



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, January 21, 2025 – 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: Rick Osen, Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness, Kendra Bradford and Deborra Garrett
City Council Library Liaison: Not present
Library Management Staff: Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hoglund, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Madeline Roseninge
FOBPL Representative: Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison
Guest Presenter: None

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:29 p.m. by Chair, Rebecca Craven.

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

Public comment: None

Consent agenda: Rick Osen moved to approve the December 17, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes and the December 2024 Performance and Activity Measures and financial reports. Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

- Rebecca Judd noted a correction on page 42 of the Board Packet. Under 4th quarter gift balances, the Bragg Muldrow endowment should be \$657,176.67 for the end of 4th quarter. The current number on the report reflects the 2025 total balance.
- Rebecca Judd pointed out a new section at the bottom of the Quarterly Donation Report called "Capital Fund Donations for Lower Floor Renovation" that was added to keep a running total of donations to the Central Library capital effort. Rebecca Judd asked if this new section was a helpful addition and Rebecca Craven said yes. Some edits were suggested including changing the title to make it more general to all renovations for the Central Library and

including the \$1 million in secured private fundraising, authorized by the Trustees at a special meeting last year.

- Rebecca Craven was happy to see the number of new borrowers registered increasing on the Performance and Activity Measures Report.

Board Chair report:

- None

Board member reports:

- None

City Council liaison report:

- None

Friends of BPL report:

- The Friends are working with library staff to categorize community distributions of book donations. Kathie Wilson and Scout Mitchell met with Liz Hendershott and Suzanne Carlson-Prandini to discuss donating books to Lake Whatcom Center, The Food Bank, Brigid Collins, Unity Care, and several elementary schools. They are also setting aside books for Liz and Suzanne to distribute via Outreach Services, and for the HEART program. Carol Comeau has been distributing books to Little Free Libraries in low-income areas and was just contacted by Skookum Kids Foster Care as well.
- The Friends Board met and approved \$75,000 for BPL to use in 2025 for materials, programming, community relations, and Wi-Fi hotspots. In March they will meet to discuss how much they can pledge to the renovation project.

Library Director report:

- Former Administrative Assistant Wendy Jenkins has agreed to return during Madeline Roseninge's parental leave.
- The Library will be pausing Outreach Services for a longer period of time, and folding the discussion about the position into the 2026 budget process.
- Annette Bagley and Bethany Hoglund shared their experience at the MLK event put on by The Community Consortium for Cultural Recognition. They said it was a great event, with student moderators and excellent speakers discussing the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. and what leadership looks like in our community.
- The Pickford did an independent screening of Free For All, a documentary about the history of libraries. The film discussed how libraries serve their communities and the powerful women that shaped what libraries are today. Thank you to The Pickford for choosing to highlight this film!
- Today is salmon egg arrival day! Library staff care for them in a 55-gallon tank in the Children's Department and then release them into Whatcom creek on March 29 at 4pm. There is a live salmon camera for anyone who would like to tune in online.
- Library Legislative Day is on Wednesday, February 5 and Wednesday, October 8 will be Staff Learning Day.

- Shirin Deylami's appointment as Board Trustee was confirmed on Jan 13. Her first meeting will be February 18.
- Tickets are now available at the Mount Baker Theater for the Whatcom Reads event with Erica Bauermeister, author of this year's book selection, *No Two Persons*. An Evening with Erica Bauermeister and Friends will be March 14 from 7-9pm.

Celebrating Rick Osen's 10 years of service

- Rebecca Craven went back through historical board minutes and noted that Rick's list of accomplishments and the crises he navigated is astounding. Since his appointment in 2015, Rick has led the board through the process of hiring a new director, adopting levels of service, and navigated the difficult decision of whether to merge with WCLS. He guided us through the installation of a new sorter and the main floor renovation as well as Covid closures, facility master planning, foregoing late fees, and the opening of the Bellis Fair branch. Plus much, much more!
- Rebecca Judd read a Letter from the Mayor thanking Rick for his service.
- Rick Osen expressed gratitude for his time being here and working with everyone. The accomplishments he was most proud of included developing the level of service standards, hiring Rebecca, and the building renovation.

2024 Action Plan - Year End Review (see packet materials)

- Rebecca began by thanking everyone on staff for their incredibly hard work in 2024.
- In the 4th quarter, the Library completed and distributed a new welcome brochure and updated rules of conduct handout, incorporated awareness of the library facility and service needs into the COB comprehensive plan, and hosted All Staff Learning Day which was a success for everyone.

2025 Action Plan – Action Item (see packet materials)

- Rebecca Judd made the recommendation to vote to approve the 2025 Action Plan with a slight amendment about printing and reiterated that we will continue to communicate the urgent need for a day shelter in our community.
- The board agreed they would like to add the following standing items to the agenda:
 - Staff safety and mental health/ welcoming public space
 - Budget planning
 - Central Library Renovation
- Kristy moved to approve the 2025 Action Plan, Rick Osen seconded, motion carried.

Central Library Renovation Update

- Rebecca Judd noted that with the General Fund stretched thin, we need to get creative about moving this project forward. For the interior renovation (\$7M estimate) we have three buckets: City funding, State funding, and Private funding (\$3.5M is our private fundraising goal, of which we have secured approximately 1.5M).
- Rebecca Craven asked if there was any word from legislators. Rebecca Judd responded that she hasn't heard of any issue regarding the LCIP grant funding. She added we will be submitting a Local and Community Project request for \$1M through Rep. Joe Simmons's office.

Fundraising Update

- Jenn Daly and others from Whatcom Community Foundation will be attending the February Board meeting to talk about ideas for securing funding for the project.
- Library Giving Day is April 1. This year we will focus on raising money for the renovation project. We are looking at April 1 as the launch for a longer-term fundraising campaign.

New Business:

- None

Agenda items for next meeting:

- WCF discussion
- Board committees for 2025:
 - Fundraising
 - Personnel policy, including Library Director evaluation
 - Facilities

Meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting February 18, 2025 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees



2024 Annual Action Plan

WELCOME & INCLUDE: We offer welcoming, safe places and experiences, where connections and understanding flourish.

- Q4 Develop new Welcome brochure to orient new patrons to Library services
- Q3 Design and implement an All-Staff Learning Day in October 2024
- Q1 Prioritize recommendations from Security Assessment and develop implementation plan
- Develop a plan on critical incident debriefing, to clarify who is responsible for convening a debriefing, who should be involved, what is the process, what happens afterwards, and how and what do we communicate with those who were not directly involved
- Q3 Update Emergency Management procedures
- Develop a 'Learning Hours' system for all library staff
- Q2 Build and implement a robust training/conference system for library employees that is equitable, transparent, easy to understand, and that requires minimal supervisor oversight. Add new trainings in active shooter/lethal threat; situational awareness and de-escalation, and fire/emergency drills
- Q1 Build and manage an onboarding system that also connects to staff training and ensures a shared foundation and knowledge of current policies and procedures among staff regardless of their tenure at the Library
- Implement community care and wellness practices that help staff at all levels manage and mitigate any current or long-term burnout, and that helps prevent new burnout from developing

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY: We connect people with opportunities and resources to solve problems and help them achieve their aspirations.

- Negotiate locations of Community Drop Boxes. Purchase, wrap and install Boxes
- Q1 Onboard Behavioral Health team, with attention to clarifying roles and building relationships with staff and patrons
- Q1 Promote community mental health and well-being with new collection of circulating Light Therapy Lamps

- Q3 Research options for whether we can serve the needs of clients who need to make emergency phone calls
- Q2 Improve access to Library and City services by participating in City-wide Language Access work group

READ & LEARN: We inspire a lifetime of reading, learning, curiosity, and discovery.

- Q2 Purchase and install additional components for Automated Materials Handling System
- Q1 Partner with Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Agency to build community awareness around the salmon lifecycle

INFORM & INVOLVE: We provide information and activities to stay abreast of community issues and events, fostering informed, active participation in civic life.

- Q3 Partner with city and community leaders to foster public education and involvement in issues that matter, with a 2024 focus on climate action, anti-racism, homelessness, substance use & civic engagement
- Q4 Build awareness of Library facility and service needs into City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan

THRIVE & GROW: We are a valued community partner and trusted city service, playing a central role in Bellingham life.

- Complete design and successfully bid Central Library renovation project
- Q1 Complete and submit Washington State Library Capital Improvement Grant for Central Library renovation project
- Q3 Develop and present 2025-2026 operational and capital budget requests to Mayor's office and City Council
- Q2 Evaluate and update Level of Service standards for Materials and Open Hours
- Q3 Complete repair of Central Library main passenger elevator
- Q2 Complete Bellis Fair Branch assessment at 1-year mark
- Implement Planned Giving program for the Library
- Q3 Implement a replacement for DEMCO Spaces & SignUP
- Q1 Update Polaris MOU with WCLS; consider changing parameters for print notices
- Establish a system for knowing which Library staff are on-site



2025 Annual Action Plan

WELCOME & INCLUDE: We offer welcoming, safe places and experiences, where connections and understanding flourish.

- Focus on two key goals identified by Library staff:
 - Top internal goal: stronger advocacy for employee/staff safety and mental health
 - Top external goal: make the Library feel safe for everyone
- Support the transition of Security to a Citywide division
- Update Emergency Management plans and procedures for all Library locations, addressing fire, lethal threats, inclement weather, hazardous materials, and air quality

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY: We connect people with opportunities and resources to solve problems and help them achieve their aspirations.

- Evaluate service priorities and develop strategies to maximize community access to library services in a period of limited fiscal and staffing resources.
- Finalize the purchase and installation of the Barkley Community Drop Box to improve community accessibility
- Research options for allowing patrons to print on devices connected via WiFi and provide recommendations
- Update the confidentiality policy to ensure clarity and alignment with best practices
- Enhance website accessibility as part of a Citywide project

READ & LEARN: We inspire a lifetime of reading, learning, curiosity, and discovery.

- Plan and host two large-scale events for adults focused on important community topics

INFORM & INVOLVE: We provide information and activities to stay abreast of community issues and events, fostering informed, active participation in civic life.

- Collaborate with the City planning team to develop programming for the mens' soccer World Cup, fostering community engagement through cultural events
- Deliver a National Library Week presentation to the City Council

THRIVE & GROW: We are a valued community partner and trusted city service, playing a central role in Bellingham life.

- Finalize the design and successfully bid the Central Library renovation project
- Establish a "Learning Hours" system to support ongoing staff education and professional development
- Complete annual performance reviews for all benefitted Library staff
- Develop and implement funding strategies focused on capital projects and planned giving, including an expanded Library Giving Day campaign to support the Children and Teen remodel
- Develop a schedule of Board training sessions, including a collaborative session with WCLS Trustees
- Track achievements from the 2020-2025 strategic plan and report on trends in preparation for 2026 strategic planning