

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, May 21, 2013 - Meeting Room on lower level
03:30 PM - 06:13 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, J. Gordon and Marilyn Mastor

Board Members Absent: Rachel Myers

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner; Madeline Sheplor; Bethany Hoglund; Katie Bray and Wendy Jenkins

Others: Stan Snapp, City Council Liaison, Karen Hannah, Friends of Bellingham Public Library representative, Deb Lambert, WCLS Board representative

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

Approve/modify agenda: No changes.

Public comment: Karen Hannah read aloud two of the comments from the National Library Week *Why We Love the Library* comment box:

#56 As an old man living alone and counting the wish for social intimacy as largely behind me now, the library fulfills my nature to be among others but without engagement except glancingly. Books, magazines, newspapers, computers, movies, a knowing and smiling staff in a safe, well-lighted, warm, airy, clean and carpeted space peopled with a representative slice of our community's humanity colorfully punctuated, like the community itself, with its fringe element – WHAT IS NOT TO LOVE ABOUT THE LIBRARY?! And so I do, Love it that is.

6 The library is my favorite place that taxes go to. Thanks for all you do!

Consent agenda: Marilyn Mastor moved to approve the April 16, 2013 minutes and the April 2013 performance and activity measures and financial reports. David Edelstein seconded. Motion carried.

City of Bellingham financial outlook: John Carter, Finance Director for the City of Bellingham, gave a presentation on the state of City finances. His report, which is in the packet, included:

- Summary of fiscal 2012 financial report

Ø As of December 31, 2012 the City had \$772 million in Total Assets and \$136.3 million in Total Liabilities with a positive Net Asset position of \$636.1 million

Ø 2012 City revenues totaled \$206.3 million; total expenditures were \$213.4 million.

- 1st quarter 2013 financial status

Ø Revenues totaled \$46.1 million; expenditures totaled \$50.1 million

Ø \$10 million was spent on capital expenditures – \$7 million of that for the Post Point wastewater treatment facility expansion

Ø Reserves decreased by \$1.7 million, but the reserve balance of \$14 million is above our target per the City's adopted financial guidelines

- General Fund

Ø 1st quarter revenues are up 4.8% over 1st quarter 2012

Ø Sales tax receipts are up 9%

Ø B & O taxes are up 8%

Ø Utility taxes grew by almost 5%

Ø All other categories were either flat or below 2012 March figures.

Ø \$14.6 million was spent for departmental operating expenses (a 4% decline over 2012, but half of the fourteen departments funded by the General Fund had higher 1st quarters expenses in 2013)

Ø There are no General Fund capital expenses budgeted for 2013 due to budget pressures. This is a concern as maintenance is deferred.

Ø The 2013 adopted budget has been increased by \$900,000 (re-appropriations and budget amendments), unless the current trend of increased revenue continues, the budget deficit is likely to exceed that incurred in 2012

· Budget concerns

Ø The City is liable for a number of environmental cleanups totaling \$20.8 million

Ø The City has an unfunded liability of \$35 million for Fire & Police LEOFF and Pre-LEOFF pensions and post-employment benefits

Ø The Public Facilities District (PFD) has a forecasted revenue shortfall of \$5 million

Ø Costs to address water quality issues in Lake Whatcom

Ø Costs to address deteriorating facilities and infrastructure (estimated at \$5 million per year)

Ø Waterfront district infrastructure

Ø Medic One dissolution, 2013 deadline, net costs undetermined

Ø Claims & litigation pending

Ø Cemetery: declining revenues/rising expenses

Ø Continued reductions in State and Federal grants and shared revenues

Ø No sustainable funding plan for General Fund (2013 is expected to be the 6th consecutive year with a deficit)

John then discussed the 2014 budget process. The timeline is similar to past years. The first step is to decide what the budget targets are. Then it is a 3-part process: Department Heads; Mayor; and City Council. Starting in June and running through August, Department Heads will determine their capital, personnel and departmental requests. In October, the Mayor will present the budget to Council, who will then approve the budget by the end of December.

2014 budget: The budget process is a little different with a 2-year cycle. Pam will just submit change requests to the 2013-2014 budget submitted last year. She will at least request staff (clerks) to restore open hours and an increase in the materials budget.

In the packet is a spreadsheet with the Library's Capital Requests – a resubmission of last year's requests with a 3% increase. It was suggested Pam add building program development funding as well as site purchase funding. Both of these were previously in the Library budget, but were removed in previous years budget cutbacks. Pam will have an updated Capital Requests spreadsheet for Board review at next week's Special Board Meeting.

Trustee education: This year's Summer Reading Program is for children, teens and adults. Bethany passed out packet samples for the Children's program, *Dig into Reading*, for kids ages 5 to 12. Children are being challenged to read or listen for 15 hours over the summer – that amounts to 15 minutes a day. Packets are being distributed to all public and private school children. Finishers will receive a free book (provided by the Friends), a mystery coupon (provided by one of our 23 community partners) and a Summer Reading Superstar yard sign.

There is also a *Little Diggers Club* with fifteen Early Literacy activities for kids ages birth to 5. Finishers will receive a free board book, finger puppet and yard sign.

