

Bellingham Public Library



Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees Tuesday, July 21, 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, Tom Barrett and Rick Osen.

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

Others Present: Jack Weiss, City Council liaison; Faye Hill, Friends of Bellingham Public Library representative; Brian Henshaw, City of Bellingham Finance Director.

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

Approve/modify agenda: Pam asked that item #11, Executive Session, be removed from the agenda – Angela Beatty, HR Analyst, was advised that, with both 114 and 114L in mediation, it is not time yet to update the Board. Pam also suggested moving item #6, Trustee Education, up to item #4. Rick Osen moved to approve the agenda as amended. Marilyn Mastor seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: No comment.

Trustee education: Pam introduced Finance Director, Brian Henshaw, who provided a City of Bellingham Financial Review and Forecast. Highlights of the PowerPoint presentation included:

- o Monthly financial reports are posted on the City's website.
- o The City of Bellingham has slightly over a \$300 million budget including about 50 different funds – some required by state law, others by council policy. \$71.6 million of the budget is General Fund.
- o General Fund revenue is primarily generated by four taxes: property; sales; utility; and B & O.

- General Fund expenditures breakdown is: 71% salaries & benefits; 8% services; 11% interfund; 7% intergovernmental; and 3% supplies. The standard for salaries & benefits for city governments is currently 68-72%.
- If the current trend continues, based on the June, 2015 YTD budget, revenues will end the year -2% (approximately \$800,000).
- Looking at the average annual growth from 2009 to 2014, revenues are up 2.6% and personnel costs are up 4.6%.
- In 2007, personnel costs were 58% of the General Fund; in 2014 they were 72%. Contract negotiations are in progress for 2015, it is anticipated the percentage will go up for 2015.
- Current budget includes a deficit of close to \$1 million for 2015 and for 2016. In order to balance the budget, these deficits will be pulled from reserves (which were at \$17 million at the start of the year). Council policy is to maintain a minimum of 12% in reserve which is \$8.5 million (this would keep the City in business for 6 weeks without incoming revenue).
- Tax levy totals for the City are currently \$2.69 per \$1,000 assessed valuation, out of an established max of \$3.00. Brian projected many of the possible levy requests in the next few years (including one for the library) – there isn't the levy capacity for all of them. Levy approvals depend upon the project, the amount, as well as what is presented to the voters first.

There was a discussion concerning operating levies – ones that cover the cost of operation or maintenance rather than capital. Presentation of this type of levy is important – voters must understand what they are approving. The School District has an operating levy that merges capital, operations and technology expenses. Pam mentioned that the Port Townsend Public Library has an operating levy with no expiration that increases 1% each year.

Brian also touched on the biennial budget process adopted by Mayor Kelli. 2015/2016 is the first truly biennial budget for the City. The City will be doing a mid-budget internal update starting in September. The plan is to limit new programs and projects in order to live within the 2 year budget, while understanding that some adjustments are necessary. Even with a biennial budget, the City is required to do a yearly Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

Consent agenda: Rachel was excited to see that new card registrations were up 6%. Tom added that holdings, especially digital copies, were up; circulation is stabilizing; and programs and volunteer hours are both up dramatically. Tom Barrett moved to approve the June 16, 2015 minutes and the June 2015 performance & activity measures and financial report. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

The Bellingham Herald had a great feature on Rick on July 5, titled *Former library dean at WWU now Bellingham library trustee*.

Board member reports: None.

City Council liaison report: Jack reported on 2 items:

- He will be bringing forward a new Greenways levy at Monday's Council meeting for the November ballot (a year early). His proposal has 20-25% of the levy set

aside as operating to pay staff to maintain purchased properties – it is a hybrid type of levy, which Jack suggested might be a good idea for the library.

- As Brian mentioned, Monday's Council meeting also will include discussion on growth management. Julie Guy provided a public comment to Council requesting that a Northside Library be included in the new plan. This document is a guideline, a planning document. Tom added that there is already some language in it about a Northside branch – if something is in the plan, there is a chance it will happen; if it is not in there, it's not going to happen. Jack suggested the Board consider if there are things they would like in the plan. The Library has a copy of the current plan and Tom is very familiar with the plan (a resource to tap). The Board could also invite Rick Sepler, Planning & Community Development Director, to a meeting to provide an overview and direction on the best ways to enter into the process.

Friends of Bellingham Public Library report: Faye reported that the Friends keep working through the summer on all of the donations. A new volunteer training session will be held 3 days next week. They received \$1,320 in donations in memory of Vicki Marshall. They also received a \$5,000 memorial gift for a long-time, frequent patron of BPL. The next book sale is August 20-22. Tom asked that Faye let the Friends know how much the Board appreciates everything they do.

Library Director's report: Pam passed around a copy of the obituary for Vicky Marshall who was a trustee from October, 2005 to November, 2009. Pam recalled that Vicky knew what her strengths and passions were and followed them.

Pam attended a Municipal Library Director's meeting that was arranged by Marcellus Turner, City Librarian for the Seattle Public Library, to discuss alternative funding strategies. Pam has a document of strategies, such as a Municipal District or annexing with the County, that she will share with the Board and suggested this topic as a future agenda item. Spokane Library is working on similar funding strategies. J. will be spending some time in Spokane for work and will contact the Library Director for information.

Pam also attended the State Library Directors meeting:

- Joe Janes, from the UW iSchool, talked about librarians of the future.
- Melissa Munn, Community Conduct Coordinator for KCLS, talked about security in public libraries (KCLS does not have security staff – all staff are trained to deal with incidents).
- The future of Teen Services was discussed.
- Orcas Island Library received \$1.4 million from the state for a building project – there is money available for capital projects.

Our security cameras are not installed yet – a policy is being worked on to outline what will be filmed, retention times, etc.

Nate Dalgas has started his position as Library Specialist 1. Nate was a former Delivery Drive who received his MLIS degree (which is not required for this position) – his interest is Technical Services, and we are happy to have him back on staff.

Two staff members received \$500 Library Staff Education Grants from the Friends: Christy Karwoski and Nicola Andrews – both are working towards MLIS degrees.

Janice has been working here for a year – a cause for celebration!

Pam reported that Marilyn is sponsoring a Rotary Club Service Grant proposal that would allow us to create a Barkley Branch Early Learning Center and refresh the Central collection.

Pam asked Bethany to explain the Humanities Washington Prime Time grant we recently received: this will be a 6-week series (sometime in the Spring of 2016) that will target 25 low-income families. Bethany is working with community partners and Sylvia Tag from WWU, to host 90 minute programs that will include dinner, a preschool storytime and parent discussion/presentations all in support of families reading together and becoming long-term library users.

Pam read from a 1904 Herald clip that Beth Farley came across, "The free reading room of the Bellingham Bay Public Library is open every day of the week from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. Men are cordially invited to use the reading room on Sundays, especially." And "Fairhaven free library and Reading Rooms, Mason block, Fairhaven; over 1000 carefully selected bound volumes; all the current publications; reading rooms open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. Books loaned from 1:30 to 5 and from 7 to 10 daily. Sundays excepted."

Operations update:

- Single Point of Service: Janice distributed a Single Service Point Project Update. Two staff teams – physical changes and training – were tasked with brainstorming and making proposals to the Management Team. The physical changes team presented 4 floorplans and the M-team unanimously chose one that puts the Single Point location at the heart of the library (near magazines, facing the main entrance) with Security desk where the current Circulation desks are. The photocopiers will be moved closer to the bank of computers. This option involves new network and electrical work as well as furniture, so will take more time. More details will be provided in August.

Committee reports:

Outreach Committee:

- Nothing to report.

Facilities Committee:

- Ted Carlson, Public Works Director, is scheduled for next month's board meeting to give an update on the Capital Facilities Plan.
- Janice is working on a new Security Camera Policy and is working with the vendor that Public Works hired for camera installation.

New business:

- Trustees have been invited to attend 2 of WCLS' Strategic Planning sessions on August 19 and 20. WCLS has hired OrangeBoy marketing firm to help with their plan.

Action items for next meeting: Pam will send J. the name and contact information for the Spokane Library Director.

Pam will invite Rick Sepler to the September board meeting.

Pam's list of Retreat ideas include:

- Metrics
- Fund-raising
- Develop our Elevator Speech
- Facilities plan & feasibility study

Once there is more information on the Capital Facilities Plan, we can determine the best process for the Feasibility Study.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting: August 18, 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