

Bellingham Public Library



Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees Tuesday, January 20, 2015 – Central Library Library Board Room – 3:30 p.m.

Minutes of Actions and Decisions of the Library Board of Trustees of the Bellingham Public Library as authorized by RCW 27.12.210 and SEC. 7.02 Charter of the City of Bellingham.

Board Members Present: J. Gordon, Marilyn Mastor, Rachel Myers and Tom Barrett.

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner, Beth Farley, Bethany Hoglund, Janice Keller, Madeline Sheplor, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins.

Others Present: Marvin Waschke, WCLS Board representative; Karen Hannah, Friends of Bellingham Public Library representative; Jim McCabe, Transportation Commission.

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, J. Gordon.

Approve/modify agenda: J. pointed out that 'Reports' has been moved to a standing #5 position and two new items have been added near the end of the agenda: 'New business' and 'Action items for next meeting'. Rachel Myers moved to approve the agenda. Marilyn Mastor seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: No comment.

Consent agenda: Pam noted that the agenda, under Minutes, should have "and dinner" added to "Regular board meeting." Tom Barrett moved to approve the December 16, 2014 minutes as amended and the December 2014 financial report. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

Board member reports: Rachel related that the Whatcom County Library Foundation has opened an endowment fund at Whatcom Community Foundation – there might be a future opportunity for the two library systems to promote the funds.

Library Director report: Pam reported she is on two union negotiating teams for new contracts – 114 and 114L AFSCME.

Human Resources has undergone many changes:

- The HR Director left and it was decided to replace the position with a Manager
- The appointed new Manager left and the position is currently vacant
- Many recruitment and hiring tasks have been filtered down to departments
- Vacant positions will now be placed in a queue, first come, first served, with the exception of Police and Fire vacancies – there will be 3 recruitments at a time
- Departments will also handle documentation and fact-finding for disciplinary actions
- The Library has a new HR point person – Analyst Holly Pederson

The Library has two Library Clerk 2 vacancies – a new position to help staff the additional branch hours and our delivery driver position which is being upgraded from a Library Clerk 1 (0.50 FTE) to a Library Clerk 2 (0.625 FTE) so that the position can cover desk shifts as well as drive. The position should post for recruitment at the end of this week.

Pam celebrated that Janice has been working here six months.

The RFP for the new Integrated Library System is nearly ready for release. Madeline and Jon McConnel, from WCLS, have been driving the project and are hoping to post the RFP by the end of the week. It will close after one month, followed by proposal review and demonstrations. If all goes well, we could be migrating to the new system by this Fall.

Pam and staff met with the Finance Director and Manager about our accounts receivable process – how we track and go after fees due. Finance gained a lot of understanding about our process.

Pam and Janice met with new City Council member Dan Hammill, explaining the library organization and relationship with WCLS. He asked about our metrics and suggested we tie our numbers to our values, such as how storytimes lead to an increased literacy rate in children.

Pam will be attending a meeting in Federal Way with other city library directors about long-term library funding, followed by the State Library Director's meeting. Pam is giving a presentation on the Washington State Library Council.

Library Legislation Day is January 30.

The WLA conference is going to be held April 15-17 at the Tulalip Conference Center. Pam will forward conference information in case trustees would like to attend.

Janice reported the Friends have changed the way in which they review, approve and allocate funding for the library. Rather than reviewing and approving many individual funding requests, they will allocate a yearly amount and let library staff prioritize how to distribute it. They have approved \$55,000 for 2015.

The Friends Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, April 25 – they will be electing all new board positions.

2014 donations: In the packet are two spreadsheets – one for 2014 donations to the Library Gift Fund which totaled \$27,763.72 and one for 2014 Friends of the Library donations (gift fund and direct-to-vendor) which totaled \$64,258.64. The combined total is \$92,022.36.

Pam reminded the trustees that there is \$26,230 in the gift fund ear-marked for Strategic Planning (from the WCF yearly distribution checks). This could be used towards a needs assessment or a planning retreat.

Library performance & activity measures, 2014: In January of each year we take a look at the end-of-year measures. Tom suggested the board look at mid-year as well, at the July meeting, to consider trends. Tom provided a list of observations concerning the performance measures, including:

- Electronic copies are increasing as physical copies are decreasing – will the feasibility study take this into consideration? Pam answered that Beth will be looking closely at this. We have moved funding to support high demand collections and are doing the same sort of adjustments with our space. Pam commented that one of the trustee candidates talked about how, in the 70's, 80's and 90's, libraries filled up with publications and lost seating. At his library, now they are taking away materials and shelving and putting the seating back in, creating community gathering spaces. Libraries need to accommodate laptops and other devices with wi-fi, electricity and seating. Rachel added that this is how the new Ferndale Library is designed – throughout the library people are just hanging out. Tom noted that Ferndale is very welcoming with low shelving and good sight-lines. Pam added that however a library is designed, it need to be very flexible so that space can be reconfigured for new uses.
- Circulation is trending down (-1.89% for 2014) – are there ways we could shift staff to new activities to bring in more patrons? More programs, focused on groups and individuals, could increase circulation. The increased hours at the branch should impact circulation in a positive way.
- In 2008 we soft-launched the Connection at WCC, but we haven't hard-launched the whole Connections program. The staffing and equipment resources are negligible. It would be good to do a push to increase awareness and use. Tom noted that he doesn't see any information about our presence when he is at WWU; perhaps we could promote the WWU Connection at the start of each semester.
- In 2014, there were over 8,500 more children's books checked out at Barkley than at Fairhaven – Barkley would be a great place to do kids programming. Pam responded that although there were not any programs at Barkley in 2014, we did have class visits there which were very successful. We are committed to doing two programs at each branch this summer; as with most of our services, it is a matter of having adequate staff resources.

Library Board of Trustees transitions:

- Trustee vacancy update: J., Rachel and Pam interviewed three candidates last week. Pam will notify the Mayor of their recommendation and hopes to have someone appointed by the February board meeting.

- Trustee attendance at WCLS trustee meetings: Faye was awesome at attending all of the meetings. The board is struggling with finding a trustee with the available time to regularly attend. J. asked Marvin Waschke if it would be a burden to have the WCLS representative give a report. Marvin will bring it up to his board and acknowledged they enjoyed having a BPL trustee at their meetings, noting cooperation between the two boards is critical. Wendy will request that WCLS board minutes be sent to BPL trustees so they can keep abreast of issues.
- Jack Weiss has been re-elected as 2015 City Council Liaison to the Library Board. J. acknowledged Jack's help in getting funding for expanded branch hours.

Restoring open hours:

- Pam mentioned earlier that the hiring process is slower with the changes occurring in the City's HR department. We do have the two Library Clerk 2 positions about to post. We will be prepared to add the 8 hours and be open to the public as soon as we get new staff up to speed.
- In the packet are the proposed new hours for Fairhaven and Barkley:

Monday, Tuesday and Saturday	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday	2:00-6:00 p.m.

The Board concurred with this proposed schedule.

Strategic Planning:

Outreach Committee:

- 2015 trustee advocacy: Tom and Rachel are taking the initiative to meet with each Council member and the Mayor, to strengthen relationships and keep them up to date on the Library. Topics could include gratitude for funding to increase open hours, and how the library may play a part in the downtown partnership and the comprehensive plan.
- 2015 draft Projects/Activities: try to attend a meeting for each neighborhood association including the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Committee; reach out to the business community; create a pitch – an elevator speech with Library highlights; start a donor recognition program using posters, digital signage or the e-newsletter; and work closely with the downtown partnership.

Facilities Committee:

- With Faye's retirement from the board the committee is down to two members: J. and Pam. They will postpone picking another member until after we have a new trustee.
- Pam set up a meeting with J., Ted Carlson, Public Works Director and Rick Sepler, Planning & CD Director, to discuss collaborating with the City on the feasibility study.
- Pam attended the Capital Facilities Committee meeting on January 5; they focused on the departments most affected by a facility need – Municipal Court, Fire, Parks, Police and the Library.
- Pam and Janice met with Clark Williams, Facilities Superintendent, to discuss the Facilities Plan. The Library is scheduled to be re-carpeted in 2015/2016. This will

cost \$417,000. We will ask to put it off until 2016 so the feasibility study can be completed first. Facilities will go ahead with installing security cameras this year.

- Pam and Madeline met with a group at WCC last week. The new Learning Commons project is getting mixed messages; it is not in the Governor's budget but WCC is moving forward with planning.

2015 Library work plan priorities: The last item in the packet is *2014 Accomplishments and 2015/2016 Preliminary Work Plan*. The Library's top three priorities are due today to the Finance Department for the budget book. After discussion the board chose:

1. Working together with the citywide facilities work group, continue exploring options for renovating and expanding, or replacing the Central Library, including conducting a feasibility study with financial options, developing an updated building program, and creating a staffing and operations budget for expanded facilities. \$50,000 feasibility study included in Mayor's budget.
2. Purchase library materials pre-processed and pre-cataloged and subsequently deploy library technical services staff to other currently understaffed public or support services. We are accomplishing this primarily with current budget funds, and are updating staff job descriptions and reorganizing to redeploy staff expertise. Some slight costs in making appropriate staff changes, and some costs offset by other parts of the reorganization; project is primarily budget neutral.
3. Seek and evaluate proposals through an RFP process and select and implement a replacement for the library's Integrated Library Computer System. Project got an early start in 2015 – working now to upgrade the self-check software as part of the larger software migration. \$140,000 is set aside in the Technology Replacement Fund for the total project.
4. Reinstate eight open hours per week, four at each branch. Project includes recruiting, hiring, and training minimal staff, publicity, and operationalizing the hours. \$40,000 was added to the library budget to restore these hours.

New business: Director/Board retreat: J. suggested arranging a retreat a few months after we have a new trustee. Topic suggestions were:

- Revisit the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan
- Trustee education (to free up meeting time) and work on a pitch
- Visit a different library
- Invite an architect or library specialist to speak

Action items for next meeting: Pam will consider having Angela Beatty come and report to the board about union negotiations in an Executive Session.

Meeting adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – February 17, 2015 at the Central Library, 210 Central Avenue, Bellingham, Washington – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST
Secretary, Library Board of Trustees