



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, August 17, 2021 – 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, Jim McCabe, Rebecca Craven, Vernon (Damani) Johnson and Kristy Van Ness

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

**Others Present:** Hollie Huthman, City Council Liaison; Leigh Ann Giles, Friends of BPL Co-President

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

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

**Public comment:** No comments.

**Consent agenda:** Rebecca Craven moved to approve the July 20, 2021 Regular meeting minutes and the July 2021 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Damani Johnson seconded. Motion carried.

**Board Chair report:**

- Rick announced we will continue to meet virtually until the City recommends in-person meetings. City Council plans to discuss this at their August 31 meeting.
- The Fundraising Committee is scheduled to meet September 8. Rick invited Rachel Myers, Philanthropic Advisor & Program Manager for Whatcom Community Foundation (and a former BPL Trustee), to attend.
- Rick was happy to attend last month's Friends' board meeting. He plans to attend regularly to help coordinate communication and foster our relationship with this valuable organization.

**Board member reports:** No reports.

**City Council liaison report:** No report; Council is on a 3-week break.

**Friends of BPL report:**

- Leigh Ann reported that the Friends are busy processing donations from the community and Village Books.
- The Friends have held two Pop-up Sales so far, with another scheduled for 10am-2pm on Friday, August 20. They are asking customers to wear masks and social distance.
- Other book sales under consideration are a Children's Sale in September and a big sale in November; considerations include the pandemic and the weather.
- Cathy, the Friends' long-term bookkeeper, is leaving in January; recommendations for this position can be directed to Leigh Ann.

**Library Director report:**

- Rebecca and WCLS Executive Director Christine Perkins toured the new Central Skagit Library in Sedro Wooley on August 6. Rebecca was impressed with the 11,000 square foot building, designed by SHKS Architects, which includes flexible spaces, interesting acoustic treatments, nice lighting, many face-out browsing options, movable shelving units, lockers and play spaces. Sedro-Wooley Library, a municipal library, annexed into the Central Skagit Rural County Library District several years ago.
- Whatcom Museum is installing the final pieces of artwork in the Central Library – a wall mounted sculpture in the entrance lobby and six prints near the public computers.
- Wayfinding signage is up and it looks great. Annette worked with Katrina Lyon Designs and Signs Plus on this large project.
- Rebecca will be on vacation the next two weeks.

Kristy, referring to the Climate Action Week information in the Director's Report, suggested this could be an opportunity to work with the School District and she offered to help.

Rebecca Craven asked for more information about the TAG Reconnect program. Rebecca Judd explained the purpose of this program is to connect repurposed equipment with low-income clients. TAGNW (Technology Alliance Group for Northwest Washington) is the lead agency and responsible for project management and the website; C4PIN (Computers for People in Need) accepts computer donations at their facility and, in coordination with community volunteer Jon Humphries, handles the technical aspects of refurbishing the equipment. The Whatcom Community Foundation provided a grant to cover the cost that would typically be charged to a recipient working with C4PIN directly. TAG works with local social service agencies to identify recipients through an application process. TAG Reconnect has funding to pilot the program for 10 months, providing up to 50 computers. Jon added that, in addition to providing hardware, proactive technical support is also being developed using TAG volunteers.

Leigh Ann requested an update on cash handling at the main Help Desk at Central. Rebecca explained that we are working with the software vendor to troubleshoot why the point-of-sale isn't working at these terminals. We do not have a date yet as to when this will be active again. We can accept payment at the Children's desk and at the branches.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter update:**

- Rebecca screen-shared a PowerPoint presentation, *Bellingham Public Library 2021 Action Plan* (see Attachment #1 – all Attachments are located at the end of the

minutes), highlighting the progress that has been made on 2021 identified goals during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2021 (yellow highlights are 1<sup>st</sup> quarter accomplishments; Goldenrod highlights represent 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter). Each of the five strategic directions – Welcome & Include; Access & Opportunity; Read & Learn; Inform & Involve; Thrive & Grow – are presented in two parts: what we are doing, followed by what we hope to accomplish.

**Reopening update:** Rebecca reported reopening updates in three parts:

- First, a roundup of services coming or on pause:
  - Public access computers are on track to be online by the end of August. We will first rollout computers at Central, followed by the branches. Adding a new server involved reconfiguring all computers.
  - Nearly New sales for the Friends have been on hold while we wait for a vendor to troubleshoot issues on cash handling software at the Central Help Desk.
  - With the rising case counts of the Delta variant, plans to reopen meeting and study rooms has been put on pause.
  - In-person meetings have also been paused until further direction from the City; further direction should be available after City Council meets on August 31.
  - Outreach to long-term care facilities is on hold except for the facilities that have arranged for holds pick-up.
- Second, an update on current vacant positions: we are on track to post, on August 27, 4 of the 5 vacant positions – Library Clerk (2 openings); Part-time Public Services Librarian; Full-time Children's Librarian; and Community Relations Specialist. The process of reviewing applications, interviewing, hiring and training will be a lengthy process, but this is an exciting first step.
- Third is discussion of a document illustrating Fall 2021 open-hours adjustment options along with potential impacts. Rebecca screen-shared a revised version of the Fall 2021 hours proposal to replace the document in the packet (*see Attachment #2 for Fall 2021 hours proposal*). Options considered are:
  - Option 1: The Reshuffle – this option expands Central hours Tuesday-Saturday but involves being closed on Monday except for the Call Center.
  - Options 2: Consistency with Branches – this option aligns Central hours with the branch hours Wednesday-Saturday, while having longer days on Monday and Tuesday.
  - Option 3: Stay the Course – this option was added in the revised version and keeps current hours plus expands Monday and Tuesday hours until 6:00 p.m.

Each option includes curbside service at the end of the day on Saturday. Option 3 is the recommendation from the Management Team. Also included on the document is a summary of the 4 COVID-10 phases.

Kristy expressed concern that school age children will not have access to the library from Wednesday-Friday.

Hollie acknowledged that Kristy's concern is important, but offered that, as an employer, she is seeing staff burned out over uncertainty and constant change, so Hollie feels there is value in maintaining consistency for patrons and staff.

Rick questioned if curbside has dropped off enough that 1 hour a week will meet the need. He commented that Option 2 limits hours at Central too much and shouldn't be considered. Rick also asked if there is talk of moving back to a previous phase. Rebecca responded, this hasn't been signaled by the City, but it is worth planning for the possibility.

Rebecca Craven asked for clarification on how long these temporary hours would be in effect. Rebecca Judd answered that this is until we are fully staffed and trained. She added that the first priority will be to add back the 3-6 pm afternoon hours M-F. Rick suggested, in communications, we emphasize the short-term time frame and that we hope to get back to pre-pandemic hours as soon as possible.

Jim acknowledged that Kristy has a good point about the children but added that as a senior citizen, consistency is important.

Damani agreed Option 2 is not ideal – Central is critical.

Rebecca Craven acknowledged that all the scenarios have impacts but for current circumstances, keeping in mind change fatigue, Option 3 is best.

Rick asked if thought was given to closing more days at the branches to provide more hours at Central. Jen responded that we can't move the holds back and forth easily so it would make holds pick-up difficult for branch patrons. She added that branches only have two staff members at a time, so closing branches does not provide enough staff to open more hours at Central.

After discussion, the Board acknowledged that this will be a temporary change and recommended that Library management determine which option is best. Rebecca thanked the trustees for their support in this process.

**Facilities Committee update:**

- Rick and Rebecca met with Cordata Neighborhood Association representatives Kate McDonald and Julie Guy, along with Council member Hannah Stone, who represents their district. Rick said they reviewed the Level of Service standards, illustrating that we are low on the standards scale. This provided some perspective while acknowledging we will continue the process of determining service needs for the northside as well as the rest of the city. Rick added we are looking for a library consultant to help develop a master strategy plan for services and facilities.
- The Facilities Committee will be meeting on Thursday.

**New Business:**

- No new business.

**Action items for next meeting:**

- Guest, Sarah Chaplin, Assistant City Attorney
- Facilities Committee update
- Fundraising Committee update

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:41 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – September 21, 2021 – 3:30 p.m.**

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

**Attachments:**

- Attachment #1: 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter update Bellingham Public Library 2021 Action Plan
- Attachment #2: Fall 2021 hours proposed (revised)

# BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY 2021 ACTION PLAN

**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.



**DECEMBER 15, 2020**

1

## ACTION PLAN 2021

**WE ARE:**

- Issuing an estimated 70 new **online library cards** each week with revised procedures to reduce barriers and promote inclusive access to service
- Delivering materials to 2,000 people each week through **contactless curbside pickup** at Central location
- Providing **24/7 materials return access** at Central location and quarantining all materials according to science-based guidelines

**WELCOME & INCLUDE**

- **Translating print and digital publications** into multiple languages
- Providing ongoing **staff training in COVID safety** protocols and new Library service procedures
- As an outcome of **2020 REACH: Exploring Equity and Cultural Humility training**, designing regular activities to promote an internal culture of safety, connection, empathy, and respect



2

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE WILL:

- In response to COVID-19, **plan and safely implement public service, materials handling, and meeting room operations** at 25%, 50%, and full reopening
- In response to COVID-19, **plan and safely implement Library programming** at 25%, 50%, and full reopening
- As part of Central Library main floor remodel, **plan and implement new study room procedures** that foster gathering and interaction

### WELCOME & INCLUDE

- As part of Central Library main floor remodel, **plan and implement wayfinding** to orient Library patrons to collections, services, and spaces
- Coordinate **handover of Barkley suite** to the Library and update branch space and procedures to reflect new agreement



3

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE WILL (continued):

- Plan and implement over **4000 furlough hours in 2021**, aligning available resources with the highest level of service possible
- Refine **winter weather and emergency procedures** to better coordinate the safe operation of Library spaces and services
- Plan and implement **Person-In-Charge training** to better coordinate the safe operation of Library spaces and services

### WELCOME & INCLUDE

- Build and fund 2021-22 **conference and training schedule** to align with Strategic Directions
- Complete **staff performance reviews**



4

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE ARE:

- Delivering **books and other resources to Base Camp** to support the reading and educational needs of people experiencing homelessness
- Providing **virtual and telephone technology coaching** for people seeking to improve basic technology skills
- Hosting **virtual lunch-time book clubs** once a month at four Bellingham middle schools
- Making print and digital Library resources available to all Bellingham Public School students through **ConnectEd student ID** program
- Partnering with Bellingham School District to receive **school library returns** at Central Library

### ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY



5

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE WILL:

- Explore **laptop lending** at Central location and identify funding opportunities
- Identify funding opportunities to maintain **wi-fi hot spot lending program** at 2020 level; explore ways to expand service
- In response to COVID-19, plan and safely implement **outreach services** at 25%, 50%, and full reopening
- Apply for **Check Out Washington**, a collaboration between the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and the Washington State Library, to allow individuals to 'check out a state park' without paying the Discover parking fee

### ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY



6

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE ARE:

- Processing an estimated **12,000 hold requests** each week, an increase of 18% with the implementation of curbside delivery model
- Checking out on average **8,000 items** each week through contactless curbside delivery
- Hosting and publicizing events for **Whatcom READS 2021**, our area's premier literary series; planning for Whatcom Reads 2022
- Inviting thousands of people of all ages to participate in **Summer Reading** and celebrate their reading achievements

### READ & LEARN

- Planning and teaching **virtual storytime classes** for children ages birth to eight
- Planning and facilitating **Bellingham Reads**, a monthly book discussion group for adults
- Researching and curating regularly updated **reading lists** for Washington Anytime Library and the BiblioCommons catalog



7

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE WILL:

- In response to COVID-19 and Central Library main floor remodel, plan and safely implement **collection maintenance and shifing projects** to enhance access to collections
- As part of Central Library main floor remodel, develop and implement guidelines for **displaying and marketing Library collections**
- Identify funding opportunities to maintain **'always available' anti-racist reading list** at 2020 level; explore ways to add titles
- Plan and implement **'Happy Go Lucky' browsing collection** at Central Library to connect readers with popular paperback titles

### READ & LEARN

- Plan and implement **SimplyE platform** to connect readers with new digital titles
- Evaluate Library **book club kit program** and explore outreach opportunities to book clubs
- Evaluate and update **collection maintenance procedures**, training staff in new workflow
- Evaluate capacity for **'Quick Picks for You'** service as part of COVID-19 full reopening planning



8

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE ARE:

- Answering on average **600 Help Desk calls** each week, connecting callers with Library and community resources
- Providing timely, accurate information about Library services, events, and issues via our **website and social media sites**
- Serving as **Zoom moderators** for City-wide meetings and commissions

### INFORM & INVOLVE

- Providing comprehensive **Board meeting packets** in advance of monthly meetings
- Actively engaged as members of **city committees and community groups**



9

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE WILL:

- Partner with city and community leaders to foster public education and involvement in **issues that matter, with a 2021 focus on climate action, anti-racism, and digital equity**
- Identify partners and funding opportunities to expand **anti-racism video storytelling** initiative with Connecting Community
- In partnership with UW iSchool, develop and implement **digital archive** for Peoples' Perspectives: COVID-19 in Whatcom County
- Pilot **new communications tools** to promote library services and initiatives

### INFORM & INVOLVE

- As part of Central Library main floor remodel, plan and implement procedures for **displaying Library information, community information, and creating welcoming and community-focused glass case displays**
- 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



10

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE ARE:

- Pivoting schedules and services to meet **priority needs in COVID-19 environment**
- Collecting, interpreting, and evaluating **statistics** for decision making and required reporting to other agencies
- Reviewing Library's **organizational structure** and identifying opportunities and gaps

### THRIVE & GROW

- Evaluating services, programs, and operations to **align with 2020-2024 Strategic Directions.**
- **Supporting the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library** efforts to expand membership, raise funds, and deliver books to the community
- Promoting **wise stewardship** of limited resources



11

## ACTION PLAN 2021

### WE WILL:

- Evaluate and update **Level of Service standards** as part of mid-biennium budget and long-range planning process; prepare and **present budget** to Library Board, Mayor, and City Council
- Begin planning for **Library services in north area of city** as part of mid and long-range planning process; bring recommendations to Library Board
- **Plan and implement second Library Giving Day**

### THRIVE & GROW

- Evaluate **donor solicitation, payment, and acknowledgement processes** and implement improvements
- Develop policies and procedures around **corporate sponsorships and grants**
- **Continue discussion of fundraising options** and bring recommendations to Library Board
- Develop **annual marketing and communications plan**



12

## ACTION PLAN 2021



### WE WILL *(continued)*:

- As part of Central Library main floor remodel, coordinate with contractor, architect, and Public Works to safely and efficiently manage the conclusion of the project
- With Public Works, plan and implement freight elevator rebuild
- Evaluate options to expand meeting room and auditorium access at Fairhaven location
- Evaluate and update Board packet performance measures
- Develop and implement materials handling standards utilizing efficiencies from new Automated Materials Handler
- Evaluate ILS phone integration options and prepare recommendation for funding review
- Evaluate Springshare platform and recommend new services and efficiencies for implementation review
- Evaluate options for updating Library account information online and implement improvements



13

## BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY 2021 ACTION PLAN



DECEMBER 15, 2020

14



Revised 8/16/2021

**Fall 2021 hours proposal.** Scope: This is a temporary measure as we fill vacant public service positions, and train new employees. Estimated timeline 3 months.

**Option 1: “The Reshuffle”**

	S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
Central	--	--	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-4
FH	--	--	10-2	2-6	2-6	2-6	10-2
BA	--	--	10-2	2-6	2-6	2-6	10-2
Call Center/Ask Us!	--	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6
Curbside	--	--	--	--	--	--	5-6

**Total Hours Open**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
--	--	8	8	8	8	6	<b>38</b>
--	--	4	4	4	4	4	<b>20</b>
--	--	4	4	4	4	4	<b>20</b>
--	8	8	8	8	8	8	<b>48</b>
--	--	--	--	--	--	1	<b>1</b>

**Potential impacts:**

- Maximizes early morning, after school, and after work access at Central
- Reduction in branch hours
- Computers and WiFi available fewer days per week
- Might be confusing for regular patrons
- Monday is a busy in-person day at Central and branches
- Some disruption to staff schedule

**Option 2: “Consistency with Branches”**

	S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
Central	--	10-6	10-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	10-4
FH	--	10-2	10-2	2-6	2-6	2-6	10-2
BA	--	10-2	10-2	2-6	2-6	2-6	10-2
Call Center/Ask Us!	--	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6
Curbside	--	--	--	--	--	--	5-6

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
--	8	8	4	4	4	6	<b>34</b>
--	4	4	4	4	4	4	<b>24</b>
--	4	4	4	4	4	4	<b>24</b>
--	8	8	8	8	8	8	<b>48</b>
--	--	--	--	--	--	1	<b>1</b>

**Potential impacts:**

- Central and branches open the same hours Wednesday-Friday
- No disruption to branch schedule
- Might be confusing for regular patrons
- Mornings are busy for in-person service, particularly in the children’s department

**Option 3: “Stay the Course”**

	S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
Central	--	10-6	10-6	10-3	10-3	10-3	10-4
FH	--	10-2	10-2	2-6	2-6	2-6	10-2
BA	--	10-2	10-2	2-6	2-6	2-6	10-2
Call Center/Ask Us!	--	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6
Curbside	--	--	--	--	--	--	5-6

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
--	8	8	5	5	5	6	<b>37</b>
--	4	4	4	4	4	4	<b>24</b>
--	4	4	4	4	4	4	<b>24</b>
--	8	8	8	8	8	8	<b>48</b>
--	--	--	--	--	--	1	<b>1</b>

**Potential impacts:**

- Builds on current schedule
- No disruption to branch schedule
- Minimizes confusion for regular patrons
- Less access after school, and after work at Central
- Least disruption to current staff schedule

**COVID-19 summary of phases:**

- Phase 4: 100% occupancy, branches open, curbside offered at 1 hour/week
- Phase 3: Limited occupancy: Central Library open to the public with staff assigned to monitor occupancy numbers. Branches closed. Curbside expanded
- Phase 2: Library facilities closed to the public. Curbside service only, Phone/AskUs! service available
- Phase 1: Library facilities closed to the public, no curbside. Phone/AskUs! service available

**Phase 3 Hours at Central Library, branches closed: Limited Occupancy**

	S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
Central	--	--	10-4	10-4	10-4	10-4	10-2
FH	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
BA	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Call Center/Ask Us!	--	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6
Curbside	--	--	--	--	--	--	3-6

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
--	--	6	6	6	6	4
--	--	--	--	--	--	--
--	--	--	--	--	--	--
--	8	8	8	8	8	8
--	--	--	--	--	--	3