



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, May 19, 2020 – Zoom Meeting
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, Jim McCabe and Vernon (Damani) Johnson

Library Staff: Rebecca Judd, Michelle Becker, Katie Bray, Bethany Hogle, Theresa Keith, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins

Others Present: Hollie Huthman, City Council Liaison; Faye Hill, Friends of BPL

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, Rick Osen.

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

Public comment: No comments.

Consent agenda: Rick noted that the April 21, 2020 minutes should be amended to note that the meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Rachel Myers rather than Rick Osen. Damani Johnson moved to approve the April 21, 2020 Regular meeting minutes as amended and the April 2020 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rachel Myers seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report: Rick reported that he and Rebecca had a Zoom meeting with Mayor Fleetwood, for their regular monthly meeting, on May 7.

Rick thanked the library staff for persevering and keeping services going in new ways.

Rick announced that Janice Keller has been appointed as the Communications Director for the City of Bellingham. He wished her well and expressed gratitude for the good work she has done for the library.

Board member reports: Rebecca Craven celebrated staff for their social media work such as publicizing storytimes and Title Tuesday. She has enjoyed watching the public reactions. Rebecca added that many people have asked her when curbside service will be available.

Jim commented that, in relation to the Department of Commerce communication in the packet, the local amateur radio organization received a request from the state to put an app on cell phones to measure wi-fi and cell coverage so they could use this information to map coverage.

City Council liaison report: Hollie suggested it is worthwhile to watch the May 18, 2020 Council meeting – Forrest Longman, Deputy Finance Director, and Andy Asbjornsen, Finance Director, provided an informative presentation about revenue projections.

Friends of BPL report: Faye reported the Friends' Board held a Zoom meeting. She expressed that the volunteers are finding it difficult to not be preparing for the next book sale – this is the way they serve the library. Between COVID-19 and the remodel plans, the Friends are in 'wait and see' mode. The Finance Committee is meeting tomorrow to look at current resources and to make a recommendation for going forward. Rachel suggested they consider an online membership drive since they can't hold a book sale. Faye will share this idea with the membership chair.

Library Director report: Rebecca also reported on the Mayor's appointment of Janice to the permanent position of Communications Director. She added that Janice will be missed and highlighted her exceptional work on the Strategic Plan, Whatcom READS, the website, as the Friends' liaison, and more. The vacant position will be posted after a job description update.

Rebecca asked if Trustees had any questions about the Director's Report and she thanked the management team for their contributions to it.

COVID-19 update: Return to work outline & Fee Schedule proposal: Rebecca screen-shared the Return to Work Plan included in the packet. Jen created this spreadsheet based on the Governor's phased reopening plan. Progression through the phases could be back and forth, rather than linear. The document will be updated as new directives come forward from the city or state. Libraries are specifically listed as able to open in phase 3, but we are hoping to get the Governor's approval to begin curbside service in phase 2. We do plan to open the book drop returns at Central in phase 2, as well as begin to pull holds and prepare for the remodel. Rebecca pointed out that Jen, Michelle and Theresa have been doing a great job of pulling together this detailed plan.

Priority is to keep health and safety first in mind for staff and patrons.

Rachel asked if there are plans in place for social distancing. Jen responded that there are – some workstations will be closed, and shifts will be staggered to keep in-the-building staff levels low. There are many details involved; Jen called it a good logistics exercise.

Rebecca screen-shared the Rates & Fees schedule with a proposed board motion. (See *Attachment #1 for Bellingham Public Library Rates and Fees schedule. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes.*) Rebecca Craven asked if staff could be overwhelmed

with requests. Rebecca Judd responded that we would not advertise this service in Phase 2 but would like to be able to handle it case by case to minimize small dollar transactions. Rick added that he asked Rebecca to consider a limit on requests if the need arises. Rebecca Craven moved that the Library Board of Trustees authorizes the Library Director to suspend the 2020 Fee Schedule as needed during the COVID-19 emergency to minimize money handling. Damani Johnson seconded. Motion carried.

Remodel update: Rick reviewed the process to date: the project went out to bid in early April and bids were due by end of day on May 4th. The bid did not include two additional items that have been rolled into the project by the city's Public Works department: a planned upgrade of the library's main elevator and improvements to the building's fire alarm system panel (brought to the library's attention during the permit process). Bids include tax, but do not include "soft" costs such as architectural and engineering fees, permits, and contingency. Furniture and equipment are also not included.

Bids were split between a base bid and 7 alternates. The base bid, which was kept at a minimum because of an unknown bid climate, includes a new staff work area on the west side of the building, restrooms on the east side, a relocated computer lab, new study rooms, a relocated SkillShare area and the teen area moved to the east side. Alternates include:

- 1) Shelving alterations, relocation of shelving within the base bid area.
- 2) New carpeting on main floor outside of base bid area.
- 3) Painting existing walls and window frames on the main floor outside of base bid area.
- 4) New ceiling tiles on main floor outside of base bid area.
- 5) New dock canopy outside door of loading dock area.
- 6) Remove existing ceiling fluorescent lights and replace with LED lights on main floor outside of base bid area.
- 7) Replace existing window glazing on the main floor.

Rick reported that 9 contractors bid on this project. Five of the companies are from Whatcom County plus one each from Snohomish, Everett, Federal Way and Tacoma. The initial look at the bids was favorable.

Rebecca and Rick met via Zoom on May 12 with Eric Johnston, Public Works Director, three of his staff members, and Forrest Longman, Deputy Finance Director. Available budget was compared with the low base bid plus all alternates. This includes uncertain prices for the elevator and fire alarm upgrades. Funds for this project derive from budget lines that can only be used for capital work (REET), thus is relatively unaffected by prospects for the operating budget due to virus-caused reductions in city's revenues. Eric, Forrest and the others are very supportive of trying to do all this project (including the alternates), so will be analyzing how to supplement current budget to cover it. No final numbers are currently available.

The city has notified Tiger Construction of the intent to award contract. They are the most responsive low bidder (besides price costs, the bid also includes meeting a variety of other stipulations and qualifications that must be met for Public Works projects). Approval for the project, including the additional funding (REET) for all alternates and the elevator and fire panel upgrade, will be placed before the City Council for their meeting on June 8.

Rachel asked if the replaced windows would be able to open so that fresh air can circulate. Rick believes this is the case but will review the documents to be sure.

Rebecca Judd added that she or Rick will send out an update after the June 8 Council meeting.

2021-2022 Budget update: Rick commented that there is much uncertainty surrounding the City's operating budget. Budget increases are off the board for now and we need to determine how to handle any possible cuts.

Rebecca said that the May 18 Council meeting video is worth watching, it provides a good overview of how the City is funded and what the current projections are. The Mayor alerted Department Heads that the City is preparing for reductions in spending in 2021-2022. Rebecca has received budget instructions that outline the process – we have some thinking and number crunching to do. Rebecca anticipates providing a full report to the Board in June.

Library Giving Day update: Rebecca reported the first Library Giving Day was held on April 23 and we raised \$1,683.00 to be used for the new mobile hotspot lending program. Rebecca thanked Jon for managing this project. Rebecca also thanked Rachel and Whatcom Community Foundation for the significant work they did building the infrastructure for this program. Janice Keller worked on this, as well as Laura Johanson, from Straightup Communications. Rachel added that we hope to raise more next year. Rebecca Craven asked how far this amount will go. Rebecca Judd responded that we think it will fund 10 hotspots for 1 year, but we are still reaching out to mobile carriers for pricing and determining if there are additional funds available.

Summer Reading update: Bethany provided information about this year's program which will run June 1 – September 30, 2020:

SUMMER READING 2020 GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

- Inspires a joy of reading.
- Gets books into the hands of children and teens.
- Sparks joy among library staff.
- Appeals to those who feel reading isn't for them.
- Reinforces that reading is fun.
- Is accessible and reduces barriers to participation and goal achievement.
- Inspires youth and adults to take ownership of their reading and learning.

Summer Reading 2020 has a theme: Imagine Your Story. Summer Reading is again using a bingo card format, with four separate bingo cards designed with the following age groups in mind:

- Early Learning (ages birth – 5 years)
- Kids (grades K – 6)
- Teens (grades 7-12)
- Adults

The Library encourages participants to choose the card that appeals to them. The bingo card squares are merely content suggestions; participants can use them or change them to whatever they'd like. Youth participants are encouraged to set their own reading or listening goal. We ask adults to complete five bingo squares.

This year, bingo cards will be available in English, and translated in Spanish, Punjabi and Russian. Thank you to WCLS for the translation work. Bingo cards will be available online on June 1 through the website. The Library will distribute physical bingo cards through curbside pickup as well as educational and social service community partners.

We've aligned Summer Reading with the library's and the state's phased Return to Work plan. Summer Reading during phases 1 and 2 will be about promoting the program and encouraging people to read or listen. In phase 3 we will be able to distribute free books to kids and take names for prize drawing entries for adults.

New Business:

- Rebecca Judd announced that she and Hollie are involved in a new project called Peoples' Perspectives. This project provides the opportunity for everyone to share their experience of this time in whatever medium they choose. The committee is currently working on a website that will be a central repository to collect the perspectives. The plan is to launch the website by early next week. Hollie added that we will appreciate this archive in the future.
- Jim reported that Western has been offering good webinars during this time, generally on Friday mornings. He asked if the library could make them available on our website. Rebecca Judd responded that we can put a link on our COVID page and thanked Jim for the suggestion.

Action items for next meeting:

- Budget updates
- Remodel updates

Meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – June 16, 2020 at the Zoom online – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: Bellingham Public Library Rates and Fees

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY RATES and FEES
Effective January 1, 2020

Library Rates and Fees are set by the Library Board of Trustees		
Description	Fee	
Fees		
Non-Resident borrower fee	\$52/year	
Senior Non-Resident borrower fee	\$26/year	
Visitor fee	\$5/month	
Photocopies/Print copies		
Black and White	.15/page	
Color	.50/page	
Lost and Damaged Library Materials	replacement cost	
Collections fee	\$10	
Facility use rates		
Fairhaven Branch Auditorium		
Specialty uses by non-commercial groups with pre-existing agreements	\$25/hour	
<p>Proposed Motion: the Library Board of Trustees authorizes the Library Director to suspend the 2020 Fee Schedule as needed during the COVID-19 emergency to minimize money handling.</p>		