



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, February 20, 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:** Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness and Kendra Bradford
- Board Members Absent:** Rick Osen and Jim McCabe
- City Council Library Liaison:** Hannah Stone
- Library Staff:** Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hogle, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins
- FOBPL Representative:** Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison
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Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Vice-Chair, Rebecca Craven.

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

Public comment: No public comments

Consent agenda: Kendra Bradford moved to approve the January 16, 2024 Regular meeting minutes and the January 2024 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report:

- No report

Board member reports:

- No reports

City Council liaison report:

- Hannah reported that the Council joined library staff for a promotional photo for the Whatcom READS 2024 selection *Red Paint: The Ancestral Autobiography of a Coast Salish Punk*.

Friends of BPL report:

- Carol reported that the January book sale brought in over \$16,000. The sale was a 3-day event with extended hours. The added evening hours were slower than daytime hours, but steady. The Ski-to-Sea book sale, a community favorite, will use the 4-day format. The Friends' Board will debrief the January sale at their next meeting. The increased income could be due to more publicity, including advertising in Cascadia Daily News.

Library Director report:

- Rebecca reported attending the statewide Library Directors' retreat at the beginning of February in Burien. There are two statewide retreats per year: in the fall the retreat is held on the east side of the state; in the winter, on the west side. A number of topics were addressed, such as Artificial Intelligence, the Library Capital Improvement Grant opportunity, and trauma informed care for library staff.
- Rebecca announced that Deborra Garrett was approved by City Council on February 12 with a Trustee start date of March 11, 2024. She will attend the March board meeting.
- As mentioned in the Director's Report, the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) salmon eggs have arrived and are beginning to hatch. Rebecca invited everyone to take a look while they are at the library or to view the [live stream](#).
- Rebecca reported Engage Bellingham is hosting a series of open houses as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. One will be held on February 22, from 5-7 p.m. at Sehome High School. They are looking for input on the community's vision. Rebecca offered to put together some talking points.
- Rebecca commented that the Champs store, next door to the Bellis Fair branch, is now vacant. We are exploring the opportunity to use this space. Mall management mentioned that our limited open hours could be a barrier.
- Rebecca thanked Jon for all his work on the new people counters. As mentioned in the Director's Report, there are not any solid numbers to compare with the new, more accurate counts. Because of this, the 2023 people count numbers have been removed from the 2024 performance and activity measures.

Open Public Meetings Act:

Wendy provided an overview of this law and its requirements: "The Washington Open Public Meetings Act, codified in chapter 42.30 RCW, requires that all meetings of governing bodies of public agencies, including cities, counties, and special purpose district, be open to the public."

Facilities Committee update:

- Rebecca Judd explained we are currently in the schematic design phase for the upper and lower floors, followed next by detailed design. Miller Hull intends to provide cost estimates for our requests in the middle of March. There are a couple of key decisions for today: the size of

the meeting room and the phasing of the project. Rebecca added that she has discussed both decisions with Rick.

- Jen Vander Ploeg discussed a draft layout for the lower level, which identifies areas that have building constraints, such as closed stacks (each support is anchored to the piling and cannot be moved) (*see Attachment #1 for Bellingham Public Library draft lower floor*). One goal for this new design is to bring Children's and Teen services to the same floor. This would involve decreasing the size of the Lecture Room. Rebecca Judd added that one option is to create a flexible space by installing a soundproof, flexible wall between the new Teen area and the new Lecture Room. Rebecca mentioned that Rick had expressed some concerns about a flexible wall – and that we should be sure to vet solutions well with the architects. She continued that the decision point for today concerns the occupancy limit for the Lecture Room. If it is kept below 50 (in this case 49), one exit is required. If the occupancy limit is higher, a second exit would be needed. After discussion it was decided to move forward with a plan for below 50 (49) occupancy.
- Rebecca said the second decision point is construction phasing. After talking with Rick and others, the recommendation is to close the Central Library during renovation. Reasons for this recommendation include: budget (we can include more long term public benefit in the design if we keep construction costs low); staff and public safety; and the complexity of the project, which includes work on all three floors. To mitigate the public impact, we propose expanding hours at all three branches as well as collections and services. We would want to negotiate for some access to Central including the automated materials handler. After discussion, it was decided to move forward with this plan.
- Rebecca also noted that we have started a conversation about the 1% for Arts Program requirement.

Fundraising update:

- Whatcom Community Foundation 2023 annual distribution: included in the packet is information about designated grants received from Whatcom Community Foundation. Rebecca Craven made a motion that the 2023 annual designated distribution from the Bayview Fund, the Designated Endowment Fund, and the Dorothy and Harris Gonsalves Bellingham Public Library Endowment Fund be deposited into the Bellingham Public Library's Gift Fund. Funding decisions for the unrestricted amounts in the Bayview and Designated Endowment Funds will be approved by the Board at a later date. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.
- Planned Giving update: Kristy reported that Whatcom Community Foundation has decided they can share BPL endowment funds donor contact information with us so we can thank and steward donors. They are currently determining the best method to provide this information. Kristy also reported that Rachel Myers, from RM+Co, is finalizing the planned giving documents which will be presented at a future meeting.
- Library Giving Day: Rebecca Judd recalled at last month's meeting, the board discussed changing the focus of Library Giving Day to a more general ask rather than a specific project. Rebecca Craved moved that the 2024 Library Giving Day campaign be a general ask to our community for undesignated funding to support Library initiatives. Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

- No new business

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Welcoming Deborra Garrett
- Jon's annual statistics report
- Facilities (renovation) update

Meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – March 19, 2024 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: Bellingham Public Library draft lower floor

Youth Services staff space
 children's restroom (public)

Children's Library

Closed Stacks

Checkout desk?

Mechanical & Janitorial

- lecture Room
 - restrooms
 - exterior access
 - storage
 - Kitchette
- Public restrooms (reduced number)

- Friends
- Break Area
- Mothers Room
- Lockers (staff)

