

Bellingham Public Library



Special Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, January 15, 2019 – Central Library – Library Board Room
4:30 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: Rick Osen, Rachel Myers, Rebecca Craven, Jim McCabe and Vernon Johnson

Library Staff: Rebecca Judd, Beth Farley, Bethany Hoglund, Janice Keller, Jon McConnell, Jennifer Vander Ploeg, Jordan Sterland and Wendy Jenkins

Others Present: April Barker, City Council liaison

Call to order and introductions: Special session was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chair, Rick Osen. Rick provided an introduction: near the end of the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, the Library Director retired. The Library was preparing to conduct a sustainable funding study and so decided to hold off on a new strategic plan and to hire an Interim Director until the study was completed. The study determined there was no benefit to combining with the Whatcom County Library System and so hired a new Director in 2018. Now is an opportune time to develop a strategic plan.

Review/Discussion of sample plans: Rachel distributed a *Library Board Work Session Agenda* (see Attachment #1. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes.).

- Rachel requested trustees and staff identify their top 3 strategic plan samples (<https://www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sample-Library-Plans.pdf>). Results were (with comments):
 - 1) North Vancouver City Library (8) – linked to city; shorter; equity; flowed & fit together; fresh; indigenous connections; aspirational; every day work.
 - 2) Edmonton Public Library (EPL) (5) – linked to city; included business plan info; defining success; graphic long/short term; no jargon.
 - 3) Charlotte Mecklenburg Library (3) – succinct; civic engagement; innovative.
 - 4) Champaign Public Library (2) – 5 goals all focused on community.
 - 5) Nashville Public Library (2) – linked to city; foundation + building.
 - 6) San Jose Public Library (1) – simple; accessible; equitable.

Other ideas expressed:

- Audience is important: staff; Board; City; community

- Longer form could be translated to 1 page for different audiences
 - Linked to City plans
 - Helpful info-graphics; short/medium/long term – scalable
 - 4 things to tie back to – WCLS is an example
 - You belong here – Your Library
- The group discussed the term of the strategic plan and determined that the plan should line up with the City's biennium budget, either 3 or 4 years.
 - Rachel asked, "What does success look like?" Responses were:
 - Easy to tie to work plan
 - Strategic and targeted
 - Linked to COB goals & strategic commitments
 - Proactive to City needs & changes
 - Flexible – community at the heart, shaping the library
 - Community reads & responds to strategies
 - Has heart, the community feels like they belong
 - Build library advocates & partners

April expressed that she has been questioning the *Libraries Transforming Communities* (LTC) title, suggesting perhaps it should be, 'Communities Transforming Libraries.' Rebecca Judd explained that LTC is a branded name, from the American Library Association (ALA), that is used across the country. The LTC process focuses on asking residents what they aspire for their community, with the library responding and determining how it can best meet community needs.

Planning process: Rebecca distributed and reviewed with the group a *Working Assumptions* document (see Attachment #2. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes.). Janice, who will be leading the strategic planning process, read 4 questions that would be posed in individual interviews:

- 1) What kind of community do you want to live in?
- 2) Why is that important to you?
- 3) How is that different from how you see things now?
- 4) What are some of the things that need to happen to create that kind of change?

Janice continued, saying that we would take the results of those conversations and ask how can the library help meet community needs?

The group consensus is that the Strategic Plan Committee should continue on this path.

Meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – February 19, 2019 at the Central Library, 210 Central Avenue, Lecture Room – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: Library Board Work Session Agenda
- Attachment #2: Library Board Work Session Working Assumptions

Strategic Planning 2019

Library Board Work Session

4:30 p.m. January 15, 2019

Agenda

1. Introduction and Work Session Purpose

2. Review/Discuss Sample Plans
 - Use criteria provided (structure, content, look and feel, overall impressions) to identify Top 3 favorite plans, and why.
 - Two, three or five-year plan?
 - What does success look like?
 - What are our research needs?

3. Planning Process
 - Working Assumptions
 - Community Conversations orientation
 - Library stakeholders
 - Timeline

Strategic Planning 2019

Library Board Work Session: **DRAFT**

4:30 p.m. January 15, 2019

Working Assumptions

LTC Community Conversations process will include:

- Using the model and materials, facilitated by library staff.
- Held with targeted groups/individuals by invitation, facilitated by library staff using the prescribed process.
- Several "open house style" sessions hosted by the library, esp. to capture individuals who may miss group sessions.
- Library Board members may volunteer to be trained to hold individual community conversations.

LTC Community Conversations is the complete engagement strategy.

- Additional surveys, focus groups, tabling, stakeholder committees, other strategies not planned.
- Approach is based on "turning outward" model, transparent and targeted.

Resulting plan is strategic level, not a detailed work plan.

- Work plans will be crafted annually to dovetail with strategic directions.

City of Bellingham is key partner in process and plan content.

- Plan builds on city adopted plans and strategic directions.
- Key city leaders are included in process.

Plan considers information and research prepared by other credible, trusted community organizations.

- Extensive original new research and demographic studies not planned. If desired, these can be framed as objectives in early annual work plans.

Resources directed to process:

- 20-25% of Communications/Community Relations Manager's time
- Approximately 100 additional staff hours to facilitate Community Conversations
- \$2,500 for meeting facilitation, document formatting, graphic design