



Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, January 16, 2024 – 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: Jim McCabe, Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness and Kendra Bradford
Board Members absent: Rick Osen
City Council Library Liaison: Hannah Stone
Library Staff: Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hogle, Jon McConnel, Soleil Borthwick, Ethan Evans and Wendy Jenkins
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 Vice-Chair, Jim McCabe. Katrina Buckman was welcomed and introduced.

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

Public comment: No comments.

Consent agenda: Rebecca Craven pointed out that there are two incorrect 2024 dates in the Whatcom Community Foundation Fund report – they should be 2023. Wendy responded that she would correct them. Jim asked for clarification concerning revenue actuals and budget. Rebecca Judd responded that we have been working with Finance to right size the revenue budget – for instance removing the Rental Fees budget line now that the Parks department has taken on oversight of the Fairhaven Auditorium. Rebecca Judd reminded everyone that for 2024 we will have the YTD comparison return to the previous year, rather than comparing to pre-pandemic 2019. Rebecca Craven moved to approve the December 19, 2023 Regular meeting minutes and the December 2023 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Board Vice-Chair report:

- Jim reported that this would be his last meeting as he will be out of town for the February meeting.

Board member reports:

- Kristy Van Ness reported that while she was in the library on Sunday, she checked with the Security Attendants and was pleased to hear that City and County efforts to provide adequate warming centers has had a positive impact on the library.

City Council liaison report:

- Hannah Stone was welcomed and introduced. She reported that she was looking forward to this assignment and invited attendees to feel free to reach out to her with questions or concerns.

Friends of BPL report:

- Carol reminded everyone that the next book sale will be from January 25-27, in the Library Lecture Room and lower lobby. Hours of the sale will be:
 - Thursday, January 25: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
 - Friday, January 26: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 - Saturday, January 27: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (half price) and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (\$5 bag)

Library Director report:

- Rebecca welcomed Hannah and Katrina.
- Rebecca reported that the light therapy lamps are a hit; there are over 200 holds now for the 23 lamps. She added we will be asking the Friends for another \$1000 to purchase additional lamps. Whatcom County Library System (WCLS) is also planning to purchase some.
- Rebecca reported it has been wonderful working with Mayor Lund as she begins her term as Mayor.
- We are preparing for a couple of messy weather days ahead. Rebecca said that if we need to close the Library, she will reach out to the Board and the Friends.
- There are several upcoming opportunities to inform the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan. Rebecca will forward a relevant email to the Trustees.
- Rebecca noted that Bethany was featured in the January 11 Barkley newsletter.
- Before the meeting, Rick provided a 2023 Highlights document, that Rebecca distributed (*see Attachment #1 for BPL Board of Trustees 2023 Highlights. All attachments are at the end of the minutes*).
- Rebecca announced that, with Jim's retirement from the Board, we will be recommending to the Mayor that Deborra Garrett fill this vacancy.

Celebrating Jim McCabe's 7 years of service:

- Jim commented that he has had an enjoyable time being on the Board and that he has appreciated Rick's great leadership as Chair. Jim added that he is amazed at how much the Board and staff have been able to accomplish over these years. When he started, the budget was almost half what it is now. A highlight of his time was working on the Capital Facilities Plan. He added that it is always good to have new Trustees, new ideas, and new energy.
- Rebecca read Rick's note about Jim's service as a Trustee:

“Jim joined the Board of Trustees in March, 2017, to fill out the remainder of Tom Barrett’s term, and then was appointed to a full 5-year term in March, 2019. After 7 years of service, this is Jim’s last meeting.

Jim has been an excellent Trustee, taking an interest in all facets of library operations and services. He has specifically served on the Facilities Committee, taking key roles in the Central Library main floor remodel and in last year’s Library Facilities Master Plan. He has provided good oversight and input on library budgets and been a good advocate for the library.

I know I speak for all of you in our sincerest thanks to Jim for his 7 years of stellar service as a Trustee for BPL.”

Rebecca then presented Jim with a gift from the Trustees and a beautiful book on Australia that has been added to the Library collection with a book plate honoring Jim’s service as a Trustee.

Trespass appeal:

Rebecca Judd reported a review committee met on January 5 (Rebecca Judd, Katrina Buckman, Rebecca Craven (for Rick Osen) and Legal liaison Sarah Chapman). They considered all of the documentation and confirmed there were two violations of our Rules of Conduct: Section 2 (failure to comply with a reasonable staff request) and Section 5 (physical activity dangerous to others).

- They considered the typical maximum length for a first offense, and after review were in agreement to uphold the reduction to 6 months established at the November 21 Board meeting. Legal has reviewed and approved this decision. Rebecca Craven moved to uphold the 6-month trespass on Jonathan Roberson which will expire on March 23, 2024. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

Trespass appeal draft procedures:

- Referencing the document in the packet, Rebecca pointed out that there are two parts to the trespass appeal procedure: Staff procedure and Administration procedure. There is very little change in the Staff procedure; most of the changes are in the Administration procedure. One key change, after reviewing other libraries’ trespass appeal process, is establishing a 30-day timeline. Another key change is convening a review committee including the Library Director, the Library’s legal liaison, the Head of Public Services and the two members of the Library Board of Trustees policy committee. The review committee will be the deciding entity. Rebecca added that we will be updating the website with this information, so people know the process and their rights. We are working to make this process as fair and accessible as possible.
- Security and Information Attendant Soleil Borthwick asked if staff will be involved when the review committee meets. Rebecca responded that involved staff will be interviewed prior to the review committee meeting.

2024 Library Giving Day focus:

- Rebecca gave this report in Rick’s absence, and in consultation with Rick. In the past, the Trustees have set a specific focus for Library Giving Day, such as digital storytelling, community drop boxes, and the interactive panels at the Bellis Fair Branch. This year, Rick suggests we try a general campaign to raise money for the Library, such as WCLS and Seattle Public Library do. Rebecca noted a general campaign might appeal to a broader audience and we would be able to remarket it from year to year. Kristy mentioned that in 2025, it might be a good idea to tie in the campaign with information about planned giving. Kendra added that running a general campaign this year would enable us to compare it with past focused campaigns. Jim added that in the marketing, past examples could be mentioned showing what Library Giving Day has enabled us to accomplish. Jim invited attendees to email their thoughts and ideas to Rick.

Agreement Between Bellingham Public Library and Whatcom County Library System for the Operation and Maintenance of an Integrated Library System:

- Rebecca noted that the only change from the last Integrated Library System (ILS) agreement is under item 4 on page 2. In the past, WCLS has taken responsibility for delivery of printed patron notices and has charged BPL for material cost of paper, envelopes and postage. They will now also be charging for the labor costs associated with this task, anticipated to be an additional \$2,800 per year. BPL also has the option of taking over the delivery of printed notices to BPL patrons – this option will be explored later this year. Mention was made of Exhibit A. Rebecca Judd said that this is a 40-page contract with BPL, WCLS and Innovative Interfaces Incorporated (provider of the ILS Polaris) that will be attached to the contract record. Jim McCabe moved that the agreement be accepted and signed as presented. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.
- Rebecca noted that typically the BPL Board does not approve contracts, and that she would like to explore the reasoning behind bringing forward this contract to the Board in future years.

2024 Action Plan:

- Rebecca Judd thanked the Trustees for the feedback provided at the last meeting. The document included in the packet reflects those changes. Rebecca Craven requested that the final bullet, *Establish a system for knowing who is on-site*, be adjusted to clarify that ‘who’ refers to staff. Rebecca agreed. Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the 2024 Action Plan with the noted change. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

- No new business

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Library Giving Day
- Planned giving update

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – February 20, 2024 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: BPL Board of Trustees 2023 Highlights

BPL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2023 Highlights

This summary contains selected highlights for the year's work of the Bellingham Public Library's Board of Trustees in its role as the governing body of the library. Our driving force has been to work closely with Library Administration and City Administration in carrying out the library's Strategic Plan and to continue improvement on meeting our adopted Level of Service standards.

The Board salutes the Library's Management and Staff for their tireless and innovative efforts in providing services, programs and support for the Bellingham community.

Board Personnel, Meetings and Bylaws

- Melissa Morin resigned from the Board in order to accept a position with the City's Communications team. Kendra Bradford was appointed to fill the vacant position and began work on the Board in October.
- The Board entertained several presentations/visits at its meetings this year. These included a meet-and-greet with Police Chief Rebecca Mertzig; a presentation on City Revenue & Budget Outlook by Finance Director Andy Asbjornsen; a presentation on Protecting the Rights to Read by Washington State Librarian Sara Jones; and, a detailed look at the Library's collections and collection development policies from Deputy Director Bethany Hoglund with assistance from Head of Digital Services Jon McConnel.
- The Boards and Directors of BPL and WCLS published a guest editorial in the Cascadia Daily News on "Libraries protect the Freedom to Read."
- The Board revised and reorganized their bylaws and related materials so that it stands as its own document and is no longer part of the Library's policies.

Facilities

- The first of two near-term projects outlined in the Library Facilities Master Plan (2022) was completed with the opening of the Bellis Fair Branch Library during National Library Week in April. There had been citizen advocacy for northside library services for many years. Through leasing space at the mall this came about quickly once the city approved the funding. This was the first additional space added to the library system in 15 years, since the Barkley Branch opened in 2008.
- The second of the Master Plan's near-term projects is just getting under way. This project is to complete the interior renovation of the Central Library through work on the ground level floor and the mezzanine level, as well as a new electrified HVAC system for the entire building. The Miller Hull Partnership was given the notice to proceed with the design of this project in November. The project is to be designed and bid by the end of 2024, with construction to begin in 2025.

Strategic Plan

- In September the Library Board voted to extend the Library's Strategic Plan (2020-2024) for two more years through the 2025/26 biennium. There were many reasons for doing this.
 - The disruption of the Covid pandemic inhibited implementation of the plan.

- Board membership and leadership is in the process of turnover. Better to have new Board members take part in the next plan.
- Central Library renovation will demand a lot of attention over the next two years.
- Level of Service standards for Materials and Hours need to be updated prior to a new plan.
- Current plan was meant to be flexible. Our strategic directions are as valid today as they were in 2020.

Additional Funding

- In conjunction with the Friends of BPL, the library totaled \$8,645 in proceeds from Library Giving Day in April.
- The Board has been working with consultant Rachel Myers to set up a framework that makes it more evident that planned giving to the library could be an option for those doing their estate planning.

Rick Osen, Chair, BPL Board of Trustees