



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, August 15, 2023 – 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.

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**Board Members Present:** Rick Osen, Jim McCabe, Rebecca Craven, and Kristy Van Ness  
**City Council Library Liaison:** Absent  
**Library Staff:** Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins  
**FOBPL Representative:** Absent  
**Guest Presenters:** None

**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, Rick Osen.

**Approve/modify agenda:** Rick added one item to the agenda: tracking overdue items. Jim McCabe moved to approve the modified agenda. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

**Public comment:** no comments.

**Consent agenda:** Jim asked if there are expectations about Bellis Fair circulation counts. Rebecca Judd responded that people are still finding and using the space, and that it will be useful to track circulation counts over the course of a calendar year. No formal targets have been set for use. Kristy commented that the Bellis Fair Mall craft fair was wonderful, and Bernice Chang did a great job of organizing it. Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the July 18, 2023 Regular meeting minutes and the July 2023 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

**Tracking overdue items:** In the last item in the Director’s Report ‘Tracking Overdues,’ Jon writes “With the Board’s agreement, I would like to stop the weekly snapshot” (of overdue items statistics). Rick commented that tracking these numbers served its purpose: the Library was able to determine that eliminating fines does not have a significant impact on either the number of items overdue, or on the number of patrons with items overdue. The Board agreed to the recommendation to stop tracking this statistic.

**Board Chair report:**

- Rick reported that the contract with Miller Hull is expected to be finalized soon. Predesign work should begin soon.
- Last month Rebecca Judd reported on the Library's mid-biennium budget modification requests. Rebecca will be meeting tomorrow with City officials about these requests.
- Rick referred to two articles in the packet that report on book challenges across the nation. He also mentioned the November ballot measure in Columbia County to close the Dayton library, as reported in the Seattle Times.
- Also in the packet, Rick referred to the following articles:
  - [Renovations will bolster Andrew Carnegie's 'heart of the community' in Green Lake](#) about renovating a Carnegie Library. This information might be helpful if we renovate Fairhaven. There are still 40 Carnegie libraries in Washington state, but only 14 are used as libraries – 4 of them are in Seattle.
  - [I WANT MY DVD](#) talks about access to certain titles and features that are not offered through streaming.
- Kristy and Rebecca Craven will be working with Rebecca Judd on interviewing candidates for the Trustee vacancy. On September 5 all applications turned in by September 1 will be reviewed. Interviews will take place mid-September.
- Burlington Public Library is working with State Librarian Sara Jones to host a trustee training. Rebecca J. added that the training will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, September 16. This is an opportunity to meet other trustees in the area.

**Board member reports:**

- Jim asked if a prioritization of projects will be included as part of the renovation predesign work. Rick answered that predesign will include cost projections and prioritization will happen immediately after the initial predesign.
- Jim, referring to the Carnegie Library article, reminded Trustees that Godfrey's provided many ideas about Fairhaven in the Facilities Master Plan.

**Friends of BPL report (Wendy reported from an email from Carol Comeau):**

- The book sale at Wander Brewing was a great success. We had new customers who came for beer and discovered books for sale, and Wander had new customers who came for books and stayed for a beer. Bellingham Public Library pens, magnets, stickers and August calendars were handed out.
- The next large book sale is September 20-23 in the Lecture Room.

**Library Director report:**

- Rebecca attended the organizing meeting for a countywide multi-agency coordinating group concerning the opioid/fentanyl crisis. There were over 60 attendees for the Zoom meeting. The next meeting is in September.
- The City is updating the Comprehensive Plan. The community engagement phase has started and there is a survey available online: [The Bellingham Plan | Engage Bellingham](#). The survey includes one library question, and BPL is working to be more involved in the process. Rebecca Craven commented that it would be good to have our updated Level of Service standards (LOS) included in the plan and asked if there was an established timeline yet for this type of

information. Annette responded that the community engagement piece has just started. Other elements of the plan will be gathered in 2024.

- Work is moving forward on embedding a behavioral health specialist at the library. The Interlocal agreement and RFP will be finalized in September. The goal is to have a specialist in place by January 1, 2024.
- Rebecca provided an update on the Digital Navigator grant: the State Library is willing to serve as administrator, and Goodwill has agreed to be included in the grant rather than be in competition for a separate grant. The turnaround will be quick with funds designated in September and a spending deadline of June 2024. BPL applied for funding to double the number of hotspot devices and for digital navigator services provided by Goodwill (10 hours/week). WCLS is also part of this grant and has requested 200 additional hotspots and funding for 2 FTE on-staff digital navigators who may be able to provide some hours here.

**Planned Giving project update:**

- Nothing new to report.

**Policy update discussion – Board of Trustees Bylaws:**

- Rick reported that the Personnel & Policy committee (Rick, Rebecca Craven and Rebecca Judd) met and determined that the Bylaws do not need to be a policy and it was suggested that they could be combined with the information from the Job Description, the Code of Ethics and a new portion on Public Comment as appendices. The draft included in the packet is the result of this suggestion. Sarah Chaplin, from City legal, has been consulted and provided feedback. Rebecca Judd added that, for public comment, there will be a 3-minute time limit per person and a total of 30 minutes allowed. Unless someone disrupts the meeting, such as refusing to stop at 3 minutes, the Board's role is to listen. Someone might be offensive, but not technically disruptive. Sarah is researching if, with a large group of commentators, it is allowable to ask City of Bellingham residents to speak first.
- Kristy suggested that the Public Comment guidelines include language that submitted written comments will be provided to Trustees. She also asked if we would be able to accommodate a request for the OWL device as late as noon on the board meeting day. Jon responded that yes, we would be able to set up the technology within this timeframe.
- Jon questioned the use of the word 'believe' in the second paragraph of the Code of Ethics appendix. It was decided that 'support' would be a better fit.
- Rebecca noted that a new section on Executive Session was added as part of this draft.
- Rick concluded the discussion by noting that additional comments or ideas could be sent to him or Rebecca Judd. The goal is to vote on the updated document at next month's meeting.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Action Plan review:**

- Rebecca talked through the highlights of the Action Plan included in the packet.

**New Business:**

- No new business.

**Agenda items for next meeting:**

- Planned Giving update
- Board of Trustee Bylaws

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:20 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting: September 19, 2023 – Central Library Board Room – 3:30 p.m.**

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST  
Secretary, Library Board of Trustees