

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

September 2006

Director's Report and Highlights

September 19, 2006

Submitted by Pam Kiesner

Ø Library Board of Trustees – Transitions

Congratulations to Tim Douglas, incoming Mayor for the City of Bellingham! While we are delighted to share Tim with the City, we are sorry that he will no longer be serving on the Library Board. Yes, we've been advised by the legal department that Tim will need to resign his position on the Board.

Since Tim's Mayoral appointment begins on November 1, we hope to have someone for our November 21st meeting. If this is possible, Mayor Mark Asmundson would appoint and recommend this person to the City Council for approval.

Alan Kemble's term ends at the end of this year, so we hope to have someone appointed by our first meeting in January, 2007. Tim, as Mayor, will appoint and recommend this person to the City Council for approval. Alan has served for ten years, and has provided amazing leadership on the Board.

At our meeting, I'd like to get feedback from you about the qualifications we are looking for in potential board members. The Mayor has always appreciated having recommendations forwarded to him for consideration, so please let me know of folks you know who may be interested and qualified.

Speaking of meetings: please bring your calendars. We will be missing Alan and Faye for the October 17th meeting and will want to discuss how and when we will meet, especially during this important time period.

Ø Strategic Planning

1. Community library services

Fairhaven

The draft report of the Fairhaven Condition Assessment will be available for your review at the October Library Board meeting. BOLA Architects representatives will attend our November meeting to present the final report.

North side

Maps

Please review the important maps and other data provided for you. I asked the Planning Department (thanks to Kate Newell) to design maps which show 5, 10, and 15 minute access to library services within the City of Bellingham and the UGA's (Urban Growth Areas). This same analysis is performed for the Fire Department, showing drive time

ranges from each of the Fire Stations. It gives a good idea of overall average travel times, not accounting for traffic congestion and signals.

We can see that Bellingham citizens have 15 minute access to a Bellingham Public Library facility (not including our outreach service and drop boxes), and many have 5 or 10 minute access. What does this say about how we should plan for communitywide library service in the future?

“Level of services” report

I’ve asked Lizz Roberts to head up a task force to study and provide you with recommendations on “level of services” to various segments of the community. This will include the north side, as well as a picture of “outreach services”, as this important service is part of the whole fabric of our library service to the community.

We will be reviewing and recommending a “level of services” that will include several options, such as drop boxes – to maybe a 500 square foot “library station” to perhaps a “small library branch” in the northern part of the community in the future. The draft of the plan should be ready to share at your December meeting.

Branch library/outlet statistics

Also in your packet: two pages from the *2004 Washington Public Library Statistical Report*. This data clearly shows which libraries and library systems in the state have branch libraries, and I’ve included population figures and branch sizes.

2. Central Library Site Selection

Map

At a previous meeting Tim asked about arterial connections to both of the sites under consideration, and Public Works (thanks to Don Burdick, Scott Lee, and Coni Turner) has provided the enclosed map. Department of Transportation plans for the I-5 ramp improvements are still in the planning process and there is not yet information available to show on a map.

Site evaluation

Faye and Vicky did the hard work of putting a “site evaluation” together on the portion of the Maritime Heritage Park south of the main stairway (to the right of the amphitheater). This evaluation tool (draft) is in your packet. Thanks Faye and Vicky!

Other site information and updates will be provided to you. I’ll report on my meetings and progress with such things/people as Parks and Recreation Director, Paul Leuthold; title searches; Bellingham Planning Group’s interest in doing volumetric studies; and more.

Ø 2007 Budget

The simplified budget document included in your packet compares the 2007 base numbers we were provided by the City to the 2007 Department Request submitted by the library. I will provide explanation at our Board meeting.

At your last Board meeting I shared an overview with you that hasn’t changed much since that time:

Salaries and benefits: 66% of total budget; no new positions; contracts are settled

Books and materials (listed under “Library Services Group” under “supplies”): 13.8% of total budget; budget increased to address materials cost inflation, public demand for variety of formats, high volume readership in a highly literate community, and to address critical collection rejuvenation necessary in many areas.

Facilities: charges are determined by Public Works; 8% increase over 2006

Overall increase of the library’s request over the City’s base number, without the capital costs (library site acquisition and design work), is approximately 2.5%.

The financial system is down for several days while the Mayor provides his input before sending the budget on to City Council, so we were unable to provide you with an up-to-date print-out. If you are interested in seeing the full budget detail, Gladys will have copies available on the table.

Ø **Communications**

Coming soon to the library’s website: a page with links to documents which should help the public better understand where we are in our planning efforts.

The site will include such things as our:

Facilities needs assessment

Open letter from the Director about the need for a new library, planning efforts, and site choices (and more)

Photos of contemporary libraries

Photos of our current library situation

Frequently Asked Questions

This is something we’ve intended to do for some time, and we are eager to start getting the word out. I’ll let you know when we are ‘up’ and will appreciate your feedback!

Thanks for all you do! See you on the 19th.