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, Rebecca Craven, Jim McCabe and Vernon (Damani) Johnson

**Board Members Absent:** Rachel Myers

**Library Staff:** Rebecca Judd, Jon McConnel, Jennifer (Jen) Vander Ploeg, Deborah Brewer, Bernice Chang, Katie Bray and Wendy Jenkins

**Others Present:** Hollie Huthman, City Council Liaison; Chris Johnsen, Friends of Bellingham Public Library

**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair Rick Osen. Chris Johnsen was welcomed and introduced as the Friends of Bellingham Public Library representative.

**Approve/modify agenda:** Rebecca Craven moved to approve the agenda. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

**Public comment:** No emails.

**Consent agenda:** Jim clarified that in his board member report, it should read “in the last Cordata Neighborhood Association newsletter” rather than “at the last Cordata Neighborhood Association virtual meeting.” Rebecca Judd mentioned that the financial reports have been adjusted slightly to work more cohesively together. Jim commented that he thinks the heading change is an improvement. Noting the unused salaries and benefits due to vacancies, Rick asked Rebecca Judd if City Administration has given any instruction on funds left over at year end. Rebecca responded the City has not given any formal instruction, but the anticipated revenue reduction points to a return of funds to the City. Jim McCabe moved to approve the July 21, 2020 Regular meeting minutes as amended and the July 2020 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.
Board Chair report: Rick reported that, according to Board of Trustee bylaws, the Board oversees hiring and evaluating the Director. The Personnel Committee, Rick and Rebecca Craven, met and determined it was best to skip an evaluation this year because of disruptive circumstances. A 2-year review will be conducted in 2021.

Board member reports: Jim announced that the Cordata Neighborhood Association will be holding a Zoom meeting on September 8. He asked Rebecca Judd if she has received an invitation as the Association would like to hear about library plans. He added that the Transportation Fund is on the agenda. Rebecca responded that she hasn’t yet received a Zoom meeting invitation.

Damani announced that the final (4th) City and County hosted listening series on race and justice is today from 5:00-7:00. The Whatcom Human Rights Task Force, which Damani is involved with, is collaborating on these sessions. Citizens can join the Zoom meeting if they would like an opportunity to speak. The sessions can also be streamed or watched afterward on YouTube. As a result of this listening series, a proposal has been made to develop a group or committee task force. Damani suggested the Library could have a voice on this task force as discussions about systemic racism are about more than just police.

City Council liaison report: Hollie reiterated Damani’s listening series announcement, calling the series helpful, saying that people are being brave and sharing their stories. Hollie added that ideas are starting to percolate, such as an Equity Commission.

Friends of Bellingham Public Library report: Chris reported that the Friends have been meeting virtually each month and have been brainstorming different ways and ideas to raise funds and remain visible. One way they have raised funds is by asking members to pay their dues and make donations. To remain visible, they are partnering with the Food Bank – bagging children’s books to distribute with food. Chris added that the Friends have been highlighting information from the Library website in their email newsletters.

Library Director report: Rebecca spotlighted a few items from her Director’s Report:

- The Library launched a new Wi-Fi hotspot lending program in August. Rebecca thanked Jon for his work on this project. Ten devices are currently in circulation, funded through Library Giving Day donations. Additional hotspots, funded by the Friends, have arrived and are being processed. The contract for Verizon hotspots, funded through the CARES act, is in process.
- The Library will be partnering with Monica Koller of Connecting Community, LLC, to document the stories of Black (African American) lives in Whatcom County as part of Peoples’ Perspectives: COVID-19 in Whatcom County. Monica’s plan is to create five 3-5-minute digital stories.
- As part of Peoples’ Perspectives: COVID-19 in Whatcom County, Washington iSchool student Robin Sheasley just completed a Directed Fieldwork project that investigated best practices for digital archiving. Rebecca hopes Robin can continue her efforts with a Capstone Project this fall.

Rebecca reported that the Institute of Museum and Library Services released the third set of test results today from Battelle lab – after 5 days there were still traces of the virus on some
materials. Bellingham Public Library is working with other libraries in the state to interpret the results.

Rebecca invited questions about her Director’s Report:

- Jim asked Jon to clarify his report comment about the SimplyE patron authentication issue and expand on his “wild acclaim” comment concerning Polaris upgrade functions:
  - In response to Jim’s first question, Jon said we have a small number of vendors whose systems communicate with our ILS using a method that, when used in its default mode, doesn’t encrypt the traffic. Overdrive is one of these vendors. Library Simplified wants to use the same authentication method as Overdrive, to make the patron experience between SimplyE and Libby/Overdrive as alike as possible. The Library is working with Overdrive and III to implement an encryption method between their systems so that Library Simplified will start off by encrypting their traffic, too.
  - In response to Jim’s second question, Jon replied that the “wild acclaim” concerned the ability to change the pick-up location or cancel a request while it is in transit, as well as the ability to suspend or reactivate multiple requests at one time using the web interface.

- Rebecca Craven asked how the hotspot lending was going: Jon responded that currently 6 of the 10 hotspots are either checked out or in transit. We haven’t advertised them yet other than a card on our homepage because we only have 10 available for circulation. We plan to match our marketing with the number of devices available.

- Damani asked Rebecca Judd how Monica Koller is determining who to interview for the Peoples’ Perspectives digital stories: Rebecca responded that Monica is currently setting up a process based on a Stanford University digital storytelling process. She offered to connect Damani and Monica to discuss further.

**Phase 2 update:** Rebecca announced that on August 10 we launched Curbside 2.0, an appointment-based model for next/future day service. Staff are still very busy with over 300 pick-ups a day, but it is a controlled-busy. On the public side, pick-up is simpler with only one phone call and a more organized queue. Rebecca added that we are looking into automating some features such as clicking on a website link to make an appointment.

Jen explained the streamlined changes have resulted in a reduction in Curbside phone calls – from 700-1400 per day to about 500. This does not include the additional 100-130 patron phone calls we receive through the Help Desk. The appointment-based model has spread the workload throughout the day.

Rebecca added that we continue to expand shelving for holds.

**Facilities update:**
• Barkley Branch: Rebecca Judd touched base today with Neal Swanson from Barkley Company – the lease agreement is being reviewed by Barkley’s attorney and should be forwarded to us sometime next week.

• Central construction update: Rebecca thanked Jen for her management of this project including meeting weekly with Tiger Construction, Public Works and Facilities staff and providing staff with a weekly email update. Jen screen-shared pictures showing the progression of the remodel (See Attachment #1 for Construction update photos. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes). Jen explained that the construction workers wrap up by 3:30 p.m. so that staff have access to pull requests and shelve books.

Urban Libraries Council statement on race and social equity: Rebecca Judd read the statement which was included in the Board packet. The petition process to sign the statement involves answering a series of questions. Rebecca screen-shared the statement questions and the answers developed so far (See Attachment #2 for Urban Libraries Council statement on Race and Social Equity question).

Jim noted that there is a lot of commonality between this statement and what we heard in the Community Conversations which we built into the Strategic Plan. The values of our Strategic Plan are consistent with the Council statement.

Damani suggested adding REACH to the answer to question #6 about collaboration with local organizations on race and social equity.

All Board members supported Rebecca continuing the petition process. Rebecca added that, if our petition is approved, the statement will be posted on our website.

2021-2022 Budget update: Rebecca Judd reported that the department budget meetings with the Mayor have not been scheduled yet. The meetings should happen in the next 2-3 weeks. City Council will receive the budget proposal on October 1.

Board Trustee recruitment: Rick pointed out that Rachel’s term will be over in December, after serving for nearly 11 years. The Personnel Committee met with Rebecca Judd to organize the recruitment. The upcoming vacancy will be posted on the City’s website page used for all City boards and commissions. Instructions and the application are also located on this website. The rough timeline is:

- August 24 – post the vacancy
- October 2 – application deadline
- October 3-19 – Personnel Committee will review applications; information will be shared with other Trustees
- October 20 – Executive Session to approve recommendation to Mayor
- October 21 – forward recommendation to Mayor
- Early December – hopefully candidate will be approved by Mayor and Council
- December 15 – invite the new Trustee to attend the December Board meeting

Rick also mentioned the possibility of a virtual ‘party’ to honor Rachel’s years of service, commenting that she has been a valuable trustee for 11 years.
New Business:
• Open discussion regarding long-term funding and fundraising at October Board meeting

Action items for next meeting:
• Phase 2 update
• Facilities update
• 2021-2022 Budget update
• Board Trustee recruitment

Meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – September 15, 2020 – Zoom meeting – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST
Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:
• Attachment #1: Construction update photos
• Attachment #2: Urban Libraries Council statement on Race and Social Equity questions
We had a bit of clutter to move.....

Dismantling and surplussing
View without computers and bookshelves

Where the materials sorter will be placed
Where the copiers used to stand and walls removed from office area

Dust walls to protect the entrance
New holds shelving

looking towards the new restroom space
We've found creative places to put things for now….

A corner of the Dodson Room
1. How is your library eliminating racial and social equity barriers in its programs, services, policies and practices?

- Diverse and inclusive collections reflective of community
- Borrower policies rewritten to be more inclusive
- Elimination of overdue fines
- Partner with public schools to give each student a Library card
- Blind application review for new positions (new)
- WiFi access in Central and Fairhaven parking lot
- Hotspot lending program
- Intentional focus on diversity and inclusion in storytimes

2. How is your library creating and maintaining an environment of diversity, inclusion and respect both in the library system and in all aspects of the library’s community role?

- REACH training for all Library staff and regular follow-up meetings to discuss next steps
- Ryan Dowd training for all staff
- Translation of summer reading card and other key documents into multiple languages
- Curbside pickup instructions in American Sign Language

3. How is your library serving as a convener and facilitator of conversations and partnerships to address community challenges?

- Community Conversation model for strategic planning
- Convener: Peoples’ Perspectives: COVID-19 in Whatcom County
- Participation in Census Complete Count planning

4. How is your library ensuring that it is reaching and engaging disenfranchised people in the community and helping them express their voice?

- Digital storytelling project
- Drop-in Center regular visits
- Community Conversations: intentional outreach to voices not always heard

5. How is your library being forthright on tough issues that are important to our communities?

- Anti-racist reading list with many digital titles always-available (no holds)
- Making space for and supporting George Floyd memorial

6. Does your library collaborate with national or local organizations on race and social equity? (If yes, please share the top three partners.)

   - Opportunity Council
   - REACH