

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, March 18, 2003 - Library Board Room
04:30 PM - 06:10 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.

Board Members Present: Alan Kemble, H.A. Barney Goltz, Karen Durham, Rick Rhodes

Board Members Absent: Judith Wiseman

Library Staff: Julie Carterson; Margaret Ziegler; Gayle Helgoe; Gladys Fullford

Others: Grant Deger, City Council Liaison

Minutes approved: February 18, 2003 regular meeting

March 3, 2003 special meeting

October 9, 2002 special meeting

October 15, 2002 amended regular meeting

Claims approved: February, 2003 general fund \$29,573.15; gift fund \$222.11

Statistics: The number of persons visiting the library in February was amended to a total of 27,673. The numbers had been cumulated over a two-month period but are now being recorded daily. IPAC, one of two online user interfaces, has now been configured to capture logins, and we will be able to combine this count with Webpac counts for total web-site visits by remote users.

Board Member Reports: Julie Carterson and Alan Kemble made a detailed presentation on the library's site evaluation process to an open City Council workshop on March 3, 2003. The Board recommended three sites, identified in the Site Evaluation Study as Sites D (Cascade Laundry Bldg +), F (block of the former Unemployment Security Office) and I (block of the old Safeway store), for further consideration to Council. These sites were selected from five recommended by the Site Evaluation Committee in the previously mentioned Study. It is hoped that Council will make the final site selection by late summer.

Karen Durham received several calls from the public expressing concerns the site had been chosen. Karen stated that she would not support a pre-chosen PFD site without public meetings and process. Julie recalled that the Library Board of Trustees had adopted an alternative resolution to that proposed by the boards of the Whatcom Museum of History and Art and the Mt Baker Theatre regarding the Cultural District because of commitment to a public process. That resolution, unanimously approved by the board on October 9, 2002, was reaffirmed.

Julie Carterson, Alan Kemble, Barney Goltz, Jane Lowrey and Therese Holm attended the Associated Washington Cities seminar offered in Woodinville on March 6th, Winning Local Elections. There is at least a year's worth of work to do before a ballot measure should be presented to the public.

Staff Report: Gayle Helgoe presented a bookmark with the library's statistics. The millennial report covering the years 1999 through 2001 will be ready by April.

Director's Report: The RFP for a new integrated library automation system is in production and should be finished by mid April. There will be demos by three vendors.

The Whatcom Foundation can set up programs for capital campaigns that permit principal draw-downs for large scale projects rather than the interest only draw-down more often associated with endowments .

The local R/UDAT group i.e. Regional Urban Design Assistance Team comprised of architects Jim Zervas, David Christensen, Terry Moore, and Bob Ross, through Zervas Group Architects, is working with staff to develop a Library Space Needs Assessment. They will present finding and survey Board members at the April meeting. The report will be used as a public education piece.

It looks like the filtering measure will pass in the State legislature. This would include all computers in libraries, and have a minimum \$25,000 budget impact.

Public Comment: Comments on the new library were heard from Bibi Herrera and Bill Hinely.

Discussion: Adding a measure to a regular ballot would save a minimum of \$60,000. Planning for a September, 2004 ballot measure would provide 15 months to hold public educational forums, gather polling data, develop library specifications and prepare an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for architectural firms. A September ballot measure would also be more likely to garner the number of voters necessary to guarantee a valid election. Rick Rhodes moved that September, 2004, be the target date for the ballot measure for the new library. The motion was seconded and approved. A time line was discussed and a working calendar of major checkpoints was started.

The Director's proposal for achieving a 2004 budget with targeted reductions of up to seven percent represented significant staff discussion and input. Because this is such a challenging endeavor, one that all City departments are confronting to address an anticipated shortfall, the library has developed survey. Library users will be asked preferences on proposals for hours of operations, fee structures for value added services, and suggestions for meeting the shortfall. Our partnership with the Whatcom County Library System requires consideration regarding any new fees we may impose.

The City has offered employees sabbaticals from two weeks to six months. This needs to be bargained and has benefit and retirement implications.

The library is also investigating sharing the van with the Museum (and therefore costs). Discussions with Fleet Management are planned. In the interim we have asked outside vendors about annual maintenance contracts.

There is a proposal to expand the Whatcom Information Network (WIN) to include businesses and churches in the database. Charging a nominal fee would increase our revenue. We are examining the legal issues such a proposal might raise.

The Public Facilities District is reviewing consultant proposals for a fund-raising feasibility study. We have been asked if we would like to participate. There is a decided cost advantage to joining forces than pursuing an independent study. The concern is the perception of being linked to the PFD. The Board took no action at this time.

Executive Session: None.

Next Regular Meeting – April 15, 2003 will begin at 4:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees