

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Monday, January 23, 2012 - Meeting Room on lower level
02:00 PM - 04:00 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, Marilyn Mastor, Faye Hill, J. Gordon and Rachel Myers

Board Members Absent:

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner; Christine Perkins; Donna Grasdock and Wendy Jenkins

Others: Kathie Wilson, Friends of Bellingham Public Library President, Jamie Amend, WCLS Board Representative

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

Approve/modify agenda: Moved Library Board transitions to next meeting when Stan Snapp can attend.

Public comment: Kathie Wilson, Friends of Bellingham Public Library President, thanked everyone for the support while she was in the hospital and expressed her gratitude for the Friends who carried on without her. There are two book sales coming up: Children's book sale February 17 & 18; February book sale February 28 through March 2.

Jamie Amend, WCLS Board Representative, expressed WCLS's wish for a successful and prosperous year for BPL. David, in turn, offered the Board's highest and best regards to WCLS.

Communications and Courtesies: In the packet are two items: Washington Library Association's Olympia Report and a letter from Acting Washington State Librarian, Rand Simmons, concerning the budget cuts from the November-December, 2011 Special Legislative Session.

Minutes: Faye Hill moved to approve the December 20, 2011 Regular Board meeting minutes. Marilyn Mastor seconded. Motion carried.

Financial reports: Kathie Wilson reported the Friends received a bequest of \$37,500.00 from the Winifred Wilks estate. Mrs. Wilks stopped in weekly at Fairhaven, usually to get a stack of British murder mysteries. The check was made out to the Friends of Fairhaven, which is no longer a separate entity. The bequest will be dedicated to Fairhaven. The Friends are gathering ideas about how best to use this gift. Ideas include a 'bestseller' collection for Fairhaven, shelving for the children's area or putting some into the capital fund at Whatcom Community Foundation. David stated it would be meaningful if a large part went into the WCF earmarked for a capital expense for Fairhaven. Marilyn suggested we publicly acknowledge the donation, loosely quoting Eleanor Roosevelt, "Putting my name on it says that it is something I think is important." Kathie will check with the attorney about anonymity. J. suggested that the improvements to Fairhaven made possible by the Kleindienst donation should be publicized through internal newsletters and the media, and let people know that now there is another donation. Christine is working on a placard for the Viola Kleindienst donation .

In the packet there are two gift fund reports. The first is a list of the 2011 donations to the Library Gift Fund from donors other than the Friends, which totals \$42,332.42. The second

report lists the Friends donations to the Gift Fund as well as the donations they paid for directly, with a combined total of \$52,135.64. The 2011 total donations is nearly \$95,000.00.

Pam reported we are working with Whatcom Community Foundation on an acknowledgement process. We'd like to be notified when they receive a donation, yet this is not something the Foundation typically does. WCF is leaning towards quarterly notification. Rachel suggested that we could craft a thank-you note along the lines of, "We were just notified..."

Claims: December, 2011 general fund \$67,800.41; gift fund \$3,347.97.

Rachel Myers moved to approve the December claims. Faye Hill seconded. Motion carried.

Library performance & activity measures: Marilyn Mastor moved to approve the December, 2011 performance & activity measures. Faye Hill seconded. Pam pointed out this is the end of the year report. Total circulation is up almost 2%. Persons visiting is up 3%. Website visits is up 30% - 627,000 visits in 2011! Motion carried.

Barkley Branch Library lease update: David and Pam met with the Talbot Company concerning the lease, which expires at the end of February. They have been extremely gracious allowing us to use the Barkley Branch space at no cost. Pam shared with them how busy Barkley has been and that we will be strategically planning this year which will include Barkley. They were upfront that they need to get something for the space in the future, perhaps a reimbursement for operating expenses. For now, they are kindly allowing us to maintain our branch on a month to month 'continuation lease' basis. Midyear, when the 2013 budget process begins, we will meet again.

Trustee education: Christine presented a report on the Fairhaven Branch Library. 2008 was our boom year – Fairhaven was open 36 hours a week. After the 2009 renovation project, we were only able to reopen for 20 hours a week due to budget cuts. The hours were cut 33%, but visitors only went down 25% and items borrowed only went down 20%. More items are checked out per hour than ever, averaging 98 per open hour. The floating collection process, in which returned items stay at the branch rather than being delivered back to Central, and Donna rotating the collection as need be, keeps the collection fresh. Fairhaven Branch is staffed with one clerk and one page. There are 4 adult public internet terminals, 2 15-minute express terminals and 1 children's terminal. Wireless is available. Donna will be starting a Jammies & Stories storytime once a month. Two of our new volunteers will be hosting a monthly Movie Matinee on Friday afternoons starting in January.

Donna reported on Meeting Room Services. We booked over 200 groups in 2011 for Central Library and Fairhaven Branch rooms. Room use ranged from dancing and tai chi to birthday parties, weddings and wakes. We also provided free space for many organizations that we co-sponsor programs with, including AARP Tax Aid, Whatcom Storytellers Guild, the Bellingham Chess Club and the Literacy Council. We use scheduling software called Evance which allows patrons to reserve our rooms online. Donna has started emailing invoices this year, saving money and increasing efficiency. Last year we began using coded doors and keycards for access to the rooms. Donna is able to code the doors so that they are open (and closed) when need be.

2012 Board meeting calendar: In the packet is a draft outline of board meeting dates with scheduled agenda items, plus possible topics. Some highlights: Kelli Linville will be invited to the February meeting, and Rachel offered to guide a brainstorming session on library communications and public relations. We joined ELPLP and will have Bethany update us. In March we will have the annual Whatcom Community Foundation report. Municipal Library District was a suggested topic to add to the calendar.

Strategic planning: Pam talked with Chris Cox, Western's Dean of Libraries, who suggested she meet with Brian Burton, the Director of Business and Economics up at WWU, who helped the university library with their strategic plan. She also discussed strategic planning with local facilitator Mary Dumas and Paula Singer who is facilitating WCLS's strategic plan. This process typically takes about a year, but could be done in 6-9 months. Pam also talked with other city department heads, as well as Kelli Linville, who suggested a continuing process approach rather than starting over.

It was determined a sub-committee should be formed including Pam, Christine and two board members and that a half day retreat with the Board would be most effective. The sub-committee could determine the planning process and timetable. Perhaps strategic planning preparation could be built into the board meetings and the retreat could put it all together. Rachel and J. have experience and are both willing to meeting with Pam and Christine on the sub-committee.

2011 library accomplishments & 2012 ideas: Pam included these lists ,that were brainstormed at department meetings and the all-staff meeting that David attended, so board members could see the quantity and variety of accomplishments and ideas. One item noted was the FIG pass lending with the museum. Bethany is working with the museum to acquire some museum passes that library patrons could check out.

Library Director's report: Pam contacted John Carter, Finance Director, to find out how much would be generated if we were to annex to WCLS. Based on the 2012 assessment of 8.3 billion and WCLS's \$.50 per thousand figure, the levy would generate about \$500,000 more than our current library budget. The citizens would be voting to tax themselves and join WCLS. There would only be one library board, which could divide that income however they saw fit. Christine added that, with WCLS, each municipality provides and maintains a facility. The City would still need to provide and maintain a facility. Pam suggested, as part of our strategic plan, we learn more about how the library district works.

Pam reported that Joan Hoisington, our City Attorney, is retiring. Currently, James Erb is our library liaison with the legal department.

Christine gave an update on the HVAC upgrade. The City is doing a major energy efficiency project, replacing heating and cooling systems, boilers, water heaters and light bulbs. The upper mezzanine's system will be replaced January 24-26 and the main floor's system will be replaced the following week.

Christine also reported that at the Friends' finance meeting, they approved requests for \$23,000 for the Summer Reading program, Raise-a-Reader, Next Reads software and book club kits.

Whatcom READS! K-9 presentation has been rescheduled in February because of the snow storm. Elizabeth George will be in town February 23. Christine handed out Whatcom READS! coasters that will be distributed to Boundary Bay, Chuckanut Brewery, Uisce Whiskey Bar, and other locations around town.

Executive Session: The Board went into Executive Session at 5:45 p.m. for the annual review of the Library Director. The meeting was called back into open session at 6:00 p.m. there was no action resulting from the Executive Session.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – February 21, 2011 at the Central Library, 210 Central Ave, Library Board Room – at 4:00 p.m.

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees