
<p>Foundation Liaison</p>	<p>Rohner moved to the added Agenda item. She would like to hand off Foundation Liaison duty to another Board member. Stokes said the Foundation board will meet at the library tomorrow night at 6:30pm. Palmer asked Bigelow and Vaughan if one of them were willing to be the liaison to the Foundation. Rohner said the duty involved very little time. Mostly, the duty is keeping in touch with the Foundation and projects they were working on to report back to the library board.</p> <p>Bigelow said that she was willing to do that; she asked when the next meeting is. Stokes said that the next meeting will be in February or March; they meet once or twice a year.</p> <p>Beth Bigelow agreed to be the designate Foundation liaison. Rohner thanked her for coming forward.</p>
<p>Finance</p>	<p>Hawes distributed print copies of the finance reports for those attending in person. A scanned electronic copy was shared with board members by email.</p> <p>General Fund received tax turnovers of \$4,967.87 on September 2. We received a check from the State of Oregon of \$9,000 for the Worksource Grant. Personnel Services is on target in total at 24.2% spent. In Materials & Services, the Book budget includes a check to Ingram of \$6,999.63 for the monthly book order and AtoZDatabases of \$1,095 for the annual subscription renewal. VISA included AbeBooks \$669.26 for book orders. Under the Library Consortium, the OCLC line is grossly overspent. OCLC offered an annual</p>



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subscription this year which was paid 7/01/2021 \$1,072.10 and replaces the monthly payments that have been made historically. The budget shows \$250, although in past years it has been \$2,500; in looking at the budget this is correct and will need to be adjusted at some point.

On page 4, the Buildings and Grounds expense line includes a check to Heaven's Best (aka Daffer Family Inc) of \$2,597 for cleaning the carpets in the Baker library building and a check to Pendleton Electric of \$2,236.80 for a service call on the HVAC system on July 19. This expense line also includes a VISA transaction for Costco of \$419.99 for a standing table being used in the front lobby for the two 3D stations. The Computer - Hardware budget includes a VISA transaction to PC Liquidators, on the previous VISA paid on 8/31/21, of \$2,513.78 for 20 replacement monitors for the District.

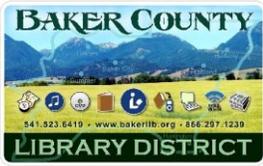
On page 5, under Public Programs, there is a new line titled Grant-SLO Worksource. Grant expenses have been included on the last two VISA statements totaling \$9,179.10 (including Costco approx. \$8,278 and Amazon approx. \$900) for 6 laptops, carrying cases and add-ons for 6 kits to be used for job seekers. The budget will need to be adjusted for the \$9,000 grant funds received. In Library Supplies, a check to AbleCard LLC of \$1,486.88 was added at the last minute for an order of 3,000 patron cards that arrived today. In Youth Programs, a check to Telecurve of \$900 is the subscription for the new Dial-A-Story program; our Youth Services Specialist is trying a new program to offer an audio story by phone. She has also been working on spending the rest of the \$1,500 Teen Services Grant received in May. Makers Kit supplies were purchased on VISA of \$352.28 to make Grab-n-Go bags for kids to do at home. Over the summer these have been very successful and well received.

There were no other noteworthy checks to mention. Please look over the checking account activity reports included in email and also available for initials tonight while signing checks. As always, questions are welcome.

The **Other Funds** currently has minimal activity. It has written two checks to visa for Amazon shipping expenses of \$40.39 (on 9/01/21) and \$54.42 on the check written today.

The **Sage Funds** has reported no income to-date which is typical. Sage usually issues its membership billings in October. It has sufficient operating cash, as of today, \$101,622. Sage wrote 4 checks for courier expenses totaling \$950.53 today, plus a check on 8/26/21 to a new courier of \$1,440 representing 2 months invoices for work performed in July and August. The check written to VISA was minimal at \$8.55 for USPS postage which is also a courier expense.

There were no questions.



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Next Meeting	<p>The next regular board meeting will be October 11, 2021. Palmer asked how that would work being a holiday. Stokes said when the library is closed, access to the meeting room is directly through the south parking lot or boardwalk entrances.</p> <p>Palmer thanked Bigelow and Vaughan for attending online.</p>
Adjourn	<p>The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p>Perry Stokes Secretary to the Board PS/ch</p>

DRAFT

Survey on Fines Free Policy

The Library Board will soon be considering a Fines Free Policy. No longer charging late fees, just billing for "lost" items not returned if 3 months overdue. Let us know what you think!

This week, the New York Public Library system, the largest in the U.S., announced that it will no longer charge fines on overdue material — a change intended to level the playing field for all library-goers. Read more about the move here: <https://n.pr/3FluLlz>

NYPL is joining a national trend that has been picking up steam in recent years and aims to decrease financial barriers that some argue have a disproportionate impact on low-income communities. Some [research](#) has shown that late fines have no impact on return rates and may be counterproductive to library service to the community by having the unintended consequence of preventing vulnerable populations from using the library.



In 2019, the American Library Association adopted “a resolution of monetary fines as a form of social inequity” at its midwinter meeting. Some of our library partners in the Sage Library System, and beyond in Oregon, have also gone Fines Free in recent years, including Cook Memorial Library in La Grande, Hood River County Library, and Multnomah County Library in Portland.

At Baker County Library District, our Library Board has considered a Fines Free policy in the past but decided against it at the time based on board member consensus that late fees help teach responsibility and accountability. With the growing number of libraries dropping fines, we'd like to know:

What are your thoughts? Would you be happier and use the library more with less worry about accruing late fines? The Library Board would appreciate your opinion with this [SHORT SURVEY](#).

Note: BCLD collects about \$10,000 from late fees each year, which is 1% of the library budget. Late fees rates are set at a minimum to recover the postage and handling costs of sending overdue notices and processing payments, so eliminating them would not severely impact the budget. For lost/damaged items not paid within 3 months, an outside "Materials Recovery Service"/Collections Agency is used to handle pursuit of replacement costs that total to more than \$40.

If adopted, BCLD would seek to implement the recommendations in the [report](#) from San Francisco Public Library, including:

- Extend the fine-free policy to all patron types
- Maintain billed item fees and accelerate billed item status (delinquent accounts referred to Materials Recovery Service / Collections Agency)
- Increase frequency of electronically delivered overdue notices
- Introduce limited automatic renewal
- Communicate fine elimination proactively to patrons and community

Generally, under new fine-free policies being considered:

- Baker County Library users of all ages would no longer need to pay any late fines on overdue materials. Old unpaid late fines would be waived. Currently, library cards are blocked if they accrue \$5 or more in fines; that would no longer be the case.
- Baker County Library users would still need to pay replacement fees if they lose or damage material. Materials would be considered lost and billed after being overdue for about one month. If materials are returned within 6 months of being past due, however, no fees would apply.
- Cards would be blocked from borrowing additional physical materials if patrons accrue replacement fees; note that even with a block on their cards, patrons could still access computers, e-books, and other digital services.

For more information and debate about Fines Free library policies, see:

["Why Have Libraries Gone Fine-free The Past Few Years?"](#) ALA Intellectual Freedom Blog. Sep 9 2021.

["Why Are Libraries Eliminating Late Fees?"](#) EveryLibrary.org. June 21 2021.

["Cook Memorial Library shelves overdue fines."](#) The Observer [La Grande]. Mar 8 2021

["No more library fines \[for La Grande\] beginning this Thursday."](#) Elkhorn Media Group. March 30th, 2021.

["Hood River County Library District becomes 'fine free' in February"](#). Columbia Gorge News. Jan 26 2021.

["Why Some Libraries Are Ending Fines."](#) The Atlantic. Dec 4 2020.

["Multnomah County Library permanently ends late fines, wipes away more than \\$700,000 owed by library users."](#) The Oregonian. Jul 1 2020.

["As Philly mulls eliminating library late fees, two librarians debate the pros and cons | Opinion."](#) The Philadelphia Inquirer. October 22, 2019.

["Fine-Free Policies Report."](#) Library Connection, Inc. Oct 15 2019.

["Athena library ditches late fines."](#) East Oregonian. Jun 27 2019.

["Not So Fine with Library Fines? A Look at the Overdue Debate."](#) Ebscopost. February 27, 2019.

["Doing Away With Fines"](#) American Libraries. June 25, 2017

["Removing Barriers to Access: Eliminating Library Fines and Fees on Children's Materials."](#) Colorado State Library. 2015.