

Bellingham Public Library



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, June 18, 2019 – Central Library Lecture Room
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:	Rick Osen, Rachel Myers, Rebecca Craven, and Jim McCabe
Board Members Absent:	Vernon Johnson
Library Staff:	Rebecca Judd, Beth Farley, Bethany Hoglund, Janice Keller, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins
Others Present:	No others

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Chair, Rick Osen.

Approve/modify agenda: Rebecca Craven moved to approve the agenda. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: no comments.

Consent agenda: Rachel asked if anyone had any insight as to why Youth circulation statistics were up at all locations, but not Adult statistics. Rebecca noted that there were many families during the snow days. Bethany responded that the trend was the same last year. She added that staff work to keep the collections fresh at each location. Rachel Myers moved to approve the May 21, 2019 Regular meeting minutes and the May 2019 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report: Rick, Jim, Rebecca Craven and Rebecca Judd all attended the Mayor's Boards and Commissions Appreciation Reception on June 12.

Rick invited everyone to Beth Farley's retirement party on June 27th, at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room. Rick thanked Beth, on behalf of the board, for her good, hard work over the last 12 years. Rick mentioned that one of the important things the board accomplished over the last few years is the Level of Service standards and Beth was especially helpful in developing the Materials LOS.

Rick pointed out the article in the packet, [In Praise of Public Libraries](#), by Sue Halpern, and strongly encouraged everyone to read it, calling it a well-done article that illustrates the importance of public libraries.

Board member reports: Jim reported that the June Cordata Neighborhood Association meeting was a mayoral candidate forum – all four candidates attended. The question of a northside library was raised and Jim reported that the candidates handled it well, each from their own perspective. Jim added that the Association appreciates the time and effort involved in Rebecca Judd hosting Community Conversations in Cordata.

Jim participated in the Emergency Preparedness Community Conversation. He reported that Suzanne did an excellent job facilitating and it was a good discussion. Rebecca Judd added that Lynn Sterbenz, Office of Emergency Management Manager, was appreciative of the conversation.

Rachel reported that the remainder of the Muldrow endowment for the Library should be received by the Whatcom Community Foundation by the end of summer, and that it should be about one million dollars.

City Council liaison report: no report.

Friends of BPL report: no report.

Library Director report: Rebecca offered congratulations to Rob Werner and Jordan Sterland for completing their MLIS degrees. For their Capstone projects, Jordan did a community mapping project and Rob did a report on service to the homeless – their findings will be folded into the strategic plan. Rebecca, Bethany and Suzanne attended the iSchool Capstone presentations in Seattle.

Suzanne is leaving tomorrow for the ALA annual conference in Washington D.C. Programs offered at the conference align nicely with both strategic planning and the building remodel. She will report on the conference at next month's board meeting. Rebecca thanked the Friends for funding that made this conference possible.

In the Director's Report, Jon mentioned that IT is working on replacing the laptops in our laptop lab. Rebecca pointed out that the Library is the only department that has a laptop lab and this summer the Parks department is going to use our lab for a program – a nice synergy of service to the city.

Summer Reading school visits are wrapping up. Rebecca thanked Bethany and her staff for the 40-45 visits they accomplished. There are already many all-age finishers.

Rebecca thanked Beth Farley for her service to the Library.

Mid-biennium adjustments: Rick recapped that the management team was involved in the initial development of the 2019-2020 budget as it was during the Director transition. Now is the opportunity for a mid-term adjustment.

Rebecca Judd distributed a Midterm Proposal DRAFT, explaining that we would like to increase our staffing LOS with the addition of a full-time Children's Librarian. *(See Attachment #1 for Midterm Proposal DRAFT. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes.)* This is currently our highest service need. At this point, Bethany is serving as the sole Children's Librarian, as well as handling management and administration duties for the department. This position would allow us to provide outreach to new families.

Rebecca provided an update on the elimination of library fines, also part of the midterm adjustment request. The BPL committee, which includes Rick and Rebecca Craven, will meet next week to continue working on policy and procedure questions. Formal meetings with the City will happen in early August. Jon is leading a joint BPL/WCLS workgroup around this project. Rebecca Judd and Janice will be working with Christine Perkins and Mary Vermillion, from WCLS, to develop a communications plan.

Facilities Committee report: Rick reported the contract with RMC Architects is being circulated for signatures. There was a meeting in late May to kick off the materials sorter project; Purchasing, Facilities, ITSD, Board and staff were all represented. Jon reported that he and Alison Kuiken are collecting daily snap-shot check-in data to provide hard numbers to help determine the correct size of sorter. He has been in contact with a couple of vendors to find out where local sorter installations are so that we can go see them in action. Rick clarified that this information is being gathered for an RFP process.

Strategic Planning update: Rachel reported that the Strategic Planning committee – Rachel, Rick, Rebecca Judd and Janice – met last week. The Community Conversations part of the process will be wrapped up by the end of June. The gathered information will then be processed before the next phase.

Janice distributed a final copy of the Schedule of Community Conversations, stating we are in the home stretch of this portion of the process. *(See Attachment #2 for Schedule of Community Conversations. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes.)* Janice reported that by the end of June, staff will have spoken to more than 300 people. A team meeting is planned for mid-July to summarize gathered information and to celebrate this three-month intense effort. From there a report will be developed and incorporated into the strategic plan. Janice said that the feedback continues to be interesting, heartbreaking, and rewarding and will be a good complement to the other research being done for the strategic plan. Janice provided sample feedback:

Aspirations

- Community that provides basic safety net. More equitable distribution of resources.
- Connected, welcoming, accessible, with free opportunities to connect with others. Culturally rich, inclusive, with preventive measures that strengthen families.
- Safe, accessible community that embraces lifelong learning. A community that is curious, where everyone has a voice.

Concerns

- Concerns about the impacts of family stress, social isolation of families, and racial inequities, which increase anxiety in families.

- Barriers to accessing services and resources. Transportation, cultural bias, language and skills barriers, lack of connections and relationships, and many other barriers and stigmas, get in the way of access to information and services.
- People are participating less and less in things that would help them develop the tools and skills to build community.

Sample summary

- “People want a community that is prepared, sharing, collaborative, resilient, connected, fun, eclectic, weird, aware, inclusive, welcoming, diverse, and well informed but they’re concerned that people have unrealistic expectations, are in denial, aren’t prepared for disaster, and are expecting to be rescued.

As people talk more about those concerns they talk specifically about apathy, a lack of resources, time, money, knowledge and education, that there is no good way to spread information to all people, that people lack time management skills, there is information overload, a lack of trust, and a cultural, language and socio-economic divide.

They believe we need to focus on building social capital, creating distributed solutions that provide depth of planning and redundancy and if government, city, social organizations and education institutions with similar missions and resources played a part, that folks would more likely trust the effort and step forward.”

- “People want a welcoming community that prioritizes strengthening families and equity of accessibility, education, economics, race and abilities, but they’re concerned that barriers such as access to transportation, home language and services, and family trauma negatively impact the development of children and lead families to social isolation.

As people talk more about those concerns, they talk specifically about the effects of toxic family stress and anxiety due to drug use, our current government climate, the barriers of oppressive, paperwork-driven systems, economic inequities, and the need to build relationships to forge connections and community.

They believe we need to focus on acknowledging that systems are oppressive, writing policies that explicitly prioritize families, bring resources directly to families and holding more free family-centered events. If parents, faith communities, higher education, the library, tribal communities, medical practitioners, Dr. Baker, non-profits and schools played a part in those actions, that folks would more likely trust the effort and step forward.”

Timeline

- June & July: Finish Community Conversations and draft a report.
- August: Present the report to the Board along with a research packet and instructions for Board members about their role in reviewing and culling information from the packet.
- October 8 (tentative): Hold a Special work session to identify strategic directions.
- October Board meeting: Continue work on strategic directions.
- November Board meeting: Review draft strategic plan.

- December Board meeting: Review second draft of strategic plan.
- January 2020 Board meeting: Approve final strategic plan.

The Board members said that October 8, from 3:30-6 p.m. will work for a one-topic Special Meeting on strategic planning.

Rebecca Craven asked how the conversations are going in terms of the Library hosting the conversations, but not focused on the Library. Janice responded that they have been introducing the conversations as such, but have also built in time at the end for specific library concerns. Jim offered the analogy of when the internet was new in the 90's. If a community conversation had been held then, it might have revealed that many people did not have access to the internet, and the Library would have identified and responded to a need. Rebecca agreed; the information gathered can help us determine what the library can offer.

Rick thanked, on behalf of the Board, all staff that were involved in this huge effort.

New Business:

- Rick reported the Personnel committee (Rick and Rebecca Craven) met with Rebecca concerning a Director annual review – her 1st anniversary is in mid-July. They decided to initiate an annual process conducted by the Board, with feedback from the management team and city officials – an electronic form will be sent to Trustees. There will be an Executive session at the August meeting.
- Rachel suggested beginning the process of recruiting for her position, which will be open at the end of 2020.

Action items for next meeting:

- Statistical overview by Jennifer Vander Ploeg
- ALA report by Suzanne Carlson-Prandini
- 2nd quarter Goals update by Rebecca Judd

Meeting adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – July 16, 2019 at the Central Library, 210 Central Avenue, Library Lecture Room – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: Midterm Proposal DRAFT
- Attachment #2: Schedule of Community Conversations

Midterm Proposal DRAFT
Department: Library
June 18, 2019

NEW Position => Children's Librarian

1 FTE Librarian 2 (Public Services Librarian: Youth focus)

As the population of Bellingham grows, we see widening gaps in Library service for children and families. This professional position will allow Library service to the community to grow in reach, complexity and intentionality, focusing on children's literacy skill acquisition, kindergarten readiness, and increasing the equity, diversity and inclusion in our programs and collections. A key focus area of this position will be serving children and caregivers not yet connected to Library resources due to housing, transportation and other barriers.

Elimination of Library Fines

The Library eliminated fines on children's materials in 2013. This proposal would remove fines on all materials, allowing the Library to eliminate barriers to City services particularly for low-income residents, improve patron experience, and better utilize staff time.

Attachment #2

Schedule of Community Conversations*

*Schedule up-to-date as of June 18, 2019.

DATE	TIME	TYPE	LOCATION	BPL ONLINE CALENDAR?	STAFFED BY:
March-June	4:30-5:30 p.m. 1 st Wed. each month	CC: Cordata neighborhood	El Dorado Condo Clubhouse	Yes	Rebecca
April 2-15	Afternoons	Ask Exercise opportunity at AARP Tax Aide	First Congregational Church	No	Deborah, Suzanne, Janice
April 2	10:15 a.m. - Noon	CC: General	Lecture Room	Yes	Bethany & Bernice
April 17	2-4 p.m.	CC: Friends	Board Room	No	Rebecca & Deborah
April 25	8:30-9:45 a.m.	CC: Staff	Lecture Room	No	Rebecca introduces, 3 teams
April 25	1-2:15 p.m.	CC: Staff	Board Room	No	Rebecca
April 25	7-8:30 p.m.	CC: Neighborhoods east of freeway (Spanish-interpretation provided)	Bloedel Beach Pavilion	Yes	Suzanne & Janice
April 26	1:30 p.m.	CC: Downtown workers, tech workers.	Faithlife Corp.	No	Bernice & Rob (Janice set up)
April 27	1:30 p.m.-3:15 p.m.	CC: General	Lecture Room	Yes	Rebecca & Katie
April 30	6-7:45 p.m.	CC: General	Lecture Room	Yes	Suzanne & Janice
May 1	1:30-3:00 p.m.	CC: Adult basic skills (Spanish)	Goodwill training center	No	Suzanne & Bethany (Janice set up) Ask Interviews: Mandee (Farsi) & Rob (Chinese)
May 2	3-4:45 p.m.	CC: General	FH Fireplace Room	Yes	Deborah & Suzanne
May 2	7-8:30 p.m.	CC: Southside Neighborhood (Spanish-interpretation provided)	FH Fireplace Room	Yes	Bethany & Deborah (Janice set up)
May 7	10:15 a.m. - Noon	CC: General	FH Fireplace Room	Yes	Bernice & Jordan
May 8	4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.	CC: Teen/Tween	Lecture Room	Yes	Jen Lov & Bernice
May 8	7-8:30 p.m.	CC: Northside Neighborhoods (Spanish-interpretation provided)	Birchwood Elementary School Library	Yes	Julie, Mandee, Janice
May 13	3:15-4:30 p.m.	CC: People with Disabilities/Out & About group	Lecture Room	Yes (with Out & About item)	Beth & Katie
May 15	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Tabling/Ask Exercises	Eleanor Apartments	No	Deborah & Suzanne
May 16	10:15 a.m. - Noon	CC: General	Lecture Room	Yes	Katie & Mandee
May 16	4:00-5:30 p.m.	CC: Adult basic skills	Lecture Room	Yes	Rebecca & Janice
May 29	4:30-6 p.m.	CC: Early Childhood	Lecture Room	Yes	Bethany & (youth services staff)
May 30	4:30-6 p.m.	CC: Elementary Child	Lecture Room	Yes	Bethany & (youth services. staff)
June 6	4:00-5:30 p.m.	CC: Emergency preparedness/emergency management focus	Lecture Room	Yes	Suzanne & Mandee
June 9	10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.	Ask Exercise opportunity: Whatcom Youth Pride Festival	Bellingham High School	No	Lesley (tabling) & Rob (Ask)
June 13	6:30-8:30 p.m.	CC: Sterling Meadows residents (Spanish & Punjabi interpretation provided)	Sterling Meadows Apts.	No	Bethany, Julie, Janice, Bernice
June 14	9:30-11:30 a.m.	ASK Exercises: WWU	Library	No	Janice
June 18	10:30 a.m. - Noon	CC: Health access/equity	Lecture Room	Yes	Deborah & Julie
June 24	4:30-6 p.m.	CC: Business Focus	Lecture Room	Yes	Rebecca & Katie
June 25	Noon - 1:30 p.m.	CC: Technology/Digital Literacy	Encore Room/MBT	No	Deborah & Bethany (Janice set up. Hosted by TAG)
June 27	5-7 p.m.	CC: PLAAAY Board of Directors	TBD	No	Rebecca & Janice
June 28	6-9 p.m.	Ask opportunity: Birchwood International Market	Corner of Birchwood and Northwest	No	Bethany, Bernice, Mandee, Julie, Janice
June		Ask: Access to services			
June		Ask: Deaf community			
June		Ask: Civic engagement			Working w/HSDC
June		Ask: Workforce development			