

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees**  
**Tuesday, October 16, 2012 - Meeting Room on lower level**  
**03:30 PM - 05:52 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.

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**Board Members Present:** Marilyn Mastor, Faye Hill, J. Gordon and Rachel Myers

**Board Members Absent:** David Edelstein

**Library Staff:** Pamela Kiesner; Christine Perkins; Beth Farley; Madeline Sheplor; Bethany Hoglund and Wendy Jenkins

**Others:** Stan Snapp, City Council Liaison, Kathie Wilson, Friends of Bellingham Public Library President, Joan Airoidi, WCLS Director, Deborah Lambert, WCLS Board Liaison, Fred Haslam, WCLS Board Member, Jennifer Dixey, WCLS Design & Process Manager

**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Vice-Chair, Faye Hill.

**Approve/modify agenda:** No changes.

**Public comment:** Kathie Wilson, Friends of BPL President, presented a letter to library staff and the Board of Trustees expressing their willingness to supplement the materials budget in light of the economic downturn and budget cuts, but also expressing their concern that a precedent not be set for "funding materials that rightfully should come from the general fund of the City of Bellingham." The Friends are also crafting a letter to send to the Mayor and City Council concerning their reservations about donating to the materials budget.

**Consent agenda:** Pam pointed out a communication called "Fantastic feedback through BiblioCommons." Rachel Myers moved to approve the September 18, 2012 minutes and the September 2012 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Marilyn Mastor seconded. Motion carried.

**National Friends of Libraries Week, October 21-27:** Pam presented Kathie Wilson with a Mayoral Proclamation declaring October 21-27, 2012 as National Friends of Libraries Week in the City of Bellingham, Washington.

Faye read aloud and presented Kathie with the Library Board's Resolution Commending the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library During National Friends of Libraries Week. Rachel Myers moved to approve the Resolution. J. Gordon seconded. Motion carried.

The Library Board thanked Kathie and all the Friends for their tireless and unceasing efforts on behalf of the library!

**Trustee education:** Beth Farley, Head of Information & Reader Services, presented an eBook update. We now have over 6500 titles (2600 available currently) and 7,728 of our cardholders (20%) use this service. The top 4 priorities for our patrons are:

- Access to authors and titles currently unavailable by publishers
- Seamless integration of e-content with the library catalog
- Easy, intuitive, no-hassle downloads to any device
- Reasonable wait or no wait period for eBooks

Access: there are six main publishers – out of those six, Simon and Schuster, Macmillan and Penguin do not sell any titles to libraries; HarperCollins limits number of checkouts to 26 per title; Hachette and Random House have tripled their prices for eBooks. Penguin launched a pilot program with New York Public Library making a selection of titles available for purchase six months after publication (but with 3M Cloud Library platform rather than Overdrive).

Seamless integration: digital title records are in BPL's catalog, but to access e-content you have to leave the catalog and login to Anytime Library to place a hold, which results in two holds lists for a patron. The patron is managing 2 separate accounts for library materials. We currently use the Overdrive platform. Beth monitors other libraries and platforms, watching for improvements.

Easy, intuitive downloads: this is getting better, changing all of the time. For instance, Overdrive now has a Nook application making downloads possible without the use of a PC. We have six different download handouts available and staff are working hard to keep informed about all of the new devices.

Wait periods depend on funding to purchase additional copies, so there is no quick solution. Recently, the Washington Anytime Library Consortium (30 libraries) was awarded \$70,000 to spend on new eBook and audiobook titles. They granted spending authority for \$33,000 each to BPL and WCLS. Beth (and her counterpart from WCLS), Bethany and Jennifer scrambled to place orders within the 2 ½ week deadline. The Mayor's 2013 budget approved a \$15,000 increase for eBooks, but if the major publishers allowed libraries to purchase new, popular titles, it would not be nearly enough.

With the holidays coming, reference staff are gearing up for another big leap in eBook use and eReader assistance. The ways they help:

- Q&A at the reference desk and over the phone daily
- Tech Coaching weekly
- Updating the online and printed download tip sheets
- Book-a-Librarian sessions
- Training volunteer tech helpers
- Meeting with branch staff for training
- Display of eReaders – lets patrons know we offer ebooks and have knowledge of eReaders
- BTV 10 video
- Improved signage

**2013-2014 budget update:** The Mayor released her preliminary budget October 8. Department worksessions with City Council have begun. The Library's worksession is October 29 at 1:00 p.m. in the Mayor's Board Room. The template for presentations include Work plan, Policy decisions and Capital projects. Pam will include information about the changes to the budget, including hardware and software replacements, materials budget restoration and Barkley reimbursement. Our personnel requests were not included in the budget. Personnel costs are 68% of our budget, chargebacks are 17%, materials 9%, and other (everything else) 6%.

The 2014 budget includes a 3% inflationary increase on line items. The 2014 budget will be reviewed and adjusted mid-2013.

**2013 Rates and Fees (approved June 19) – revisited:** In July, WCLS informed us they were considering eliminating fines on children's cards for children's materials (their strategic planning process established a goal of increasing children's use of the library which will build the future library community). Pam asked Bethany and Madeline to work with county staff to determine the revenue impact if we follow suit, and also if we do not. Jennifer Dixey, Design & Processing Manager for WCLS, worked with SirsiDynix and estimated a potential revenue impact. Changes

that could offset a potential loss include the recent change to have the fine determined by where an item is checked out (rather than which library it belongs to) and moving forward on allowing credit card payments online. If we do not follow suit we could see a loss in circulation (which would also result in loss of revenue).

Pam reported that WCLS's Board did decide today to eliminate children's fines and to increase adult fines. Pam recommends that we also make this change in order for our two libraries to align our policies more closely, our ultimate goal being a seamless experience for our patrons. Pam also recommends the change to allay the potential loss in circulation and to keep the playing field even (if WCLS children do not have to pay fines, it is not fair for BPL children to pay fines).

In response to Board concerns that we are removing the incentive to bring items back, Pam assured them that we would continue to provide overdue notices and that long overdue items would be converted to lost items and charged to the patron's account.

We are also working on a compromise with WCLS about grace periods and maximum fines to further align our circulation policies.

Following discussion, J. Gordon moved that we follow WCLS and eliminate the fines on Children's and Young Adult (teen) items checked out on children's cards; Children's and Young Adult items on an adult card will be fined \$.10/per item/per day, effective January 1, 2013. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

It was suggested the two library systems work together on a news release and other public messages.

**Strategic Planning:** Pam updated the Board:

- Staff and board members made 127 survey follow-up calls on September 25. The comments (being transcribed and categorized) were overwhelmingly positive, but patrons also got the opportunity to share changes they would like.
- The survey revealed that parking is one of the biggest barriers to library use. Pam and Christine met first with Public Works staff, then with the Transportation Commission. There are now 5 additional 10-minute book drop spots out front.
- A Stakeholder meeting has been set for November 1, from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m., in the Fireplace Room at Fairhaven. Strategic Planning efforts and results will be shared.

A new draft of the Strategic Directions & Goals was emailed to each board member prior to today's meeting. Comments and concerns with this draft were:

- The Direction under LEARN, "Partner with families to prepare and excite children to learn," leaves out adults and life-long learning (though a Goal under DISCOVER touches on this, "Bellingham Public Library offers programs that inform and delight our community"). The LEARN Direction was originally intended to highlight Early Learning as a priority.
- How to best place SUSTAIN? Sustainability is a necessary condition to achieve the Strategic Directions. Does it belong on its own or possibly under MEET "create thriving places"?
- Consider tying our plan in with the City Council's Legacies and Strategic Commitments – Sense of place? Access to Quality of Life Amenities? Quality, Responsive City Services?
- Under DISCOVER, the previous draft wording, "Enhance access to library services to encourage people to discover new worlds and improve their lives," is stronger than the current draft, "Deliver library collections and programs that introduce ideas, build skills, and spark creativity."

- The first Goal under READ, "Bellingham Public Library is everyone's favorite place to get books..." sounds like it could be Amazon – include the word "free"?
- We do not want the plan to be a restatement of what we do, we want it to be a plan of how to do things better and very future-oriented.
- Goal setting is the most important – the goals need to be specific, time-defined, and measurable, keeping the number of goals manageable.

Pam will call a meeting with board members and management team to work on the next draft.

**Interlocal agreements:** Included in the packet are copies of the Interlocal Agreements we have with Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College and Western Washington University. Marilyn Mastor moved to approve the agreements for another year. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

**Board member's report:** No further report.

**City Council liaison report:** No further report.

**Library Director's report:** Pam is developing the agendas for the November and December board meetings. Nicole Oliver will be at the November meeting to give a short presentation on the City's Performance Measures available to the public on the City website.

One of the patrons we talked with on a survey follow-up call, Rick Chartrand, asked that the board be reminded of his detailed proposal for expansion that he delivered to the board in July, 2008. Pam passed out his proposal for the board to see.

The management team will be attending "Lead the Change Leadership Conference" October 30 at Seattle Public Library.

**Meeting adjourned** at 5:52 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – November 20, 2012** at the Central Library, 210 Central Ave, Library Board Room – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees