

**Special Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees**  
**Tuesday, March 06, 2007 - Library Board Room**  
**05:30 PM - 07:40 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: David Edelstein, Vice-Chairperson: Faye Hill, Vicky Marshall, Marilyn Mastor

**Board Members Absent:** J. Robert Gordon

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

**Others:** Lois and George Markiek, Velma Wendt, Shirley Jacobson, Julianna Guy, Adrienne Lederer, Stowe Talbot, Linda Lambert and Marilyn Olsen

**Called to Order:** Chair David Edelstein called the Library Board meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The agenda was approved. Pam Kiesner explained that no library matters were discussed during a brief dinner prior to the meeting.

**Communications:** No communications.

**Public Comment:** Julianna Guy, 4559 El Dorado Way, Unit 266, submitted a letter to the Board which requests a branch library in the north end of Bellingham. Julianna has sent copies of the letter to the Mayor and City Council.

Stowe Talbot, Barkley Company, submitted a letter to the Board stating their interest in a library presence more substantial than a drop-off box in the Barkley area. Barkley District is slated to become one of the largest urban villages in the city over the next decade. Barkley Company is very interested in pursuing opportunities and perhaps subsidizing a combined community center and library presence. Stowe stated he is very much behind a new central library as well.

**Strategic Planning –Comprehensive Citywide Library Services—Library Service to the North side:** David explained that citywide library services include a new central library, the Fairhaven renovation and a north side library presence.

Pam passed out the just completed FAQ brochure; it will be revised as needed, and we seek feedback and comments.

Pam also passed out a map showing all the current library services: 29 nursing, retirement and assisted living facilities, book drops at 3 Haggen stores, and the Central Library and Fairhaven Branch. A large map is on the wall of the Board Room.

In 2001 we began the process of looking for a site to build a new central library. A couple of years ago we recognized the need to look at the entire community. Improvements to the structure and integrity of Fairhaven Branch are needed. Applying the 3-mile and driving time standards, it may be important to plan for service to the North side in the future.

Pam and Lizz attended the Guide Meridian/Cordata Summit, and will also speak at the Neighborhood Association meeting on March 13th.

Linda Lambert, Whatcom Community College librarian has expressed great interest in working with us towards a library presence there.

Pam and Lizz met with the Operations Manager of Community Food Coop. The new store will open in April, 2008. They are very interested in working with us. Their plans include a café and meeting room, and would welcome a book drop, pick up, and use of the meeting room for programs.

These possibilities may lead to other ways of providing innovating service to other parts of Bellingham as well.

### **North Side Questions:**

**# What is our definition of the North side?** For the Board and staff planning purposes, a consensus was reached on the definition: north of McLeod Road and east of I-5. Barkley will be considered on the east side.

**# What library services do we currently provide?** On the North side several retirement, nursing and assisted living facilities are served through Library outreach. New developments include the Food Coop, a new elementary school on Aldrich Road, and D.R. Horton plans multiple homes on Kline Road.

**# How far away is the north side?** Drive times are 12 to 15 minutes to Central Library, not accounting for traffic congestion and traffic lights can take longer. Many libraries do adopt the 15 minute standard.

**# Can we set a level of service standard for library service?** The following draft was discussed:

- o Library services ~~will be~~ are provided to all the citizens of Bellingham.
- o Library services are available to all residents within a 3-mile radius of their homes, or within a 15-minute drive time.
- o Qualified residents who are homebound, or in nursing, assisted living or retirement homes, ~~will be~~ are offered personalized library services.
- o To encourage energy savings, to promote self-sufficiency, and to provide convenience, the library will consider implementation of other ~~limited or technological~~ solutions to meet the library needs of Bellingham residents, even when residents may fall within the time and distance level of service standards.
- o These additional solutions will be considered within the library's operating budget, and when the additional service may be warranted as determined by the Library Board of Trustees.

David suggested it is not fair to expect the library to be able to meet, or be judged by, such standards during rush hour, for instance. Standards help to determine where the services should be provided, and are not hard rules, but guidelines.

**# Who are our potential partners?** Area residents, Neighborhood Associations in area, WWC, BTC, Bellingham Public School District, Community Food Coop, Bellis Fair Mall, other developments/strip malls, Whatcom Transit Authority, other key stakeholders and partners. BTC does not fall into our definition of North side.

**# Who else needs to be involved in our discussions?** In addition to the above list: Barkley Company, Hagggen's, current and potential outreach facilities, Bellingham Parks and Recreation, and Birchwood Presbyterian Church.

**# What has happened so far?** Comprehensive Citywide Library Services Study, included neighborhood representative on study committee, meeting with WCC officials, meeting with Community Food Coop Operations Manager, initiated contact with Cordata/Guide Meridian Neighborhood Association, Cordata Summit, Library Board work session focus on North side, and brown bag topic for March 27. In the works: Web Site Suggestion Box and survey of neighborhoods.

# **What we know:** Fall 2007, mayoral election. We would need to be ready to go by mid-August. School operating levy in Spring, 2008. Current library service is limited to visits to outreach facilities. There is no drop box on the North side. Lizz explained we have had three drop boxes in Haggen's stores: Sehome, Meridian and Barkley for at least ten years. It started with our van making three pick-ups each week, and has progressed to an everyday pick-up at Barkley. Haggen pays us; they feel it brings in customers.

David suggested a pilot drop box in the North side as soon as we can. Pam commented we could ask the neighborhood association to make a recommendation for the best location.

Faye asked Linda Lambert about parking at WCC. Linda answered that there is a small number of visitor parking spaces. She suggested having lockers at the new Foundation Building where there is lots of parking. It is the pink building adjacent to Cruisin' Coffee. Another possibly would be the Laidlaw Building.

Pam explained there were no 2007 funds for service improvements, but we might ask the Friends for money.

David encouraged considering an easy and accessible spot on Bakerview between Northwest and Guide Meridian to land a drop box.

Therese Holm, City Finance Director, and Joan Hoisington, City Attorney, spoke at the last Board meeting. A bond issue can not be used for a lease, only for capital projects, and 85% of money must be spent within 3 years of the election. David added that we need to demonstrate a logical, defensible, compelling need for the bond issue as well as for presenting an increased operating budget to City Council.

David hopes for a library presence near or in a school, university, fire hall, or cooperative. All would benefit from our having a community center and parking lot.

**Future:** Our research shows that a second branch is not necessarily warranted presently.

Marilyn asked about square footage needed for storage. Pam answered we have 44,000 sq. ft in current building. However, our intent is not to put anything in storage, but have it all available. We can include transition expense in a bond, such as leasing a facility for 1-2 years. Marilyn suggested leasing something that could be turned into a branch.

The Board discussed incremental library service, from drop box to holds pick up, lockers, kiosk, small room in facility with computers, larger room with more computers, employees and periodicals. Further discussion about whether we should consider property purchase and timing.

Vicky expressed her concern that she does not want to lose the opportunity with Mr. Talbot at Barkley. We will talk to him about what he is ready to provide, if there is a place for outdoor or indoor lockers or a kiosk with lockers and computers, and ask for security suggestions. Vicky added that if Barkley has a community center, maybe a library staff member could go there once a week for storytime.

Staff will provide a table that shows incremental levels of service and their possible costs for both North side and Barkley.

Pam stated it may be possible to have a population projection in five year increments available for the next meeting. Marilyn said she would like to see the cost of two sets of lockers and kiosk space open seven days a week on the incremental table.

The next work session will focus on the North side and Barkley. The Board would like to see figures and square footage needs to provide them with something more concrete to talk to Stowe Talbot. David asked Pam to meet with Stowe Talbot.

**Fairhaven Presentation:** BOLA architects will do a presentation about their Fairhaven Condition Assessment in the Fireplace Room at Fairhaven on April 5th at 7:00 p.m. for the public. (NOTE: Time has been changed to 6:30 p.m.) Myron Carlson will be there to explain the priorities.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – March 20, 2007** will begin at 2:00 p.m. in the Library Board Room.

**Meeting adjourned** at 7:40 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees