

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, March 15, 2011 - Library Board Room
04:00 PM - 06:30 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: Stan Snapp, City Council Liaison, Jamie Amend, WCLS Board representative, Kathie Wilson, Friends of the Bellingham Public Library President.

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: Kathie Wilson, Friend's President, reported a company that owed them for sold books sent a check for over \$8000 (not the fully owed amount). The last two book sales netted over \$10,000 total.

Minutes: Faye moved to approve the February 15, 2011 regular Board meeting minutes. Marilyn seconded. Motion carried.

Rachel moved to approve the March 2, 2011 special Board meeting minutes. Faye seconded. Motion carried.

Communications: Pam included the Olympia Report from the Washington Library Association to make sure all Board members had seen it.

Financial reports: Claims: February, 2011 general fund \$34,489.20; gift fund \$11,832.32; capital maintenance \$29,839.29. Marilyn moved to approve the January claims. Faye seconded. Pam pointed out the claim for three defibrillators. These were acquired with a grant from the St. Luke's Foundation. Staff will be trained soon and then they will be installed. Motion carried.

Committee report on foundation planning: Pam, Faye and Marilyn met twice to consider setting up an independent foundation. After discussing the merits and reviewing past board meeting minutes, they decided to revisit Whatcom Community Foundation to find out more details about the services they offer. It would be an involved process to set up an independent foundation, difficult for staff to take on with current workloads and start-up money would be needed. David suggested rather than meeting with Mauri Ingram (WCF President), to obtain a list of libraries who have independent foundations. Question these libraries to determine the population size and dollar amount threshold that makes an independent foundation worthwhile. Christine did investigate this question when she set up a foundation for Burlington Library. There was not a clear population or dollar amount threshold, it was more a question of community needs and desire for local control.

Questions remain as to whether WCF offers spending flexibility and fundraising help. Either way, a very active fundraising committee will be necessary.

Pam passed out information on three fundraising workshops happening here: "Fundraising in a Challenging Economy" on Tuesday, April 12, from 1:00-2:15 in the Lecture Room at Central Library; "Meet the Grantmakers" on Tuesday, April 12, from 2:30-3:30 in the Lecture Room; and "Finding Funders for Your Nonprofit" on Thursday, April 14, from 1:00-2:30 in the Conference Room at Central Library.

Whatcom Community Foundation: We received the report on our endowment fund for the last half of 2010. The fund is doing significantly better than the past few years and we received a distribution check for \$6,628.00. We also received a check for \$1,449.28 as a grant from the Foundation's Bayview Fund. Each year we receive one eighth of the distributable amount of that fund. In the past we have reinvested these distributions with the Foundation. Discussion ensued as to what to do with these distributions: reinvest, or seed an independent foundation or non-endowed fund, or use for a consultant? Marilyn moved to wait and give the Board a month to decide. Faye seconded. Motion carried.

Library performance & activity measures: Rachel moved to approve the February 2011 performance & activity measures. Faye seconded. Circulation is up 5%, persons visiting is still down due to reduced hours. Faye questioned the circulation increase at Barkley while persons visiting dropped significantly. Christine responded there are fewer visits, but people are checking out more items each visit. Pam added that hold items are a large portion of the branch circulation numbers, and holds are up. Motion carried.

Library policy review: The Library Safety and Security Policy, last updated in 2006, has been revised to include the addition of Security Attendants and to add what other City Departments provide for us. As we revise policies, we also add the point that the Library Board periodically reviews and updates the policies. Marilyn questioned why the phrase "in compliance with the State of Washington, Industrial Safety and Health Act" had been deleted. Pam responded that it states right before that we are in compliance with City safety policies, which includes the State of Washington, so it was a redundant phrase. Faye asked if staff are consulted in the changes. Pam answered that the Management Team has reviewed it as well as relevant staff. All staff and our legal representative will be reviewing the policy before it is brought to the Board next month for final approval. Faye questioned if the Security and Information Attendants were two separate positions. Pam responded it is the complete title of the position – they offer security as well as greeting, answering directional questions, and other duties. David asked if the attendants were easily identifiable. Pam answered that they wear vests with a logo and nametag. It was suggested adding the word "Security" could be helpful. Pam will look into this suggestion.

Teen Summer Reading fine forgiveness: This program, a tradition since 2001, allows up to \$5 of overdue fines to be waived as an incentive for teens to return to the library. Marilyn asked how much this amounts to. Christine answered only a little more than \$50, but the anxiety relieved is priceless. Faye moved to approve the Teen Summer Reading fine forgiveness program for 2011. Rachel seconded. Motion carried.

Public Works library capital improvements: Pam and Christine have been working with Myron on an RFQ draft for a consultant who could then draw up bid specifications. There is \$275,000 available for library improvements. The priorities for this project are recommended as follows, depending upon how far the funding goes:

1. Re-carpet and repaint interior (close the library and do all at once)
2. Renovate for efficiencies:
 - a. Circulation reorganization
 - b. Construct two offices (two supervisors have no place to meet with staff)
 - c. Re-configure microfilm/oversize/public computers area to gain space

d. Remove risers in Dodson room

David noted there is not enough money in the budget to accomplish everything and suggested finding out from Myron if the same amount is available next year. Rachel commented that the public areas were last carpeted 13 years ago, carpeting needs to be a priority. It was discussed how the jobs could logically be divided. David, Marilyn and J. questioned the need for an RFQ considering our limited funds. Christine responded that Myron has limited time and is not a space planner and perhaps with the current economic climate, they could get a package deal. David and J. suggested the Small Works Roster (might require 3 inquiries), or the On-Call Roster which doesn't have that requirement. Kathie Wilson commented that a donation of service might be an option and also added that the Friends might be willing to help with some small part of the project. Staff will research further and report back to the Board.

Board members' report: Faye attended the WCLS Board meeting. Their new Foundation Director, Jennifer Rick, was introduced. The foundation's first plan of action is to develop a strategic plan. North Fork Branch had a successful grand opening despite the snow. Their Board also approved the Teen Fine Forgiveness program. The Teen Librarian, Aubri, put together a video about one of her favorite programs. Two years ago, as part of Whatcom READS!, Sherman Alexie visited the juvenile detention center. WCLS established an ongoing program at juvenile detention where they go in four times a month to read and discuss a book with the inmates.

Rachel handed out Trivia Bee tickets. The Bee and a silent auction are happening Friday, April 1, 2011. Ken Jennings will be there. Last year BPL won the "most exuberant" award.

City Council liaison: Stan asked if the Board had any questions for him. Pam asked if there was any funding to follow up on the Capital Facilities Task Force recommendations. Stan responded there is no funding. There is a staff retreat and a council retreat coming up soon to discuss next year's budget.

Library Director's report: Pam reported we had a fire incident on February 16 and reviewed for the Board the steps the library takes before, during and after such incidents. The patron was apprehended and is in jail awaiting trial. David suggested we lengthen the trespass beyond five years considering the severity of the offense. Pam will add this to next month's agenda.

Pam passed out information about the PLA Virtual Spring Symposium happening in the Board room on Wednesday, March 30. "The Post Recession Library," "Minnesota Library Futures Initiative," and "The Sustainable Library" are part of the program, and Board members are welcome to attend. Let Pam know if you are interested so we can notice this as a meeting if necessary.

Whatcom READS! had a great turnout, over 600 people attended the author events. Next year's author is Elizabeth George.

We hired Bernice Chang as our new Children's Specialist and we are now recruiting for her vacated position. Our vacant Security & Information Attendant position was mistakenly dropped from the City's budget. Pam is working with Finance to re-establish and fill this position. We will be hiring some Pages as well.

Jamie Amend asked that each Board member be given a copy of WCLS's strategic plan.

Executive Session: The Board went into Executive Session at 6:15 p.m. for the purpose of following up on the Annual Review of the Library Director. The Board returned to regular session at 6:30 p.m. No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – April 19, 2011 in the Board Room at Central Library –
at 4:00 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees