



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, November 17, 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, Jim McCabe and Vernon Johnson

**Library Staff:** Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Bethany Hoglund, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins

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

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

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

**Public comment:** no comments.

**Consent agenda:** Jim McCabe moved to approve the October 20, 2020 Regular meeting minutes and the October 2020 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

**Board Chair report:** Rick reported that he and Rebecca had their monthly meeting with Mayor Fleetwood on November 5. Among other topics, the Mayor's most recent meeting with the Cordata Neighborhood Association was discussed.

Rick announced the Mayor approved the Board's Trustee recommendation for the upcoming vacancy. City Council approval is scheduled for December 7. If approved, the selected candidate will be invited to attend the December board meeting.

**Board member reports:** Jim reported that Rick Sepler, Planning and Community Development Director, provided an update on general northside planning at the last Cordata Neighborhood Association virtual meeting. One of the items mentioned was repurposing Bellis Fair Mall, which prompted Neighborhood advocacy for a branch location

at the Mall. Rick Osen mentioned that service needs and costs also need to be part of the discussion.

**City Council liaison report:** Hollie reported that Council is deeply involved in budget discussions.

Rebecca thanked Hollie for introducing her to the newly forming Racial Equity Commission. Hollie explained that the Commission has done research, looking deeply at racial equity questions. The Commission is currently in discussion with Mayor Fleetwood and County Executive Sidhu about next steps, and Hollie felt the Library was a natural place for community building.

Jim mentioned the Transportation Fund levy passed with 82% – amazing support.

**Friends of BPL report:** Faye reported that one of the Friends, Kathie Wilson, invited all Friends members to take the tutorial training *ACT with Compassion* to help gain insight into homelessness. Faye said members were looking forward to this training – it isn't about books, but it's about the people they care about.

**Library Director report:** Rebecca announced she would be doing a presentation about the remodel at tomorrow night's Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission (MNAC) meeting. Jen provided her remodel photographs for Rebecca to share.

Rebecca invited Annette to discuss a couple of projects she is working on:

- Annette has arranged for BTV to film two segments concerning the Library: one on the remodel and one on a behind-the-scenes look at curbside service.
- Whatcom READS committees have been meeting virtually, preparing for the 2021 event featuring Esi Edugyan's book *Washington Black*. Virtual events are being planned for December 5, then January-March 2021. The author events are being coordinated for March 4-5. More information is available on the Whatcom READS website: <https://www.whatcomreads.org/>

**Phase 2 update:** Rick announced that the new Governor's order calls for 4 weeks of dialed back service in many areas, but libraries are not specifically mentioned. Rebecca said this means that opening at 25% capacity stands. Libraries across the state are responding in a variety of ways – some rolling back to curbside, some remaining at 25%, some pausing opening dates. We will continue to explore a Fairhaven branch computer lab, as well as expanding book return options but will wait to announce any dates.

Jen updated the Board on the upcoming MyLibro app – it is ready to go, training is underway, and we expect to go live on Monday, December 7.

**Facilities update:**

- Barkley Licensing Agreement: Rick reported the Agreement is being routed for signatures.
- Central Library main floor remodel: Jen screen-shared pictures showing recent progress on the remodel (*See Attachment #1 for Highlights from the main floor remodel. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes*).

**2021 DRAFT Annual Action Plan:** Rick mentioned that we need to keep in mind that we have three frozen vacant positions plus staff furloughs to take into account in 2021, so we must be careful not to be too ambitious.

Rebecca reviewed the 2021 DRAFT Annual Action Plan that is included in the packet. She prefaced that this draft was prepared with the assumption that the first half of 2021 will have disrupted service due to the remodel completion, the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, furlough hours that must be planned and implemented. Rebecca pointed out that each of the five sections – Welcome & Include; Access & Opportunity; Read & Learn; Inform & Involve; and Thrive & Grow – has a set of “We Are” statements followed by a set of “We Will” statements. Rebecca added that she will also be sharing this draft plan at the upcoming November staff meeting. She plans to finalize the draft and present it to the Board at the December meeting.

Rebecca Craven asked if the Outreach curbside service arrangement mentioned at last month’s meeting has been put into action. Jen responded that it has. Colleen Morse has been working with each of the Facilities to arrange service.

Rebecca Craven asked if the HVAC system in the library will be effective enough for the small meeting spaces when we are partially open? Rebecca Judd responded that we will not be opening the public meeting spaces until Phase 4.

Rebecca Craven also asked for clarification about the 600 Help Desk calls each week – do they include curbside service calls? Jen clarified that the Help Desk calls are in addition to curbside calls. We typically get 600-800 curbside calls daily.

Jim complimented the scope of the Action Plan and suggested AMH be spelled out for people who might not know this refers to an automated materials handler.

**Fundraising follow-up:** Rick first asked everyone to consider nomenclature: there are two types of funds – fundraising and sustainable funding. Fundraising refers to private donations and sustainable funding is budget-supplemented funding (as was studied in the BERK Bellingham Public Library Services and Funding Models Study completed in 2018). The fundraising discussion will continue into next year. Rick suggested that at the January board meeting, with the new Trustee, we review current funding sources.

Rick continued that last month we discussed fundraising, focusing on Library Giving Day. Next steps include coming up with a list of donation targets and a list of ways to promote Library Giving Day widely throughout the community.

Rebecca pointed out that there are donation targets mentioned in the 2021 draft Action Plan – racial equity, climate action, and digital equity. Last year the Library Giving Day donations funded a new WiFi hot spot program to respond to digital equity needs. The service contracts for these devices will end in May and June. To renew service for the 35 Sprint hot spots and convert the 20 Verizon hotspots, we need about \$8,000. If we would like to expand the service with an additional 10 devices, we would need \$10,000.

Rebecca mentioned that another project we are currently implementing, with Friends of the Library funding, is *Digital Storytelling: Black lives in Whatcom County*. Adding two more communities to this project in 2021 would cost about \$10,000. She mentioned that a third possible target is a laptop lending program. Funding for the laptop initiative is still to be determined.

Rebecca continued by mentioning that the Bragg-Muldrow Endowment will provide its first distribution early in 2021. It is estimated to be approximately \$125,000. We will need to determine whether to save or spend it. Rachel offered to attend the January board meeting in her Whatcom Community Foundation capacity to provide a presentation about the funds.

Rachel shared that, from a current cultural perspective, she thinks racial equity is the right direction to go.

**Budget update:** Rebecca reported that the first and second reading of the 2021-2022 budget is scheduled for December 7 followed by adoption on December 14. Included in Public Works' Capital budget is \$450,000 for replacement of our freight elevator.

**New Business:**

- Rick proposed limiting the December meeting to one hour so we can sign off and join a Zoom social hour in honor of Rachel's eleven years of service.

**Action items for next meeting:**

- Election of 2021 Board officials
- 2021 Annual Action Plan

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:45 p.m.

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

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

**Attachments:**

- Attachment #1: Highlights from the main floor remodel

## Highlights from the Main floor remodel

- Drywall is mostly up
- Window glazing starting shortly
- More carpet coming out
- Rooftop unit going in over west end

1

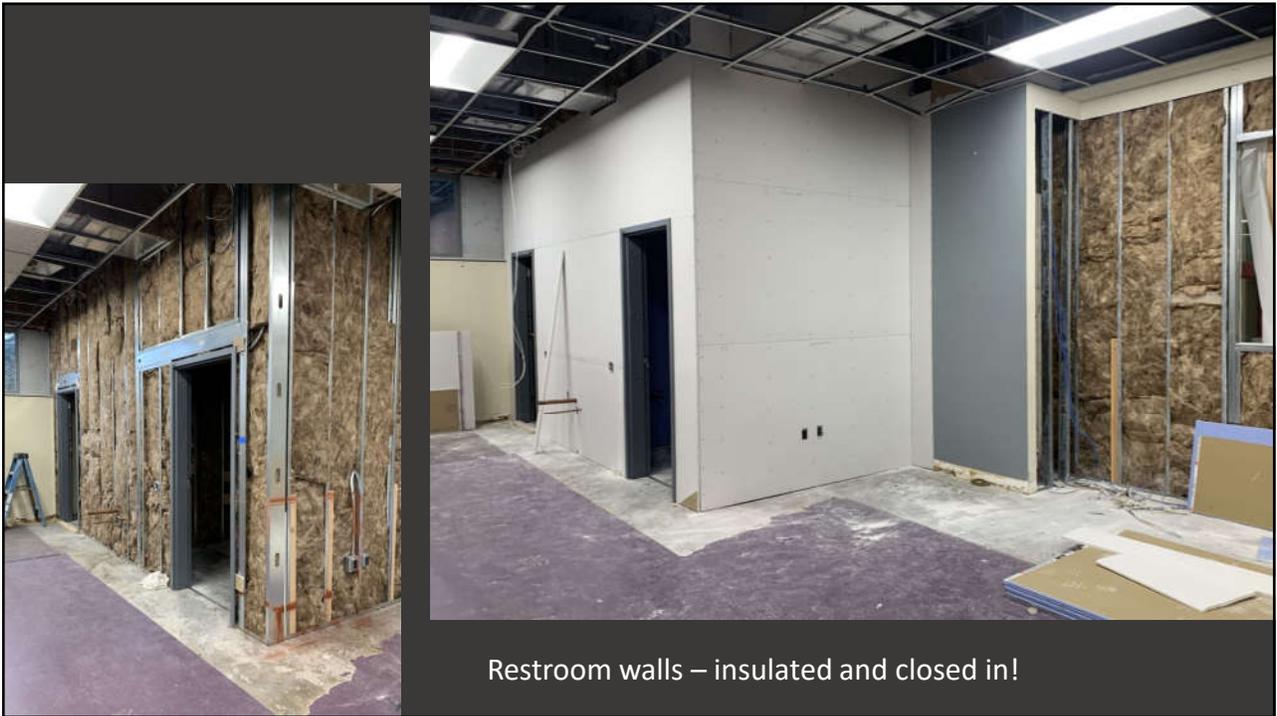


2

Looking at the new walkway from the front of library through to fiction.... passing by the new returns room



3



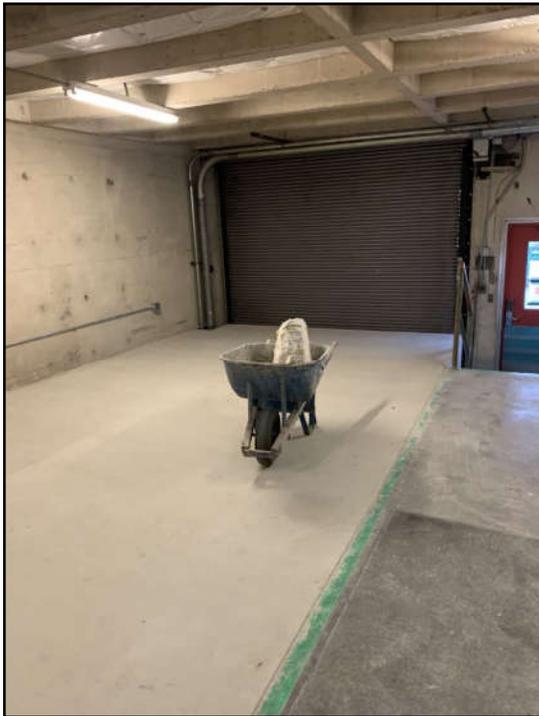
Restroom walls – insulated and closed in!

4



Mechanical shaft enclosed with fire-rated materials

5



The new garage “warehouse” area and loading dock that will be used for holding incoming and outgoing crates. View from the garage into the new staff area which will house the sorter and workspaces.

6



A "birds-eye" view from the help desk toward the front of the library.....

7



And looking the other way toward the old teen area.....

8

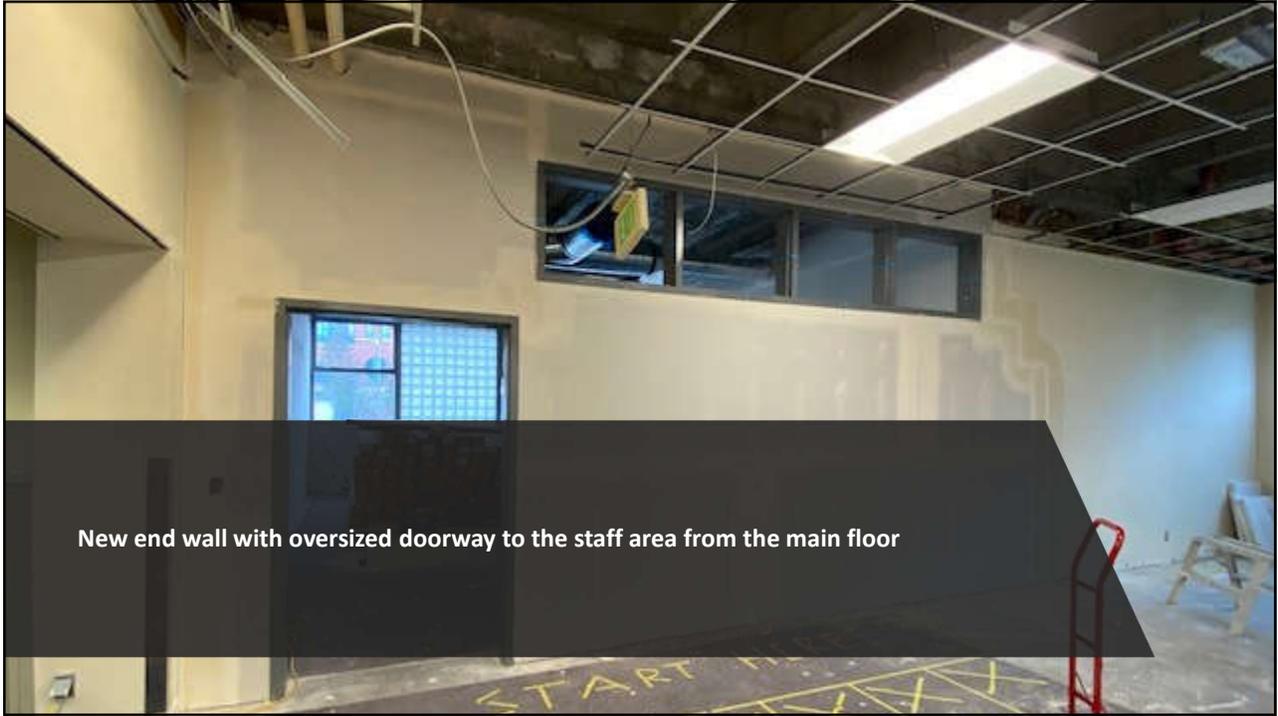


Some odds & ends

9



10



11



12