

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees**  
**Tuesday, November 18, 2003 - Library Board Room**  
**04:00 PM - 06:30 PM**

Minutes of Actions and Decisions of the Board of Library 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:** Alan Kemble, H.A. Barney Goltz, Karen Durham, Tim Douglas, and Judith Wiseman by Speakerphone

**Board Members Absent:**

**Library Staff:** Julie Carterson; Margaret Ziegler; Jane Lowrey; Gladys Fullford

**Others:** Grant Deger, City Council Liaison, Susan Trimmingham, Pamela Jull, Tom Glenn, Velma Wendt

**Minutes approved:** October 14, 2003 regular meeting

**Claims approved:** October, 2003 general fund \$42,394.86; gift fund \$4,502.26

**Statistics:** Statistics continue record breaking trend.

**Board Member Reports:** Tim Douglas mentioned the final meeting of the fundraising group will be the morning of November 25.

**Director's Report:** Julie Carterson introduced Susan Trimmingham, co-chair of the anticipated library election campaign. She also introduced Pamela Jull, who conducted the 1998 library survey. Jull suggested a follow-up study to determine citizen support for a new library. She elaborated on the different types of questions that could be posed, the difference between "soft" data and "harder" data and the importance of posing the right questions. Research data could be used to develop a plan for the library ballot measure.

Julie Carterson reported that she, Alan Kemble and Helen Scholtz attended a CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act) Workshop. There is an unfunded federal mandate for libraries to filter all library computers with access to Internet. Libraries that elect not to filter will not be eligible for a portion of E-rate reimbursements. There is, however, a serious movement in the Washington State legislature to pass a bill requiring CIPA compliance. Also on the agenda is a measure promoting the election of Library Trustees. Both appear to have strong support.

The Library will not move forward with the custodial proposal from Public Works. It provided for the transfer of two custodians to our staff for both Bellingham Public Library and Fairhaven plus responsibility for maintenance and utilities. Based on the hours, use and traffic through both facilities we felt ill equipped to provide custodial services with only two people. Previous documentation from Public Works indicated that three FTE were necessary. We will continue to work with their staff to define basic service levels.

Budget presentations to the Council took place last Wednesday and Thursday. The final budget should be approved on December 15, 2003.

Julie Carterson and Gayle Helgoe will be meeting with the Systems Contract Negotiator, Sue Epstein, this week. It looks like we will have a very good contract with Dynix. Maintenance fees have come down substantially; we will strive to negotiate a maximum annual cap of 3%. We intend to move forward with the \$8,000 wiring bid. We will also upgrade as many computers as possible this year. If necessary we

will ask to re-appropriate funds set aside for the Systems purchase this year to 2004. The go-live date is planned for mid-August; there is much to do between now and then.

**Discussion Items:** Barney Goltz suggested an addendum be added to the Rudat Report if the projected population increase by the year 2020 has changed from 38,000. When asked how many of the library's 45,000 library cards were issued to people who live outside of Bellingham, Julie replied that she knew about 150 are issued to patrons who live outside of the county. She will check on the number of Whatcom County patrons.

Therese Holm consulted the city's bond council about a property tax levy lid lift for the purpose of financing the construction of a new library. A lid levy specified for a special project must have a 50% voter approval and be completed within nine years. The levy amount required would be \$.445 per \$1,000 valuation. Therese could arrange for the Bond Council to come and address the board.

Pamela Jull mentioned that with the ongoing tumult in politics, timing of a systematic survey is important to consider. Three to four months before the ballot is safe. A preliminary survey can be used in a public information campaign. A minimum number of telephone surveys should be completed to eliminate bias and errors that may be introduced by the form of the question.

Tim Douglas asked about the failed EMS levy. This issue needs to be resolved. Only City Council can place a ballot issue in an election. The community needs to understand the urgent need of a new library. The board will push for a presentation to Council in late January or early February. Grant Deger stated the Mayor might bring the EMS levy back for consideration by Bellingham voters only in the spring.

Several elections are planned for 2004 including the Bellingham School District levy in February. Barney Goltz also observed there is a group advocating for a statewide sales tax increase of 1% in the general election. He noted we wouldn't want to be on that ballot.

Tim Douglas said we should strategically plan to present a higher public awareness of need. Margaret Ziegler talked about the need for a decision on the site. Pamela Jull said we should clarify our decision and an alternate with a cost benefit analysis. We must answer the question, "Why do you need to move from where the library is now?" The case needs to be made and put in context of the community. Alan Kemble and Julie Carterson created a draft document to make the case. Jane Lowrey said it would be interesting to come up with numbers: Land acquisition costs, relocation costs while re-building, and utility of building other than for library use. A soft study could explore the public concerns. It was agreed that it was a good idea to talk to City Council.

Tim Douglas said the Board has two choices: 1) Make the decision now for a library architect to examine and seriously look at renovating and expanding the present building, or 2) Go to the best site choice. City Council needs to think about the overall strategy and goals of downtown redevelopment, and make a choice for siting a new library. The Board is interested in Council's input. There were several ideas for funding an architectural study including taxpayer money, private funding, and matching funds from the Friends. Pamela Jull suggested recruiting an unbiased advisory committee of non-contributing citizenry to validate the research.

The case for or against this building and/or this site merits serious consideration. Alan Kemble and Julie Carterson will draft specifications for such a study. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to conduct such a study will be made available to engineers/architects with significant library experience. Barney Goltz suggested an open meeting with City Council explaining the proposal and requesting Council's approval. The case then needs to be made to both Council and the Public that the present library is inadequate. The Board must weigh in with their recommendations. The need for a new library must be clearly articulated and separated from other City issues. The presentation to the City Council should include visuals. It was recommended that Dave Christensen be asked if his slides of new libraries might be used.

It was suggested that the word “new” be replaced with “changed” as in “changed library building.” Changes in the information future make for a healthier community.

Julie Carterson will discuss a timeline with Alan Kemble and Tim Douglas concerning meeting with the City Council and preparing an RFQ.

Leslie Johnson-Stay will be invited to talk with the Board at the December 16th meeting about the Feasibility Study. Lavelle Freudenberg was unable to attend today’s meeting. She would like to attend the December 16th meeting to review rules, regulations and public disclosure requirements.

Pamela Jull reviewed phases of surveying for the first, second and third quarters of 2004. She suggested a survey of opinions, a soft survey, and discussed the potential timings of a telephone survey.

Tim Douglas suggested two Board members approach two City Council members at a time to inquire about their flexibility on sites, or if they feel strongly about the present site. They could also be informed about the RFQ for the present site.

The telephone call to Judith Wiseman is being paid by her, and is not at the public’s expense.

**Action Item:** No action items.

**Executive Session:** None

**Next Regular Meeting – December 16, 2003 will begin at 4:00 p.m.**

**Meeting adjourned** at 6:15 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees