

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees**  
**Tuesday, November 21, 2006 - Library Board Room**  
**02:30 PM - 05:05 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:** Chairperson: Alan Kemble, Vice-Chairperson: David Edelstein, Faye Hill, Vicky Marshall, and J. Gordon

**Board Members Absent:**

**Library Staff:** Pam Kiesner; Lizz Roberts; Gladys Fullford

**Others:** Rhoda Lawrence, BOLA Architecture, Myron Carlson, Facilities Supervisor, Sam Taylor, Bellingham Herald, Sal Russo, Cliff Baacke, Stan Snapp, and Jack Weiss

**Executive Session:** Labor negotiations update and consideration of acquisition of real property by lease or by purchase.

**Called to Order:** Regular session was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Alan Kemble. Alan asked for a motion to pass the agreement that the 114L union has ratified, and that the Board discussed in Executive Session. Vicky Marshall moved to ratify the agreement with the 114L union as presented. Faye Hill seconded. The motion was approved.

The second item discussed in Executive Session had to do with lease or purchase of real estate. No action is recommended from the Executive Session.

**Public Comment:** None

**Minutes approved:** October 5, 2006 regular meeting minutes approved as read.  
November 7, 2006 special meeting minutes approved as read.

**Strategic Planning:** Pam updated the Board regarding the issues identified at the last meeting. The Bellingham Planning Group is willing to do the volumetric studies project. They have the scope of work, and copies are provided in the board packet. City staff have concerns about the suggestion for vacating Grand Avenue. This will evolve through our planning process and architect selection.

Pam met with Malcolm Fleming, Chief Administrative Officer, Dick McKinley of Public Works and Tara Sundin of the Planning Department about the parking. Pam provided them with numbers for library parking requirements. It looks like we have a need for at least 150 spaces, but a firm number would be available once the design work is well underway. There may be a possibility of doing a non-voted general obligation bond for the parking piece of our project, so parking would not have to be included when we go to the voters for a new library bond. The Parking Commission and County will be consulted; this was an initial meeting only.

Staff comments have not yet been solicited on the concept of the central site, but this will be done.

Rhoda Lawrence from BOLA Architectural Planning presented the final Fairhaven structural assessment report. Myron Carlson, Facilities was present. A team of mechanical and electrical engineers visited the Fairhaven Branch in August. The building was constructed in 1904. A new roof was added in 1999. A three coat stucco system was applied directly to the masonry probably soon after construction, maybe because of water infiltration. Conditions led the team to believe there are some leaks in the building. Weatherproofing the exterior should be a priority.

The building was divided into four zones: 1) Preservation Zone of most significant spaces including the roof. 2) Free Zone is newer, and changes are not needed. 3) The two-fold Impact Zone includes the librarian office and work room, which negatively impacts the historic integrity. It is not as originally designed. It can be made to appear more compatible. The second part of the Impact Zone is the Stack Room. It used to have sky light and tall ceiling. The space had a unique visual character that has been lost because of the need for mechanical and electrical systems.

The auditorium on the second floor and west stair is a significant space. They have been maintained adequately for the most part.

Deficiencies include water infiltration at the entry way to the basement. Damage is due to the deterioration of the entry stairs. Columns and walls have been removed. The security gate needs improvement. The team did not know what is underneath the floating floor installed in 2002, or how it is anchored to the walls. Some of the Chuckanut sandstone on the exterior has deteriorated. Patches need to be compatible for a good seal. The gutters and downspouts are not properly sized and connected. Parapets on the roof do not drain. The sealant needs repair.

Alan asked about alternatives to stucco. Rhoda stated that aluminum is not recommended. Stucco is o.k. if applied and treated correctly and all the joints are sealed correctly.

The comprehensive costs include design fee, construction and sales tax. Priority 1 is important. Priorities 2 and 3 are primarily for esthetics and for user comfort. Priority 1 includes fixing the exterior and perimeter drainage, sealant around the windows, flashing and doors, replace some window seals, and a couple of extra outlets are needed. There is nothing in the building code that required structural work at this time. Proposed work is recommended to protect the building and prevent walls from crumbling and damage during an earthquake. Priority 1 cost is near \$1,000,000.

Priority 2 includes air conditioning on the second floor for comfort. It would be more comfortable and preferable to have more air. The current unit is old and inefficient. Windows do not work very well. Window restoration would make the windows more operable and efficient. A handrail could be added to interior stairs. There are a couple of electrical items.

Priority 3 for esthetics would continue the historic restoration, changing out the suspended ceilings in the main library, sheet rock repairs; items for the long term.

In answer to Faye's question about the cost variable in repairing the stucco, Rhoda explained the outcome of work on historic buildings is dependent on who is doing the work. They have had success in using the pre-qualified contractors. Faye also asked about the painting as a second priority. If it is re-stuccoed, it should also be painted. Rhoda will revise that priority. If exterior repairs are done, painting should also be done to complete the envelope.

J. Gordon asked about the windows. How uncomfortable is the building with open windows? Jack Weiss replied it does get pretty warm upstairs. Looking at the cost he would advocate making the windows operable and having fans available to circulate the air. Improving the air flow would definitely help.

David suggested an improvement over air conditioning would be a large ventilating fan in the ceiling of top floor. It would move air throughout the building.

Sal Russo mentioned the storm window hardware is in poor repair.

J. Gordon asked for clarification about replacing the P-2 panel with a 42 circuit panel in the electrical report. J. Gordon also asked about providing new floor sheathing at the second floor under the third priority. He compared this to the Geiger report which said sheathing was needed all around. Rhoda said the majority of the Geiger report was from 1995. The roof sheathing was added in 1999. Rhoda also

said the engineer agreed only one shear wall for the west wall was needed now. J. Gordon mentioned hardening the exit points of brick buildings to provide strength to keep brick from peeling. Rhoda said further testing would tell how well it is attached.

**Public Comment:** It was mentioned that the floating floor was installed because of historic preservation issues. Nothing could be attached to the walls. Sal Russo said he remembered that John Blethen provided the materials, but Butch Ericksen was the volunteer foreman.

Alan said the library is a historic asset. Only 16 Carnegie libraries in Washington are still functioning. The problem is bringing them up to code. The City has the obligation to preserve the building. This is a function of the Public Works Department.

Myron Carlson explained his operational budget for the libraries is charged back to the library. Anything beyond the day to day problems like the stucco is a capital expense. This is the first step towards getting that capital money.

Alan suggested having a small working group consisting of a couple board members who would work with Public Works to get to work on some of the smaller items while figuring out how to get the capital funds for the big items. Alan also asked for a motion to accept the report.

Faye made the motion to accept the report subject to finalization and thanked Rhoda for responding to our request for listing the priorities. Vicky seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Pam suggested that Myron and Lizz make recommendations to bring back to the Board for consideration. David said that was an excellent idea. Package and send the recommendations to City Council with the top priority of the exterior and water infiltration. It is a community owned building, and it is the Council's job to find money to get it done.

J. Gordon said there are two items: the operations and maintenance issues and the bigger capital items. Alan said the list of capital items would be taken to the City Council.

Pam added it is our responsibility to let them know the issues a.s.a.p. Unfortunately, we are at the end of the budget cycle for 2007. The original intent was to find the needs and roll it into a bond to go to the public for a community-wide library issue.

Alan liked the idea of composing a letter as part of the package, and go to Council.

The budget has been adopted, but there is room for emergencies. David suggested letting them know if these items are not done, these are the effects, so they will know why it is important to take care of them. Rhoda will write an executive summary that will explain the consequences.

**Claims approved:** September, 2006 general fund \$40,968.42; gift fund \$100.70;  
REET fund \$58.64  
October, 2006 general fund \$61,832.31; gift fund \$138.26;  
REET fund \$14,000.00  
Materials Withdrawn, third quarter: 5,180

Pam met with Calene LeBeau, the executive director of the Whatcom Community Foundation and with a donor who is interested in giving a donation for the new library. The easiest way to do this may be to set up a non-endowed fund with the Foundation. It is relatively easy to do. Pam asked for the Board's permission to set up the non-endowed fund, so she can let the donor know we have a vehicle set up to accept her donation before the end of the year.

David has questions as to whether or not the Whatcom Community Foundation (WCF) is the right place for us. He wondered if we should have our own foundation. If the fund was set up at WCF, the funds would have to be non-restricted with no strings attached. He would not want them to make decisions on whether we can withdraw money from the fund. David said it was the Board's fiduciary responsibility to take control of things that involve the library and not to abdicate them.

Alan explained that the Board had a number of meetings with WCF to explore these questions before the library's current endowment fund was established. At the time the Board was satisfied that the problems of dealing with the IRS when it came to endowed funds far outweighed the opportunity of having someone else manage substantial funds. A Board would have to be set up to govern a new foundation.

Pam will ask Calene to come to the December 5th meeting to explain how WCF handles endowed and non-endowed funds.

**Statistics:** The visitor count remains high. The count does not include attendance in the meeting room if people come in the back door. There are more no charge room bookings.

**Communications:** A communication from Jack Weiss regarding library location options is in the Board packet. Alan thanked Jack for the time he put into it as it gave another thought as to how things might look.

Pam read a communication from John Watts regarding his absence from the Library Board meeting. John mentioned no changes were proposed to the Library budget. John hopes any ballot measure proposed would include the most critical elements from the Fairhaven Branch Assessment. John is deciding whether to seek continuation as Library Liaison or offer this responsibility to another councilmember. The Board's advice is welcome. One strategy behind having a different representative from Council is that the Board would have the opportunity to thoroughly educate another member in both deliberations and recommendations.

Faye mentioned that since John has been through so much of this process with the Board, he would be a good advisor when the Board presents to Council. Vicky added that John has clearly been a good advocate for the Library. She would like to keep him as liaison.

**Interlocal Agreement:** This is an agreement with the Whatcom County Library System on our Mutual Extension of Borrowing Privileges and Services. The cost of living increase in the dollar amount is 3%. The Memorandum of Understanding on Telephone Messaging System is attached. The system has proven itself in terms of savings in the amount staff time and mailing costs. The typo in the Memo of Understanding will be corrected to read "Thereafter BPL will reimburse WCLS on a quarterly basis..." Pam said the Whatcom County Library District Board approved this morning. David move to approve the agreement. Vicky seconded. The motion was approved.

**2007 Library Board Meeting Dates and Times:** The dates follow the pattern of meeting on the third Tuesday of the month except Pam has changed the May meeting to the fourth Tuesday. Pam mentioned that members of the public have asked about different meeting times such as evening or early morning, so that they may attend.

J. Gordon mentioned that he will not be able to be at the January 16th meeting. The February 20th meeting falls during the Bellingham School District Midwinter Break. Vicky will also not be able to be at the February 20th. Pam suggested that if two people cannot attend, the date be changed to the fourth Tuesday.

David suggested the meetings should start at 2:00 p.m. in order to take care of all the business.

The Board's preference is to meet at 2:00 p.m. The January meeting will be changed to January 23rd at 1:30 p.m. The February meeting will be changed to February 27th. The December 5th meeting will be at 1:00 p.m. for the Executive Session, 1:30 p.m. for the Regular Session. David made the motion to accept both the 2007 meeting dates with the changes for January and February and the Holiday Dates listed on the back of the page. Vicky seconded. The motion was approved.

Pam will bring a revision of the by-laws to the Board.

**Policies:** This Confidentiality Policy brings us closer in line with WCLS. The Security Policy addresses the new security measures we have put into place in terms of wearing badges, access and coded doors. Faye moved to approve both policies. Vicky seconded.

J. Gordon asked about the impact of Home Security and the Patriot Act. Pam explained records are only kept if materials are overdue. Returned books close the record. Confidential library records are only given out by court order. The City Attorney would be consulted when there is a court order.

The motion to approve both policies was approved.

**Reports:** Pam commented on the executive compensation schedule presented to City Council and in the newspaper today. The Library Director's salary was highlighted. This study was begun many months ago by a consulting firm, Millman, in Seattle.

Ferndale has hired Myers, Scherer, & Rockcastle Architects from Minneapolis to work with the library in their planning process. Tom Meyer will meet with Pam when he comes to Ferndale on December 4th. They are a very reputable firm who has built a lot of libraries.

Pam passed out Bellingham Public Library news articles.

**Next Special Board Meeting – December 5, 2006** will begin at 1:00 p.m. for Executive Session and 1:30 p.m. for Open Session.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – December 19, 2006** will begin at 2:30 p.m.

**Meeting adjourned** at 5:05 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees