

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, July 18, 2006 - Library Board Room
02:30 PM - 05:00 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; Scott Blume; Gladys Fullford

Others: John Watts, City Council Liaison, Tom Glenn, Friends of BPL, Velma Wendt and Margaret Ziegler

Called to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Tim Douglas. Agenda Approved.

Public Comment: None .

Minutes approved: June 20, 2006 regular meeting minutes approved as read.

Claims approved: June, 2006 general fund \$60,470.67; gift fund \$958.81

Quarterly financial report for April through June was approved.

Materials withdrawn (5,286) for the quarter April through June were approved.

Alan Kemble and Vicky Marshall commented that the Annual Report looked very professional.

Statistics: We are slightly down in circulation, but up in the number of visitors.

Communications: Pam Kiesner explained the email from Linda Langey did not come directly to the Board, but she wanted the Board to see it. Vicky requested that someone should respond. Pam will do so.

A letter was received from Barry Buchanan, Chair, The Lettered Streets Neighborhood Association, expressing interest in the library considering the Sash & Door site as a possible new library location. Pam will respond to Barry's letter as well.

Tim Douglas discussed community building with a branch library, but the public needs to be informed of the cost of operating a branch library. The City needs to do more to build community, but economics are involved. David Edelstein suggested some people have only used a branch library. Do we bring government to the neighborhoods, or should the public come to the Central Library. Pam said we would put together costs for various levels of a northside presence, from a kiosk to a full branch. John Watts said requests are good, but the fact is that a new central library is needed for a repository, meetings, and electronic access. Alan expressed concern that the regular finance report shows only Fairhaven staffing costs, not the total Fairhaven costs. John suggested talking to Kendall regarding their planning process. Alan is willing to talk to neighborhood associations when the time is right. Tim received a phone call from Jack Weiss, who sees branches as a fundamental need and suggested a branch library should be included in a bond issue for a new central library.

2007 Budget: Pam turned in the capital requests with the changes the Board discussed at the June meeting. Objectives are now due August 7th. It will be in the same format as 2006. Pam asked for the

Board's suggestions for 2007 objectives. John mentioned the Council's objectives are a work in process and will probably be finalized in January.

Tim remarked that the Board has been focused on site and construction needs, but it should also discuss programs and the library as a knowledge center. Pam mentioned staff have explained what they are doing through Trustee Education at Board meetings. There is a stepped-up programmatic emphasis this year. Vicky suggested the Board would like to know the concerns and needs from the perspective of staff and patrons. The Board would like a report on express check. Tim has observed express check going smoothly, and staff is invested in helping patrons. Tim complimented staff for the excellent way they are providing good customer service.

John mentioned that the Library rated very high in the City survey.

Faye Hill suggested wording be added to Objective #1 to say the Library continues to develop and implement the necessary groundwork to build a new **or expanded** library. Tim said the idea of expanding is less desirable with the problems and costs of operating during renovation.

David said the long range and immediate goals are the Board's responsibilities. The staff has immediate goals well in hand. The action now for the Board is in long range plans.

Pam will email a draft of the objectives to the Board for their suggestions and comment before they are due to the City.

Policies: The Library has a Safety Committee. Our representatives attend the City Safety Committee meetings. Library staff has reviewed and made changes to the Library Safety Policy. The Safety Auditor from the Department of Labor & Industries will be coming through the Library this week. Faye suggested the last bullet under #5 should be clear that it is the City Central Safety Committee meetings. Faye is concerned about safety guidelines for volunteers. Security badges are being made for the volunteers. Faye moved to approve the Safety Policy. Vicky seconded. The motion carries.

Reports: Faye and Pam attended the Project for Public Spaces Workshop. The speaker, Fred Kent, said Bellingham downtown is performing at 30% of its potential. He said the Library should be in the downtown area. It is currently in the Civic center, not downtown. The Library should be made enticing and attractive with such amenities as a bus stop, play ground, and chocolate shop. Faye defined the course as about public spaces, not just for but designed by the public to bring them to their full potential. Partnering with retail shops and business owners, sidewalk tables, sculptures, out-door markets are encouraged. Allow the public to articulate needs and wants. Good spaces deter crime by breeding healthy activity. John added that a big architectural signature building doesn't do it. A welcoming place for people to want to gather is desired. Fred Kent said the one-way streets funnel people through town without time to look. For example, changing one-way streets to two-way has impacts, including expense. Planners must think both realistically as well as creatively. He asked how many users come to the library because they use City Hall or the County Courthouse. Margaret Ziegler said we do refer a large population to offices of City Hall and the County Courthouse. A lot of city and county employees use the library. The Children's Museum will be a good connection.

Pam announced that Jo Dereske will be speaking at the library this evening.

Lizz Roberts has finished the Annual Report in good time. The report will be sent to the City Council, Downtown Renaissance Group, Chamber of Commerce, City Hall Lobby, School District, and book clubs.

Pam has sent an update of the site selection process to the Mayor and Council to keep them advised.

The Head of Information and Reader Services position was offered to a candidate. He accepted the position, but decided not to make the move after meeting with his financial consultant. Pam is working with Lorna to refine the process and job description.

Pam had lunch with the director of the Downtown Renaissance Group to introduce her to Lizz. Pam and staff met with Dac Jamison of the Police Department to discuss trespassing measures. Pam will have lunch with the Mayor tomorrow to bring him up to date on library issues.

Strategic Planning: Faye and Alan evaluated the Sash & Door site. This could be also be called the Re-Store site or Site X. Maritime Heritage Park is right on the edge. A major problem is accessibility and traffic control would be needed. Alan questioned the size with setbacks from the creek. Planning & Economic Development want to keep the Astor Street view. That would leave less than 35,000 buildable square feet. It may be possible to have two buildings with a sky bridge across Astor Street. It could be an expensive site, costing \$5,000,000 to get to the ground level with underground parking and pilings. Noise and smells of recycling center is not good. It is outside of City Center, and would add to the area economically.

David does not believe the view corridor on Astor Street is set in stone. The view would be available from the library. The piling is not a deal killer unless the community wants a park. David agrees the function needs to be an economic catalyst. This might be a good site in the far future. The library should be coupled with a park or outdoor use to make it inviting. David suggests putting the library in the park and moving the park to the Re-Store site. Tim asked about the crime record for the area. The perception of transients in the area is strong. Be careful with saddling the community and ourselves with the way things are today. Things are going to change in the future. Alan suggests having a conversation with Parberry's about their plans. Tim said they have a developer/planner looking at their land, and may move the recycling center to be ready for new growth. If water development takes place, this could be a prime site. The City needs to do a survey for accurate measurements of setbacks. David will have current information on Old Town at the next meeting.

Executive Session 4:35 p.m. To consider acquisition of real property by lease or by purchase.

Regular Session: Reconvened at 4:55 p.m. The Board agreed to a Special Meeting with a Planning staffer on the population and growth of Bellingham on Friday, August 4th at 2:30 p.m.

Other Matters: None.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – August 15, 2006 will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees