

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, May 16, 2006 - Library Board Room
02:30 PM - 04:50 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, Vicky Marshall, David Edelstein

Board Members Absent:

Library Staff: Pam Kiesner; Lizz Roberts; Madeline Sheplor; Helen Scholtz; Scott Blume; Gladys Fullford

Others: John Watts, City Council Liaison, Tara Sundin, Planning & Economic Development, Tom Glenn, and Margaret Ziegler

Called to Order: Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson, Alan Kemble. Agenda Approved.

Public Comment: Tom Glenn is attending the Board meeting as a liaison with the Friends of the Library. Lizz Roberts was introduced as our new Assistant Director.

Minutes approved: April 18, 2006 regular meeting minutes approved as read.

Claims approved: April, 2006 general fund \$33,511.59; gift fund \$55.58

Statistics: Pam Kiesner explained the 2005 Washington Public Libraries Annual Report included in the board packet. Madeline completed the report this year. John Watts noticed the library had not applied for the e-rate grant the past couple of years. It has been costly to apply for such a small amount, but we will be applying again this year. The public computers are in constant use with queues all the time. There were more programs in 2005: Catalog classes, mouse classes, and small business workshops. Lizz Roberts will be working directly with programs. Faye Hill asked about the LSTA grant, which reimbursed registration and travel expenses for the WILL workshop.

A new statistic shows new borrowers registered. This month, there was an increase in number of visitors, but a decrease in check-outs. Margaret Ziegler suggested that summer holiday people from out of town are coming in for information and to use the internet, but are not checking out books.

Faye moved to approve withdrawal of 7,702 materials during the first quarter of 2006. Vicky Marshall seconded. The motion was approved.

Communications: A letter from the Friends of the Fairhaven Library asked the Board to give serious consideration to investigate the possibility of purchasing property next to the Fairhaven Library. Pam mentioned a sign on the property states land can be leased up to 40 years and is zoned commercial. We don't know if it is available for sale. David Edelstein stated he would be hesitant to lease or purchase unless the specific use was stated. As an advocate for the community, David said it would make sense for the City to purchase it. Parking has been an issue for at least six years. Faye said if we don't get the property, a new building would preclude ever getting it. The Board's feeling is to have Pam contact Patty Fernandez to see if the property is for sale and the price.

Myron Carlson has contacted an architect firm on the City's shortlist for the structural study of the Fairhaven building. The study will begin fairly quickly.

Trustee Education: Helen Scholtz presented the summer reading program, “Paws, Claws, Scales & Tales.” This is a collaborative national program, making shirts, posters and bookmarks available, and saving a huge amount of staff time in designing promotional materials. The philosophy is to keep it simple, fun, open to all, personalized, foster love of reading, and support what to read for fun with reader’s advisory. Children are encouraged to read 20 minutes a day. If they read 15 hours over the summer, they will receive a certificate for a free book from the Friends. For each 20 minutes of reading, children are given a penny to fill up the giraffe. The money will be donated to the Humane Society.

School children will be visiting the library in May and June, and will receive library cards. Helen will be contacting child care centers, and is collaborating with school librarians. Helen will report back to the schools in the fall. Supporters include the Parks Department with concerts and a “Get Moving” program, Whatcom Humane Society, Sardis Wildlife Center, the Friends, Whatcom Film Association for films on the library lawn, and the county libraries. The Board can support the program by being ambassadors in the community. John Watts suggested having a URL for children to look up and read. Helen said they are gathering an email address list for people who want information about children’s programs. The Board thanked Helen for the Children’s Library staff work.

Reports: John reported that the Council has approved the first and second readings of the comprehensive plan. Final copies of what they looked over during the last year and a half will be submitted to the County. The County makes a decision if they agree. The Council hopes to have a complete plan by the end of the year.

Pam announced the City is conducting a citizen satisfaction survey next week. The library is mentioned with questions similar to the 2004 survey.

The Friends annual meeting was April 8th. The Friends contributed \$61,000 to the library in 2005. The bulk of this was for self check-out and public computers. Alan thanked the Friends on behalf of the Board. Lizz Roberts will be liaison with the Friends and the Fairhaven Friends. Lizz will also be working with programming, marketing and public relations.

There were 30 applicants for both open positions. We conducted five interviews for Assistant Director, and Lizz Roberts was the top candidate. We are pleased that Lizz is on board. We have readvertised for the Head of Information and Reader Services position.

As a part of building security, staff and volunteers will be wearing I.D. badges.

Alan Kemble will be going off the Board at the end of this year. The Board needs to think about recruitment, and names of people that we can recommend to the Mayor. Typically, the Mayor’s office publicizes the open positions. Pam will be in touch with them. Let Tim or Pam know if you have suggestions.

Pam is on the Street Scape Schematic Committee, which is looking at the area between Mt. Baker Theatre and the museum, Flora Street and Cultural Center.

News clippings about Bellingham Public Library were made available for Board members to read.

Strategic Planning: Tara Sundin from Planning & Economic Development presented information about the Sash & Door site. There are 92,000 square feet with 63,143 buildable square footage. ReStore has a lease through June, 2007, and two other tenants have monthly leases. (ReStore may have found another site.) The property is on landfill, and will require pilings for construction. The site is capped and cleaned up. Zoning is planned commercial with a 3 story height limit. Because of water issues, a parking structure/foundation would be limited to only 5 feet below ground. Costs would be higher to dig out contaminated elements. It is City-owned, purchased with a Federal Government grant and City general funds. A library could fill the need to be of beneficial use for economic development. Tim Douglas asked

about the adequacy of traffic circulation. Holly is the main route, F Street is an important arterial, and Astor is not a through street. A round-about could be improvised. Library investment would provide spin-off from the private sector.

Maps showing Bellingham's proposed Urban Growth Areas, 2005 neighborhood population, and estimated 2006 – 2022 population growth were given to board members for future library service development.

Financial Reports: Some of the 2007 budget tasks have been completed: Actual 2005 staff count, performance measures we track, and estimated staffing level for 2007 – 2012. Pam has asked for half-time clerical backup for programming, half-time aide for technical assistance, and half-time aide for branch and outreach services, which would free Jane Lowrey up to work on Programming with Lizz. The budget calendar includes dates for rates and fees increases and capital requests. These need review and action by the board at its June meeting. The 2006 room rental rate increases have generally been accepted by the public. There are a few less inquiries about meeting rooms. The rates are comparable with Parks Department rates and in line with the rest of the community. The Board last changed fines effective July 1, 2003. Pam recommends not increasing library fines as they are in line with rest the rest of the state. Pam recommended moving the capital projects out a year and increasing the costs. She will confirm the figures with David Christensen. David Edelstein commented that construction cost increases are on a higher level than the cost of living rates. We can assume there will be site purchase costs until we know there are not. The capital budget request will most likely need to include structural improvements for Fairhaven, land acquisition, and a north-side presence. David also suggested separating construction costs from moving and furnishings. A decision needs to be made by the next meeting.

Executive Session: To consider acquisition of real property by lease or by purchase

Regular Session: Reconvened at 4:50 p.m. Alan Kemble explained that real estate matters were discussed at the Executive Session. No action taken.

Other Matters: None.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – June 20, 2006 will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees