

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, October 20, 2009 - Meeting Room on lower level
02:00 PM - 04:05 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, Vicky Marshall, J. Robert Gordon

Board Members Absent: Marilyn Mastor

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner; Christine Perkins; Donna Grasdock; Colleen Morse; Madeline Sheplor; Beth Farley; and Gladys Fullford

Others: Jack Weiss, City Council Liaison, Lorna Klemanski, Human Resources, Janet Boyhan, WCLS, Vincent O'Connor, AFSCME Representative, Kathie Wilson, BPL Friends, Fred Voltz, Donna Davis, Beverly Porter, Margaret Ziegler, and Stan Snapp, City Councilman.

Called to order: Regular session was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chair, David Edelstein.

Approve/modify agenda: No changes to agenda.

Public comment: Vincent O'Connor commented as a patron today, and commended the Board for taking time to make a decision about maintaining levels of service while facing an additional \$140,000 budget cut. Vincent asks for all due diligence in making the decision today.

Minutes approved: Faye Hill made a motion to approve the September 15, 2009 regular meeting minutes. Vicky Marshall seconded. Motion carried. Faye Hill made a motion to approve the September 22, 2009 special meeting minutes. J. Gordon seconded. The place of the meeting was corrected to the Lecture Room. The motion carried.

Library performance & activity measures: Vicky Marshall made a motion to approve the September performance and activity measures. Faye Hill seconded. Pam Kiesner remarked that it looks like we will reach 1.6 million check outs and one million visitors by the end of the year. Barkley Branch has had three times as many check outs over last year when it opened to the public. Christine Perkins said the holds request list today was 750. Average requests are 300. There have been delays in getting materials to the shelves. Christine is checking into purchasing carts for a new system to get materials out quicker for patrons. The Friends plan to give a generous donation for this. Motion carried.

Communications: Correspondence related to closure and cuts are in the Board packet. Three more items were passed to the Board. Pam has responded to all of these on the Board's behalf.

Trespass Appeal: Continued discussion from last meeting of an incident of assault to a Friend's volunteer in the Children's Department on August 10 that resulted in trespassing the assailant for one year. Communication from the assailant's mother is in the packet along with the Board requested information from Scott Blume and Donna Grasdock that indicate parameters if Wil Davis' trespass is reduced.

Donna Davis, Wil's mother, answered a question from the Board that yes, Wil asks about the library. Donna has been coming in to pick up materials for Wil. A major part of his life is coming to the library. Wil doesn't have the intellectual capacity to understand. He had a meltdown, and he is sorry. Wil's behavior is better with his parents. He caught his caregivers off-guard.

Vicky Marshall said in studying the trespass information she noted Scott Blume's concern on the impact with small children. It was suggested that Wil be allowed to go to the Fairhaven Branch only, with the parameters staff suggested.

Faye Hill made the motion to amend Wil Davis' trespass, so he can return to the Fairhaven Branch only as of January, 2010 through August 10, 2010, and Wil must be in the company of a parent. Vicky Marshall seconded the motion. The Board would like the Friends to know they respect that this was very frightening. The trespass will be honored for one year at Central Library where the incident occurred. Wil will only attend the Fairhaven Branch from January through August 10. This can be petitioned a few months into the year for reconsideration. The motion carried. Pam Kiesner will send a letter to Donna Davis. The slate will be clean as of August 10, 2010.

2010 Library budget: Changes were made to the department objectives as suggested by the Board last month. The budget presentation to Council will be based on these objectives, which tie into the Council goals.

The Board works within the budget allocation from the Mayor and City Council. The library budget has been reduced a couple times this year. We are dangerously close to not providing an adequate materials collection for the community. The City Administration could not wait for the Board decision on new reductions and has reduced the book budget by \$140,340. This can be changed with the Board's decision today. There will be a \$50,000 adjustment next week in management personnel, however the details are not available today. One option to further reduce the budget is to reduce Outreach by \$31,093 with a staff layoff. Outreach services would be for nursing homes and homebound only. Another option would be to take the balance from materials. We will be using \$25,000 from materials to pay for pre-processing of materials by the vendor, so the materials will be shelf-ready when they arrive.

Lorna Klemanski said the City has not reached an agreement with AFSCME 114. Talks are continuing into mediation. The City is looking for sustainable cuts. Staff furloughs are not a possibility. Furloughs in themselves are not sustainable. There is no assurance that closures would provide savings. A slight uptick in general sales tax revenue would only reduce the amount of loss. A 2 – 3% increase in sales tax will not keep up with 5.3% benefits increase each year. This is a structural problem that the city is trying to solve. Reserves do not look good in 4 to 5 years.

The city's preliminary budget is on the city website. The Finance Department puts out a monthly report on city trends and forecasts. Pam will make this available to the Board.

Many Outreach patrons in facilities that might be cut from the program are mobile. Those who are not mobile can apply for Home Service, where we would pick out materials and they would send someone to pick them up. Some may also be eligible for the Talking Books service through the state. There are 208 patrons that would be affected if Outreach service is reduced. The Board noted that any cut will affect some patrons. They are considering balancing the greater good for the community. It was noted that the cost per patron is high for Outreach services.

Closing Fairhaven Branch one day a week would not save dollars, but staff could be deployed to Central. The Board encouraged Pam to go to Public Works to ask if we consider closing Fairhaven for a day, would they reduce the cost of maintaining the facility.

Faye Hill moved to reduce Outreach by \$31,093 and reduce materials by \$51,000. It is assumed there will be \$50,000 savings in management personnel. Vicky Marshall seconded. Motion carried. Christine Perkins recognized the Outreach Team staff have built up relationships over the years. The cut is difficult for them. Pam has met with the affected staff member, so she knows about the layoff that will occur.

Pam Kiesner is proposing additional hours to be cut in January. Jeff Kochman from Barkley Company preferred a Friday closure if it has to be. Fairhaven Branch may be closed on Monday, open every day

from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m., or both. The second option would be easier to staff. The Board agreed to whatever works best for staffing. The Board sends their appreciation to Jeff Kockman and the Barkley Company for their understanding. They have a large investment in the Barkley Branch Library.

Claims approved: September 2009 general fund \$48,180.46; gift fund \$3,404.52; Facilities Capital Maintenance fund \$211,501.04. Vicky Marshall made a motion to approve the September 2009 claims. Faye Hill seconded. Motion carried.

Pam proposed a new fee be introduced in January: \$1.00 for replacement library cards. The Board concurred. There will be a campaign for patrons to use and bring their cards as this helps increase check-out efficiency.

Fairhaven Branch Library repairs and renovations update: Christine Perkins said the stucco is almost completed. The sandstone is coated with sealant. The flashings and building penetrations are complete. The front entry stairs are almost complete and include structural support that was lacking in the original construction. The Fairhaven Library sign was reinstalled, but the windstorm damaged the "L," which has been reordered. The storm windows, gutters and downspouts are being installed. Landscaping is going in and Facilities are doing touch-ups. Key card reader training is planned. The opening is anticipated for the first week in January. The landscaping warranty is up to one year. RMC and Dawson have been top notch to work with. No change orders are forthcoming. There is money remaining to replace the Central doors.

November 3 election: Handouts are in the packet: Initiative 1033 as it relates to libraries and WCLS proposition for county residents. According to the RCW, the Board cannot publicly support initiatives as a Board. Individual Board members can do so on their own behalf. The Director can support them on her own time, and cannot use library resources or her job title.

Library Board member reports: Faye Hill attended the WCLS Board meeting. WCLS Board thanked the BPL Board for working together with the mutual borrowing and services agreement.

Vicky Marshall announced the Maude Heyes Fischer award ceremony is November 21 at 11:00 a.m. The ceremony honors young people's gain in reading. It is a delightful hour, and everyone is invited.

David Edelstein acknowledged Vicky for providing food at Board meetings, staff meetings, Barkley Author spotlights, and Friends meetings.

City Council Liaison report: Jack Weiss introduced Stan Snapp, City Council member. The city budget has been cut by \$8,000,000 this year, and it still needs to eat into reserves. Remaining reserves will only allow the city to operate 5 to 6 weeks. Stan voted against the budget last year because it didn't address the problem. He is resistant to go into reserves this year.

Library Director's report: Nancy Pearl is speaking at the Whatcom Literacy Council Breakfast in November.

The library budget presentation to City Council will be November 2.

Pam will meet with Dick Little next week regarding legislative issues involving libraries. Pam will attend the Northwest Corner Library Directors meeting in Anacortes next Friday.

Frank Ordway asked to come to the next Board meeting to talk about the Parking Commission's plans to install LUKE pay stations around the library block.

Pam taught a class for the Academy for Lifelong Learning/WWU on BPL: Past, Present and Future.

The library has had power outages, and computer and elevators down times. Security must escort disabled patrons to the freight elevator when the main elevator is down.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – November 17, 2009 in the Central Library Board Room, Upper level will begin at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees