

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, January 15, 2013 - Meeting Room on lower level
03:30 PM - 05:50 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: Faye Hill, David Edelstein, Marilyn Mastor, J. Gordon and Rachel Myers

Board Members Absent:

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

Others: Stan Snapp, City Council Liaison, Kathie Wilson, Friends of Bellingham Public Library President, Lizz Roberts, WCLS Representative, Max Meiers, Heather Mueller, Deonza Smith, members of the public

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

Approve/modify agenda: Pam requested that, under agenda item number 9, Library Board transitions, Representative to WCLS Board be added.

Public comment: Heather Mueller commented that she would like to see Fairhaven Branch Library's hours expanded to include Mondays and some morning hours. Faye thanked Heather for the suggestion and added the Board and Library would like that as well.

Kathie Wilson reported that the Friends raised over \$110,000 in 2012 and are eagerly awaiting spending opportunities.

Consent agenda: Faye asked for Trustee input on the consent agenda format the Board began using in March of 2012. Rachel commented that this format saves 10 minutes at least, time that can be used to talk about issues. Marilyn agreed, adding that there is always the option to pull an item from the consent agenda for further discussion. The Board decided to continue using the consent agenda format.

Pam pointed out the Wall Street Journal article in the packet, *Checking These Out at the Library: Blacksmithing, Bowling, Butchering*.

Wendy made a correction to the December 18, 2012 minutes in the packet: under Public Comment, the Friends increased the Scholarship Fund for staff development from \$1,000 to \$2,500, rather than from \$500 to \$1,000.

Marilyn Mastor moved to approve the December 18, 2012 minutes and the December 2012 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

Introduce new library staff member: Pam introduced Katie Bray, our new Public Services Librarian, who replaced Jane Lowrey who retired in June of 2012. Katie commented that she has been a librarian for eleven years. She started working in libraries as a part-time clerk while earning her Masters in Library and Information Science. She has worked in many types of libraries, doing public programming, outreach and some director's work.

Donations to Library Gift Fund and Friends of Bellingham Public Library Donations, 2012: In the Board packet are two reports: donations to the Library Gift Fund and Friends' donations to the Gift Fund including donations paid directly to vendors on behalf of the Library. There were \$25,148.94 total donations to the Library Gift Fund. Friends' donations totaled another \$108,710.58. Kathie explained that many of the Friends' donations are staff requests such as Summer Reading, Whatcom READS! and technology upgrades for the Lecture Room. This year they also donated \$50,000 to the Library's Capital Fund at Whatcom Community Foundation. Not included on the report was the Wilks Trust donation of over \$39,000 to the Friends on behalf of the Fairhaven Branch Library which will be spent in 2013. Faye asked that Kathie thank all of the hardworking Friends on the Board's behalf.

Anonymous donation for children's programs: Pam reported that we received an anonymous donation of \$1,000 for children's programming. Bethany is considering how best to spend it, perhaps a Baby Storytime – a non-walker group. Currently Little Storytime is for birth to 3, but babies in the group require a special curriculum.

Library performance & activity measures, 2012: Pam pulled the performance and activity measures from the consent agenda so the Board could take a closer look at the year-end statistics. Madeline reported that, overall, circulation numbers are down – only 0.4%, but it is the first time they have dropped. Visits (2.33%) and new borrower registrations (2.73%) are also down slightly. Fewer open hours is a factor, plus patrons are changing the way they use the library. For instance, computer logins are down from over 8,000 a month to over 6,000 – many patrons now have smartphones they use to access our WiFi, so no longer need to use public computer terminals.

Digital checkouts are up almost 41%. Circulation at Barkley Branch is up 7%, perhaps because 4 more open hours were added in November, 2011.

Rachel mentioned that the drop in new borrower registrations is troubling. Madeline commented that a New Card campaign is being planned. Bethany added that there could be new registrations with the elimination of fines on children's cards. She said there were 16 new registrations in the Children's department just last Saturday.

Pam pointed out that programming continues to increase, 8.14% for 2012.

Many of these trends will be addressed with the Strategic Plan.

Library Board transitions: Pam noted that David Edelstein has come to the end of his term as Chairperson for the Library Board after 6 years and offered him the Board's "highest and best" regards. Pam presented him with an assortment of empty boxes to add to his personal collection. Pam also chose 4 books from the Library's collection in which to commemorate David with a book plate:

In Honor
Of
David Edelstein

Chair of the
Bellingham Public Library
Board of Trustees

January 2007 – December 2012

Stan Snapp has been re-elected as our 2013 City Council Liaison to the library. Pam thanked Stan; the Board is pleased he will be continuing.

Faye, who has been our representative to WCLS's Board meetings for the past few years, is willing to continue in that capacity, but wanted to offer the other trustees the opportunity to serve. It was unanimously decided that Faye would continue serving as the representative; if she is unable, another trustee or Pam will attend the meeting. Pam commented that it is important to keep the communication open between the two boards.

Branch Library update: Christine reported on the coming upgrades to Fairhaven Branch made possible with the Wilks Trust. The upgrades will address 4 issues: more WiFi access; consolidation of technology; improved sight line for staff to door and computer stations; increased patron seating. Upgrades include: a WiFi bar along the north side of the building; consolidating computer stations on the north side; adding another self-checkout terminal; moving staff checkout away from a pole to increase sight lines and replacing the counter top; print station will be relocated closer to checkout; a table added under bulletin board; adding mission style chairs with side arm rest that can be used with laptops. All improvements will be functional, but have a historic look, consistent with the original Carnegie Library style.

Pam was recently notified the Barkley Company is considering moving the Barkley Branch to the Our Kitchen is Your Kitchen space. David, Faye and Pam met with Jeff Kochman and toured the space. Barkley Company would take care of all improvements, carpeting, painting and moving furnishings. There would no longer be a shared open space, so locking up would be easier. The new space would be on the parking lot side of the building. J. added that construction will be starting soon across from the current space, so it will be an advantage to be away from the noise and mess.

Strategic planning: Pam thanked the whole staff for getting together in work groups and developing objectives for each goal in the Strategic Plan, and the management team for compiling and organizing the objectives. Pam is working on a preface and hopes to get a more complete draft to board members in the next couple of weeks.

J. was impressed with the level of detail in the draft and suggested it would be a good time for the steering committee to meet. Rachel added that the draft is exciting, but she sees a need to prioritize goals. Rachel attended Mayor Kelli's speech to the Chamber of Commerce about plans for downtown – we need to get the library included on this plan.

Faye questioned how responsibilities would be divided for accomplishing the goals. Pam answered the responsibilities would be divided by department, for example, Bethany will oversee Children's Department goals. A staff member will be in charge of each goal.

It was suggested that now is a good time to set up a facilities committee (take advantage of Stan and David's last year on Council and Board), including staff, board members, community leaders, and proponents of downtown. Faye and J. will meet with Pam about setting this up.

Artwork donation update: Pam and Beth Farley met with the executor of Guy Anderson's estate, Deryl Walls. Deryl went to WWU and has lived in Bellingham and feels this piece of art would be a great fit. He would like to give it to the library, but would need us to fundraise to pay for it – \$40,000 plus \$2,000 more to frame it. Anderson is a well-known northwest artist and the piece will probably double in value, we were told by Mr. Walls. Pam and Beth toured the library with Deryl, considering placement and a fundraising brochure, but also let Deryl know that we are not yet ready to fundraise for a new library, so the likelihood of fundraising for art is slim. There might be a group or individual in town who would like to do the fundraising for this. Marilyn expressed that she doesn't think it would set well with the public to be fundraising for

art at this time, but it would be great if someone wanted to handle this in conjunction with a new building. Pam will talk with Patricia Leach from the Museum and possibly the Bellingham Arts Commission about this.

Kathie Wilson mentioned it was possible the Friends could coordinate a fundraiser, perhaps matching funds, if the Board agrees that it is something important for the library. J. added we would like to have it, but simply can't fundraise for it.

2013 Board meeting calendar: Pam presented a draft of this year's board meeting calendar. Strategic Planning needs to be added to the draft and Pam asked for ideas from the Board about what they would like added. It was agreed that Pam would invite Mayor Kelli to a meeting and Rachel suggested setting up a time to meet with the WCLS board – a social gathering to share strategic plans.

Board member's report: Faye suggested expanding the definition of "reports" to include reports, questions and comments – a time members feel free to bring up anything for discussion.

Faye attended the WCLS board meeting. They are in the process of selecting a new Director. They are very excited about the Ferndale Library building campaign. Rachel commented that the fundraising has been ongoing for 6 years. The plans for the new Ferndale Library building include an expanded technology area and less shelving. It was added that the Lynden Library fundraising took 17 years.

Marilyn commended the library staff for the panel discussion held last Saturday, *The Japanese-American experience during WWII*.

Rachel sent a list to Pam and Bethany of the top ten children's libraries in the U.S. Vancouver, WA is number 2 (12,000 square feet is devoted to children's, including interactive activities and an indoor bookmobile). Rachel sees the Children's department as being a huge selling point for a new library. Pam will send out the link to the list.

City Council liaison report: Stan reported that Council lowered the number of members on each committee to exclude a quorum and also rearranged their meeting times. Stan has a standing meeting with the Mayor every month and will have the library on his discussion list each month. He invited Pam to suggest talking points at any time.

Library Director's report: Pam handed out the 2013 Board roster.

Pam received a call from OCLC Webjunction who has been awarded a Paul Allen Family Foundation grant to make library space vibrant in order to change the traditional ways people think about libraries. It is an 18-month program that 2 libraries in the state participate in – each receiving \$15,000. OCLC asked BPL and WCLS to be test libraries. OCLC hires a program manager and they will develop a Memorandum of Understanding for us to review. The management team is very excited – this dovetails with our Strategic Plan. We could reconfigure space with technology in mind, or early learning, or programming needs (the recent panel discussion was very overcrowded and storytimes need more space).

Madeline is overseeing a technical services study with WCLS staff. It is a joint study on how to become more efficient, save resources, and possibly collaborate to improve the way we do our technical services – cataloging, processing, and acquisitions. Madeline will report mid-year. Faye commented that this was mentioned at the WCLS board meeting this morning. This could possibly free up and re-deploy staff so that we could open more hours.

Pam passed out copies of WCLS's Strategic Plan.

Annual Review of the Library Director will be on February's board agenda.

Christine reported on Whatcom READS! The first panel discussion was standing room only. The panel represented all aspects of the Japanese community; they were eloquent and honest and the public was very receptive. Christine received over 90 evaluation forms, many people had never hear of Whatcom READS! until the Bellingham Herald article. There is another panel discussion coming up, a showing of the movie, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, at the Pickford, a demonstration titled *Chado: the way of tea*, and David Guterson will make several appearances February 19-21. Mayor Kelli will be introducing David at the Syre Center on February 20 at 7:30 p.m.

Christine also reported that the delivery truck will be getting a new lift gate which will cost between \$5,000 and \$6,000. The truck is in constant use for deliveries and Outreach.

David observed that programming is a great way to gain support for the library. He recently attended the bee-keeping program held at Fairhaven – the room was full for this two hour event. He overheard someone commenting that Fairhaven Library is a great building.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – February 19, 2013 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