

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, October 18, 2005 - Library Board Room
02:30 PM - 04:45 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, Faye Hill, David Edelstein

Board Members Absent: None

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

Others: John Watts, City Council Liaison, Claude Hill

Called to Order

Agenda Approved

Minutes approved: September 13, 2005 special meeting minutes approved with the correction that Alan Kemble was in attendance.

Minutes approved: September 20, 2005 regular meeting minutes approved as read.

Claims approved: September, 2005 general fund \$42,991.84; gift fund \$752.93.

Communications: An email was received expressing concern about privacy in self pick-up of holds. The writer felt it was possible to identify what books people are reading. Precautions have been taken in turning the books upside down and shelf-end barriers. The truncating of names was tried at Fairhaven. Confidentiality is an important aspect, but we cannot guarantee that a name would never be seen. The Assistant City Attorney has said we are abiding by state and federal laws. The patron can request to have their items held at the desk.

Statistics: Alan Kemble remarked that the numbers are still looking good. Faye Hill noticed Lecture Room rentals are less than last year. Tim Douglas said we have noticed changing room rental patterns.

Faye made the motion to approve the withdrawals for the third quarter. Alan seconded. The motion carries.

Public Comment: None

Strategic Planning: Pam called the Lettered Street Neighborhood Representative on the Mayor's Advisory Committee to present history and information that we are talking about the possibility of the Municipal Court site. We want them to be aware and involved. He was grateful and will share the news with their president, Barry Buchanan, and other neighborhood officers. He was glad we made contact. Alan Kemble said he was willing to go to a neighborhood meeting if they invite us.

Pam also met with two of PFD representatives, City Department Heads and the City Center Action Group. They expressed reservations about the library in the court area because of the distance from downtown area. Tim said we need to look at the future. The way Bellingham looks today is not how it will look 20 years from now.

John Watts mentioned that before the city bought the property, the plan was to keep city functions on this side of the creek to avoid encroaching on the neighborhood. When the property became available, it was

a good deal. We needed to think outside the box with a bigger central area. It is a community asset. Most neighborhoods would regard a library as a nice thing to have as long as we have good design work. What better amenities can be brought to a neighborhood; a library is the best possible facility. Tim said people are committed that downtown does not become a wasteland; we don't want to abandon commitment to downtown.

David Edelstein asked if the building was not here today, which would be the better site? He realizes construction here would be expensive, and would not be as functional or excellent as starting from scratch. Americans do not have a collective long view. The Board has to have an institutional view: Look out 50 to 75 years. The library would not be out of civic center, but in an excellent spot at the Municipal Court site.

Pam mentioned that the PFD representatives asked if we were interested in pursuing the county parking lot. We got the sense that it will not be under consideration for 5 to 10 years. David said we need to consider what is available now. An ad could be put in paper to see if there is any available site within 1,000 feet of current building. David is a serious and strong supporter of downtown, but does not believe it is the mission of the library to drive economics of downtown. The library needs to go to the best place for the community.

Faye commented that the more we examine the site, the more enthusiasm grows. Tim said the traffic circulation needs to be looked at in detail. Pam will ask Dick McKinley to have a traffic engineer take a cursory look at the two blocks with a vacated street between them, and tell us whether we can foresee any problems.

Tim mentioned Paul Schissler would like us to keep the Kulshan Community Land Trust in mind when we are planning for a site.

John mentioned the Bellingham School District is land locked. They might be a good partner. There have been strong neighborhood drives to protect older schools.

Alan said there is a lot of enthusiasm for the site. It is an opportunity for views of the city, Sehome Hill and the bay. The site is big enough and easy to build what we would like. He is bullish on this site, and feels the public would agree. Faye said she has visited all of the sites, and this is the best yet. It is easy to find, close, central and would add to the community in a number of ways.

Claude Hill said he thought it is a wonderful site with the amenities the library needs. With the public perception of costs, he hopes the cost of moving the current occupants would not piggy back on the library bond issue. Tim said we do need to address relocation. The current court building is poorly designed. The current library building is a great location for the courts. John suggested requesting a transition plan from city staff. How would they be impacted? What are the scenarios and logistics? Pam said Dick McKinley and impacted City Department Heads are interested to hear if this is the top site, and if they should move forward. ITSD has not been able to come up with a good temporary location. Pam suggested as an option that maybe they could move here and some library services go elsewhere. Marty Mulholland has a concern about seismic problems here. David said ITSD should be aware their current building is pretty much down to the end of its life span.

In review, Pam will talk with Dick McKinley about a transportation study. Is there any reason that would make this site impossible? The Police Station is also a neighbor. We need to ask how traffic would affect them.

John wondered if the R/UDAT Group should be asked how a building would fit on the court site. He mentioned that Vicky Marshall has been appointed as the new Library Board Member. He encourages meeting with her and bringing her up to speed. He also suggested making a library film presentation on Channel 10.

Tim and Pam will work on an updated roadmap sequence: Program statement, secure architect, traffic study, City Council, neighborhood involvement, transition study.

John mentioned the Council has vested greater responsibility to the Parking Commission. The Parking Commission will review every parking situation. We need to keep the Parking Commission advised.

There is money in the 2006 budget for a Fairhaven structural stability survey. Stowe Talbot is working on the next step of Barkley Village. He would like to bring something to the board regarding a library presence.

Trustee Education: Jane Lowrey, Outreach Services: Outreach provides materials to the elderly and homebound. They select 3,000 items to go to 29 facilities every month. Jane said there is a need to develop criteria for Outreach Services; requests are going to compound. She has looked at a bookmobile for \$175,000, and is looking for a grant.

Jane also told the Board about WIN (Whatcom Information Network.) This is a directory of services and clubs now in a database with Horizon Catalog Program. This is changing to the 2-1-1 Project. This is the information number to call for access to social services. It goes beyond what the library currently does; they will follow up with case management. Our database will become part of the 2-1-1 system, which includes five northwest counties of Washington. It will be operated by the Volunteers of America, and will be housed in Everett. British Columbia is also setting up a system which may overlap. The system takes pressure off of 9-1-1, but does not replace it.

Director's Report: Vicky Marshall was confirmed at the City Council meeting. She will serve out Judith Wiseman's term, and will be reappointed to a full term next year.

Pam will give a 10 minute budget presentation for City Council next Monday afternoon.

A memo in the packet explained wireless in the library. Gayle Helgoe said there are six access points, maybe nine. Signal distance depends on reflectivity and water volume. There is no space left for more computers. Deborah Brewer is looking for a grant for laptops for lab instruction in the Lecture Room.

News articles mentioning the Bellingham Public Library were passed around the table.

Pam has been approached by Tara Sundin of Community Development. Christopher Morrison would like to permanently donate his art piece by the bicycle racks to the city. The Bellingham Municipal Arts Commission will consider this. The Board felt this should be left in the hands of the Arts Commission.

Other Matters: None.

Next Strategic Planning Board Meeting – November 8, 2005 will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – October 15, will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees