

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, January 18, 2005 - 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, David Edelstein

Board Members Absent: Judith Wiseman

Library Staff: Pam Kiesner; Gayle Helgoe; Margaret Ziegler; Jennifer Lovchik; Gladys Fullford

Others: John Watts, City Council Liaison, Joan Airoidi, WCLS Director, Donna-Lee Elke, WCLS Board Member, Faye Hill (Fairhaven Friends Committee President), Claude Hill, Susan Tercek, Michael Menard, Sue Hynes

Welcome: Tim Douglas welcomed John Watts, the new City Council Liaison to the Library Board.

Modified Agenda approved.

Minutes approved: December 21, 2004 regular meeting minutes approved as read.

Claims approved: December, 2004 general fund \$93,708.70; gift fund \$640.05.

Communications: A letter was received from Priscilla Brotherton expressing appreciation for the Children's Library and the services provided. Pam Kiesner sent a letter on behalf of the Library Board and staff to the Friends, thanking them for their tremendous efforts in 2004.

Statistics: Circulation was up slightly for 2004. A report showing the whole year by month was handed to the Board members. Gayle Helgoe explained there is a lot of traffic between BPL and WCLS. We receive up to 100 totes from WCLS per day.

Public Comment: Michael Menard asked about the agenda on the website. It was not posted before the meeting. Michael thanked Gayle Helgoe for coming to the Fairhaven Friends meeting. Michael asked how the bond process works and what is the process for the library? Michael asked John Watts to explain his remarks at a City Council budget meeting about possibly closing the Fairhaven Library. Michael spoke with Mr. Grimes, the consultant on the Bellingham Community Forum on Growth Management, who said the report does apply to libraries.

John Watts answered that the concept allows growth in designated areas, and that Fairhaven is a world-class urban village. How to get there is a matter of discussion. The growth forums are used as a planning footprint. It is a matter of negotiations to make sense for urban development. The Council adopted the report, and it is on the table for discussion. It is a concept allowing us to plan for growth.

Sue Tercek asked about the procedure for nominating Board Members. The Library solicits possible members on the basis of who would be available with certain abilities. Applicants file an application with the Mayor's office. The Mayor makes the decision, and sends it to Council for confirmation.

Board Member Reports: Tim Douglas spoke with Cape Powers of the Public Works staff about the geo-technical study. He is talking to a list of qualified engineers. The study will examine soil conditions between the library and city hall. It will also provide a seismic and structural review of this building. It will provide options for the use of this building. John Watts mentioned the city is doing structural integrity and seismic resistance studies on all city buildings.

Library Director Report: Pam Kiesner also welcomed John Watts to the Library Board. Pam mentioned that she has asked Gayle Helgoe to be the liaison to the Fairhaven Friends Committee since she supervises the branch. Deborah Brewer has served as Library Safety Committee member. Wendy Detloff will be taking her place. Thanks to both Deborah and Wendy for serving in this capacity.

Pam will be attending the State Library Directors meeting Jan 27 and 28 in Federal Way. Pam mentioned the Library Legislation Day on February 17th, and suggests that this is a good time to meet with legislators regarding library issues.

Pam thanked Joan Airoidi, WCLS Director, and Donna-Lee Elke, WCLS Board Member, for attending today.

Pam brought up for consideration the nominations of library board officers, an annual nominating process usually present in bylaws, but is not spelled out in our bylaws. The Library Board's handbook and several policies need updating, which will be undertaken throughout the year.

Thank you to Village Books, who donated a portion of the proceeds of their Children's Book Week sales to BPL and WCLS. We received \$442.

Thanks to the Friends, who provided funding for the new chairs by the public internet stations.

Deborah Brewer is providing library catalog instruction classes to help customers learn to use the Internet. This is a good programming effort, one we hope to continue.

The State Library is sponsoring a Library Marketing Workshop here February 2nd. Five staff members will attend. Pam will look into the possibility of Library Board members attending, as Alan expressed interest.

"BPL In the News": copies of news articles that mention Bellingham Public Library were passed around for the Board to read.

Interlocal Agreement: Purchase and Use of Integrated Library System: This is the first draft, and it has been reviewed by the city's legal department. It is a revision of the 1991 agreement with significant changes. Alan Kemble asked about modifications to the agreement. Changes are accommodated within the agreement. Tim Douglas mentioned he would like to see mediation rather than arbitration process for dispute resolution. The WCLS Board is concerned about 3.B.: Ownership of the system. Is the phrase "to extent allowed by law" needed? Joan Airoidi spoke and mentioned that the WCLS Board suggested their attorney, Deborah Garrett, should talk with City Assistant Attorney, Alan Marriner about the phrase and clarity of ownership of records. John Watts remarked that we do want to see greater harmonization of policies of both entities and less confusion for patrons.

Emergency Weather Conditions: The library policy is more a procedure guideline. Does the Board affirm that when the city closes, the library closes? The Library Director or staff member in charge makes the decision on Saturday or Sunday in consultation with the Library Board President or others. The staff member in charge makes decisions based on the last bus and safety of going home when conditions worsen during our evening and weekend hours. Alan Kemble felt the city has a broader picture of roads and transportation situations. David Edelstein agrees, but realizes we have customers who need us. Tim Douglas would like for the librarians to make an independent decision, and would hope services would not be closed very often. John Watts felt this was a rare situation. Public safety and liabilities that might accrue from dangers to employees and patrons present good reasons for the library to be a part of the city decision. General consensus was that the library should follow the city's lead during regular business hours.

Strategic Planning: Meeting is Tuesday, January 25th. Tim encouraged Board Members to review the document outlining the Plan of Action, and to take a lead on a different aspect, taking responsibility and ownership for a part of the plan. The more people we can get involved, the better. We need to identify people and groups to contact.

Gayle Helgoe and Pam Kiesner will have a list of the libraries to visit virtually and actually. John Watts invited Board members on a tour of “green” buildings. The Council and Planning Commission will visit four buildings in Seattle; one is the Seattle Public Library. John will forward information about the tour to Pam.

Staff Informational Topic: Website Tour and Young Adult Services: Jennifer Lovchik presented a look at all the options on the library’s website. Jennifer also told the Board about the teen summer reading program, teen committee, rotating displays, and the new newsletter, “Shelve It.” Jennifer’s goal is serious consideration of a defined teen space with a sense of ownership by teens. In the short term she would like to add shelving parallel to the fiction area with seating appealing to teens. Jennifer has met with middle school and high school librarians and encouraged library visits. Joan Airolodi complimented Jennifer on the HIP logo.

Other Matters: John Watts said the City’s Finance Director highly recommended the Council members read The Price of Government. After he reads the book, he will donate it to the library.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – February 22, 2005 will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees