

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, October 19, 2010 - Meeting Room on lower level
04:00 PM - 05:46 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: David Edelstein, Faye Hill, J. Gordon, Marilyn Mastor and Rachel Myers

Board Members Absent:

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner; Christine Perkins and Wendy Jenkins

Others: Michael Lilliquist, City Council Liaison, Kathie Wilson, Friends of BPL President, Julie Guy and Beverly Jacobs, Cordata Neighborhood Association

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

Approve/modify agenda: No changes to agenda.

Public comment: None.

National Friends of Libraries Week, October 17 – 23: Pam welcomed Kathie Wilson, President of the Friends of Bellingham Public Library and presented her with a resolution and commendation that Faye Hill read aloud.

Faye Hill moved to approve the resolution. J Gordon seconded. Motion carried.

Pam presented a proclamation from Mayor Pike recognizing this week as National Friends of Libraries Week. It is posted on the City's website.

David added our Friends take non-profits to a new high, not only with financial commitment, but with so many volunteering their time.

Communications: In the Board packet is a thank-you from the Literacy Council for partnering with them, offering their tutor/ learner pairs a safe and comfortable space to work. Also included is an email forwarded from City Council concerning Outreach. Pam has phoned and emailed the patron. Just received is an email thanking the Library for the Barkley Branch and requesting 50% more open hours.

Minutes approved: Marilyn Mastor moved to approve the September 21, 2010 regular Board Meeting minutes. Faye Hill seconded. Michael Lilliquist requested a correction: reference to a 60/30 bond on page 2 should be corrected to refer to a 63-20 non-profit corporation bond. Motion carried.

Financial reports: Claims: September, 2010 general fund \$24,150.41; gift fund \$10,719.98. Rachel Myers moved to approve the September, 2010 claims. Faye Hill seconded. Pam shared the line item concerning library refunds. If a library material is lost and the patron pays for it, if they find it within 3 months, we will refund their payment. Motion carried.

Library Financial report ?? 3rd quarter: Pam reported the year is 75% over. We have spent 70.4% of our budget. Last week we had to inform the City how much we anticipate not spending and returning to the city: approximately \$14,000. At the 2nd quarter report the skewed branch

numbers were mentioned which will be corrected in 2011 by budgeting all branch staff from one account.

Michael questioned the intergovernmental/interfund line item which is only 4.6% used. WCLS bills us once a year for mailing services and Lark; that money will be used. Pam clarified most of the interfund lines are our chargebacks from the city, what we pay for ITSD services, fleet, insurance and facilities.

Library performance & activity measures: Marilyn Mastor moved to approve the September performance & activity measures. Faye Hill seconded. Pam pointed out the red words near the bottom concerning the unavailable patron counts for Barkley and Fairhaven. She has asked Madeline to estimate what the numbers would be based on the recent actual counts to give us a better grasp of these numbers. Pam is working on the 2011 budget, preparing for formal budget presentations to the Council. She will also be reporting on our 2010 accomplishments, so some of these numbers will be used for those presentations. Visits are down because of fewer open hours, but our circulation is up. There are more materials checked out per hour than ever, a credit to our staff. At the next meeting Pam will share the presentation. Motion carried.

2011 holidays & library closures: All of the dates on the grid in the packet, except for 2, are official City holidays. Two years ago, the Board gave Pam latitude to determine other closures. Pam is recommending closing Saturday, January 1 and Saturday, December 24, 2011. For the latter, the library will be closed Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Michael asked if the website will still be available. Pam affirmed. David suggested a large sign to put up a week ahead of time to warn patrons. Michael questioned how the due dates work out. Christine clarified Madeline Sheplor adjusts the due dates and we back date our check-in computers.

2011 budget update: Pam mentioned the email she had sent to the Board members concerning another 1.5% contingency cut the City had asked Department Heads to prepare for. The cut was due before the Board meeting, so she emailed her recommendation and everyone concurred. Five people will be interviewing for the open Page Coordinator position. We are hopeful we will choose someone from that pool. Pam's recommendation is that we freeze the resulting vacancy.

The other budget item is a timeline. November 15th is a work session in the Mayor's board room where Council can go into more detail about the library budget. The other presentation is the afternoon of November 22nd to the City Council. Pam will share the presentation with the Board at their meeting on November 17, which offers a great opportunity to get Board feedback.

Capital Facilities Task Force: Pam pointed out she has a new copy of the Executive Summary draft. It is not finalized. This draft looks similar, but it is different. One difference is it is stamped "Draft," plus on page 3, the wording of the 3rd General Fund Priority has changed from "Develop and enhance existing library system" to "Develop library system plan." Michael, who serves as the alternate Council member on the task force, verified that the section was rewritten. Pam included a page of her suggestions for the library section (sent to John Carter, Janice Keller and Barbara Ryan). Pam has gone to several of the task force meetings and wants the Board to know what her input has been.

Michael shared a little about the task force. The task force was given the task of considering all of the things the community could and should invest in. They looked at all the needs, prioritized them and considered how to finance them. They developed guiding principles, then more specific directives. Applying the directives, they came up with general fund projects and enterprise projects, such as new sewer lines paid with user fees. The task force recognized the need for a library. The task force consists of approximately 9 citizens from a variety of backgrounds. Key staff members from the city (such as Pam) have come and talked about their

department's needs. The task force needs to meet one more time to finalize the report and then more will be known.

Army Street site evaluation: Included in the packet is the Public Development Authority's site evaluation that Jim Long shared with the Board at the last meeting. Faye commented they did a great job in evaluating the site using the library's criteria. Marilyn agreed the report is very well done, but does not think this is the best site; if the library goes into this site, it would help the other parties more than it would help the library. David concurred. Michael questioned the reports reference to the ALA's recommendation that libraries be placed near the center of general business activity rather than in the civic center. J. Gordon pointed out a civic center closes at 5 and is not open on weekends. Rachel commented this project is talking about a complete shift in the downtown core, that the city is going to re-orient itself around the water. Marilyn worried that, if we choose that site, we may be alone for quite awhile. J. commented that so many things have to fall into place, such as the railroad being moved. He added it might be a good idea to get a professional group for siting. J. liked the idea of co-facilitating; we need to be financially efficient. Pam said now is a good time to plan. We are talking of a bond in 3 or so years. Time has passed and circumstances have changed since the last study. We need to take a new look at our planning process, involve partners and plan for a multi-use facility. David added his observations: let's build something that is multi-use and makes sense for 50 years to come. The PDA has their charge/responsibility and we have our charge/responsibility, they are not the same. They might coincidentally work together, but theirs is economic development. That is not why we are here. As to the bullet point in the report about the ALA's recommendation a library not be in the civic center, isn't this one of the most popular libraries in the state? And isn't it dead center in the civic center? All cities are not equal. Michael and Rachel pointed out our civic center is situated 2 blocks away from our city center.

David suggested we might need to have a special planning meeting. The Board has a responsibility to long-range plan. J. mentioned lots of people are talking about this, the Library Board should be leading this discussion. Marilyn asked about the foundation, if we get it established, could it fund this study.

Michael asked when the last study was done. Pam answered 2007. Everything may need to be revisited and revised. David wondered if we could have 2 different consultants consider where to site. Pam asked if the Board would like to schedule a work session. David suggested talking with Seattle or another library that has done this recently, perhaps a city close to our size, Yakima, Puyallup, or Everett. A work session will be arranged.

Board member report: Faye went to WCLS Board meeting September 28th at their new library facility at Kendall, which is near completion. Their Board also voted to sign the 501c3 for Whatcom READS! Their library staff is working hard to hold their own, meeting needs with current resources. Faye brought a pamphlet on their foundation and on book endowment. She mentioned kilowatt meters can now be reserved online for pickup at any branch. Pam added this is part of a larger project they are working on, of lending tools. This is not a new idea, across the nation libraries are lending tools, toys, patterns, cake pans, anything is possible (if you have the room and the staff!).

Rachel reported that Pam had asked her if she was willing to serve another term. Rachel confirmed she was, but mentioned she might miss some meetings in the spring because she is pregnant.

Marilyn wanted to commend Pam's letter to Outreach patrons. Pam said the letter went out and she has received a couple of phone calls. We are winding Outreach down. We could contact the Volunteer Center, let them know we are going out of service.

Library Director report: We have hired Bethany Hoglund, an internal candidate, for the position of Head of Children's Services. She got her MLS a few years ago and has been waiting for the opportunity to work as a librarian. Pam has been working on desk in Children's and has heard how pleased many patrons are.

Pam mentioned after the budget is final, the Board may want to have a work session about funding sources, alternative and otherwise. The Mayor mentioned he was pleased the Library Board was considering a foundation, that the Museum, Parks and Library could "pay their own way." We need to establish the purpose of foundation funds. We also periodically consider if it would be a benefit to annex with WCLS. Currently, because assessed value is going down in the city, there would not be a financial gain. The funding numbers are close to the same. Pam also mentioned the idea of a levy for library operations & maintenance. Is that something we want to pursue?

We have a new keycard system. Our ID badges are now our keys. If lost, the keycard can easily be deactivated. Once all is in place (locks and new exterior doors), we will be able to open up our Community rooms for use while we are closed, perhaps in 2011. This is being done at Fairhaven.

David had asked Pam at the last meeting to share the Whatcom READS! agreement with our city attorney's office. Alan Marriner reviewed it and does not have a problem with it.

Pam will be attending the NW Library Directors' meeting on Thursday.

Christine thanked the FOBPL for the new batch of book trucks that have enabled us to put in a new shelving system. We used to check items in, put them on shelves in the sorting area, when it is time to shelve, they were taken off the shelf and put back onto a cart. Now, with the volume of book trucks, we check items in, put them directly onto a cart and immediately shelf them. It has completely changed how we do things. We have redesigned the work area to make it more efficient. Currently, if an item says it is in or returned today, it should be on (or near) the shelf. Thanksgiving will be the big test of this system. Kudos go to all of the pages and clerks who have worked hard to make this a success.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – November 16, 2010 in the Library Community Meeting Room, Lower level – at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees