

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, December 21, 2004 - Library Board Room
02:30 PM - 04:10 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: Chairperson: Tim Douglas, Vice-Chairperson: Alan Kemble, H.A. Barney Goltz, Judith Wiseman by phone, David Edelstein

Board Members Absent:

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner; Gayle Helgoe; Margaret Ziegler; Gladys Fullford

Others: Grant Deger, City Council Liaison, Lorna Klemanski, Sue Tercek, Michael Menard, Sue Hynes, Claude Hill, Faye Hill

Modified Agenda approved.

Executive Session: Labor Relations

Regular Session Reconvened: 2:55 p.m.

Minutes approved: November 9, 2004 special meeting minutes were approved as read.

Minutes approved: November 16, 2004 regular meeting minutes approved as read.

Claims approved: November, 2004 general fund \$45,220.63; gift fund \$583.70.

Communications: None.

Statistics: Circulation should be moderately ahead of 2003 figures at the end of December.

Public Comment: Michael Menard read a letter to the Board of Trustees requesting that they temporarily suspend all planning activities for a central downtown library and the expenditure of any funds involved, and they begin a study on how to provide library services to the entire City of Bellingham in a manner consistent with both the spirit of the Bellingham Community Forum on Growth Management and its specific recommendations. Michael submitted the letter, and requested the letter be made part of the minutes for the meeting. The letter is attached to the minutes.

Board Member Reports: Barney Goltz stated that he appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Library Board. It is a wonderful service to the City. Barney encouraged taking the village communities seriously, but we cannot support 23 branches. Branches do not replace a central library. A central library would support branches. Barney thanked the Board for the good work they do. Tim Douglas and Alan Kemble thanked Barney for his wise counsel and all the work he has done for the library.

Library Director Report: Pam Kiesner reminded the Board a small task force has been working on a redesign of the lobby. They toured Seattle branches to see how they use technology and provide a welcoming feeling. They are specifically looking at self-checkout and self pick-up of holds. Pam thanked Margaret Ziegler, Iris Kaneshige, and Deborah Brewer for bringing back so much good information and for working hard on this project that will improve customer service and provide service efficiencies.

The Library was affected by the power outage last Thursday. It was a good test of procedures. It has been noted where better emergency lighting is needed.

Pam attended the WCLS (Whatcom County Library System) Board meeting last Friday. Their Board feels the staff and directors work well together, and expressed an interest in meeting with our Board. They may send a representative to our Board meetings. They asked Pam about mention of a possible merger that had been in the newspaper, and commented they have not been approached regarding the matter. Pam and Joan mentioned that they will work towards any possible efficiencies between the two systems. Staff from the two systems are continually looking for ways to work together to achieve efficiencies. Pam discussed with them that in the meantime, she has asked city legal counsel for his opinions on a merger process, so that we are equipped with that information. WCLS is getting used to the new computer system. There are more challenges with more locations.

Pam applied for and received her lifetime Washington Professional Librarian Certificate.

Pam was a participant in the City's Chief Administration Officer interview process.

Pam passed out copies of an article: "Google to help digitize libraries" from the December 14, 2004, *Bellingham Herald*, and copies of an email from John Sheller, President of the Washington Library Association, on recent news about library funding in the state: "Why is this happening to our state's great public libraries?"

Donation of Art Work: Alan Marriner, Assistant City Attorney, drew up an agreement based on the elements the Library Board agreed to at the last meeting. Barney Goltz moved approval of the License Agreement with Ben Mann. Alan Kemble seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Trespass: A patron was issued a three-month trespass by a police officer. The Board reviewed the trespass, and no modifications were recommended.

Interlocal Agreement: This is an annual contract that comes to the Board at the end of each year. The WCLS Board approved the agreement at its December 17th meeting. Alan Kemble moved to adopt the Interlocal Agreement: Bellingham Public Library and Whatcom County Library System – Mutual Extension of Borrowing Privileges. Barney Goltz seconded. Motion carries.

Holds and Overdue Notices: Bellingham Public Library previously sent postcard notices announcing holds and overdues. The move to Horizon precipitated the county taking over the process. Notices are now sent from a central location, and specify where the item can be picked up, and the county sends notices in a sealed envelope to protect patron privacy. This incurs a postage cost that had not been originally budgeted. WCLS charges \$.417 per notice. On the advice of the City's Budget Manager (Kim Krause) and Director of Judicial and Support Services (Linda Storck), our 2005 budget will not be altered at this late date to cover the WCLS charges. We will track our monthly expenditures during the year as a debit in our budget that will give us a figure for budgeting purposes in 2006 if we decide to maintain this arrangement. Budget updates will show an expenditure column without a commensurate budget figure. We will continue to encourage patrons to give e-mail addresses for receiving their notices, as this will reduce postage costs.

Strategic Planning: The City staff person responsible for the Geo-technical Study will move ahead with soliciting contractors soon. Tim Douglas clarified the fundamental study of conditions under the top layer of land needs to be done. A structural analysis is pursuant to learning about seismic activity of the building. The study is needed for future decisions. David Edelstein stated every penny spent on a structural study will be of benefit to the city. It is the key to anything to do with the property or building.

Pam Kiesner mentioned the possibility of a virtual library tour with web sites of other libraries. A road trip is also a possibility if the Board so desires. Other libraries are being looked at to ascertain what are the trends in library services and how they are being implemented. New buildings are being looked at to see how staff and customer efficiencies are being implemented.

The Library appears to be in line with the planning guidelines outlined in an article in the December 19, 2004 *Bellingham Herald*, because the library has a presence in the core village (the Central Library) and the district village (the Fairhaven Branch, as well as our planning effort to locate a library presence in the northern part of Bellingham—in Barkley possibly.) We could invite Bill Grimes, consultant, to talk with the Board about how the library aligns with the “urban village” growth plan.

There will be a Strategic Planning Work Session January 25, 2005, to talk about our process, public input, what staff has done to date, and where we go from here. Barney Goltz suggested if regional branches are a good idea, thought should be given to ground rules for neighborhoods to participate in creating their library branch. Alan Kemble said it is important to say what we mean in terms of service. David Edelstein thought it was important to note that when the Forum on Growth Management mentions bringing services to neighborhoods, they mean police, fire and public services, not necessarily library branches. The CBD (Central Business District) has no height restrictions or parking requirements. We need to look at the future of the CBD, and make it a strong, center of community.

Tim Douglas mentioned that Faye Hill and Vicky Marshall have agreed to be nominees for the Board Trustee position, and Pam has forwarded their names to the Mayor’s office.

Staff Informational Topic: RFID: Gayle Helgoe presented the Radio Frequency Identification process. It is an intelligent library system that streamlines handling of library materials. She showed a film that described the basic concept of RFID.

Other Matters: Grant Deger announced this would be his last meeting as a Council Representative. He has been impressed with the passions of good people serving on the Board. He will always be an advocate for the library.

Judith Wiseman said it has been a pleasure to work with Barney Goltz at Board meetings and sub-committee meetings. He will be missed. We will also miss Grant Deger. He has been a tremendous liaison.

Next Regular Meeting – January 18, 2005 will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Special Planning Session – January 25, 2005 will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.



Letter from Michael Menard attached: December attachment 2B.pdf

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees