

Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, June 17, 2014 - Library Board Room
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.

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

Board Members Absent:

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner; Madeline Sheplor; Beth Farley; Bethany Hoglund; Jennifer Vander Ploeg; Jennifer Lovchik; Katie Bray; Mandee Manes and Wendy Jenkins

Others: Jack Weiss, City Council liaison, Elisabeth Marshall, WCLS Board representative

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:33 p.m. by Chair, Faye Hill.

Approve/modify agenda: Pam Kiesner proposed to eliminate #11 Executive Session. Rachel Myers moved to approve the agenda as amended. Marilyn Mastor seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: No comment.

Consent agenda: Tom Barrett requested the May 20, 2014 minutes and the May, 2014 performance and activity measures be pulled from the consent agenda and considered separately.

Tom referred, in the May 20 minutes, to the last sentence in the first paragraph under *2015-2016 budget* which reads, "The board supported the Capital Requests spreadsheet as written." Tom recalled that he had requested that a line item for a possible Barkley Branch expansion be included in the spreadsheet. Pam clarified that her recollection was that it was determined that a Barkley Branch expansion would best fit under Operational budget rather than Capital Requests because current Barkley Branch costs are in the Operational budget. If we are able to expand or move the branch and not all costs are covered, then we would need funds to build out and could possibly do an addendum to the Capital Requests. Pam suggested that she and Madeline try to meet with Stowe Talbot and Jeff Kochman, both of the Barkley Company, to discuss space and costs before the next board meeting. If a dollar amount is determined, it can be added to the Operational budget. Pam added that 'explore increasing space at Barkley Branch,' as well as explore a north side presence, were both included in the budget requests Pam discussed at her meeting with Mayor Kelli. Tom said, "Sounds like we will be covered," and moved to approve the minutes as written. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

Tom requested the board discuss the performance and activity measures because of the continuing declining trend in some areas. He questioned if part of the reason is that, as the statistics show, we have fewer items in the collection. Rachel noted that the circulation of digital items, such as NW Anytime Library, is increasing (63% YTD), yet overall circulation is down. She also expressed surprise at declining website visits. Madeline clarified that many patrons now access our site through the library catalog or our Library Now app on their mobile devices – these visits do not show up in the statistics. Faye added that we lost patrons when we cut our hours – we have only added back 4 hours at Barkley and 4 hours on Sunday at Central and are still operating at 20 fewer hours overall. Pam suggested she work with the management team to consider reasons and how best to address them. She will put in on the July meeting agenda for the board to discuss.

Marilyn Mastor moved to approve the June 4, 2014 Special board meeting minutes and the May 2014 performance and activity measures and financial report. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

Trustee education:

2014 Summer Reading

Bethany Hoglund, Jennifer Lovchik and Katie Bray presented information on this year's Summer Reading Program which kicked off June 7.

Bethany passed out the *Fizz, Boom, Read* packet for ages 5-12 which challenges kids to read or listen for 15 hours over the summer. This year Youth Services staff delivered packets to every student in Bellingham at both public and private schools. Finishers receive a mystery coupon (from our Community Partners), a free book (from the Friends of the Library) and a yard or window sign that says, "Summer Reading SUPERSTAR!" Last year there were 1,672 finishers – Bethany hopes to beat that number this year.

Bethany then passed out the *Little Sparks Club* packet which suggests 20 different Early Literacy activities for ages birth to 4. This year BPL and WCLS worked together creating a joint packet which was delivered to all childcare centers and preschools in Whatcom County. Here at BPL, finishers will receive a book, yard sign and finger puppet.

Bethany also distributed June and July's calendar of events to illustrate the packed schedule of programs that are happening here – in July there are only two days without a program happening.

Jennifer called the teen program, *Spark a Reaction*, a "more laid-back affair." There are a couple of new elements to it – new online software and a seamless partnering with WCLS which should erase some barriers and confusion for users. Jennifer went out into the schools and book-talked to over 800 students and also, for the first time, hosted a book club group at Shuksan with teens for their service learning project. Teens are again eligible for \$5 in fine forgiveness after turning in a book review; they also will receive a free set of earbuds. If they review 5+ items they are eligible to win one of over 30 weekly prizes; 10+ reviews enters them into the drawing for 3 grand prizes. Coming up on June 22 is the annual BA~CON – Bellingham Anime and Cosplay Mini-Con; Jennifer expects 250 participants this year.

Katie handed out a sample of the paper review form and business card for the adult program, *Literary Elements*. Patrons can participate either online or in person, earning 'badges' for many library activities such as daily reading, reviews, creating lists, using Facebook, downloading an ebook, attending a program or tech coaching, even visiting the Spark! Museum. Weekly prizes plus 5 grand prizes are offered.

Reach Out and Read

Mandee Manes, Children's Specialist, provided an overview of the Reach Out and Read program we participate in. This is a national, non-profit organization with a focus on low-income families that works with the medical community to "prescribe reading" to kids. BPL became involved in 2007, with WCLS taking the lead on getting books into doctor offices. This past winter, Mandee worked with WCLS to strategically divide the clinics, with Mandee taking on the Bellingham clinics. New books are provided to kids at their well-visits and gently-used withdrawn books are distributed to the waiting rooms. Mandee has also provided Early Literacy handouts to all in-town clinics.

Pam invited trustees to share what they took away from this training. Responses included:

- Suggestion to meet again with the WCLS trustees with an emphasis on talking about mutual endeavors or challenges
- Importance of the role of trustee as advocate – getting into the community
- Suggestion to ramp up telling the story of the library and its' benefits, crafting a message, such as "it's way more than books," to communicate to the community (this would be a good agenda topic)
- Suggestion for all trustees to read the article distributed at the training: *The Small but Powerful Guide to Winning Big Support for Your Rural Library*
- Suggestion to re-launch the Strategic Plan to the community and City Council – take a look at the plan asking questions such as:
 - o What are we doing well?
 - o What should we be doing?
 - o Is there anything we are missing?
 - o How do we keep relevant?
 - o What is our focus?

Open Public Meetings Act training video:

Trustees viewed a twenty minute video on the *Open Public Meetings Act* presented online from the Office of the Attorney General of Washington. This Act was passed in 1971 as part of a nationwide effort to make government affairs more accessible and responsive. As of July 1, 2014, this training is required for public officials.

2015-2016 budget: An updated organization chart is included in the board packet and Pam handed out copies of the payroll spreadsheet the Budget department asks us to update. Pam clarified that this is not the time to request new positions, those will be asked for later. This is our opportunity to verify that Budget has current information and to let them know if there are any expected retirements; Pam has not been notified of any planned retirements for 2015.

Pam distributed a draft list of 2015-2016 Budget Requests that she will work from, unless the board directs otherwise. The list includes:

- Restore open hours
- Continue to restore materials budget
- Purchase all library materials pre-processed and pre-cataloged
- Replace self-check software (may be included in ILS upgrade)
- Explore increasing space at Barkley Branch
- Future: north side library presence/access/programming

Strategic Planning:

Facilities committee: Nothing to report.

Outreach committee: Tom met with Councilman Gene Knutson discussing items from the draft budget request list. Barkley Branch is in Gene's ward so he was interested to hear about Barkley and also about all of the programming we do. Tom will be meeting with Terry Bornemann tomorrow.

J. attended the Cornerstone building open house across the street from Barkley Branch. Tom suggested we get library information to the building; Jennifer Vander Ploeg confirmed we

included our brochure in the new resident 'welcome' bags. Beth suggested we get a neon "Free eBooks" sign.

Joint Library Board/City Council work session: Pam confirmed the July 7, 1:00 p.m. meeting time and distributed a list of work session ideas. She asked for two trustees to meet to determine priorities for the agenda. Tom and Faye volunteered.

2013 Bellingham Public Library Annual Report: Pam handed out copies of the 2013 Annual Report and acknowledged Alison Kuiken for all of her great work on it.

Policy review: In the packet are final drafts of the two policies reviewed by the board last month.

Rules of Conduct: The wording of #7 now reads, "Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, is not permitted in library facilities or on library property."

The wording of the second sentence of #9 now reads, "The Board reviews all trespasses that are issued for five years and over."

Board of Trustees Bylaws: The sentence "The Chairperson is a full voting member of the Board of Trustees." was added to Article IV, Section 2.

Tom Barrett moved to approve the revised Rules of Conduct. J. Gordon seconded. Motion carried.

Tom Barrett moved to approve the revised Board of Trustees Bylaws. Marilyn Mastor seconded. Motion carried.

Board member reports: Faye attended the WCLS board meeting which was held at South Whatcom Library. The trustees discussed policies and internet filtering.

City Council liaison report: Jack reported Council has been spending their time on many issues including the Peace Health tax, Alabama street improvements, rental issues and transportation planning. Pam invited Jack to work with the two trustees on the joint Library/Council meeting agenda.

Library Director's report: Pam thanked all of the trustees for attending the Mayor's Boards and Commissions Appreciation Event.

Madeline provided an update on the ILS (Integrated Library System) upgrade process; our current system is 10 years old. Together with the WCLS, a team invited all of the major ILS vendors to demonstrate their products to determine if it is an optimum time to issue an RFP. It was determined that we (BPL and WCLS) will issue an RFP this fall. Pam added that funds from ITSD have been earmarked for our portion of the cost.

Pam reported that Geneva Ransom, a strong library supporter passed away and the library was mentioned in her obituary.

The new Shirley Erickson sculpture, *Earth Guardian*, has been installed at Fairhaven Branch. The City highlighted it in a news release titled *New sculpture joins outdoor public art collection*.

Pam has a meeting scheduled with Katie Franks, who the Mayor has assigned to take an independent, objective look at all of the reviewed sites.

We received a \$1,500 donation from Michael Hinkel to add audiobooks to our collection.

Julie Guy and Beverly Jacobs invited Pam to a meeting they have arranged with Bellingham Public Schools Superintendent Greg Baker to talk about public library service. Pam has asked Bethany to attend to share what we are doing with the schools.

Libraries around the state have been considering if there is a need to provide email accounts for board trustees. Pam has queried City Attorney James Erb and IT Director Marty Mulholland, who both feel it is not necessary. It would be very expensive to provide accounts for all of the boards and commissions.

Pam will add declining statistics to the agenda for July as well as invite the new Finance Director Brian Henshaw to speak.

Pam received a letter from Vinnie O'Connor who represents the 114 and 114L unions. She also received copies for each trustee which she has mailed to them.

Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – July 15, 2014 at the Central Library, 210 Central Ave, Bellingham, Washington – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees