



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, October 20, 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.

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- Board Members Present:** Rick Osen, Rachel Myers, Rebecca Craven, and Jim McCabe
- Board Members Absent:** Vernon (Damani) Johnson
- Library Staff:** Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Bethany Hoglund, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins
- Others Present:** 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. Rick welcomed Annette, the new Head of Community Relations.

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

**Public comment:** No comments.

**Consent agenda:** Referencing the YTD report, Rick inquired if the funds for the automated materials handler (AMH) are included in the Supplies line under Expenses. Rebecca responded that the funding for the sorter is included in the Capital Outlays line. Rebecca Craven, referencing the State Library of Oregon article concerning handling library materials during COVID-19, asked if we would be reevaluating our quarantine time. Rebecca responded that we are following up with the Whatcom County Health Department. Jim McCabe moved to approve the September 15, 2020 Regular meeting minutes and the September 2020 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

**Board Chair report:** Rick read aloud *A Resolution Commending the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library* in honor of National Friends of Library Week, October 18-24, 2020 (See Attachment #1. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes). The Trustees approved the resolution by acclamation.

Rick reported that six applicants were interviewed for the upcoming trustee vacancy, adding they were strong group and it was heartwarming to see such library support in the community.

Rick passed on information Damani provided about next week's Ralph Munro Seminar – *Institutional Stress in an Era of Pandemic*:

<https://chss.wvu.edu/political-science/ralph-munro-seminar-civic-education>

**Board member reports:** Jim reported that Mayor Fleetwood attended last Tuesday's virtual Cordata Neighborhood Association meeting, where he fielded questions about northside services. Jim shared at the meeting that Rebecca has done a good job listening and communicating with the neighborhood association.

**City Council liaison report:** no report.

**Friends of BPL report:** Faye reported the Friends will be holding a Zoom Board Meeting on Wednesday, October 21. They are considering a bookmark contest, plus working on another Food Bank book giveaway, as they continue their efforts to keep the Friends' name out in the community.

**Library Director report:** Rebecca extended a welcome to Annette on behalf of the staff.

Rebecca commended Jon for his work on the Verizon hotspot lending program – 20 devices funded with the CARES Act are now circulating. Jon acknowledge the work ITSD and the Collection Services staff contributed to this project. Rebecca shared that a library in Iowa requested permission to use the instruction materials Jon developed.

Rebecca gave a shout-out to another group project – ConnectED is a collaboration with the Bellingham School District that provides a limited use library card to all Bellingham students. There is a limit to checking out physical items, but students have access to all digital resources.

Jim asked Jon if he had received feedback from the AMH company about the sample materials we sent to them. Jon has not heard from them yet.

Rebecca Craven thanked staff for their efforts to get the MyLibro app, for curbside service, ready to launch.

**Phase 2 update:** Rebecca reported that the MyLibro app has been vetted by IT and Purchasing. The vendor is working to update the software with our specifications. We are hoping it will be up and running before next month's board meeting.

Outreach services: Colleen Morse, Outreach Specialist, has been communicating with the assisted living and long-term care facilities we provide service to. Typically, we deliver and pickup materials, but cannot do that currently. Jen has recently visited each facility to pick up items that were delivered prior to COVID-19. Colleen is arranging for the selection of materials and coordinating with facility staff to pick up using curbside service.

Rebecca reported that Governor Inslee has issued new orders concerning libraries, including opening at 25% with stringent COVID-19 procedures in place. Rebecca explained we are considering options and she requested the Board provide a consensus on direction, then staff can take that direction and work through the details. We will coordinate reopening with other city departments. Elements to consider:

- Expanding at Central during construction would be challenging, so proposal is to maintain curbside service
- There are many variables for opening branches for browsing, staffing being a concern
- Recommendation to prioritize exploring limited public computer access at Fairhaven Branch to better serve those without computer access

Rachel clarified that the suggestion is we use the 25% capacity at the branches exclusively for computer access. Jim added this would be a reasonable place to start – an internet café at one of the branches. Rebecca Craven asked how the computers are currently configured as social distancing can be a challenge. Faye asked if we know what WCLS is planning. Rebecca responded that their intent is to open branches at 25%. Rick suggested we find out if there are other city facilities where we could set up computer access. Rebecca added that, for health and safety, there is less risk when people are not in an enclosed space for long periods. Rick supported exploring options but advised against overstretching staff.

#### **Facilities update:**

- Barkley Licensing Agreement: Rick reported that there was a question about custodial service; Barkley has now offered to absorb the cost through 2021. Rebecca heard from Neal Swanson from Barkley Company today, who conveyed the agreement is finalized and ready for signatures.
- Central Library main floor remodel: Jen screen-shared pictures showing recent progress on the remodel (*See Attachment #2 for Highlights from the Main floor remodel*).

Rebecca said the project was still on track to be completed near the end of February. Jen added that there were COVID-related delays with the manufacture of the elevator car, but it is expected to ship mid-December. The anticipated AMH arrival date is December 8.

**Annual Action Plan 2020 update:** Rebecca gave an update on the 2020 Action Plan which included COVID-19-related changes (*See Attachment #3 for Library 2020 Action Plan update*). Tasks that have been creatively accomplished, despite COVID complications, have been highlighted.

**Budget update:** Rick explained that City Council is holding weekly afternoon department budget meetings. At this week's meeting, Rebecca presented the Library Budget PowerPoint covering 2019-2020 Department Achievements, the 2021-2022 Proposed Budget, 2021-2022 Budget Changes, and a 2021-2022 Work Plan (*See Attachment #4*). Rick commented that Council members were curious about what the Library is doing. Rick summarized that, all things considered, we should feel good about the budget. We have three frozen positions, staff furloughs are being negotiated, but no staff layoffs. The final 2021-2022 budget will be passed by Council in December.

**Fundraising discussion:** Rick explained that sustainable funding options, such as increasing the General Fund or a levy to supplement the General Fund, were considered in the BERK Bellingham Public Library Services and Funding Models Study completed in 2018. The focus of today's meeting is to discuss private fundraising ideas. Typically, there are restrictions with private donations such as not using them for operations. Private donations are ideal for one-time funding projects.

Rachel facilitated the discussion, starting with providing some context:

- We have the Friends of the Library who provide consistent contributions for programming and some materials.
- We have the endowed funds at Whatcom Community Foundation (WCF) – the yearly distributions from these funds are unrestricted. The Bragg-Muldrow Endowment Fund will begin distributing in 2021; this will be a significant distribution.
- Library Giving Day was held for the first time this year with a focused project – circulating hotspot devices and service. We could continue with this yearly fundraiser, choosing a priority from the Action Plan to dedicate the funds to.
- Another impactful focus can be promoting bequests.

Rachel suggested we consider choosing a priority that we could focus fundraising efforts around.

Jim mentioned another fundraising method is to get your name on something such as bricks on the Fairhaven Green or Pickford Theatre seats, wondering if the remodel provides any such opportunities. Rachel commented that, in her experience, this was difficult to manage.

Rachel added another way to provide donor recognition is bringing stories to life surrounding donations.

Rebecca Craven stated it's important to determine what role trustees will play and what role staff will play. She felt strongly that, as a governing board, trustee expectation should not include donating. Rebecca added that Library Giving Day should be built up and developed as a yearly project; perhaps a blast about planned giving could be incorporated into Library Giving Day. She also stressed the importance of determining what we are asking for – to increase materials, or build an endowment, or something for the northside?

Rick agreed that we need to first prioritize before determining the fundraising method. A big-ticket item could be something like Central Library upgrades. For that, a citizen committee would be helpful. Rick also thinks that the programming support the Friends provide is important. He suggested that the library stay involved in helping people be successful in the world, perhaps providing speakers and workshops to effectively pull the community together. Rachel recalled that 'belonging' and 'connections' were often mentioned in the Community Conversation sessions from Strategic Planning, adding we could plan virtual events with authors or speakers. Rick said that special events like this also provide an easy way to recognize donors.

Jon commented that, as an employee of a city government, he doesn't want to lose sight of a steady funding stream, such as a taxing district or levy. Jim pointed out an example of this is the Transportation Fund on this November's ballot.

Rachel suggested we revisit fundraising at next month's meeting, choosing a focused project for Library Giving Day, April 2021.

**New Business:**

- No new business

**Action items for next meeting:**

- Phase 2 update
- Facilities update
- Fundraising follow-up

**Executive Session:** The Board went into Executive Session at 5:07 p.m. to determine a recommendation to the Mayor, for the upcoming Trustee vacancy. The group decided on a candidate to recommend. They returned to Regular session at 5:18 p.m.

**Meeting adjourned** at 5:18 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – November 17, 2020 – Zoom meeting at 3:30 p.m.**

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

**Attachments:**

- Attachment #1: A Resolution Commending the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library
- Attachment #2: Highlights from the Main floor remodel
- Attachment #3: Library 2020 Action Plan Update
- Attachment #4: Library Budget Presentation



**A Resolution Commending the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library  
October 2020**

**Whereas**, the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library is an all-volunteer non-profit organization, dedicated to their mission of supporting and advocating for our library; and

**Whereas**, the Friends raise money for library needs, sponsor programs for all ages, encourage community support for the library, and support literacy by making free reading materials available and offering inexpensive materials at regular book sales; and,

**Whereas**, our Friends' long-time support of the Bellingham Public Library is an example of the vital role volunteers play in our community; and

**Whereas**, our Friends' dedication is a demonstration of their commitment to the library and the library's mission to connect our community with each other and the world; and,

**Whereas**, our Friends in recent years have funded adult and children's books, summer reading programs, Whatcom READS and other special events, online language-learning subscriptions and other online services, furnishings and audio-visual improvements in library facilities, and much more; and

**Whereas**, many improvements and enhancements in our library have only been possible because of the support provided by our Friends; and

**Whereas**, we join libraries across the nation in celebrating their strongest and most dedicated supporters -- their Friends organizations -- during National Friends of Libraries Week October 18-24, 2020 and throughout October 2020.

**Now, therefore, be it resolved that** the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees joins the library staff and the Bellingham community to commend our Friends of the Bellingham Public Library and urges everyone to join us thanking the Friends for all they do.

**Passed by Library Board action this 20<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2020.**

*Rick Osen, Chair*

*Rachel Myers, Vice-Chair*

*Rebecca Craven*

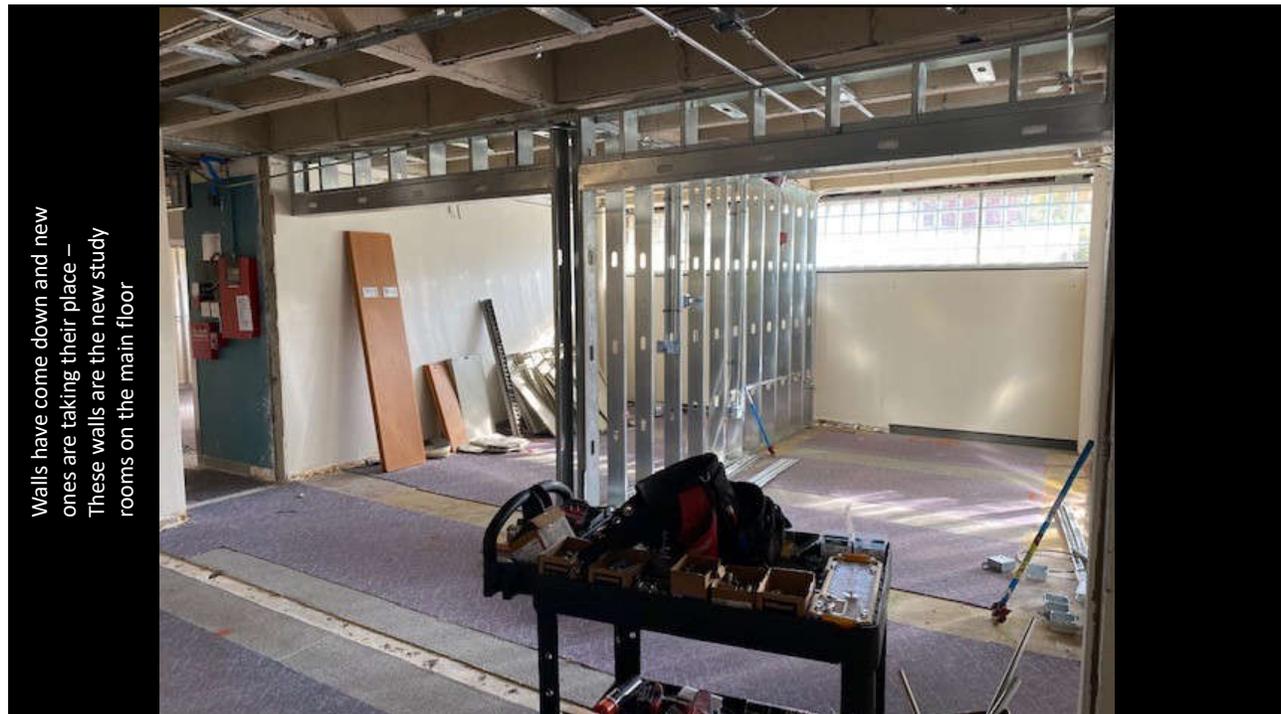
*Jim McCabe*

*Damani Johnson*

## Highlights from the Main floor remodel

- Walls are starting to take shape
- Electrical going into the floor next
- The paint colors so far are a lovely update
- The library is going to be so much brighter with new light fixtures

1



2

This will be the opening between the front entry area and the library to allow better visual access

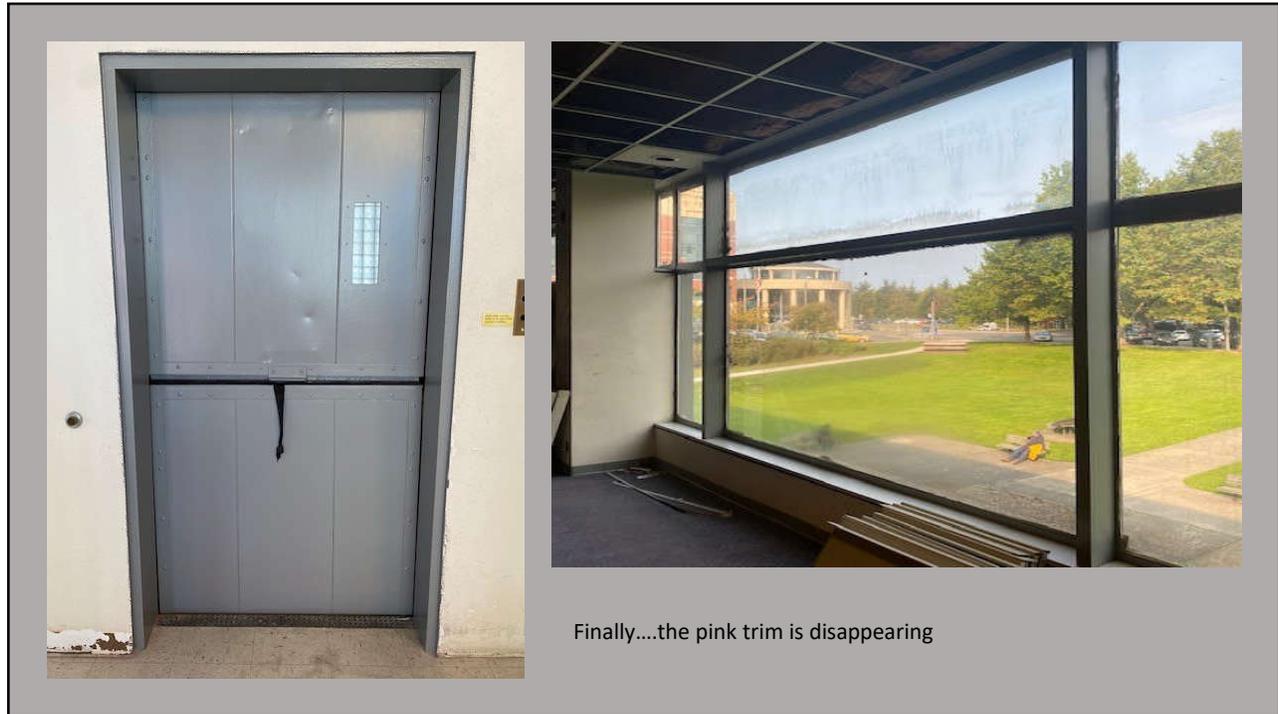


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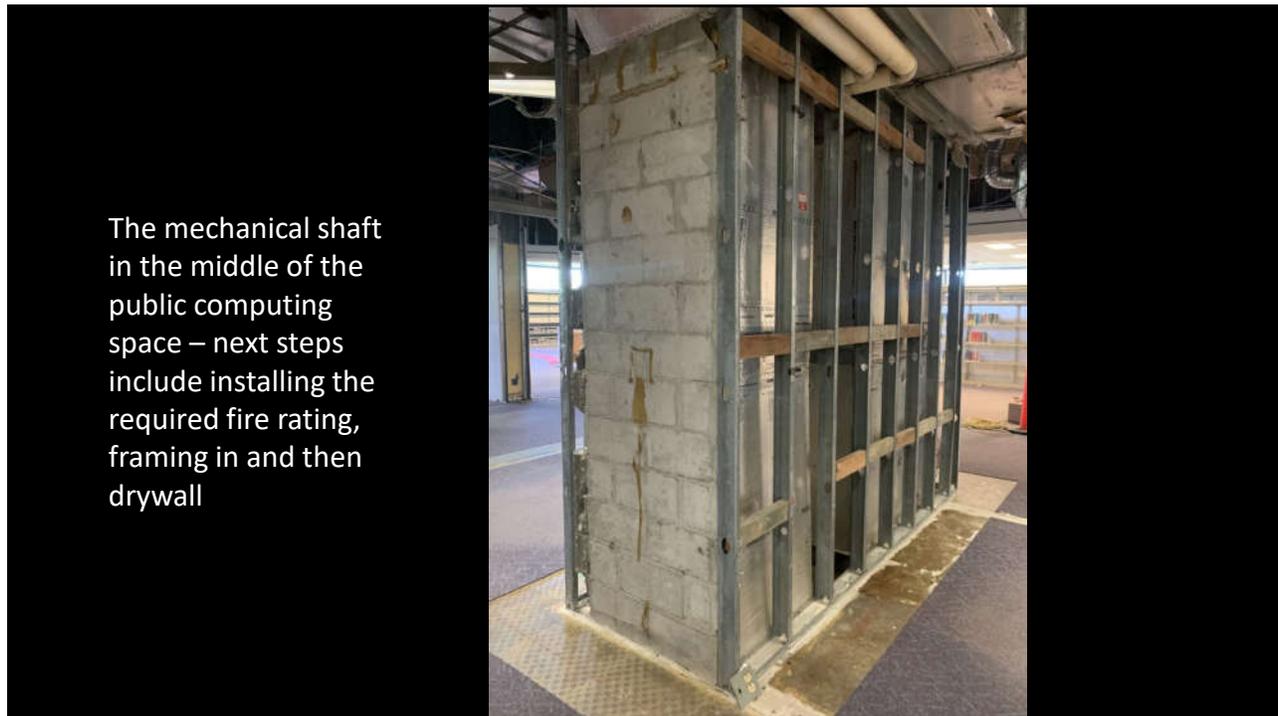
Main floor seating area - being prepped for new electrical in the floor



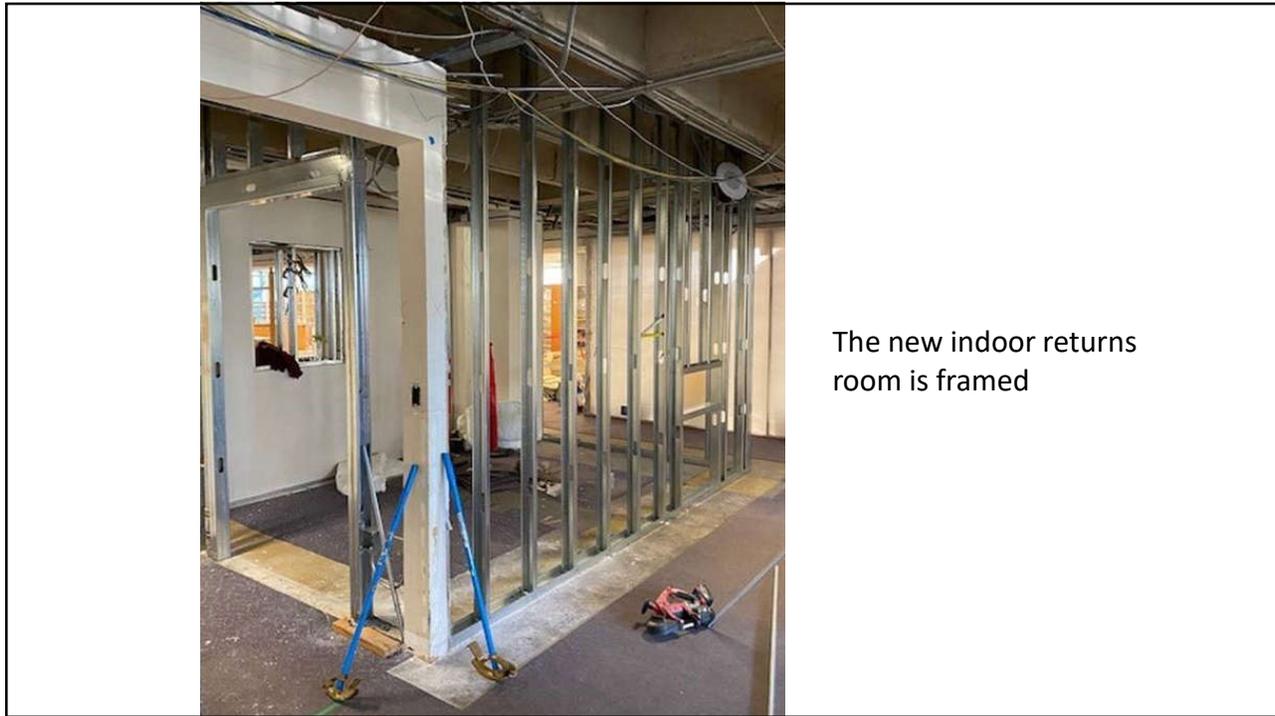
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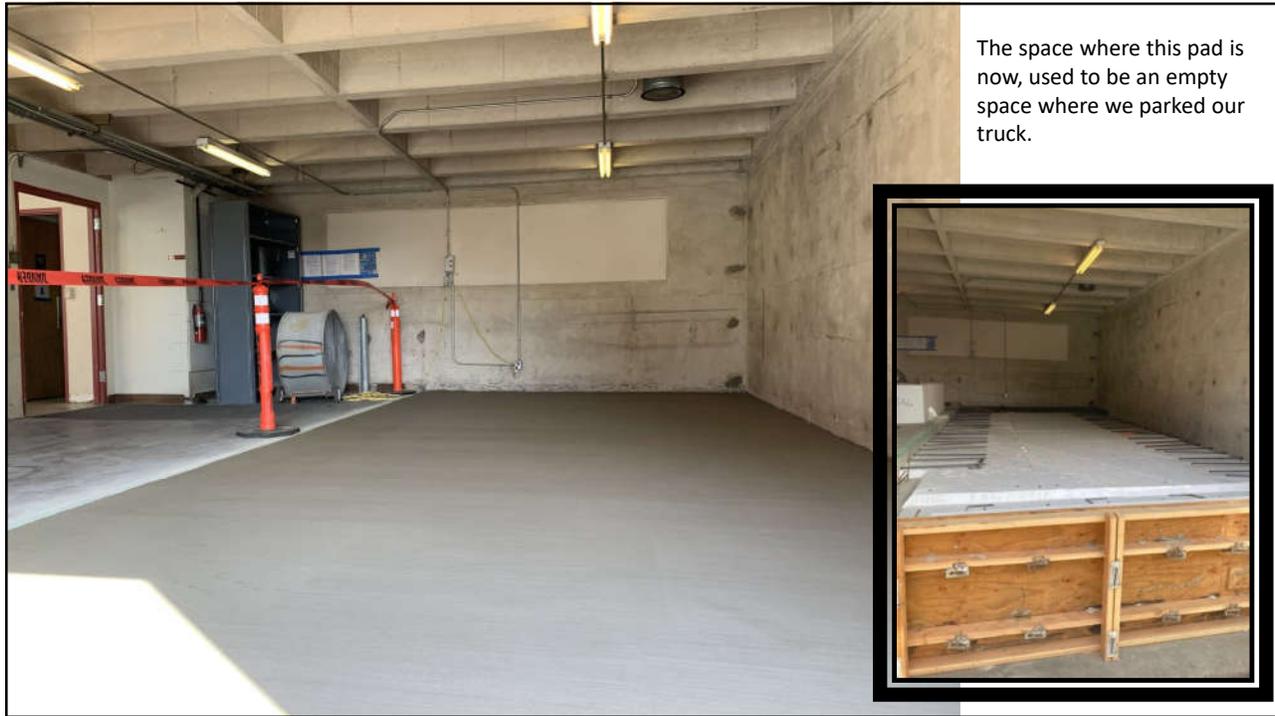
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7



8



9



10

**A hole in the roof!**

This is in preparation for the new roof top HVAC unit that will be installed in the west end staff area.



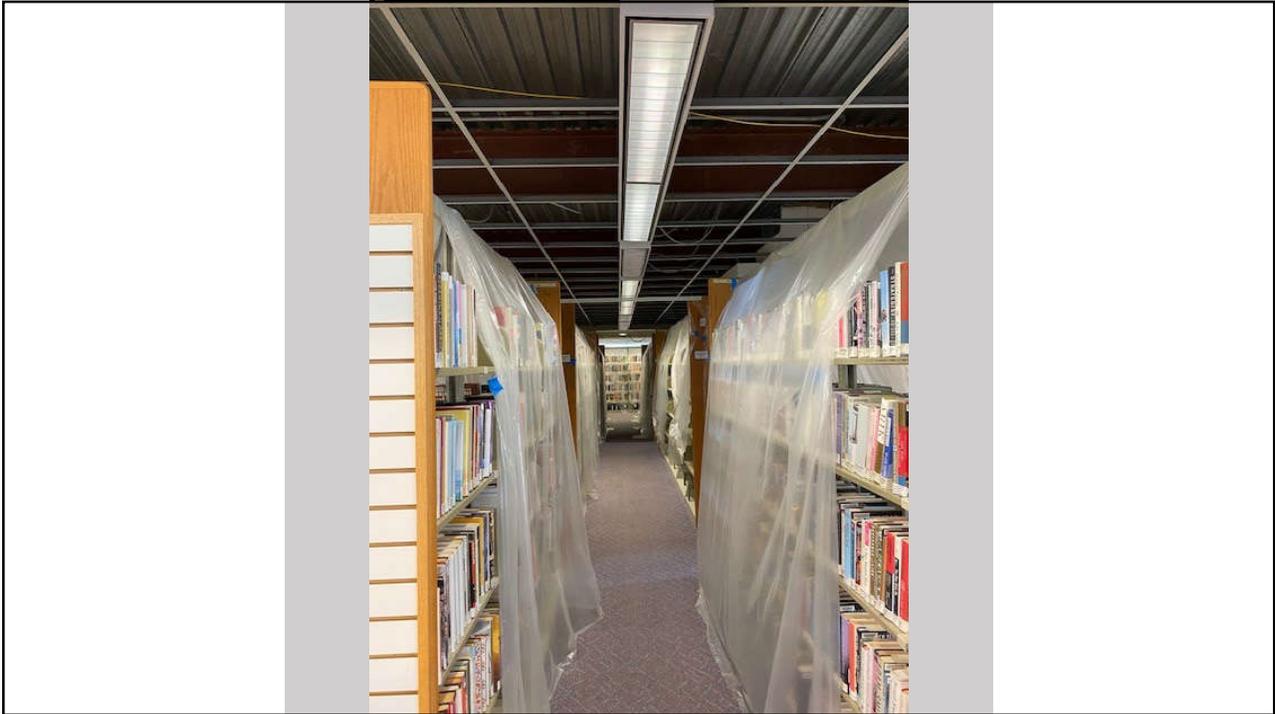
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New light fixtures - so much brighter than the old fixtures

Piles of new lights to go in



12



13

# LIBRARY 2020 ACTION PLAN UPDATE



**WELCOME & INCLUDE**  
We offer welcoming, safe places and experiences, where connections and understanding flourish.



**ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY**  
We connect people with opportunities and resources to solve problems and help them achieve their aspirations.



**READ & LEARN**  
We inspire a lifetime of reading, learning, curiosity, and discovery.



**INFORM & INVOLVE**  
We provide information and activities to stay abreast of community issues and events, fostering informed, active participation in civic life.



**THRIVE & GROW**  
We are a valued community partner and trusted city service, playing a central role in Bellingham life.

**PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, OCTOBER 20, 2020**



1

# ACTION PLAN 2020

**WE ARE:**

- Issuing an estimated 25 new library cards each day and orienting these new patrons to library services.
- Opening our doors at three locations to welcome an estimated 2,218 visits each day.
- Giving babies a new board book at birth. *(with partner agencies)*
- Bringing people together to share and learn with free, drop-in SkillShare activities.



**WELCOME & INCLUDE**

- Offering collections for adults who are learning to read in English.
- Hosting conversation classes for adults who are learning to speak in English *(with partner agency)*
- Making meeting rooms available for not-for-profit public uses during library open hours.
- Providing staff training in CPR, youth safety, and service to those experiencing homelessness.



2

# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE WILL:

- Develop a new library card that is easier to use for patrons and staff.
- Reorganize the Central Library main floor to be more accessible and comfortable for people of all abilities.
- Develop phasing plan for main floor remodel that prioritizes open hours for and minimizes disruptions to Library service.

## WELCOME & INCLUDE

- Continue to build our welcoming, diverse, customer-focused team with each hiring process.
- Develop a plan for translating printed and digital publications.
- Add a Spanish language option for the interface of our online catalog.



3

# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE WILL (continued):

- Foster gathering and interaction at the library with improvements to our study rooms and SkillShare spaces.
- Plan and implement new wayfinding on Central Library main floor to orient Library patrons to collections, services, and spaces.
- Pilot new communications tools to promote library services and initiatives to new audiences.

## WELCOME & INCLUDE

- Update our Barkley Branch agreements and improve management of existing library services and reading room space.
- Refine winter weather procedures to better coordinate and focus operations.
- Provide staff training opportunities in safety procedures and racial equity.



4

# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE ARE:

- Eliminating overdue fines and waiving fine balances to remove barriers to service.
- Hosting an estimated 224 public computer sessions each day in our three locations.
- Providing technology coaching for people seeking to improve basic technology skills.
- Providing materials selection and delivery to 14 care facilities.
- Offering online services via our website, which gets an estimated 1,812 visits a day.
- Hosting lunch-time book clubs once a month at four Bellingham middle schools.

## ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

- Providing library services at Lighthouse Mission Drop-In Center to offer resources to people experiencing homelessness.
- Allowing Bellingham Public Schools students to use student ID cards as library cards.
- Reaching out to teens and young adults at the juvenile detention center, treatment facilities and other youth services facilities.
- Visiting seven childcare, preschool, and early learning classrooms each month.



5

# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE WILL:

- Complete project to eliminate overdue fines, including updating patron records and staff procedures, and continuing publicity.
- Update Eligibility for Library Service and Confidentiality policies to ensure equitable access and privacy for all patrons.
- Redesign garage as part of remodel to increase efficient delivery of off-site materials and services.

## ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

- Participate in community events that reach priority audiences.
- Explore joint loan limits with Whatcom County Library System to provide simplified, consistent access to materials.
- Update our damaged item procedures to ensure equitable access to materials.
- Evaluate options for updating Library account information online and implement improvements.



6

# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE ARE:

- Filling an estimated 1,699 hold requests on a typical day.
- Checking out, checking in, and re-shelving an estimated 5,475 books, DVDs, and other items on a typical day.
- Hosting Bellingham Reads, an evening book discussion group for adults.
- Inviting thousands of people of all ages to participate in Summer Reading and celebrating more than 1,500 youth finishers each year.

## READ & LEARN

- Hosting 19 Storytime sessions each week for children ages birth to 8 years old.
- Planning, co-hosting, and publicizing events for Whatcom READS 2020, our area's premier literary series (*with partners*)
- Training all staff in "Reading Conversations."
- Providing regularly updated reading lists through the BiblioCommons catalog.



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# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE WILL:

- Select an automated materials handler and manage delivery, installation, and staff training.
- Reorganize and interfile collections as part of main floor remodel to improve access and usability.
- Identify new areas to display Library collections as part of the main floor remodel.

## READ & LEARN

- Evaluate collection use and develop a proposed 2021 materials budget.
- Evaluate branch collections and implement improvements for refreshing materials.
- Evaluate interlibrary loan service and implement changes to improve access.



8

# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE WILL *(continued)*:

- Host Summer Reading 2020 for all ages and begin planning for 2021 (*with partners*).
- Complete Whatcom READS 2020 events and plan, co-host, and publicize Whatcom READS 2021 (*with partners*).
- Add a "Happy Go Lucky" collection at the Central Library.
- Evaluate and enhance our book club kit system and outreach to book club members.



9

# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE ARE:

- Answering an estimated 399 patron questions on a typical day.
- Providing timely, accurate information about library services, events, and issues via our website and social media sites.
- Providing e-newsletters highlighting library services to preschool and elementary school teachers.
- Providing comprehensive Board meeting packets in preparation for monthly meetings.
- Actively engaged as members of city committees and community groups.
- Distributing monthly events listings to media and stakeholders, and providing paper and electronic calendars of events, highlighting free programs and activities.



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# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE WILL:

- Provide comprehensive information about the 2020 U.S. Census and host Questionnaire Assistance Centers.
- Publish and distribute our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan to stakeholders and offer presentations to groups.
- Keep library patrons informed about plans, progress, and any service impacts during Central Library main floor remodel.
- Participate in the City's broadband strategies.
- Migrate board packets to new document management platform to simplify preparation and improve user experience.
- Present State of the Library report to City Council during National Library Week.
- Orient Mayor, new City Council member, and Council Liaison to Library services.



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# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE ARE:

- Reviewing our organizational structure and identifying opportunities and gaps.
- Maintaining connections with city colleagues and community groups.
- Orienting our staff schedules to meet priority needs and provide strong public services at our three locations.
- Collecting, interpreting and evaluating statistics for decision making and required reporting to other agencies.
- Promoting wise use of resources among library staff, including encouraging alternative methods of transportation and reducing waste and energy consumption.
- Accepting donations of funds and materials through our established channels.
- Supporting the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library efforts to expand membership and raise funds, which benefits the library.



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# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE WILL:

- Develop 2020 and 2021 Action Plans aligned with Strategic Directions.
- Evaluate staffing, hours, collections, and budget line items, and update LOS standards, as part of budget planning.
- Finalize and present 2021-2022 City of Bellingham budget request to Board, Mayor, and City Council.

## THRIVE & GROW

- Complete design for remodel and hire contractor.
- Plan and implement remodel operational needs and deliver quality service during construction.
- Evaluate donor solicitation, payment, and acknowledgement processes and implement improvements.



13

# ACTION PLAN 2020

## WE WILL (continued):

- Evaluate long-term funding strategies and bring recommendations to Board.
- Evaluate plans for library services city wide and bring recommendations to Board.
- Set up systems for managing and organizing policies and statistics collection and reporting.

## THRIVE & GROW

- Evaluate Youth Services, Adult Services, Administration, and Operations divisions and implement changes in alignment with 2020-2024 Strategic Directions.
- Working with WWU engineering class, evaluate one operational process.



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# ACTION PLAN 2020

THRIVE &  
GROW

## WE WILL *(continued)*:

- Evaluate and update Board Packet performance measures.
- **Collect and submit statistics to state and professional agencies.**
- Develop policies and procedures around corporate sponsorships and grants.
- **Plan and implement inaugural Library Giving Day.**
- Hire and onboard newly budgeted positions: **Public Services Supervisor, Security Attendant, Children's Librarian.**
- Complete E-Team salary study, with Human Resources.
- Build and fund 2021 conference and training schedule to align with Strategic Directions.
- Complete staff performance reviews.



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# COVID-19 RESPONSE

The  
Unexpected

- Closed facilities during Phase 1 lockdown
- Planned and implemented staff training program during Phase 1 lockdown
- Supported operations at Whatcom Unified Command, Mayor's Office, and Citywide Zoom moderation
- Planned and implemented Library Call Center from off-site locations
- Planned and implemented virtual programming such as storytimes, title Tuesday, and book discussion group
- Enhanced digital collections, including Always Available anti-racist reading list
- Planned and implemented safety protocols for staff returning to the building; trained all staff
- Planned and implemented new service delivery model: curbside pickup of holds and material returns at Central Library
- Planned, funded, and implemented HotSpot lending program
- Working with ITSD, added wireless access points outside the Central Library and Fairhaven



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# LIBRARY 2020 ACTION PLAN UPDATE



PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, OCTOBER 20, 2020





1

## 2019-2020 Department Achievements

- In 2019, the Library circulated just over 1.5 million physical items and just under 300,000 digital items. During the same period, 737,000 people visited the Bellingham Public Library
- 2020-2024 Strategic Plan adopted
- In partnership with the Whatcom County Library System, eliminated collection of overdue fines
- Central Library main floor remodel design work, bid award, and construction
- COVID-19 response, including curbside pickup of holds, WiFi hotspot lending program, and improved wireless access outside Library facilities

2

2

## 2021-2022 Proposed Budget

Library	2019-2020	2021	2022	2021-2022
General Fund & Library Gift Fund	Revised	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed
CHARGES FOR GOODS AND SERVICES	44,200	22,100	22,100	44,200
FINES AND PENALTIES	70,000	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE	190,000	95,000	95,000	190,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>304,200</b>	<b>117,100</b>	<b>117,100</b>	<b>234,200</b>
SALARIES AND WAGES	4,902,577	2,363,401	2,709,447	5,072,849
PERSONNEL BENEFITS	2,430,967	1,100,674	1,247,901	2,348,575
SUPPLIES	1,552,500	776,250	776,250	1,552,500
OTHER SERVICES AND CHARGES	2,033,747	1,045,450	1,093,107	2,138,558
CAPITAL OUTLAYS (6000 EXP OBJ)	200,000	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>11,119,791</b>	<b>5,285,776</b>	<b>5,826,706</b>	<b>11,112,482</b>

### Positions

2020: 48.2 FTE

2021-22: 48.2 FTE

Frozen FTE: 2.625

- Public Services Librarian
- Specialist II
- Part-time Clerk

3

3

## 2021-2022 Budget Changes

- Frozen Positions and Furloughs
- No reductions in line item budget or programs

4

4

## 2021-2022 Work Plan

- Continue to phase in and adjust Library services based on Central Library remodel timeline, COVID-19 health directives, and budget realities
- Continue to evaluate and adjust Library services based on newly adopted Strategic plan and Strategic directions
- Working with community and City partners, continue to evaluate and implement services that increase access to technology and build technology skills
- Update and implement communications and marketing plan to bring new audiences to the Library

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