

# Bellingham Public Library



## Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees Wednesday, January 18, 2017 – Central Library 3:30 p.m.

Minutes of Actions and Decisions of the Library Board of Trustees of the Bellingham Public Library as authorized by RCW 27.12.210 and SEC. 7.02 Charter of the City of Bellingham.

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**Board Members Present:** J. Gordon, Rachel Myers, Tom Barrett and Rick Osen

**Library Staff:** Nancy Kerr, Beth Farley, Bethany Hoglund, Janice Keller and Wendy Jenkins

**Others Present:** April Barker, City Council Liaison; Faye Hill, Friends of BPL; Rebecca Craven and Lynn Lohr, members of the public

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**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:33 p.m. by Chair, J. Gordon.

**Approve/modify agenda:** Tom Barrett moved to approve the agenda. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

**Public comment:** Rebecca Craven introduced herself as one of the candidates for the vacant trustee position.

Lynn Lohr, a library patron, made a request that the library provide a naturally lit, electronic device-free area for reading. Patrons would then have a place to read away from the fluorescent lights and electro-magnetic frequencies emitted by devices.

**Consent agenda:** Rick Osen moved to approve the December 14, 2016 Regular meeting minutes and the December 2016 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

**Board member reports:** Rachel expressed excitement about this coming Friday's event, *Bring Your Light to the Library*. Whatcom Community Foundation awarded a Project Neighborly grant for this event – this will be the first executed community event funded with these grants.

Tom mentioned that he saw, in the Planning Notices section of the Planning Department's website, plans for the new small park and street by the Fairhaven Branch Library that was previously mentioned at a board meeting. When he returned to the site to print a copy, it wasn't available. Tom also mentioned that there have been some issues with the Orca Building being built next door to Fairhaven, specifically with a filled trench and storm drainage.

April and Tom attended the Cordata Neighborhood Association meeting. April, who also spoke at the meeting, reported it was a good discussion including the WCC connection and the possibilities for a north-side branch. All attendees were library card holders.

Rick reported that he, Nancy and Beth have a meeting scheduled next week to work on the Materials Level of Service. They hope to have a preliminary report for next month's board meeting.

**City Council liaison report:** Council will be discussing the issue of Bellingham becoming a sanctuary city at this coming Monday's meeting. April expects it to be an interesting conversation.

April met with David Webster, the Opportunity Council's Associate Director for Early Learning and Family Services. He is working on a plan to survey his consumers to determine the community's needs. This could be good information for future library program planning.

**Friends of BPL report:** The Friends held their January board meeting this afternoon. Faye praised the Friends' hard work and dedication – all of the current officers want to remain in their positions for another two years. They are planning for their Annual Meeting to be held on April 22. Nancy will be the keynote speaker at the meeting.

Faye reported that, at today's meeting, they approved the funding requests the library provided and also approved 2017 funding up to \$55,000.

**Library Director's report:** Nancy reported she is happy to be here and that staff are just as enthusiastic as they were portrayed when she interviewed. There are a few challenges: the wear and tear on the building as well as building design issues and also the wear and tear on staff. She has worked with far larger libraries with less circulation than Bellingham. The staff make it happen. She thinks it is important to work on the Materials Level of Service and the technology challenges we face – there is limited space to plug in devices. She is pleased to see a full-time Communications position; this is critical because we need to tell our story.

She had a wonderful time meeting with the Friends today. They are near and dear to her heart – libraries cannot function without dedicated volunteers.

Nancy has written numerous thank-yous for donations to our gift fund and our funds held at the Whatcom Community Foundation.

Nancy met with Christine Perkins, Executive Director of the WCLS – a very productive meeting. She finds it invaluable that Christine has worked for both BPL and WCLS.

She is looking forward to meeting with the Mayor, who had to delay their scheduled meeting.

Nancy will be attending the Washington State Directors meeting on Thursday and Friday. The State Librarian will also be attending. Pam encouraged Nancy to go to learn about issues and solutions from libraries across the state.

Nancy mentioned next week's Materials Level of Service meeting. There are mathematical formulas to determine a standard, but they do not tell the whole story. Bellingham's demand on the collection is significantly larger than in other communities. This shows that staff have made good collection decisions.

**2016 gift and donation report:** Gift donations to the Library gift fund totaled over \$88,000 in 2016 – \$33,000 from various donors and \$55,000 from the Friends of Bellingham Public Library. Funds were spent on collection support, programming, Summer Reading, Whatcom READS!, Raise a Reader, the website refresh project and more.

Bethany reported that Tom Barrett and Kenni Merritt provided funding to purchase two Eric Carle prints and chairs for the Early Learning Space at Barkley – this will really brighten up the space!

**Library Board of Trustees vacancy update:** With Tom's March resignation, there will be two vacancies. J. suggested to the Mayor that she appoint both of the trustee candidates that the Board interviewed. The Mayor wants to first meet with each of the candidates along with J. and Nancy. Tom suggested inviting the applicants to the Sustainable Funding Retreat.

April pointed out that, because the Retreat is being held on a Monday due to our two guest speakers' schedules, Council members and others will not be able to attend. Rick proposed asking BT-10 to film all or part of the retreat so that it can be viewed afterward.

**2017 WCLS Interlocal Agreement:** In the packet is a copy of the draft agreement with the financial information removed. Nancy reported that this draft is what WCLS is reviewing at their board meeting. The board determined to discuss this at next month's meeting. April suggested the discussion include the financial impact this has on the Library's budget in the coming years. When the Mayor found out that we would not be receiving the anticipated \$150,000 for 2017, she removed the planned \$50,000 increase to the Library budget to help offset the decrease in revenue. It is unknown what the impact will be in 2018. April said that now is the time to start advocating for next year's budget.

**New Business:**

- Whatcom Community Foundation distributions and balances
- Library gift fund balances
- April mentioned the ALA webinar and instruction series Libraries Transforming Communities: Models for Change. The President of the League of Women Voters recommended we review/consider this opportunity. Janice confirmed we are signed up to view the introductory webinar to see if this series, which will explore approaches to foster community conversation, is a fit for our library. Library staff and representatives of the League, which is willing to partner with us, have been invited to attend.

**Action items for next meeting:**

- Mayor Kelli Linville (she needed to delay today's planned attendance)

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:31 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – February 21, 2017** at the Central Library, 210 Central Avenue, Library Board Room – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees