

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, March 16, 2010 - Meeting Room on lower level
04:00 PM - 05:55 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 Gladys Fullford

Others: Michael Lilliquist, City Council Liaison, Jamie Amend, WCLS Trustee, Kathie Wilson, BPL Friends, Joan Airoidi, WCLS Director, and Kie Relyea, The Bellingham Herald

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

Rachel Myers, the Library Board's newest member was introduced and welcomed. Rachel is the Executive Director of the Whatcom Literacy Council.

Approve/modify agenda: No changes to agenda.

Public comment: None.

Minutes approved: Marilyn Mastor made the motion to approve the February 16, 2010 regular meeting minutes. Faye Hill seconded. The word "evenings" will be added after Wednesday under the Library performance & activity measures on page 3. The motion carried.

Financial reports: Claims: February 2010 general fund \$54,763.50; gift fund \$763.72; Facilities Capital Maintenance Fund \$5,055.80. Marilyn Mastor made a motion to approve the February 2010 claims. Faye Hill seconded. The selectors are on track with expending the materials budget. They are being conservative because of the budget cut. Beth Farley will be invited to a future board meeting to explain the collection policy, how and why we buy, and the impact of the recent cuts to the materials budget. Motion carried.

Library performance & activity measures: Faye Hill made the motion to approve the January performance and activity measures. Marilyn Mastor seconded. The materials numbers have been corrected. The number of new borrowers has dropped because of a reduction in open hours and services. There was also a push last year for people who use our public internet stations to have an internet guest card. The motion carried.

Faye Hill made the motion to approve the February performance and activity measures. J. Gordon seconded. Staff will take a close look mid-year at the impact of our budget and service reductions. The motion carried.

Communications: Joshua Leinbach had requested that the Board consider waiving their policy on serving alcohol for a wedding during a room rental. The email in the packet is his response to the Board's decision.

Trustee education: Foundations: Joan Airoidi, WCLS Director, spoke about the Whatcom County Library Foundation. Joan said it is important to ask why are we doing this, and how many resources do we have to invest in a foundation. The Whatcom County Library System has nine branches and a bookmobile. They needed an umbrella support group for the library. The Whatcom County Library Foundation started four years ago with an Intellectual Freedom Award of \$25,000. They met with their

Friends groups to explain the need for a foundation and ask them to suggest names of people to serve on the founding board. The Friends and the Foundation are not competing organizations. It would be good to have an agreement between a foundation and the Friends. Whatcom County Library Foundation now has a ten-member board. They are only limited by the board's energy, creativity and imagination for fundraising. WCLS' Public Information staff person is limited to about two days a month to work with the Foundation.

Joan Airolti said she went through the same process in Wisconsin, but it was harder to find board members in a larger area that consisted of several counties. Some founders help get a foundation started and then leave. Whatcom County Library Foundation had an accountant who helped with the 501c3 paperwork. One of the benefits of a foundation is a higher level of advocacy. A foundation board can take on larger fundraising events than what the Friends might want to do.

The sole interest of a Bellingham Public Library foundation would be to support the library. Some staff time is needed to work with a foundation. It may be potentially easier to bequeath money to a foundation, but the Whatcom Community Foundation allows groups to write their own rules for a fund. WCF takes care of the management and paperwork. People may be more inclined to give to a foundation than a public entity.

Christine Perkins was the past director of the Burlington Public Library. The city was on the edge of committing to building a new library. The Burlington Library Foundation was another advocacy group to work towards getting a new library. New foundation board members came to the city council meetings to show support. Raising funds for the library showed local financial support. Their small Friends group was supportive but uncomfortable about raising large sums of money. The foundation's nest egg of \$800 was used to pay for the 501c3 and paperwork. In the first two years they raised \$160,000. The foundation did not need to use the money for the building, but altered their mission to purchase public art for the building, establish a collection endowment, and offer library programs. The library looks to the Friends to help by making purchases that enhance the day-to-day operations of the library, and to the Foundation for the long term, endowment and capital projects. Foundation members were not necessarily library users, but they cared deeply for the idea of a public library.

An accountant, a lawyer, a marketing person, and contributors are key in starting a foundation. Service clubs can be approached for contributions. There can be naming opportunities for donations.

To answer the why a separate foundation – folks wanted to belong to an entity branded as their own. They felt capable managing it on their own. The foundation agreed to meet each month for only one hour.

Pam Kiesner spoke about using a community foundation, which can take care of the support work including tracking donations, donors, financial reports, and so forth. Pam asked if a Board member would be interested in working with her on the foundation, whether starting our own or working with the Community Foundation. Marilyn Mastor was interested, and suggested beginning with Whatcom Community Foundation because of staff cuts. Questions and a purpose statement need to be formulated. What do we want out of a Foundation? What are the functions and priorities? The foundation board would be responsible for the mission; the Library Board decides the purpose. This will be put back on the agenda next month, and Pam will invite Marui Ingram, Whatcom Community Foundation.

Policy: Public Use of Community Rooms: Pam Kiesner said the reopening of the Fairhaven Branch brought about a review of the community rooms policy. Pam asked Alan Marriner, Assistant City Attorney, for advice. Alan suggested adding, "In accordance with the Washington State Constitution, community rooms are not available for religious worship." It is up to the renter to abide by the policy. The policy revision was brought back to the Board for their second review. J. Gordon made the motion to approve the policy as written for the Community Rooms. Marilyn Mastor seconded. The motion carried.

Circulation Services: Christine Perkins is currently responsible for Circulation Services. She reviewed 2009 activities for the Board. During the Fairhaven Branch repair project, the Fairhaven collection was moved to Central. Overall use and number of visitors went up. We had 1 million visitors and 1.6 million materials checked out.

Unique Management is a collection service used when we are not able to contact patrons regarding lost items and overdue fines. Over 6,000 accounts have been submitted over the past eleven years. Patrons pay a \$10.00 collection fee. Unique has recovered a total of \$299,264 in returned materials and fines. If collection is unsuccessful, the information is turned over to a credit reporting agency.

Self check-out is increasing. Children's holds have been moved upstairs, so all the holds are in one place. There have been 438 checkouts of book club kits. Thanks for the donations from the Friends and book clubs for new book club kits.

Through the Northwest Washington Anytime Library, our patrons downloaded 5,871 audiobooks in 2009. This figure grew from 2,871 in 2008. The downloadable audiobooks are now IPOD compatible.

Circulation lost staffing due to the layoffs. Occasionally there is an all-call to staff to help with shelving an overload of materials.

Parking: The staff recommendation is tabled until next meeting.

Teen summer reading: Faye Hill made the motion to approve the staff recommendation of \$5 fine forgiveness per teen during the summer reading program. Rachel Myers seconded. It was explained that these are often fines racked up as children, and now the teens can help clear their accounts. The motion carried unanimously.

Library Board Member report: Faye Hill attended the WCLS Board meeting. Their hope is that the city of Ferndale will take a long-term look at the new library. Jamie Amend added they would like to see the stakeholders settle, so they can proceed.

City Council Liaison: No report.

Library Director: Pam Kiesner announced that Helen Scholtz and the Children's Library Staff have won a Mayor's Art Award for the Children's Craft Fair. The awards ceremony will take place March 24 at 6:30 p.m. at the Mt Baker Theatre.

The door replacement project consists of front, back and staff doors. The amount of \$50,000 has been reappropriated from the Fairhaven repair project for the doors. It will be the end of summer before the specs are written and bid process completed. We may need to close for one day for the main door installation. If so, we will use the day for staff training.

Pam will not be attending the PLA conference in Portland; Beth Farley, Jennifer Lovchik, and Jane Lowrey are attending.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – April 20, 2010 in the Library Lecture Room, Lower level - will begin at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

