

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 12:37 PM
To: Jill Nixon; Jake Logan; Executive; Cathy Halka
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Advisory Group Application

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Advisory Group Application

Step 1

Application for Appointment to Whatcom County Advisory Groups


Public Statement

THIS IS A PUBLIC DOCUMENT: As a candidate for a public advisory group, the information provided will be available to the County Council, County Executive, and the public. All advisory group members are expected to be fair, impartial, and respectful of the public, County staff, and each other. Failure to abide by these expectations may result in revocation of appointment and removal from the appointive position.

Title	Field not completed.
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First Name	J. Riley
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Last Name	Sweeney
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Today's Date	
Street Address	
City	
Zip	

Do you live in Whatcom County?	Yes
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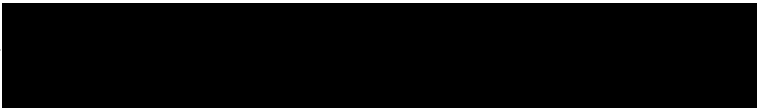
Do you have a different mailing address?	Field not completed.
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Primary Telephone	
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Secondary Telephone	Field not completed.
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Email Address	
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Step 2

1. Name of Advisory Group	Rural Library Board
2. Do you meet the residency, employment, and/or affiliation requirements of the position for which you're applying?	Yes
3. Which Council district do you live in?	District 4
4. Have you ever been a member of this Advisory Group	No
5. Do you or your spouse have a financial interest in or are you an employee or officer of any business or agency that does business with Whatcom County?	Yes
If yes, please explain	I work for the County Government in the County Executive's office.
6. Have you declared candidacy (as defined by RCW 42.17A.055) for a paid elected office in any jurisdiction within the county?	Yes
You may attach a resume or detailed summary of experience, qualifications, & interest in response to the following questions	
7. Please describe your occupation (or former occupation if retired), qualifications, professional and/or community activities, and education	<p>Sixteen years of professional communications and organizing experience in the public and private sector, with a bulk of my work in public service. Areas of expertise include policy development, outreach to diverse populations, capital project management, parks oversight, and web development. Excellent fundraiser, meeting facilitator and community outreach expert with a demonstrated track record of success.</p> <p>Volunteer activities include president of the Irene Reither Elementary PTA, past candidate for Meridian School Board, playwright for the Unsubdued Theatre Collective and the Lynden Heritage Museum's Mystery in the Museum fundraiser, radio drama producer, and a variety of community initiatives.</p>

8. Please describe why you're interested in serving on this Advisory Group.

As a lifelong library enthusiast, I am deeply passionate about keeping the WCLS running strong. Our local libraries provide vital, needed, and essential community services - at a time when we are facing new, and unprecedented challenges. What does literacy and information gathering look like in a world of ChatGPT? If the federal government continues to erode, how will our local libraries help those left behind? Already, we've seen the steps forward a future-focused library system can take with the expansion of the library of things, and providing zoom call spaces, and digital subscriptions - but the future will require more and the board of trustees is an ideal place to help navigate those challenges.

My family uses the library somewhere between weekly and daily. It provides a critical lifeline as a parent and community member to the wider world and I am ready to fight to keep our libraries running strong.

References (please include daytime telephone number):

Mayor Greg Hansen, [REDACTED]

Appointment Requirements

I understand and agree

Signature of applicant:

Riley Sweeney

Place Signed / Submitted

Bellingham, WA

(Section Break)

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whatcom county
library system

*Take
Please appoint
Satpal*

December 16, 2025

Mr. Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 108
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Executive Sidhu:

As current Chair of the Whatcom County Library System (WCLS) Board of Trustees and a member of the library board Personnel Committee, I am in the unique position of interviewing candidates to be my replacement for Position #3 when my second term ends at the end of January 2026. This month, trustee John Miller and I met with several candidates and were extremely impressed with one candidate in particular, J. Riley Sweeney. Today the WCLS Board voted unanimously to recommend that he be appointed to Position #3, effective February 1, 2026.

Mr. Sweeney has been a longtime library user and WCLS partner for many years. When he worked for the City of Ferndale, Mr. Sweeney collaborated with WCLS on promotional efforts related to our "I Believe in Libraries" campaign. This won a national award from the American Library Association! He understands marketing and public relations and has a deep appreciation for the challenges to intellectual freedom that libraries face. He and his family use the library weekly (sometimes daily). He's active in the Meridian School District, one of WCLS's Connected partners. He lives in a geographic area of Whatcom County that is not otherwise represented by other trustees. He writes plays for the Lynden Heritage Museum, another WCLS partner. He has proven experience with community outreach, which will be essential to us as we begin our next strategic planning process. He's articulate, passionate about libraries, and understands public service. We are excited by the energy he will bring to our board.

If approved, J. Riley Sweeney's first term on the WCLS Board of Trustees would run through January 31, 2030. If you have any questions about this recommendation, please do not hesitate to contact me at rodney.lofdahl@wcls.org, or Executive Director Christine Perkins at christine.perkins@wcls.org. Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing the news of your appointment.

Sincerely,

Rodney Lofdahl
Chair, Board of Trustees

The Power of Sharing

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