



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, July 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, and Vernon (Damani) Johnson

Board Members Absent: 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; Leigh Ann Giles, Friends of BPL Co-President

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 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 Judd pointed out that, in the Persons Visiting category of the Library performance & activity measures, the cell for Central Library Adult is blank because we are in the process of installing a people counter on the main floor. We plan to provide full month statistics starting in August. Rebecca Craven moved to approve the June 15, 2021 Regular meeting minutes and the June 2021 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report:

- Based on City recommendations, we expect to continue with a virtual meeting for August.
- Rick Larsen, Representative for District 2, toured the library on July 8 with Rick and Rebecca Judd. Representative Larsen was interested in remodel project and asked good questions about Library service.

- The Fundraising Committee held a preliminary meeting on July 17 and considered options to explore.
- Upcoming board meeting guests:
 - September: new Legal library liaison, Senior Assistant City Attorney Sarah Chaplin
 - October: new Human Resources Director, Elizabeth Monahan
 - November: Mayor Seth Fleetwood
- Rick will be attending the Friends of Bellingham Public Library board meetings as a Library Board liaison, beginning with their meeting tomorrow.

Board member reports:

- Damani participated in the Racial Equity Summit held in May, and now serves on the Stakeholders Committee. The Committee hopes, in the next 6 months, to determine what a Racial Equity Commission will look like. He and Rebecca Judd recently discussed the role long-term stakeholder institutions might play in future Commission plans – Damani thinks the library is one of these possible institutions.
- Rebecca Craven, referring to the CNN article in the packet about libraries providing Wi-Fi and other services during the pandemic, shared that she heard a related interview on Minnesota Public Radio's Marketplace, [It checks out — libraries are an "investment that's well worth it"](#), calling it, "A nice shoutout to libraries."
- Rick thanked the Friends for restarting book donations.

City Council liaison report:

- Hollie is involved in a work group for the Racial Equity Stakeholders Committee that Damani mentioned, commenting that she is impressed with the word-smithing detail involved in developing a vision statement.
- City Council decided to continue with virtual meetings at least until September.

Friends of BPL report:

- Leigh Ann reported they have increased the number of volunteers working in the library to handle the higher volume of donations.
- The next book sale and smaller pop-up sales will be discussed at tomorrow's board meeting.
- The Friends' Board of Trustees developed a mask policy – they are asking all backroom volunteers to wear masks regardless of vaccination status.
- Village Books has a Round it Up display in their store with featured book reviews and a collection of old due date slips.
- Leigh Ann called their involvement in the Summer Reading parties, "fun and successful," giving out 70 books at the first party and 140 at the second.

Library Director report:

- Rebecca Judd and Jen Vander Ploeg attended a community heatwave Hot Wash (debrief). It was determined there is a need to create heat and smoke plans to provide direction and help with coordination. Other agencies involved in the Hot Wash included WTA, Whatcom County Health Department, City of Bellingham Emergency Management, and the Bellingham School District.

- The Police department is offering training related to the recent Washington State policing reform bills. Jen, Michelle and Alison have arranged for staff training early in August.
- New signage will be installed August 9 & 10. Rebecca offered thanks to Annette and consultant, Katrina Lyons, for their work on this big project.
- Rebecca has been working with the Technology Alliance Group Northwest (TAGNW) on the Reconnect project which aims to distribute gently used computers to those in need. TAG received a grant from the Whatcom Community Foundation to fund this project. The first distribution will happen on Thursday. Reconnect is accepting applications for computers through local non-profit organizations.

Reopening updates:

- COVID-19 Temporary Rules of Conduct policy: Rick reminded the Trustees that authority was given to Rebecca to approve changes to the temporary policy supplement. Jen screenshared the policy (included in packet) and provided an overview of changes made to match current state and local guidance:
 - Deleted no-longer-applicable rules such as social distancing and building occupancy limits
 - Defined "fully vaccinated"
 - Adjusted mask requirement guidelines
- Rebecca provided additional updates:
 - Fairhaven and Barkley branches have reopened
 - Self-check is available
 - Public computers are still being upgraded and installed
 - Video relaying and microfilm access will be installed after public computers
 - Troubleshooting is happening on Point of Sale (POS) at the main Help Desk; POS is working in Children's and at branches
- Study Room procedures: Library staff are working with Public Works to get the meeting rooms, study rooms and SkillShare space cleared out for reopening. Rebecca screenshared and talked through the 2 documents included in the packet – *Reserving and Using the Study Room* and *Study Room Guidelines*. The app used for curbside pick-up scheduling, MyLibro, will also work for Study Room scheduling.
- Open Hours: Rebecca explained the management team has been brainstorming options for Fall open hours. We are in the City's hiring queue for our vacant positions, but this will take many months. We will not be able to provide pre-pandemic service hours until we are fully staffed. Because meeting room use is limited to open hours, this service will be limited as well. A final recommendation for Fall open hours will be brought to the Board in August for discussion and a vote.
- Jen shared a PowerPoint presentation outlining considerations, priorities and 2 possible options for Fall Open hours (*see Attachment #1 for Rebuilding capacity and open hours; all attachments are located at the end of the minutes*).

Curbside service use has declined enough that both options include 1 hour a week at Central, from 5 pm – 6 pm (down from 6 hours per week). The management team felt it was important to continue to offer this service into the Fall.

After discussing the two options, it was decided Rebecca would bring a proposal for the Board to vote on at the August meeting.

Mid-biennium budget requests:

- Rick explained that 2022 is the second year of a 2-year biennium. The City process allows for mid-biennium budget adjustment proposals. We are not recommending additional FTE requests as part of the mid-biennium adjustment but will instead continue planning for a more robust 2023-24 budget ask.

Rebecca screenshared and the Board discussed the *Draft 2022 Mid-Biennium Modification Proposal Summary* that is included in the packet. Proposals are for:

- \$9,500 MyLibro and Omeka digital platforms
- \$30,000 Level of Service increase for Materials
- \$6,000 Barkley Branch janitorial service
- \$24,000 Wi-Fi lending program

Rebecca Craven moved for approval of the Mid-biennium budget requests as proposed in the draft document. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

ARPA funding:

- Rebecca screenshared and the Board discussed the *American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) discussion* document that is included in the packet. This summary outlines the options considered for the best use of the \$28,528 that the Washington State Library designated for Bellingham Public Library. The funds must be spent by June 2022.

One of the options, using funds for expanding Wi-Fi hotspot lending, requires that BPL be CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) compliant. Rebecca explained we currently are not CIPA compliant, adding this would be a good topic for the Board to discuss next year – this topic is controversial and would restrict some public access.

Bethany provided some background information about the Healthy Whatcom program that was considered as an option:

“Healthy Whatcom is the name of the collaborative workgroup that is gathering and facilitating the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) process. This is an action plan to address health issues identified in the Community Health Assessment. Community members and partner organization representatives from across the county are collaborating to go through a facilitated process to help craft the action plan.

I'm currently serving on the CHIP team that is looking at the outcome of Early Childhood Well-Being, with a focus on kindergarten readiness. We are doing this with a lens to racial equity and the strategies and action items are intended to address the systems and systems within which all children and families can

succeed and thrive. Our work is continuing this summer and into the fall; I look forward to seeing the results of this work and seeing what action items that we, as a library, can prioritize to help “move the needle” if you will towards child and family health, equity and success.”

Rebecca added she wants to see how the library can fold this into our long-range planning, but for the purposes of the ARPA funds, we are limited by the time frame.

The recommended option is to purchase a Mitsubishi Hybrid Outreach vehicle to be used for early-learning and other outreach events, enabling us to provide service outside our walls. Public Works Fleet would coordinate the purchase and a \$5,000-\$6,000 annual maintenance cost would be required with this option.

Rebecca Craven, recalling last month's discussion of City ARPA funds, asked if the HVAC request is still on the table. Rebecca Judd responded that she hasn't received official feedback yet, but the remodel pieces and HVAC are still on the table.

Rick suggested adding the \$5,000-\$6,000 annual cost as a mid-biennium request proposal, as well as the difference between the cost of the Mitsubishi Outreach vehicle and the ARPA grant (approximately \$7,472).

Rebecca Craven moved to approve an additional mid-biennium budget request proposal for \$13,472 to fund:

1. the portion of the cost of the Outreach vehicle that will not be covered by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant (approximately \$7,472) and
2. \$6,000 for 2022 vehicle maintenance costs

Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

Facilities & Long-range planning:

- Rick, Rebecca Judd, Jen and two staff members from Public Works met with two people from McKinstry, a company the City has engaged to increase energy efficiency, to discuss an HVAC system. The meeting was set up by PW Superintendent Carol Rofkar.
- Rick stated the renovation of the Central main floor is finished, but work is still needed on the upper and lower levels of the library. We want to continue the momentum for the 2023-2024 budget as well as looking longer range for possible expansion. To be ready for 2023-2024, plans need to be developed by June of 2022. Rick suggested hiring a library-experienced consultant to help with current and long-range planning. The Facilities Committee will be providing recommendations. If we hire a consultant ourselves, Rick suggested using Whatcom Community Foundation Bragg-Muldrow Endowment distributions. More information will be provided at next month's board meeting.
- Jim commented that he heard good feedback from the Hot Wash about the long-range need for an HVAC system for the library (someone other than him brought the topic up).
- Rick mentioned that Rebecca alerted him of the need to also request, in the mid-biennium process, that the Library Gift Fund Council-Approved spending authority be

raised from the budgeted \$50,000 to \$150,000 to allow for possible additional gift fund expenditures in 2022. Rick's recommendation is to submit this request.

- Rebecca Judd and Rick are meeting August 4 with two Cordata Neighborhood Association representatives and Council member Hannah Stone. This will be a preliminary meeting to begin to assess service needs in the northside of the city.

2nd Quarter update:

- Postponed until August meeting due to time constraints.

New Business:

- No new business

Action items for next meeting:

- 2nd Quarter update
- Fall hours recommendations

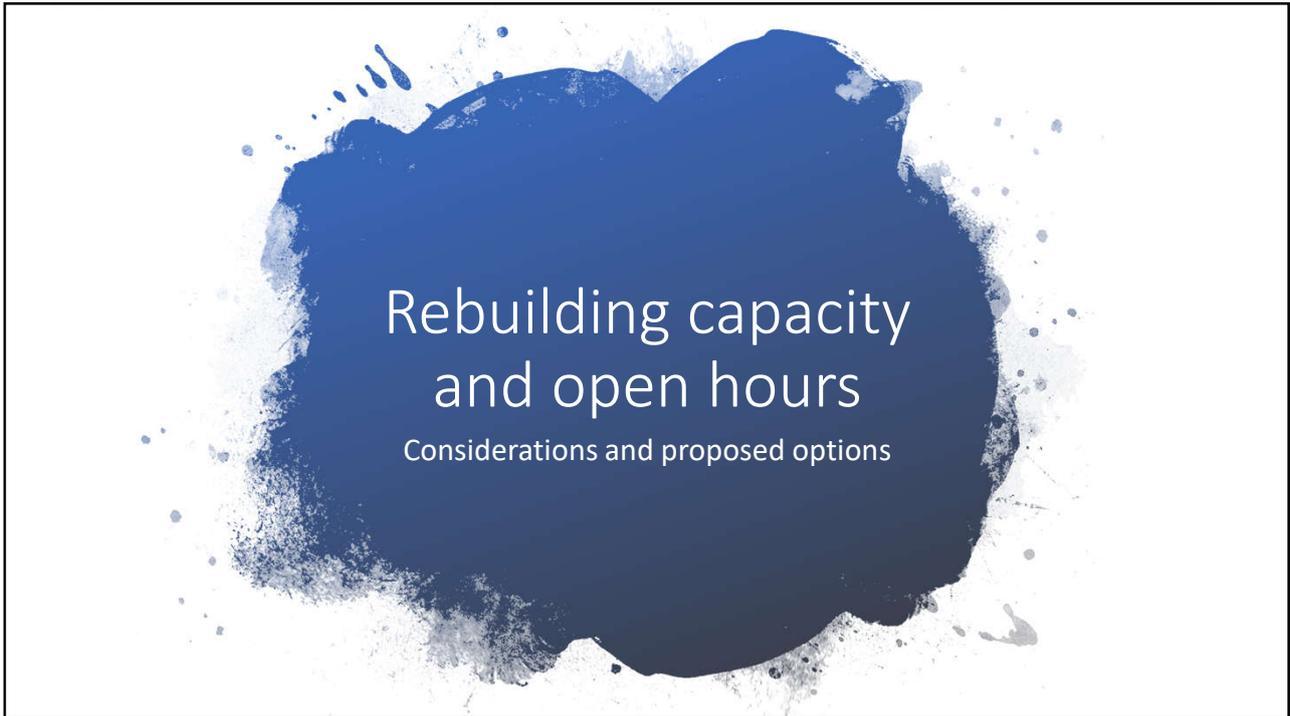
Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – August 17, 2021 – Zoom meeting – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees



1

Staff resources available

- Staff resources available in September for public service will be around 340 hours per week
- Once vacancies are filled and staff are trained we will have around 420 hours per week available for public service

2

Factors considered



- Recommend a phased approach to reinstating open hours that considers available personnel
- Time is needed to complete staffing processes to fill a number of vacancies and provide training for these new staff
- Focus on these priorities:
 - Highest use hours and locations
 - Meeting after school/work needs
 - Fewer drastic changes, public communication easier
 - Meeting the continued need for curbside in a limited capacity

3

What we are doing today

Open 10-3 @ Central							
	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Main Floor		6	6	6	6	6	6
Main Floor		6	6	6	6	6	6
Main Floor		6	6	6	6	6	6
Phones		9	9	9	9	9	9
Children's		6	6	6	6	6	6
Children's		6	6	6	6	6	6
	0	39	39	39	39	39	39
							234
							per week

Open @ Branches							
	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Desk @ FH		5	5	5	5	5	5
Desk @ BA		5	5	5	5	5	5
	0	10	10	10	10	10	10
							60
							per week

Curbside 3 days per week							
	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Door person		2.5		2.5			2.5
2 staff (retrieving)		6		6			6
2 staff (check out)		6		6			6
	0	14.5	0	14.5	0	0	14.5
							43.5
							per week

- Central Monday to Saturday 10am – 3pm
- Branches Monday to Saturday 4 hours/day
- Curbside 3 days per week
- Requires approximately 338 hours per week to offer these hours and services

4

Next phase - Option 1

Central
Monday – Saturday

- Monday/Tuesday 10-6
- Wednesday – Friday 2-6
- Saturday 10-4 & Curbside 5-6

Branches
Monday - Saturday

- Monday/Tuesday 10-2
- Wednesday – Friday 2-6
- Saturday 10-2

5

Next phase - Option 2

Central
Tuesday – Saturday

- Tuesday-Friday 10-6
- Saturday 10-4 & Curbside 5-6

Branches
Tuesday - Saturday

- Tuesday 10-2
- Wednesday – Friday 2-6
- Saturday 10-2

6