

Bellingham Public Library



Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees Tuesday, November 21, 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.

Board Members Present: J. Gordon, Rachel Myers, Rick Osen, Rebecca Craven and Jim McCabe

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

Others Present: April Barker, City Council Liaison; Faye Hill, Friends of BPL; Norman Grossman

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:32 p.m. by Chair, J. Gordon.

Approve/modify agenda: Rebecca Craven moved to approve the agenda. Rick Osen seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: Norman Grossman provided feedback on the Bellingham Public Library website. He considers the placement of the words "equity, diversity and inclusion" in the upper left hand corner of the webpage, taking up approximately 15% of the page real estate, as a waste of space. Suggestions offered for the space were SkillShare programming, books and references on community issues such as the ongoing new jail issue, economic resources, travel books or home improvement projects. Other community resources could also be highlighted such as BTC classes and local events. Janice thanked Norman, adding that these are great ideas and that changes are in the works.

Consent agenda: Rachel Myers moved to approve the October 26, 2017 Regular meeting minutes and the October 2017 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

Board member reports:

- Rachel provided an update on the recent bequest of a new endowment fund for the Library at the Whatcom Community Foundation – \$1.8 million has been received so far and more funds will be processed.
- Rebecca commented on the November 13 City Council meeting that she and other trustees attended.

- Rachel would like to give a short presentation on her visit to the Vancouver Public Library at an upcoming meeting.

City Council liaison report: April expressed the need to celebrate the small successes.

Friends of BPL report: Faye reported that the Friends' Board of Trustees met last Wednesday where they did celebrate the outcome of Monday's City Council meeting.

Library Director's report:

- Jennifer Vander Ploeg's job reclassification has been completed and is effective as of November 1st. City HR reclassified her position as Head of Public Services (rather than Head of Circulation) which is more reflective of actual duties and allows her to project manage the Help Desk procedures and scheduling of public service desks.
- The Budget request for additional funds for collections in the amount of \$109,000 was approved for 2018. April added that Council also approved the future budget year step increases for collections.
- We are done with the initial round of Homeless Patrons training – huge thanks go to Deborah and Suzanne for coordinating the training. We will be meeting to discuss next steps for training and for interpreting our Rules of Conduct. We have discussed our training efforts with Parks and expect to assist them as they set up training for their staff.
- The group, made up of staff from BPL and WCLS, which evaluated multiple ILS options has agreed that we need to pursue an RFP.
- Nancy is compiling data which will help the Board and staff determine the Level of Service standard for Staff FTE. She is using comparable libraries across the country and in the Pacific NW and is looking at how their staff FTE compares to their circulation, program, and door count statistics. Rick commented that our staffing level is currently the same as 10 years ago, adding that FTE per capita is also a useful benchmark.
- Jen Vander Ploeg has put together a spreadsheet that we can use to track staff and Board training all in one place, such as the Homelessness training, First Aid, and *Darkness to Light* training.
- One of our goals for 2018 will be reviewing job descriptions until they are all up-to-date and on a regular cycle to be updated. We have job specifications and descriptions that are 10-15 years old and require significant changes. It will be a large project but it will make our hiring process much easier in the future if descriptions submitted to HR need only small tweaks rather than overhauls.

BERK Consulting study update/Strategic Planning 2018: On Monday, November 13, BERK Consulting presented their draft report on the Sustainability Funding Study to City Council's Committee of the Whole meeting. Following the presentation Council agreed to take annexation off the table and to "direct the Administration to give recommendations to the Library Board of Trustees to make Level of Service 2 or Level of Service 3 a priority."

- Nancy is editing the BERK draft report. Once it is finalized by BERK, we will bind the report, presentation and situation assessment. In the end, BERK provided a good, convincing product.
- We will work with the Mayor's office to see what funding opportunities there are for next year. The fate of the Regional Fire Authority (RFA) initiative will be a big

determining factor for the budget. Nancy has already talked with the Mayor about staffing and an electronic sorter.

- We will continue working on LOS standards to help with developing the Level 2/3 proposal.
- It could be worthwhile to look at the current Strategic Plan and see what is still to do. Once we have a new trustee on board, we can have an end-of-project debrief and set up next steps for the new Strategic Plan process.
- Kudos to April, Brian, Rick, J. and Nancy for their work on this project.

Board Personnel Committee:

- Copies of a proposed charter for a standing Personnel Committee were distributed. The committee would consist of the current chairperson and one other appointed board member (one short of a quorum). This committee would be charged with reviewing the Director's performance, deciding what to do with the Director position moving forward and assisting in other personnel matters as approved by HR. Rebecca Craven moved to establish a standing Personnel Committee. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried. J. and Rick will serve on the committee through the end of the year.
- Rick will take the lead on the Director's performance review process. An outside consultant will be hired to perform a 360 degree review. The consultant will then craft a confidential summary and report to the Board in Executive Session. This will be a yearly review process.
- Human Resources has recommended that a national search be done for the permanent Director position. The Personnel Committee will move forward with this.

2018 Interlocal Agreements for Connections: The Interlocal Agreements with the Connections, which are now perpetual agreements that remain in effect unless one of the parties opts out, are being routed for signatures.

Trustee recruitment process: Trustees, as well as April, have been reaching out to possible Trustee candidates. One application has been received so far.

Peter P. Lee Memorial Park fountain space: The Board officially recommended that the broken fountain be removed, leaving a flat, variable-use space.

Youth Safety Policy update: The Friends of the Library are getting background checks and they will also be receiving Brigid Collins' *Darkness to Light* training.

2018 regular Library Board of Trustees meeting schedule: Rick noted that the schedule could be subject to change with a new board member. Rachel Myers moved to approve the 2018 regular Library Board of Trustees meeting schedule. Rick Osen seconded. Motion carried.

2018 City of Bellingham holidays & other library closures: The last two holidays were listed incorrectly in the packet. The correct days and dates are:

- Day before Christmas Monday December 24
- Christmas Day Tuesday December 25

New Business:

- A group has been camping out in front of the library. The homeless Hot Team have been here quite a few times. Nancy talked with the City's Legal department – nothing illegal is going on, so it is up to us to enforce our Rules of Conduct. We have provided information about available services and have given them notice to remove their belongings. If they do not move on, the police will be called.
- An item of old business: April contacted the First Congregational Church which was able to offer Tax Aide a comfortable space that will allow more privacy for their clients.

Action items for next meeting:

- Staffing FTE Level of Service standard
- Elect new board officers
- Meeting Rooms policy

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – December 19, 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