The Teen program, *Beneath the Surface*, invites teens to read/listen to a book, attend a library program or read & explore a web site. If they submit a review (online with Google Docs) they have a chance to win one of 28 weekly prizes (provided by the Friends). Teens (ages 12-18) can also have up to \$5.00 in fines "forgiven" for submitting a review. There will be a special prize for the most "Voracious Reader" (most book reviews submitted).

Katie presented this year's adult program, *Groundbreaking Reads*. We are hoping to encourage adults to model good reading behavior and embrace all library services. Ways to participate include:

- Read a title on a Groundbreaking Reads booklist
- Start to learn a language using Mango Languages
- Post on the Bellingham Public Library Facebook page
- Write, post, and tag a review for "bham2013" in Bibliocommons
- Create a list in Bibliocommons
- Subscribe to a digital magazine with Zinio
- Download an ebook or digital audiobook
- Write and submit a book review either online or at the library

By doing one of these things each week adults have a chance to win weekly prizes or a Nook eReader.

Pam then demonstrated how the new Washington Public Library Trustee Wiki works. The Wiki, which replaces the outdated Trustee manual, provides information and resources on what library boards do (and don't do), Washington state laws, Attorney General opinions and much more.

Strategic planning: Pam passed out the document that Thomas Hacker Architects put together for the library in 2008, *Bellingham Public Library Community Analysis, Library Need Assessment, Central Library Building Program Statement and Cost Analysis*. It was determined that the Special Board Meeting on May 30 would focus on site criteria, determining how much of the Hacker document is still relevant, and developing a timeline.

The Facilities and Sustainable Funding committees did not meet this month.

Pam has been invited to attend the Lettered Streets Neighborhood Association Meeting on June 11 to talk about the 5-year Strategic Plan. The Port Commissioner is also invited to speak at this meeting. Marilyn, Faye and Rachel all expressed interest in attending with Pam. Stan suggested contacting the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Committee also.

Policy review: Pam reported the Rules of Conduct needed to be updated. In the packet is a copy with tracked changes including:

- Adding volunteers
- Clarifying "disruptive behavior"
- Restricting bringing in items that restrict movement (shopping carts)
- Adding "trespass may be issued for disobeying direction of library staff member"
- Barring "distributing literature, gathering signatures, soliciting contributions or conducting surveys"

Pam had our attorney, James Erb, look at the changes. He agreed with all changes but made a suggested revision to the final bullet point under #4.

It was suggested we also change the wording "The Board reviews all permanent trespasses" to "The Board reviews all trespasses five years and over."

Periodicals subscription service: Madeline provided background information for this service. The Library has about 450 subscriptions to magazines and newspapers. The subscriptions are from 1-3 years with staggered start and end dates. There are periodical managing companies who negotiate with the publishers for bulk rates and handle renewals for libraries. We have

worked with EBSCO for many years, but are required by public bidding laws to periodically submit a Request for Proposals (RFP). Three companies have submitted proposals which we are currently reviewing.

Grants: Bethany has applied for and received a \$1000 2013 Early Achievers Outreach Partnership Grant. She will be using the funds to create an Early Learning Space at Fairhaven that will have comfortable seating, books and hands-on activities for creative play.

Bellingham Public Library and WCLS have been chosen as the two pilot libraries for the Paul Allen Family Foundation grant project. Each library will receive \$10,000 for this project which seeks to enhance services and space in libraries . After much thought and discussion, BPL has landed on the idea of DIY kits focused on sustainable living (beekeeping, preserving, beer-making, chickens, goats, cider-making). The kits are an opportunity to team with the community (Center for Self-Reliance, ReStore and Sustainable Connections) on programming plus highlight the collection. Another part of the project is transforming space, so the area behind the self-checkout terminals, next to the Friend's Nearly New books, is being considered to house the new kits. A current trend in libraries is 'maker spaces' – space for people to make things in the library using equipment not affordable for individuals. This ties in with the "creation of content" discussed at the Stakeholder Retreat – using library resources to learn and create. The results from both libraries will be shared nationwide.

Board member's report: Faye attended the WCLS Board meeting this morning. She reported that Trustee Tom Burton has resigned and they have begun the process to fill this position. The Board discussed their recent compensation study and learned about Ask-WA which provides 24-hour access to librarians online.

City Council liaison report: Stan reported he borrowed library audiobooks for his vacation trip. Council is working on a fireworks ban that, if approved, would take effect in 2014.

Library Director's report: Marc Poulsen's last day was May 1 and he provided a nice letter of appreciation to Pam about his supervisor, Madeline Sheplor. Stacy James is now working full-time. Nine Skype interviews were conducted for the Children's Specialist position; 5 live interviews are scheduled. We have four Skype interviews scheduled for Assistant Director. The Head of Circulation posting closes June 7.

Pam participated in the Fire Chief interview process. The Interim Fire Chief has agreed to stay for another year.

The City Council unanimously supported the Library staffing changes at their April 22 meeting. We received final approval on May 13.

Pam was the keynote speaker at the Friend's Annual Meeting April 27 and presented the Strategic Plan.

Pam attended the Hungry Minds Breakfast at Whatcom Middle School on April 30.

We have secured the Mt. Baker Theatre for the Whatcom READS! presentation in 2014.

Meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – June 18, 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