

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, March 20, 2012 - Meeting Room on lower level
03:30 PM - 06:00 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; Madeline Sheplor; Beth Farley; Bethany Hoglund and Wendy Jenkins.

Others: Kathie Wilson, Friends of Bellingham Public Library President, Joan Airoidi, WCLS Director, Tom Barrett.

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, David Edelstein.

Approve/modify agenda: Pam thanked Stan Snapp for being our liaison to City Council in 2011 and for continuing in that role for 2012.

Public comment: Kathie Wilson, Friends of Bellingham Public Library President, reported the Friends are preparing to help the Library celebrate National Library Week, April 9-13; Mayor Linville will be the keynote speaker at their Friends of BPL Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 28, from 10:30-12:30; and there are two scholarships available - one for staff enrichment and one for a junior in high school who would like to continue their education beyond high school.

Pam introduced Joan Airoidi, Director of Whatcom County Library System, who was in attendance.

Consent agenda: Faye Hill moved to approve the February 21, 2012 minutes and the February, 2012 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

2011 budget update: Included in the packet is a 2011 Staff Development report. We ended the year with a balance in some categories. Pam commented that we found it more difficult this year to send staff away to training because we are so short staffed. We increased the 2012 budget slightly so that we can take advantage of the WLA Conference being in Marysville this year, and are sending many staff members and trustees.

Faye questioned one of the webinars on the Staff Development report - *Cracking QR Codes* - asking what QR codes are. Madeline Sheplor answered they are the square barcode seen on many items now that can be scanned with a smartphone to bring up information or reviews on the item.

Pam reminded the board that last month she shared the end-of-year report which showed remaining budget balances by department. She then handed out a spreadsheet that detailed the 2011 remaining balances by category: salaries/benefits, supplies, other services, intergovernmental services and interfund (chargebacks). There was over \$69,000 left in salaries - primarily unused vacation dollars and short-term vacancies, \$7000 left in interfund (a category the library does not control), and \$5000 left in supplies and services. Pam added that all departments were asked by the city to spend very conservatively so that there would be turn back dollars at year's end.

Wilks bequest: The Friends met with staff to deliberate what projects the \$37,500 could be used for. The Friends decided to use the funds to create a technology center with a Wi-Fi laptop bar in response to increased demand for space for patrons to use their personal computers. The funds will also be used to move the circulation desk away from the pillar so staff can see patrons as they enter the building. There will be signage to honor the Wilkes.

Mayor Kelli Linville: Pam introduced Mayor Kelli to the Board and asked her to share her vision for the library and her thoughts on the planning process.

Kelli shared that she grew up using the Fairhaven Branch Library, so it was a special place for her. She is aware there has been ongoing talk of a new library and site selection and is also aware that many neighborhoods feel underserved - everybody wants their own library. After visiting Barkley, Kelli was impressed with the level of service we are able to provide there. She has asked Pam to focus first on services, find out what the community needs and let that drive capital investments. Kellie believes the library is an essential service of city or county government.

Kelli then invited questions:

What people or organizations are important for us to include in the strategic planning stakeholder group?

The people that use the library; neighborhood groups could provide information (Kelli is chairing the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Council (MNAC)); Torhil Ramsay is a good contact for community groups; groups that use our community rooms - who view the library as a community center; the schools; the Friends of the library - volunteers; our elected officials; and non-profit groups. Pam added the library will be having a stakeholder retreat (April 17) and also gathering public input through surveys and brown bag lunches.

Have you (Kelli) talked with Pam about a collaboration with ITSD?

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Yes and I am glad Pam and Marty are talking - Marty is an energetic IT director. We have a Department head meeting each Monday - we will talk more about this there. Partnerships and collaborations are great. I love that Pam arranged Brian Burton's help with strategic planning - working together to make a better place.

How can we provide more library services unless the city gives us back the budget that has been taken away?

We are not out of the woods yet. As of the end of March we are 1.5 million short on this year's budget. We are determining what are our priorities and looking for efficiencies. Can we centralize some tasks? We don't want to do a lot of things poorly. What do we want to do really well?

What are your priorities as Mayor?

I am taking on managing the city and want the city to run better in four years than it does now. I'm trying to reinvent how the city is run. The department heads are involved in an exercise looking at what we are required to do by city or state mandate, then what do we want to do. Prior to a retreat, all department heads read *Great by Choice* by Jim Collins. We are getting down to the foundation of what the city should do and then developing a plan to get something done - to accomplish something each year.

Strategic Planning: The Steering Committee meeting minutes are in the packet. Brian couldn't attend today's meeting, but he has been providing information to Pam about the stakeholder retreat. He has also revised his planning presentation to be library specific.

Also in the packet is ALA's "Confronting the Future: Strategic Visions for the 21st Century Public Library." Outcomes of the Steering Committee meeting include using the ALA approach - looking at the 4 dimensions; a 5-year time frame for the strategic plan, with annual reviews; and the first step is a stakeholder retreat to develop our missions, values, and do a SWOT analysis. Pam wants to include as much staff involvement as possible and as much public involvement as practical. J. is willing to facilitate the staff participation.

The Board brainstormed a list of possible stakeholders:

Brian Burton will facilitate.

Doug Dickinson will provide technical support.

The Library Board
The Management team
The Steering Committee
WCLS & WLC representatives
Friends of BPL
City Council members
School district
Peace Health
Chamber of Commerce
Barkley Company
Heavy library users
Past library trustees
Neighborhood representatives
Younger users - college or high school
New volunteers
Senior Center
Elected officials
Department heads
Media - Herald? Cascadia?
Donors

Discussion followed about including people who are familiar with the library; on the other hand, this is a good opportunity for us to share information about the library, too. We can accommodate up to 40 at the Retreat. We'll design other opportunities to bring other community members into the process.

Trustee education: Madeline Sheplor, Head of Technical Services, demonstrated how BiblioCommons works. When WCLS chose this product, they included two BPL staff members in the decision process – Madeline and Jennifer Lovchik – everyone loved BiblioCommons, which is an overlay that makes our public catalog more user friendly. Patrons can create a user name rather than typing in their library card barcode. They can have access to their recently returned items plus set up their own privacy and location preferences. Searching is intuitive, more like a Google search. It offers a carousel of recently reviewed books to get ideas from. Patrons can review items and post on Facebook and other social networking sites.

The start-up cost would be about \$7000 this year, and \$10,000 each year after; the cost would be shared with WCLS. Madeline pointed out that we haven't invested in our catalog for a very long time. This would make our catalog more accessible and relevant. BiblioCommons

continues to be very innovative – cell phone applications are coming soon. Joan Airoidi, WCLS Director, added that they went to this interface because the former way of searching was deplorable, patrons could not find what they needed. BiblioCommons is intuitive and patrons love it. The Board agreed it would be a good use of resources and asked the staff to proceed.

Teen summer reading incentive: Every year our Teen/Web Services Librarian, Jennifer Lovchik, requests the Board approve fine forgiveness for the Teen Summer Reading Program. For example, last year 117 teens participated in Summer Reading - 35 used fine forgiveness for a total of about \$125 - a small price to pay to keep these teens returning to the library. Pam asked that the Board do a blanket approval for future years. Marilyn Mastor made a motion that fine forgiveness for the Teen Summer Reading Program be approved indefinitely, with a yearly end-of-summer report on the amount of fines waived and the number of teens involved. Faye Hill seconded. Motion carried.

Library Board member's report: Faye Hill attended the WCLS Board meeting and reported they are also involved in strategic planning and have shared the ALA document we are using with their Steering Committee.

City Council liaison's report: Stan Snapp reported it is good to be back and to hear what Mayor Kelli had to say. Stan's experience has been that it is easy to get a meeting with her. Stan introduced Tom Barrett, the chair of the City Planning Commission, who was in attendance at the board meeting.

Library Director's report: Pam invited the trustees to a photo opportunity at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10, when the Friends will be presenting a giant check for \$50,000 to Whatcom Community Foundation for the capital sub-fund of the non-endowed fund. April 10 is Library Snapshot day.

The WLA conference in Marysville is coming up. Marilyn and Faye will be attending on Thursday, April 19.

Pam received a call from Steve Swan, WWU Vice-President for University Relations, who wants to meet to talk about future facilities planning on the waterfront. He previously talked with other academic institutions, Jim Long (from the PDA), and also Dan Pike. Pam asked if any of the trustees would be interested in attending this meeting. Rachel, J. and David all expressed interest.

The City has expanded the Mutual Use of Space and Facilities Agreement with the Port. Now we are offering Library, Museum and Parks space free of charge. The agreement is for 3 free uses by the City annually, during the work week. We will take advantage of this agreement by using the Squalicum Boathouse for our planning retreat on April 17; thanks to Mayor Kelli for her approval.

We received good news from Whatcom Community Foundation - a bequest of \$5,000 has been donated to the endowment fund.

Christine and Pam have recently attended fundraising luncheons put on by the Association of Professional Fundraisers and the Community Foundation.

Pam reported that today we received a check for \$1,000 from Andrew Zanchi.

Staff member Bernice Chang has been accepted into the University of Washington iSchool MLS (Masters of Library Science) program. Suzanne Carlson-Prandini, Leanne Nott, and Nate Dalgas are also working on their MLS degrees.

The Children's department has presented 120 programs so far this year (eleven were off site presentations)! Kudos to Bethany and her staff.

The Old Fairhaven Association has received a grant from the City of Bellingham to affix QR codes to the historical buildings so that people can scan and obtain information about the buildings. Fairhaven Branch Library will receive a QR code.

Pam informed the Board of a recent security incident.

Pam reported that Encyclopedia Britannica announced they will no longer sell hard copies, only digital.

The 3rd annual anime convention – BA~CON – was a huge hit on Sunday. It attracted over 200 teens and young adults all dressed up as their favorite anime character. There were amazing costumes, exchanging of crafts, manga drawing, a fashion runway and a ramen-eating contest. Photos are posted on our Facebook site. Jennifer Lovchik has hit on something great that makes sense for libraries to do.

Jane Lowrey is reintroducing *Name That Book* on Friday, April 13, at 7 p.m. in the Lecture Room.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – May 15 , 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