



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, May 21, 2024 – Central Library Board Room
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.

Board Members Present:	Rick Osen, Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness, Kendra Bradford and Deborra Garrett
City Council Library Liaison:	Hannah Stone
Library Staff:	Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins
FOBPL Representative:	Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison

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

Approve/modify agenda: Rebecca Craven moved to approve the agenda. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: no comments.

Consent agenda: Referring to the April performance and activity measure in the packet, Rebecca Craven asked if there was a reason for the increase in Overdrive magazine checkouts compared with 2023. Jon explained there are two things to consider about the numbers. Last October, Overdrive switched to automatic check-out of new magazine issues. Previously, patrons received a notification when a new issue was available, and they had to respond by going into Libby to borrow the issue. The switch to auto-checkout dramatically increased magazine checkouts. Then, in April 2024 their system had a problem for about three weeks where the automatic check-outs did not happen. They shared that they were going to re-process a portion of those automatic checkouts, but that didn't happen until May. So, the year-over-year magazine check-outs are up due to the new automatic checkouts, but April 2024 is down from March 2024 due to the technical problem.

Jon was also asked to explain the difference between Website Visits and Bibliocommons Visits. 'Website Visits' refers to bellingshampubliclibrary.org while 'Bibliocommons' is our catalog interface at bellingsham.bibliocommons.com. He noted that we adjust the Bibliocommons visits number to avoid a

source of double counting. We provide both counts on the monthly report because the State's annual statistics reporting used to ask for both website and catalog visits.

Rebecca Judd directed everyone's attention to the YTD report: for this month's report we added 3 columns – Updated Budget, Updated Remaining and % Updated Complete – to reflect that the City rolled the remaining balances from 2023 into 2024 as part of the biennial budget process. Next month these columns will be removed. Hannah added that the City will be going to an annual budget for 2025 rather than a biennial budget.

Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the April 16, 2024, Regular meeting minutes and the April 2024 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report:

- Rick reported that Mayor Lund will be a guest at our July Board meeting for a "meet and greet." Tomorrow he and Rebecca Judd will have their monthly meeting with the Mayor.
- We are still awaiting names/addresses from Whatcom Community Foundation so that we can send thank you letters out to Library Giving Day donors. Rick attended the Friends' Board meeting last Wednesday and thanked them for their generous contribution to Library Giving Day.
- Rick commented that he has no further updates on the Planned Giving issue—there is no rush with everything else that's going on now.

Board member reports:

- Rebecca Craven mentioned she was glad to see that fans will be installed in the Fairhaven Branch restrooms.

City Council liaison report:

- Hannah asked if the Board had any particular interests they'd like her to report on. Kristy requested City Comprehensive Plan updates. Kendra requested information about ways Trustees can advocate for the library. Rick added anything that might impact the library.

Friends of BPL report:

- Carol reminded everyone that the Memorial Day book sale starts tomorrow, May 22 and ends at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 25.

Library Director report:

- Rebecca invited everyone to tomorrow's City Club meeting - Rebecca and Christine Perkins, Executive Director of WCLS, will be presenting on modern libraries.
- Rebecca highlighted the *Library Security and HEART* (Holistic Engagement through Allied Recovery & Treatment) report in the Director's Report – the team does such good work handling library incidents. The co-response model has had positive outcomes for library patrons and library staff.
- Deborra referred to the \$7000 expense in the April Claims report for Security and Person-in-Charge radios and requested more information. Katrina explained that we have moved from

having one Security Attendant during Library open hours at Central, to two Attendants so that both floors of the building can be monitored and for staff safety. This created a communication issue for an Attendant needing immediate help during an incident. Katrina consulted with Public Works, and they suggested using the radios currently in use in other City departments. Three radios have been issued to Security, one is issued to the Person-In-Charge, and we are installing three at service desks so that Security can be reached quickly without escalating a situation. We purchased 7 radios at approximately \$1000 each, which includes a 7-year warranty. There are no maintenance costs as Public Works has offered to provide that service.

Open Public Meetings Act (OMPA) and Public Records Act (PRA):

- Wendy explained that the City has expanded the training requirements for Board Trustees. In addition to the OMPA training, Trustees will now also train on the PRA. This training will be required within the first 3 months of service, with a 4-year refresher training. The City has provided a link to an online webinar for the PRA. The webinar training will be added to a future board agenda. Hannah offered to have someone come and present to the group from City Legal.

Rules of Conduct revision in response to SB5444 "POSSESSION OF WEAPONS-LIBRARIES, ZOOS, AQUARIUMS, AND TRANSIT FACILITIES – Action item (see packet materials):

- Katrina reported that, as suggested at last month's board meeting, she referenced the RCW under Codes and Laws. She also adjusted the numbering in the policy, though the item language remained the same. Rebecca Craven asked if Katrina had worked with other entities about defining what a "weapon" is. Katrina responded the law gives examples and the security team discussed and developed a low, medium, and high risk matrix to apply to weapons:
 - Low: large stick (taller than rib-high more than 1.5 inches in diameter), baton, small knife (less than 3 inches)
 - Medium: metal knuckles, bat, bow and arrow, stick with sharp or hard attachments, large knife crossbow, machete
 - High: firearm, explosives

Level of risk determination also takes into consideration the behavior of the person carrying the weapon. Rebecca Craven moved to approve the Policy as written. Deborah Garret seconded. Motion carried.

Facilities update:

- Renovation update: Rick reported there have been recent meetings with Federal legislative assistants regarding our Federal appropriations request of \$2 million for the Central Library exterior and immediate grounds renovation. Taking part in all or some of the meetings were Rick, Rebecca Judd, Hannah, Annette, Carol Comeau and Scout Mitchell, who met with Teagan Hudson from Representative Rick Larsen's office, Hayden Jenkins from Senator Patty Murray's office and Cameron Caldwell from Senator Maria Cantwell's office. These meetings were very informative. The process involves many steps, and it is unlikely we will know the final outcome

before early 2025. Meanwhile, the LCIP State grant we have applied for, for the interior renovation, is being reviewed by the selection committee. Rebecca Judd added that Mayor Lund had the opportunity to discuss the Federal appropriation with Senator Cantwell at a recent lunch event.

Rebecca Judd reported we have paused work on the HVAC and detail design while we secure funding for the entire project. We are moving forward on the conceptual design and renderings for the exterior renovation, using the gift fund money approved by the Board.

Rebecca screenshared the schematic design for the lower level (*see Attachment #1 for Miller Hull 75% schematic designs. Attachments are at the end of the minutes*). With a longer timeline now in place, she asked to re-open the decision to design a smaller community/storytime area: is the higher public good a larger community room with no after-hours access, or a smaller room (max capacity 49) with after-hours access? With the retractable wall, the space could be enlarged for larger gatherings – but only for library events or programs. Following discussion, the consensus was to continue with the original decision to design the room capacity at 49 so that we can offer after-hours access.

- Flagpole Plaza: Rebecca Judd reported that the management team and the security team have been discussing reopening the flagpole plaza (front of library near the bike racks) which was closed last year due to security incidents. The recommendation to the Board is to look for ways to activate the space in new ways. The Board approved of this direction and offered the following suggestions for the project:
 - Book lockers
 - Bike lockers
 - Education station for community issues
 - Food truck
 - Coffee cart (with or without buskers)
 - Dog lockers
 - Stroller lockers

Rick clarified that we are looking for a way to use the space for now; we can consider other options when we redesign the exterior. Hannah added that a project to install bike lockers at the Commercial Street parking garage and at the police station has been in the works for a while; the library would be a great place for this too. She suggested now would be a good time to place a request to become part of this project. The bike lockers will be pay for use.

- 1-year assessment of Bellis Fair Branch: Rick thanked Jon for the excellent and comprehensive 1-year assessment of Bellis Fair Branch that is included in the packet. Discussion comments include:
 - Bellis Fair has a different adult/youth split than other branches. In 2024, at Central and Barkley, the split is 50/50; at Fairhaven it is 2/3 adult, 1/3 youth; at Bellis Fair, it is 1/3 adult, 2/3 youth.

- Library card registrations have been significant compared to other branches. This might indicate reaching people we haven't seen before. Many kids get library cards at Bellis Fair – perhaps families feel safer there.
- The staff feedback included in the report is appreciated.
- More staffing to accommodate more open hours would be great.
- The northside of town is where affordable housing is going in.
- Social media posts express a demand for more hours.
- When we close Central for renovation, it will be an opportunity for more patrons to utilize Bellis Fair and the other branches. Branch hours will be expanded, and staff will be distributed.
- The outdoor drive-up book drop is getting good use.

Level of Service (LOS) standards: Materials:

- Rick referred to the last page of the packet which provides the 2025 budget process timeline. Our operating budget modification requests are due July 12. There is one more Board meeting between now and that date. Rebecca and the management team will be working on recommendations to present at the June Board meeting. One of these could be additional funds for the materials budget. Factors to consider for a materials request are:
 - Updated LOS Materials standard which incorporates inflation
 - Higher use of digital materials, and higher cost
 - Partnership with WCLS and its benefits
 - Our actual expenditures in relation to other WA public libraries (municipal and district)
 - Budget strategy for materials request—continual progress on LOS standard

Rebecca Judd credited Jon for the numbers provided in the Board packet. The report includes two options for updating our standard: Option 1 which uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Option 2 based on the Average Annual Price Change for Hardback, Paperback and E-Books. Actual expenditures per Capita were looked at, as well as our partnership with WCLS. Kristy asked if the updated standard would account for yearly inflation. Jon answered that this is our intention. Rebecca Judd added that she has talked with Andy Asbjornsen, Finance Director and Forrest Longman, Deputy Finance Director, about updating our standard and how to calculate inflation. Rick pointed out that the goal today is information and discussion. He suggested any further thoughts or questions could be emailed to him or Rebecca Judd.

New Business:

- No new business.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Level of Service standard: materials
- 2025 budget modification requests

Meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – June 18, 2024 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment #1: Miller Hull 75% schematic designs



