



Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, October 18, 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.

Board Members Present: Rick Osen, Jim McCabe, Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness and Melissa Morin

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

Others Present: Kristina Michele Martens, City Council Liaison; Jennie Tuckerman, Friends of BPL Co-President; Blake Lyon, Planning & Community Development Director

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, Rick Osen. Rick thanked Katie Bray for administrating and moderating the Zoom board meetings for the past 2 ½ years.

Approve/modify agenda: Jim McCabe moved to approve the agenda. Melissa Morin seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: No comments.

Consent agenda: Jon McConnel explained that there is a technical issue with the self-checkout software we started using as each location reopened after the pandemic closures. Currently all checkouts that happen through self-check are recorded as if they happened at the Central Library. The total number of checkouts shown in the Performance and Activity Measures is correct, but at the location-level the Central Library is assigned too many, and the other locations too few. ITSD is working with the vendor to find a solution. Rebecca J. added that we hope to have this resolved before the new year begins. Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the September 20, 2022 Regular meeting minutes and the September 2022 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report:

- Rick reported that the Facilities Master Plan and our work with Godfrey's Associates is complete. This Plan provides a road map for library services for the next 20 years and is

already being put to use as we plan for 2023. The Facilities Master Plan is posted on the library website and there are a limited number of print copies available.

- On October 10, Rick and Rebecca J. reviewed and discussed the Library's 2023-24 biennial budget request at a City Council work session. Their impression was that the Council was very supportive. Rebecca then screenshared and reviewed the document that was passed out at the Council presentation (see *Attachment #1 for 2023-2024 Proposed Biennial Budget – Library Department*). Rebecca pointed out that the FTE listed is incorrect; The finance department is still calculating the adjustment resulting from changing some Library Assistant positions from non-benefitted to benefitted. Jim commented that when he joined the board, the biennial budget was around \$9 million – it's good to see how much it has progressed.

Board member reports:

- No reports.

City Council liaison report:

- Council is busy with the budget season. Kristina felt the library presentation was well received. She is focused on how we can make the library more accessible in light of the new demographics of Bellingham.

Friends of BPL report:

- Jennie reported the next pop-up sale will be November 12, in the Lecture Room. The Friends will also hold a pop-up sale on April 5, with the proceeds going to Library Giving Day. They are hoping to bring back a large book sale in May, 2023.
- Jennie invited everyone to the April 22, 2023 Annual Meeting – Rick and Rebecca J. will speak; Katie will provide a book talk and Monica Koller will speak about the storytelling projects *Unrooted Experience* and *Resilience Circle*.

Library Director report:

- Rebecca reported that DVD loans are being extended to 3 weeks, along with Discover Pass backpacks and Happy Go Lucky titles. All materials except Book Club Kits will now be 3 weeks. WCLS is also making these changes.
- At the Washington Public Libraries Director's retreat Rebecca had the opportunity to tour the newly renovated downtown Spokane Public Library. It is 117,000 square feet – 3 times our Central Library. They incorporated radio, music, and podcast studios, artwork and a beautiful view of the river into the design. They also had an interesting technology platform for managing meeting room access. Group4 was the architect for the project.
- On November 5, Monica Koller and Connecting Community will host a [Community Voices Film Fest](#) at the Squalicum Boathouse. Bellingham Public Library was a partner in this project. The first public showing of the digital storytelling *Resilience Circle* will be from 2-4 p.m. This is a free event but requires registration.

National Friends of Libraries Week, October 16-22, 2022:

- In honor of the Friends, Rick read A Resolution Commending the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library. Rick Osen moved to approve the Resolution. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

Fundraising update:

- Agency Fund update: the Whatcom Community Foundation Board agreed with the Library's proposal to transfer the Agency fund back to the Library as suggested by the City's Finance Office. We expect the transfer to happen soon.
- Planned Giving: the Fundraising committee will return to the proposal from consultant Rachel Myers to design a planned giving program for the benefit of the Library. That work will begin early in 2023, schedule to be determined.
- April 5, 2023 – Library Giving Day: Rick thanked the Friends for participating through their planned April 5 pop-up sale. We will soon begin discussing what project(s) we will be focused on for the 2023 campaign.

Welcoming Planning & Community Development Director Blake Lyon:

- Rebecca J. welcomed Blake to the board meeting and introductions were made.
- Blake provided a little detail about what brought him to Bellingham. First, he acknowledged he has three children who are all happy patrons of the library. Blake's undergraduate studies were in environmental science. He was born and raised in the Los Angeles area where he developed an affinity for city planning. Professional planning work began in Santa Monica, followed by Redwood City. Most recently, he comes to Bellingham from Florida where he worked for a county government.

Since arriving in Bellingham in March, his focus has been on getting to know the community and its priorities and getting to know staff.

He explained that Planning and Development has three teams:

1. Long range, with a 20/30/40-year comprehensive plan.
2. Contemporary work on development which includes permits, impact studies, regulatory pieces, zoning and building codes and life safety issues.
3. Community and economic development which includes services, sheltering, affordable housing and childcare needs. For economic development, they work closely with the Port of Bellingham.

Return to in-person Board meetings:

- Rick stated that, with the emergency declarations being lifted at the end of October, all boards and commissions will begin to meet in person. Included in the packet are updated directives from the state. The November meeting will be held in the Lecture Room.

Policy changes - discussion:

- Eligibility for Library Services: Rebecca J. screenshared the policy while Jen explained our goal is to improve accessibility and this update provides more accessibility for patrons without photo ID and children without a signing parent. These patrons would now be able to check out up to 3 physical items at a time, have access to electronic materials, and access to the computers. Full access is up to 75 items plus e-materials and computer access.
- Collection Development: Rebecca J. explained this is not a full policy review which involves looking at comparable policies from other libraries, but light edits were made. Of note, specific language was removed from the donations section and instead

refers to the recently updated donations policy. Rebecca Craven suggested a further step in removing "2.102" from item #10.

- Rick suggested comments be sent to Rebecca J. before the board votes on approval of the policies at next month's meeting.

3rd Quarter Action Plan update:

- Rebecca J. screenshared and reviewed the document in the packet which lists the significant projects accomplished in each of the 5 Strategic Plan focus areas – Welcome & Include; Access & Opportunity; Read & Learn; Inform & Involve; and Thrive & Grow.

New Business:

- No new business.

Action items for next meeting:

- Guest speaker, Chief of Police Becky Mertzig
- Policy update approvals

Meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – November 15, 2022 – Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: 2023-2024 Proposed Biennial Budget – Library Department



2023-2024 Proposed Biennial Budget

Library Department

	2021-2022	2023-2024
Operating Budget	\$11,826,466	\$15,606,974
Capital Budget		n/a ¹
Budgeted FTEs	54.3	57.6

2023-2024 Operating Budget Highlights

- Level of Services increases in Facilities (square feet/capita), Materials (expenditures/capita), and Staffing (budgeted FTE).
- Increased access to Library services on the north side of Bellingham through Bellis Fair Mall branch pilot.
- Additional staffing capacity in key operational areas, including a full time Head of Public Services.

2021-2022 Achievements

- Completed renovation of Central Library main floor, improving customer experience and operational efficiency
- Assessed current and future facilities needs against Level of Service goals. Completed Facilities Master Plan and presented near, mid, and long-term recommendations to City Council.
- In partnership with Unity Care NW, hosted community training with Ryan Dowd at Mount Baker Theatre titled “Skills for Interacting Confidently and Compassionately with Individuals in Crisis.”
- Reopened facilities and restarted Library services as part of COVID-19 recovery.

2023-2024 Work Plan

- Design and implement Bellis Fair Mall branch pilot; continue to explore long term branch opportunities on the north side of Bellingham.
- In collaboration with Public Works and ITSD, complete HVAC upgrade and interior renovation of the Central Library.
- Hire and onboard new Library staff. Convert eight Library Assistant positions to benefits-eligible.

¹ Library facility improvements are budgeted in Public Works.