

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, August 21, 2012 - Meeting Room on lower level
03:30 PM - 05:45 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; Bethany Hoglund and Wendy Jenkins.

Others: Stan Snapp, City Council Liaison, Deb Lambert, WCLS Board Representative.

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

Approve/modify agenda: No changes.

Public comment: Deb Lambert commented that, on behalf of the WCLS Board of Trustees, she is very happy to attend this meeting.

Consent agenda: Rachel Myers moved to approve the July 17, 2012 minutes and the July, 2012 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Marilyn Mastor seconded. Motion carried.

Whatcom Community Foundation: Included in the packet are financial statements for the Library's two established funds:

- Bellingham Public Library Endowment Fund, activity from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012
- Bellingham Public Library Fund, activity from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012: Capital, Material, Unrestricted

Typically the disbursements received from the Endowment Fund and the Bayview Fund are re-invested. This year the Board decided to put the disbursements into the Gift Fund to be used for Strategic Planning expenses.

Rachel Myers announced she is stepping down from her position as Director of Whatcom Literacy Council and, starting in October, will be working as a consultant for Whatcom Community Foundation.

Wayne and Mary Ann Hanson donation: The Hansons have again donated \$10,000 to the library for the purchase of books. Pam sent a formal thank you letter and included a brochure for Whatcom Community Foundation.

We just received another donation from Andrew Zanchi as well - \$1000.

2013 budget update: The 2013-2014 budget is now in the Mayor's hands. She and her staff are working to cut \$700,000 from the 2013 budget and 2 million from 2014. The Mayor has publicly stated she will not cut the Library's budget, but also noted that she has not agreed to increase it either.

Pam is working on a report for the Mayor and Council that will break down the cost to restore the lost open hours. She will note in the report that though we lost 12 positions, we would not need to fill all of those to restore hours because we have added many efficiencies.

At Monday's Department Head meeting, Pam mentioned Seattle Public Library's successful operating levy. This led to a discussion of the levies our community currently supports or is anticipating.

Strategic Planning update: The next step is to develop strategic initiatives. Pam has begun the process and has a meeting scheduled with the Management Team to determine the themes revealed in the survey which can then be cross-referenced with information gathered from staff, stakeholders and the community open houses. Then it will be time to pull the Strategic Planning Committee back together.

Christine reported that the 4000 write-in responses from the survey have now been compiled. There are many wonderful comments about the library and staff. The number one barrier to library use is parking at Central. Suggestions range from removing meters to adding 5-minute and handicap spots. Enough people wrote in comments that it would be worthwhile to meet with the Transportation Commission and explore options, such as is there a way to give a certain number of minutes free for library use?

Another big issue is restoring lost hours at Central and Fairhaven, especially Sundays at Central.

The condition of Central was frequently mentioned with suggestions to build a new Central Library or to fix-up/improve existing building. 44 people commented that Central "smells."

953 survey responders provided contact information for further inquiry. Christine suggested staff and board contact 10% of the 953, that it would be informative and instructive. She has drafted a news release to let people know where we are at in the process and that we will be contacting some people. It was suggested that when we call we need to offer a way for people to get and stay involved, to capture and channel the excitement for the library, perhaps asking, "Have you heard of the Friends of the Library?"

What will we do with all of this information? Pam clarified that a strategic plan is a living thing that will help guide budgeting and services decisions. She is hopeful it will lead to a realistic course of action, plus be a plan that will guide us to future initiatives. It will be a tool to communicate to the Mayor and Council what the community's priorities are for library services.

Library Council of Washington: Pam is now a member of this council. Included in the packet is the Mission Statement and member information.

Library Board member's report: Faye Hill attended the WCLS' board meeting at the Blaine Library. They have decided to call their strategic plan a "strategic framework" to acknowledge they are building on established strengths. Lizz Roberts has been invited to be a guest blogger on the Bellingham Herald's Family Blog. The Blog will be introduced September 24. Rachel Myers has also been asked to contribute something on behalf of the Whatcom Literacy Council.

City Council liaison report: Stan Snapp reported that City Council has decided to not draft a vote proposal concerning the Gateway Pacific Terminal project.

Library Director's report: Former trustee Melba Sunel passed away recently. She was a trustee in the 1990s. Memorials can be made to the Friends of the Library.

The joint Staff Development Day, with WCLS, is happening Friday, September 14. The library will be closed that day. Our staff will join with the county from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and then return to BPL for lunch, strategic planning work and department projects.

The Summer Reading Recognition Ceremony is tomorrow, August 22 at 11:00 a.m. As promised, the finishers will have the opportunity to shake the Mayor's hand. There have been over 1000 finishers so far this summer.

The peer review process that Pam has been involved in, for the Port Townsend Carnegie Renovations, is near completion. She recently took a tour of the building and also toured the temporary quarters for the library.

Chris Cox, former Dean of Libraries at WWU, has taken a position with the University of Northern Iowa. He was a strong supporter of working with public libraries. Pam has been invited to be on the search committee for his replacement.

On August 14, Pam, Beth and Madeline held six Skype interviews for the vacant Librarian 2 position. Three of the candidates have been invited for a personal interview and tour in September.

WCLS is considering eliminating children's fines as part of a strategic initiative to make it easier for children to use the library. Madeline is calculating the possible budget impact of that move. It would be a significant revenue decrease if we followed suit, but would be confusing for patrons if we didn't.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – September 18 , 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