

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees**  
**Tuesday, September 22, 2009 - Meeting Room on lower level**  
**07:30 AM - 10:05 AM**

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, J. Robert Gordon, Marilyn Mastor

**Board Members Absent:** Vicky Marshall

**Library Staff:** Pamela Kiesner; Christine Perkins; Madeline Sheplor; Scott Blume; Beth Farley; Iris Kaneshige; Beth Bevans; Donna Grason; Shari Emley; Marc Pouson; Sue Kenney; Jane Lowrey; Judy Swatosh; Diane Formway; and Gladys Fullford

**Others:** Jack Weiss, City Council Liaison, Lorna Klemanski and Renee Bliss, Human Resources, and Tim Johnson

**Called to order:** Special session was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Chair, David Edelstein.

**Executive Session:** Labor negotiations update.

**Regular Session:** resumed at 8:25 a.m. with no action as a result of the Executive Session.

**Public Comment:** None.

**2010 Budget reduction options:** Pam Kiesner reviewed the budget cut options with the Board. Media coverage has prompted some letters to City Council and Pam. The Board may want to consider further public input. Budget reductions are ultimately the Library Board's decision with the Director.

Included in the Board's packet are budget reduction options, history of materials collection budget, library comparison to other like libraries in area, city department budget rankings, and services the library provides.

Pam reviewed the budget reduction options, ranging from the materials budget, library facilities, and services such as Outreach.

The City has been patient in waiting for the library decision.

David Edelstein thanked Pam for the information. He said every item in the budget is open for discussion. This is very complex with far reaching circumstances. The Board may not be able to come to hard and fast decisions without benefit of talking to Human Resources and City Administration.

Discussion points:

# Per capita usage is linked to quality of materials. We are below national average of materials budget as a percentage of total budget. A current survey of libraries would show that a lot of libraries are taking materials cuts, and some are closing doors. The Board wants to do the greatest good for the entire community.

# Part of Outreach might be cut for greater good to maintain high quality/high usage standard. We cannot continue to offer to the extent we have. Outreach is a staff intensive service to a limited number of patrons. However, it is not a luxury but a life line to many senior patrons.

# Furloughs are not the City Administration's preferred option.

# Fairhaven: Closing facility and moving staff to Central would save \$78,000. Should it be kept open as a community center? Could Public Works or Parks possibly manage the facility as a community center and receive the revenue of room reservations? There would need to be public dialogue and communication about the cost of branches. A night time special meeting was suggested to give the public opportunity to express their views if Fairhaven is seriously considered for closing.

# The City has asked for sustainable cuts, not temporary measures. The Board can only make decisions on the budget they are given, and the City decides which City services are a priority. These decisions represent cuts in things we have built over the past 30 years.

Jack Weiss explained the City's revenues are not as high as expenses. The current economic condition made the situation worse. The City needs to react to long term systemic problem and will not be adding staff or services for many years.

The library should offer the most efficient services with the money available, and make decisions that benefit the greater community .

The motion to table the discussion and ask Human Resources to investigate options was made by Faye Hill. Seconded by Marilyn Mastor. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees