

# Bellingham Public Library



## Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees Tuesday, February 16, 2016 – Central Library 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.

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

**Library Staff:** Pamela Kiesner, Bethany Hoglund, Janice Keller and Wendy Jenkins.

**Minutes taken by:** Bethany Hoglund.

**Others Present:** April Barker, City Council liaison; Faye Hill, Friends of Bellingham Public Library.

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**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:36 p.m. by Chair, J. Gordon.

**Approve/modify agenda:** Rachel Myers moved to approve the agenda. Marilyn Mastor seconded the motion. Motion approved.

**Public comment:** No public comment.

**Consent agenda:** Tom Barrett moved to approve the January 19, 2016 minutes and the January 2016 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rick Osen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Library Director Pam Kiesner drew attention to the article she included in the packet, *Referenda Roundup*, from the January/February 2016 American Libraries magazine. This article compiles the happenings in other states in regard to library levies and bonds.

**Board member's report:**

- Rick Osen reported that his book club is discussing *A Tale for the Time Being* by Ruth Ozeki. Tom Barrett reported that he gave Ozeki's book to his neighbor who read it at her book club and plans to attend the Whatcom READS! event.

Rachel Myers reported that she too has read the title in both her book clubs and expects her book club members to attend the Mount Baker Theatre event.

**City Council liaison report:** City Council Liaison April Barker shared that the Council is currently in negotiations for redeveloping the condemned Aloha property on Samish Way and will be working with the Housing Authority. The Aloha property will be the first project that will have market rate as well as affordable housing; there is room for over 100 units. Council is working to have a restaurant in this space and is in talks with FareStart. FareStart operates cafes and restaurants around Seattle but are unique in that they train and employ community members affected by homelessness, incarceration or are in recovery.

**Friends of BPL report:** Friends liaison Faye Hill provided updates on a number of activities:

- The Friends are busy preparing for their next book sale – March 3-5.
- Faye, Claude Hill and Chris Johnsen will be staffing a Friends of the BPL ~~information~~-table at the Ruth Ozeki event at the Mount Baker Theatre on March 4~~th~~.
- It is time to pay dues for 2016.
- The Friends are finding great success with their new sales space in the lobby of the Central Library. Faye presented the sales totals for January 2015 and January 2016, for comparison.
  - Display case books, January 2015: \$75; January 2016: \$507
  - Nearly New books, January 2015: \$639; January 2016: \$981

**Library Director's report:** Library Director Pam Kiesner provided updates on a number of items:

- Pam attended the State Library Director's meeting where she led a discussion about state standards for public libraries.
- The Head of Information & Digital Services position was posted and closed Friday, February 12. We received 13 applications. Pam is working on setting up application review and interview teams.
- Pam met with Brad Cornwall, who wanted to get together and talk about facilities planning.
- Pam had a phone meeting with Peter Moy. Peter is charged with putting figures to the Zervas report.
- Pam met with Parks, Legal, and Planning regarding the building next to the Fairhaven Branch Library.
- Janice gave City Council a Whatcom READS! presentation and passed out copies of the books to the Council members.
- Hoopla is a service to stream music, movies, audiobooks and comics. We will be ending the service on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Hoopla is a pay-per-use model – we've been monitoring the service and decided that it is not sustainable. This decision was made jointly between BPL and WCLS management teams. Funding ear-marked for Hoopla will be used to create a Happy Go Lucky collection here at the Central Library as well as additional copies in the NW Anytime Library. Pam then provided some stats for Hoopla use:

- Total patrons registered: 3000 (out of 49,000 BPL cardholders)
  - 73% of registered were inactive.
  - 819 active patrons
- Projected cost for 2016 would be about \$60,000.
- Rachel Myers was curious about what our messaging is going to be to those active users who will be disappointed. We will have talking points available to staff. Rick Osen suggested pointing those users to other collections/services that they might be interested in. Rachel Myers feels being transparent is best – we are unable to pay for the service.

**Whatcom Community Foundation:**

- Enclosed in the Board packet is a letter from the Whatcom Community Foundation regarding our funds and 2015 distributions totaling \$14,260.11
- Library Director Pam Kiesner led the discussion with the Board regarding what they would like to do with the distribution.
- Tom Barrett suggested putting the money towards physical Early Learning materials.
- Rick Osen questioned if the distribution could be put in the gift fund without earmarking it for a particular project, rather designating a specificity later.
- J. Gordon discussed how it is difficult to know what we might need money for when the Zervas study has not been published yet. In regard to funding the feasibility study, J. believes a financial plan should be formulated. J believes the study could be \$75,000: Mayor Kelli is providing \$50,000 for the study and there is \$28,000 in the Strategic Planning fund. However, the study might be larger than originally intended and therefore more money might be needed.
  - It would make sense to launch a feasibility study immediately after the Zervas study comes out.
  - Council Liaison April Barker wondered what would happen to the \$50,000 designated by the Mayor for the feasibility study if it is not spent in 2016.
    - If the distribution money is placed in the strategic planning fund, the fund is a near match for the \$50,000 from Mayor Kelli.
  - Rick Osen moved to transfer the \$14,260 distribution to the gift fund for use in some combination of strategic planning and library materials. Tom Barrett seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with one abstention (Rachel Myers).

**2015 gifts and donations report:**

- Library Director Pam Kiesner presented the 2015 Gift and Donations report that totaled \$76,017.31. The total is a combination of two major categories: Friends Donations and General Donations to the Library Gift Fund.
- Friends of the Bellingham Public Library Donations
  - In 2015, the Friends allotted the library \$55,000 to spend on projects, materials and initiatives of our designation.
  - The 2016 allotment is \$55,000 with the caveat that further funding can be requested as needed.
- General Donations

- Items in the General Donation Fund come from varied sources such as memorial donations, which library staff take very seriously due to their special nature. Often, Pam works directly with the families.

### Financial report – 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2015:

- According to the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter report for 2015, the library spent 97.8% of the budget. There was \$96,105 left which was all in personnel funds. Pam shared that she was asked by City Finance to save \$40,000 for contract settlements. Pam noted that the remaining \$56,000 was due to various staff vacancies.
- The library will ask for \$6,126 to be re-appropriated to cover purchases made at the end of 2015 but not billed until 2016.

### Committee reports:

- Outreach Committee report: No report.
- Facilities Committee report:
  - 2016 Comprehensive Plan Capital Facilities and Utility Chapter – update
    - The due date was Friday, February 12, but Pam let Planning know it will be submitted late as the Board needs to ~~review~~ see the revised version.
    - To recap the history: The library submitted a document in November and added the Board-approved Level of Service chart in January. ~~Since then, Planning has combined the documents and sent a revised document version for Board review prior to submittal to the Planning Commission. to Pam Kiesner. Pam and Janice Keller felt the Planning revisions were generalized rather than specific to BPL, whereas Pam and Janice's edits were stronger and specific to BPL.~~ The 2016 plan is an update to the 2006 plan, in which the Library portion was specific and strong.
    - ~~It is time for the Board to review the revision then Pam will edit and resubmit to Planning.~~
    - ~~Pam shared the following dates regarding the Comp Plan:~~
    - ~~On March 3 the Transportation and Capital Facilities chapters are going being reviewed by to the Planning Commission, followed by an April 7 public hearing on all chapters. ○ April 7 is the public hearing on all chapters.~~
    - Tom Barrett would like to include language to specifically call out a Northside Branch.
    - J. Gordon explained that historically the Board has kept as a more general "library services" as branches are expensive in terms of staffing. For our size of our community, we already have many branches and only a few cities nationwide have more branches.
    - ~~Discussion ensued regarding being general or specific in the Comp Plan.~~
    - Council Liaison April Barker said she believes the Comprehensive Plan is to help inform decisions about where to put money in the City. The library is so well used and utilized and those details should be in the plan. Specifically, she wants to address needs for equity access and partnerships.

- ~~Rick Osen proposed that the North Bellingham Library Services be #4 under the heading "Library Facilities," rather than a bolded heading under #3.~~
- Under "Goal CF-5" Tom Barrett proposed the language of the last Policy CF include, "including consideration of a branch library in a north side location" after "the needs for additional library services." This addition shows a real commitment to the north side of town.
- It was noted that the Comprehensive Plan does not commit the Library Board to anything. Including a provision for a north side branch could be a goal. J. Gordon ~~mentioned said that~~ the Board has had struggles in the past funding existing locations so much so that it is difficult to discuss new branches when our current locations are underfunded.
- Rachel Myers stated that the Board would consider a north side branch if they had the partnership and funding, so why not just explicitly say consider a branch? Rachel said she doesn't feel that adding language more aspirational in nature would be a hindrance.
- ~~There was a slight discussion regarding time and distance metrics to the Central library and branches. It is often difficult to get to the library from the north end.~~
- ~~There was discussion that the language in the document could give the public something to bring to Council. It might also help to plant a seed when talking about partnerships.~~
  - ~~The word "consider" is important.~~
- ~~Library Director Pam Kiesner deleted the Policy CF regarding new urban villages. Pam reported there are multiple urban villages being discussed, including one in Old Town. It would not make sense to consider a library presence in every new urban village.~~
- Council Liaison April Barker commented she would like to see something that shows that equity access demands of the highly impacted populations is a priority.
  - ~~Note there is a difference between equity and equality.~~
- Council Liaison April Barker asked if there a commitment to be mindful of the guiding principles. Not to commit us to something, but actually be committed to look at what level of service means.
- J. Gordon would like the wording under the Fairhaven Branch Library to read, "seismic upgrade is needed to preserve the publicly-owned asset and *life safety*."
- Council Liaison April Barker would like added under the "Central Library, Forecast and future needs" that we are not meeting the needs of the ADA or even the needs of users and families. One example of this is that bathrooms are located only on the lower level of the library.
- Council Liaison April Barker would like the Barkley Branch library summary to highlight ~~the its high copious~~ use ~~by~~ children and families. ~~Additionally, add "on a month to month lease" after the "...1400 square foot space" description. Currently, it reads as if the space is a city asset, which it is not.~~ Rick Osen suggested perhaps we add "we have no long-term agreement" to the paragraph as well.

- ~~There was discussion as to if we should eliminate each location's individual "Forecast of Future Needs" and combine the recommendations into one overall "Forecast of Future Need."~~
- Tom Barrett shared that the Table 3 graph is confusing and would be better represented as a line graph.
- Council Liaison April Barker supports how the Central Library is identified as a positive asset downtown.
- Library Director Pam Kiesner reviewed the next step, in which ~~Pam and Janice Keller will make~~ the requested updates will be made for email review by email to Rick Osen and J. Gordon ~~for review, and~~ then submit to Planning.
- 2017-2022 Capital Plan update: review draft spreadsheet submitted to COB Finance
  - This document was edited by Board, talked briefly at the January meeting.
  - Rachel Myers moved to accept the document and submit to COB Finance. Marilyn Mastor seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Discussion:**

- The discussion regarding the Bellingham Public Library Standards was tabled until the March Meeting.

**Single Point of Service:**

- Library Director Pam Kiesner and Janice Keller provided the Board with an update. The new public service desk, called the Help Desk, is up and running!
- Council Liaison April Barker would like to let the Council know about the new Help Desk. Janice Keller will provide her with talking points.

**Bellingham Public Library Organization Charts:**

- Library Director Pam Kiesner presented an updated Functional Organizational chart as well as a Supervisory Organizational chart.

**New Business - Reciprocal borrowing agreements with other libraries**

- Library Director Pam Kiesner included in the packet the web page from the Upper Skagit Library District, who would like to have reciprocal borrowing privileges with BPL and WCLS.
  - WCLS has reciprocity with Fraser Valley, Sno-Isle and Timberland Libraries. BPL is not included in these agreements, however BPL materials are shared between WCLS and BPL and therefore BPL is essentially extending reciprocity as well.
  - Reciprocity is essentially "our patrons can borrow from you and your patrons can borrow from us."
    - Some libraries have opened reciprocity so that anyone with a public library card in Washington State is able to borrow materials.
  - Library Director Pam Kiesner would like the Board to discuss reciprocity at the March board meeting.

- Rick Osen questioned if the library provides free Interlibrary Loans to the libraries requesting reciprocity. Library Director Pam Kiesner affirmed this.

**Action items for next meeting:**

- Council Liaison April Barker is working with NW Youth Services and is wondering how the library is serving Bellingham's population of homeless teens. Head of Youth Services Bethany Hoglund will follow up.

**Meeting adjourned** at 5:36 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – March 15, 2016** at the Central Library, 210 Central Ave, Library Board Room – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST  
Secretary, Library Board of Trustees