



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, April 20, 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.

Board Members Present: Rick Osen, Jim McCabe, Rebecca Craven, Vernon (Damani) Johnson and Kristy Van Ness

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

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

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. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: no comments.

Consent agenda: Jim noted that the YTD Salaries is running a little higher than previous years. This could be due to frozen vacancies not being included in the budget. Rebecca Craven noted the odd high % Complete on the YTD Fines and Penalties. This is because we have received \$721 in Fines and Penalties, but our budget for that line is zero. Jon communicated a small terminology correction: on page 3, in the 'Steps to reopen' section, a more accurate version of the last bullet would be "...a new server for the public computing network..." rather than "...a new server for the public computer area..." Jim McCabe moved to approve the March 16, 2021 Regular meeting minutes as amended and the March 2021 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report: Rick thanked Rebecca Judd and Jen for providing the Trustees with a tour of the remodel. He is amazed at the transformation on the main floor.

Board member reports: no reports.

City Council liaison report: no report.

Friends of BPL report: Faye thanked Rebecca for providing the Friends' officers with a remodel tour and called the changes spectacular. Faye reported that the Friends' Annual Meeting will be held via Zoom on April 24 – attendees can expect a combination of business and budget reporting as well as entertainment. Rick thanked the Friends, noting that a sizable portion of the remodel furniture budget came from the Friends.

Library Director report: Rebecca commented that it was wonderful to see everyone on the remodel tours. She also invited anyone who missed the tours to reach out to her to arrange one.

For Library Giving Day, the Library worked with Whatcom Community Foundation to add a direct donation link to our website. We also added direct donation links to the non-endowed funds: Unrestricted, Capital, Materials, and Fairhaven Branch Materials. Previously, the only online donation option was the Endowment Fund.

Today a verdict was delivered for the trial surrounding the death of George Floyd. Rebecca added that we are looking for ways to support the community during this time.

Kristy Van Ness, referencing the information in the Director's report about the contract negotiations for the Northstar Digital Literacy platform, requested that we highlight this service in our eNewsletter once it becomes available.

Facilities update: Rebecca reported:

- It is too premature to provide an opening date, but as the timeline is refined, she will keep the board informed.
- The FAQs on our website is a good resource for the reopening process.
- The CDC has released updated guidelines on cleaning protocols, but this hasn't significantly changed our procedures. We still plan to clean computers after each use and the quarantine of materials for 24 hours is still in place.

Jen provided a construction and operations update:

- The current projected elevator completion date is April 30. With limited elevator crews in the area, emergency jobs take precedence.
- The garage and parking lot are now available for library use.
- IT has been working hard on computer installation, completing the returns room stations and now working on Help Desk computers.
- Jen, Alison Kuiken and Michelle Becker will be working this week to get the returns room ready for operations next week.
- The Dodson Room will be used as a quarantine space for materials.
- Once the Help Desk computers are set up, operations and holds will be moved upstairs.
- Once this is complete, the Children's Library can be put back together.
- Jen has been working on Rules of Conduct Policy and Procedures so that staff will have a solid foundation for reopening.
- Rick added that this is the first time since the building was originally built in the 1950's that there will be public rest rooms on the main floor.

COVID-19 supplemental Rules of Conduct: Included in the packet is a draft of this Policy. This is intended as a temporary supplement to our existing Rules of Conduct. Jen explained that the Legal department has reviewed the document, adding that it aligns with WCLS' policy to alleviate confusion for patrons. Jim made a motion that the Board approve the Policy as written. Damani seconded. Motion carried.

2021 Action Plan – First 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 in the 1st quarter of 2021, despite the remodel and ongoing pandemic.

Concerning implementing public service at 25% and 50% capacity, Rebecca Craven asked if we would be basing the 25% and 50% occupancy limits on fire marshal code. Jen responded that she researched many library specific examples to determine occupancy limits. Rebecca Judd added that the determined 50% capacity is 50 patrons at a time on the main floor and 15 patrons in the Children's library. Jen said that staff will be stationed at the upper- and lower-level doors.

National Library Week – April 4-10, 2021

- Library Snapshot Day – April 5: Annette screen-shared numerous photos she took capturing a day in the life of the library on Monday.
- Library Giving Day – April 7: Annette announced we had 188 individual donations on Library Giving Day totaling \$15,442 which includes the processing fees for many of the donations. The net donation is \$15,183. Annette thanked the Trustees for their help in getting the word out. Rebecca added that she thinks the eNewsletter made a big difference this year.

Whatcom Community Foundation allocation: Referencing the donated funds documents in the packet, Rick explained the first page is a quarterly report of donations to the Library Gift Fund and to our Whatcom Community Foundation (WCF) funds. This will be updated for the Board each quarter.

The next page, a Revenue Summary, first lists the current balance of the Library Gift Fund and how the funds are designated to be spent, followed by the current balances of the WCF non-endowed funds. This page also lists the WCF distributions received in 2021, including the first-year distribution of the Bragg-Muldrow endowment.

The final page lists anticipated 2021 donations from the Friends of Bellingham Public Library and the American Rescue Plan, plus lists the 2021 projects and initiatives for the Board to consider funding with the Library Giving Day proceeds and the WCF distributions.

Rick proposed that Library Giving Day proceeds be distributed for the advertised purposes:

- \$5,000 for Anti-Racist Reading List materials
- \$3,000 for Spanish Language refresh
- \$7,000 for Digital Storytelling

The remaining \$3,000 Special projects funding from the Friends will be used to expand the popular Discover Pass backpack lending program.

Rebecca mentioned that she is working with TAG (Technology Alliance Group) to apply for a grant from the WCF Resiliency Fund. The project, called Reconnect, aims to distribute gently used computers to the community.

Rick reviewed that the Board's tentative plan was to return the \$197,707 Bragg-Muldrow portion of the 2021 WCF distribution to the 'spendable' portion of the endowment to have it available for future projects. This would leave \$15,787 for current projects.

Rebecca Judd calculated that the current Wi-Fi hotspot lending program (55 devices) can be extended for another year for approximately \$13,800, which would leave \$2,000 for other initiatives. Rebecca Craven asked about the current demand on the hotspots. Jon responded that typically there are the same number of holds as there are devices, so they are never available for browsing. Rebecca Judd added that if we eventually have more devices, the hotspots can renew so that patrons may use them longer. She added that American Rescue Plan Act funds are likely to become available this summer, which could be used to purchase additional devices and monthly service. The Verizon hotspots offer a broader service area, but the monthly service cost of the Mobile Beacon (Sprint/T-Mobile) hotspots is significantly less. Rebecca Craven made a motion to approve placing the Bragg-Muldrow distribution into the spendable portion of the endowment and using the remaining distribution to continue the current Wi-Fi hotspot initiative for another year, with the possibility of increasing the number of hotspots when we know more about American Rescue Plan Act funding. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Rick reported that he and Rebecca met with James Erb, Assistant City Attorney, and Andy Asbjornsen, Finance Director, to discuss fundraising by the Library Board of Trustees. James could not find any statutes to support or condemn involvement. Rick explained that large city libraries and district libraries, such as WCLS, will often have their own Library Foundation with a paid foundation officer to run it. We currently would not be able to support a paid officer. Rick determined it would be good to establish a temporary fundraising committee to explore goals and issues. The preliminary goal is to fund new innovative projects that the city doesn't cover, such as the wi-fi hotspots. The second goal is to gather interest for future facility improvements at Central or other branches – Rick noted there is a better chance to receive grants when seed money is available. Rick invited Kristy to work with him and Rebecca on this fundraising committee, which will report back to the board.

New Business:

- Invite Forrest Longman, Deputy Finance Director, for a budget forecast.

Meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – May 18, 2021 – Zoom meeting – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: Bellingham Public Library 2021 Action Plan

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.

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

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

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**

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

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

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

ACTION PLAN 2021

WE WILL:

- In response to COVID-19 and Central Library main floor remodel, plan and safely implement **collection maintenance and shifting 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

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**

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

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

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**

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



THRIVE &
GROW

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