



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, April 15, 2025 – Central Library Lecture 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:	Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness, Kendra Bradford, Deborra Garrett, and Shirin Deylami
City Council Library Liaison:	Hannah Stone
Library Management Staff:	Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hoglund, Jon McConnel and Jennifer Vander Ploeg
FOBPL Representative:	Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, Rebecca Craven.

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

Public comment: No public comment.

Consent agenda: Kendra Bradford moved to approve the March 18, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes, the March 28, 2025 Special Meeting minutes, and the March 2025 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Shirin Deylami moved, Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

Jon clarified that the large number of items removed from the collection, reflected in the statistics, was a batch process he does periodically throughout the year and conducted in February. It is the final step in withdrawing an item from the collection.

Board Chair report:

- Rebecca Craven gave kudos to all the staff who assisted with the medical incident referenced in the Director's Report.
- Rebecca Craven highlighted the upcoming retirement of Donna Grasdock. Donna has worked at the library for 42 years and was at the Fairhaven Library for a long time, even issuing her children their first library cards. Congratulations to Donna!
- Committee meetings will not commence until June.

Board member reports:

- Deborra Garrett will not be at the May Board Meeting.

City Council liaison report:

- Hannah Stone wanted staff to know that the library's stressful workload is being acknowledged and talked about in many conversations with multiple groups she's a part of.
- Continuing to watch the State Legislature actions closely.

Friends of BPL report:

- The Friends Annual meeting is Saturday, April 19 at the Central Library.
- The next booksale is May 21 – 24.
- There is discussion within the Friends about reaching out to decision makers regarding cuts to the Library and Museum; they welcome talking points and advocacy tips from the Library.

Library Director report:

- Rebecca Judd reported that she's been receiving media requests regarding IMLS funding cuts. Concerning advocacy in this fast-moving environment, Rebecca's recommendation is for anyone wishing to advocate to reach out to legislators about *your* personal library story. Legislators are receiving many form letters; personal experience might resonate more. Also, please share the stories with us at the library.
- Wendy Jenkins returned April 2 as a leave replacement in the Administrative Assistant position. A big thank you to Wendy for stepping in to cover so quickly.
- National Library Week was last week. The Friends always celebrate Library staff on National Library Worker's Day - thank you! So many wonderful cookies!

1st Quarter Action Plan Report

- Rebecca reviewed the 2025 Action Plan, specifically addressing action items worked on in Quarter 1. Highlights include:
 - A staff survey and many conversations regarding safety at the library with community organizations and stakeholders.
 - The hiring of the City's Security Supervisor. Katrina Buckman and Jennifer Vander Ploeg were involved in the process. This position was filled and begins April 16.
 - A training focus on Fire Safety and Evacuation.
 - Many budget conversations, including weekly meetings by managers and supervisors.
 - Continued work on website accessibility as part of the Citywide project.
 - Planning work on a Book Club Social for adults in November.
 - Rescheduling Rebecca's City Council presentation on the Library to summer.
 - Regular meetings with the Whatcom Community Foundation regarding fundraising and the capital campaign for the Central Library renovation.

Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update

- Rebecca Judd shared the staff survey results in the Board Packet. The survey served as a touchpoint to see if we are on the right path regarding the staff-driven goals for 2025.
- Jargon clarification: ROC is "Rules of Conduct"

- Rebecca Judd attended the Housing Advisory Committee meeting last week. It is a group that meets every other month and consists of City staff, Whatcom County Health and Community Services Staff, Whatcom County Staff and other local organizations.
- Rebecca Judd thanked Hannah Stone for connecting her with two Whatcom County Council Members.
- At the City Council Committee of the Whole Meeting on April 14, Jason Korneliussen, COB Strategic Initiatives Manager – Health and Human Services, gave a presentation about the overview of his first 6 months on the job and the general landscape within his scope of work. He made particular mention of the struggles here at the library. His presentation ended with the observation that permanent affordable housing and emergency housing are both very important and need to be worked on simultaneously. Rebecca said this statement resonates with our experience at the library. Jason also attended the April Public Services staff meetings and explained his role with the City and what he’s experienced so far.
- Conversation ensued regarding the Lighthouse Mission and their daytime sheltering offerings. There was acknowledgement that their model leaves a community gap in daytime sheltering options.

Budget Planning Update:

- Following up from the Board Retreat, there was discussion regarding the proposed open hours adjustment. Kristy Van Ness voiced appreciation for the circulation data. Deborra Garrett moved to adjust the Central Library hours to 10am-6pm Monday – Thursday and add Tuesday 10am-2pm hours at the Bellis Fair Branch. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.
- Rebecca Judd said June 1 would likely be an appropriate start date for the new hours and will confirm with supervisors.

Central Library Renovation Update:

- WCF Letter of Agreement update
 - Rebecca read into the minutes the following from Whatcom Community Foundation: “Upon motion duly made, the Board unanimously approved a loan to the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees for the remodel of the downtown Bellingham library branch. The loan is to be funded with earnings on The Robert Bragg & George Muldrow Endowment for the Bellingham Public Library with a maximum loan amount not to exceed the earnings balance of the fund (roughly \$1.5M).”
- Annette Bagley provided a 2025 Library Giving Day update. She first shared the history of Library Giving day, which we first participated in in 2020, raising \$1500 for Hot Spot Lending.
 - 2021: \$15,000 from 150 donors for anti-racist digital reading materials (during COVID and remodel closure)
 - 2022: \$11,761 for Community Voices Book Kits and Community Returns Bins (includes a \$2,400 donation from the Friends)
 - 2023: \$8,755 for Early Learning Installation at the Bellis Fair and Fairhaven Branch Libraries (includes a \$3,000 donation from the Friends). Note that this Giving Day was during Spring Break.
 - 2024: \$22,000 for unrestricted dollars for emerging needs (includes a \$5,000 match from the Friends).

- 2025: \$34,562 so far from more than 200 donors. We have a donor who is willing to match up to \$100,000, and we also have a \$5,000 match from the Friends. We will now transition the campaign from Library Giving Day to the Bellingham Central Library Renovation Fund
- A big thank you to everyone who donated and shared the campaign.
- March 28, 2025 Special Board Meeting update
 - Rebecca talked with Ruth Baleiko from Miller Hull regarding the question of restrooms on the lower and upper level of the Central Library. We can limit the lower level restrooms to youth and families. However, staff are concerned that two restrooms on the main level will not be sufficient. Rather, could the restrooms on the main floor be redesigned to accommodate more stalls? Rebecca recommends considering this when planning the main floor work.
 - Conversation ensued about public meeting rooms and how public meeting rooms for adults will need to have adjacent adult-accessible bathrooms. Rebecca Judd acknowledged that public space planning is complicated and difficult in our building; there are many competing needs for our limited space.
 - Rebecca Judd reported that Ruth and her team are familiar with the study pods introduced/discussed at the special meeting.
 - The next Project Charter Group meeting is scheduled for May 7.
 - Rebecca Judd reported she re-submitted the Federal appropriation grant proposal for the exterior work (2 million) for the FY2026 process. Rick Larson's office reached out to Rebecca to invite this re-submittal.

Strategic Planning

- Rebecca Craven proposed that she, Kristy Van Ness and Rebecca Judd work together to bring suggested next steps for Strategic Planning to the Board for discussion at a later meeting.
- Rebecca Judd is working on a narrative for the City's 5-year Comprehensive Plan. She asked Board members to read, review and provide feedback of the draft.
 - This narrative will be going into the Capital Facilities Plan and is meant to be very high-level and readable, rather than technical.
 - Rebecca Craven asked Board Members to read, review and get comments and feedback to her and Kristy by April 29. The edited draft will be included in the May Board packet for review and discussion at the May Meeting.

New Business:

- The May Board Meeting will be at the Bellis Fair Branch Library.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Christine Perkins (WCLS) asked to attend a Board Meeting to talk about the upcoming WCLS Levy in August.

Meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting Tuesday, May 20, 2025 – Bellis Fair Branch Library – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees