

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, October 21, 2008 - Meeting Room on lower level
04:00 PM - 06:20 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: David Edelstein, Vice-Chairperson: Faye Hill, J. Robert Gordon, Marilyn Mastor

Board Members Absent: Vicky Marshall

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner; Christine Perkins; donna Grasdock; and Gladys Fullford

Others: Jack Weiss, City Council Liaison, Janet Boyhan, WCLS Trustee, Lorna Klemanski, Angela Beatty and Michelle Barrett, Human Resources, and Fred Votz

Called to order: Regular session was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chair, David Edelstein.

Approve/modify agenda: No changes to the agenda.

Public comment: Fred Voltz mentioned the ARCO building is available for rent for any library space needs. Fred also asked if there had been any progress on analyzing or committing to a branch at Bellis Fair Mall. Christine Perkins explained that she, Pam Kiesner, and David Edelstein met with Julianna Guy and Beverly Jacobs about this and the estimated costs for running Barkley Branch. The City has asked all Departments for budget cuts. Jack Weiss added that the Library is faring best in the City, but cannot add any programs.

Fred Voltz asked about the issue of an analysis of merger of Whatcom County Library System (WCLS) and Bellingham Public Library (BPL). Pam Kiesner answered the Board has not given her direction to look into an analysis. There has been no interest on either side in the past. WCLS and BPL continue to cooperate and collaborate in many areas. David Edelstein suggested this issue be added to the agenda in the next month or so.

Fred Voltz asked about usage statistics for the materials in closed stacks and about statistics of room rental hours and utilization rate. Fred suggested architectural students could do a study and recommend use of facilities. Pam stated staff is continually working to make space more usable and efficient.

Executive session: Labor negotiations update.

Regular session: Faye Hill made the motion to ratify the labor contract with the AFSCME 114L group. Marilyn Mastor seconded. The motion carried.

Branch update: The Fairhaven Renovation Committee met October 15th. Faye Hill, David Edelstein, Myron Carlson, Donna Grasdock, Christine Perkins and four architects met. They reviewed plans, resources, drawings, BOLA condition assessment, Philbin Group landscaping plans, discussed the bid format, and did a walk-through to fill in the gaps. An earthquake retrofit is invasive structurally, requiring closure of the branch. Bids and contracts will be in February/March. It will be up to the contractor to decide whether or not to undertake interior and exterior at the same time or stage the work separately. Weather may be a factor. Preference is to close the least amount of days, but we do not want to force contractors into a premium dollar situation. The architects anticipate that the collection will need to be moved. Opportunity for public input will be on November 20 at noon and again at 7:00 p.m. Donna Grasdock led a tour of the Fairhaven Branch Library.

Barkley update: Construction build-out was \$150,000 paid for by the Barkley Company. The City paid \$12,000 for furnishings, \$20,000 technology expenses, \$26,000 collection (\$7,500 of this from the Friends), and staffing costs of \$45,000. There were over 2,000 items circulated in the first 11 days.

Minutes approved: September 16, 2008 regular meeting minutes were approved with correction that Jack Weiss, City Council Liaison, was present.

Claims approved: September 2008 general fund \$57,933.52; gift fund \$2,114.26.

Library performance & activity measures: September performance and activity measures were approved.

Communications: Best wishes to the Board and staff on opening the Barkley Branch from Joan Airoidi and the WCLS staff. Joan also wrote an on-line letter of congratulations on opening the new Barkley branch to the Bellingham Herald editor.

An architect sent a clipping about the renovated Des Moines library.

New Central Library: Pam Kiesner and Library Board members will attend the October 28 waterfront meeting. Board attendance with Pam at the Public Development Authority and Waterfront Advisory meetings would be appreciated to learn about the waterfront and speak to issues regarding the library. There will be a public open house on November 13 and 17 with a presentation of City plans and Port plans.

The Board is open to looking at different sites other than the one they chose nearly two years ago. Some of the previously evaluated sites may be worth looking at again. A bond election will likely not be feasible in 2009, but looking at sites would provide necessary information when the time does come. A waterfront site cannot be evaluated before the Master Plan is approved and a library site is known. The Board wants to do what is best for the library. In summary, we want to stay open minded, keep up to speed on waterfront planning, and update a list of sites.

2009 Budget: The Mayor postponed his presentation to the Council until October 27. The Mayor asked the Department Heads to make further cuts from their budgets. Pam suggested removing the \$35,000 for design of a new website, which the City has done. The budget has not been released yet.

Library Board Reports: Faye Hill attended the WCLS Board meeting today. WCLS hired a private polling company to conduct a phone poll related to library services. There was a favorable outcome by both users and non-users. A phone poll would be a good resource for gathering information in the future.

Library Director's report: Pam received a thank you from Mauri Ingram for giving her the opportunity to speak to the Board about the Whatcom Community Foundation.

Pam attended a downtown celebration of successful projects from a 10 year plan including the Mt. Baker Theatre, the new Whatcom Museum and street improvements. All items in the plan were complete or on the way with the exception of the new library.

Pam attended a Whatcom Literacy Council retreat and talked to the Mayor, who has endorsed the Whatcom READS! project.

The Library had a table at the Farmer's Market and at the WWU student orientation.

Pam toured the Emergency Center Operations and the new Museum building with the City Department Heads.

Children are now able to get library cards at any age.

Pam heard Dan Burden speak about building walkable communities and attended a Northwest Corner Library Director's meeting on Orcas Island.

A mandatory staff meeting was about preparing for natural disasters at home. Attendees received emergency radios, which will also be located in library departments and branches.

David Edelstein agreed to have a question and answer session at a library staff meeting in December.

David mentioned that Barkley Branch accommodates some of the North side customers. Patrons appreciate the "manageable collection size."

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – November 18, 2008 will begin at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees