



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, September 20, 2022 – 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, Kristy Van Ness and Melissa Morin

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

**Others Present:** Kristina Michele Martens, City Council Liaison; Leigh Ann Giles and Jennie Tuckerman, Friends of BPL Co-Presidents; Don Burdick, Information Technology Services Director

**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, Rick Osen. New Children's Librarian, Ali Kubeny, was introduced.

**Approve/modify agenda:** Jim McCabe moved to approve the agenda. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

**Public comment:** no comments

**Consent agenda:** Related to Banned Book Week, Rick mentioned an opinion piece he recently read by Miami Herald writer Leonard Pitts, Jr., *What do book banners and burners fear?* The article was reprinted in the Sunday, September 18, edition of the Bellingham Herald which can be accessed through our [library website](#). Rebecca Craven moved to approve the August 16, 2022 Regular meeting minutes and the August 2022 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

**Board Chair report:**

- Rick reported that Governor Inslee announced the end of his COVID-19 emergency orders effective October 31, 2022. The October board meeting will be virtual unless we hear differently.
- Rebecca and Rick met with Mayor Fleetwood and Deputy Administrator Brian Heinrich on August 30th for a preview of the Facilities Master Plan presentation that would go in front of City Council on September 12. Rick thanked everyone for comments either at or after the August Library Board meeting on the draft version. The final presentation

incorporated these suggestions. There will be more information in the Facilities Committee Update section of this meeting's agenda.

**Board member reports:**

- No reports

**City Council liaison report:**

- Kristina reported that City Council is waiting to hear how Governor Inslee's easing of restrictions will impact their meetings.
- At the Town Hall meeting held on September 19, *Community Voices on Funding Priorities*, Kristina counted seven individuals who spoke on the need for a north side library presence. She added she overwhelmingly agrees that the library and staff are amazing and hopes Council is able to allocate enough funding for the library to thrive.

**Friends of BPL report:**

- Leigh Ann reported that the September pop-up sale, which included children's items, brought in \$3,600 – the most so far for a pop-up sale. The sale was held in the Lecture Room.
- The next pop-up sale will be November 12 – because of the Friday, November 11 closure for Veterans' Day, they will set up for the sale on the Thursday before.
- The Friends are retraining back-room volunteers who were out for the pandemic.

**Library Director report:**

- Rebecca reported the Mayor's 2023-2024 Preliminary Biennial Budget will be presented at the October 3 City Council meeting – and included in the Council meeting packet which is published the week prior to the meeting. Rebecca will send the trustees a link when it is posted. The next phase of the budget process, work sessions with each department, begins early in October. Rick and Rebecca will attend the Library work session. Final Council budget approval is expected in early December.
- Jen Vander Ploeg and Rebecca met with Road2Home and other city representatives to begin planning for a severe cold weather warming center for the upcoming winter. The Lecture Room and adjoining Conference Room will be utilized for this emergency daytime use.
- Rebecca will attend the Library Directors of Washington meeting at the end of September. It will be held in Spokane, so attendees will be able to tour the recently completed Spokane Public Library building.
- Kristy Van Ness asked if there are any updates on the community drop boxes that will be funded with Library Giving Day funds. Rebecca responded that part of the Facilities Master Plan project was locating possible sites for the boxes. Work on this project will begin this fall.

**Land Acknowledgement:**

- Rebecca screenshared the Land Acknowledgement that is included in the packet. The initial draft was brought to the board on November 16, 2021. Rebecca, Annette, and Kristy Van Ness consulted with the Museum, Lummi Nation representatives, and Nooksack tribal liaison Joshua Olson who all provided feedback on the initial draft. The Respecting Ethnic and Cultural Heritage (REACH) Committee was also involved. The

Acknowledgement is intended to be a living document to be revised as we learn more. Our intent is to post the Land Acknowledgement within the frame that Coast Salish artist Jason LaClair painted in the library lobby.

- Rick moved that the Land Acknowledgement be approved as written, with the understanding that it is a living document to be reviewed by the Library Board annually. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

### **Welcoming ITSD Director Don Burdick:**

- Board attendees were introduced, and Don provided information about himself:
  - He is a 30+ year employee of the City of Bellingham, starting in Public Works as a storm water design engineer, migrating to mapping systems, and after going back to school to study computer systems management, he worked in Planning with geographic information (GIS) and water management systems, finally transitioning to ITSD.
  - Current priorities include developing a business continuity plan which includes disaster recovery, and a strategic plan. IT is about to issue an RFP for a consultant to develop the continuity plan.
  - Another priority is determining how to equitably provide services to everyone in the community – the library plays a critical role in providing digital services.
  - Don shared that from an early age, libraries were an important part of his life, beginning with visits to a rural bi-weekly book mobile and continuing with trips to Port Angeles from the west end of the Olympic peninsula.
  - Jim asked for an update about the Broadband Advisory Workgroup. Don replied that the Workgroup will be presenting their recommendations to City Council at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, September 26 and also mentioned that digital literacy is included in the discussion.
  - Don concluded with the comment that community is very important to him and he feels it is an honor to serve in his position.

### **Banned Book Week:**

- Rebecca reflected that most years Banned Book Week is a time to educate and celebrate the freedom to read, but this year is a time to stand tall for these freedoms. Rebecca screenshared the library website to illustrate where to access our Collection Development policy (bottom left of opening page, under *About BPL*) which has links at the end for *ALA's Freedom to Read Statement*, *ALA's Freedom to View*, *ALA's Free Access to Libraries for Minors*, and *ALA's interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*. The Collection Development policy is our guiding document. If there is a challenge to an item in our collection, there is a *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials* form, though most challenges are resolved with a conversation.
- Rick noted the policy was last revised in 2011 and suggested now, because of the current climate, would be a good time to review and update the policy.
- Rick asked how many challenges we receive. Bethany answered that we only get a handful of official challenges a year, but we have many discussions. Rick also asked about requests to add questionable materials. Bethany responded that we reference the Collection Development policy for established criteria before adding an item.
- Rebecca Craven suggested reviewing the donation paragraph, perhaps adding more detail.

**Facilities Committee update:**

- Rick reported that Brad Waters from Godfrey's Associates, Rebecca Judd and Rick made a presentation to the Bellingham City Council at their afternoon meeting of the Committee of the Whole on September 12. In general, impressions were that the presentation was well received and there were multiple signs of support from Council members. The packet includes the Memo, Executive Summary, and slide presentation that were shown to Council.
- As reported at previous Library Board meetings, two of the recommended near-term priorities from the report are included in budget requests for the 2023-24 biennium. Those two priorities are: 1) renovate the remaining two floors of the Central Library, and 2) establish a library presence on the growing north side of Bellingham through a pilot project based at the Bellis Fair Mall.
- Next steps are final editing of the Facilities Master Plan final report, including an accompanying volume of Appendices. It is anticipated the report will be complete by the end of September.
- Kristy commented that it was exciting to hear enthusiasm from Council members. She thanked staff for working so hard to make this happen.

**New Business:**

- Whatcom Community Foundation update

**Action items for next meeting:**

- Guest new Planning Director Blake Lyon

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:36 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – October 18, 2022 – Zoom meeting – 3:30 p.m.**

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST  
Secretary, Library Board of Trustees