

**BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

**NOTICE OF MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
of TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2025, 3:30 p.m.**

Publication of the agenda and the approximate times are a guide to, and not a limitation on, the activities of Trustees. Order of agenda items may be adjusted.

**Central Library, 210 Central Avenue, Bellingham, Washington
Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.**

<u>AGENDA</u>	<u>TIME (approx.)</u>
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We acknowledge that we gather on territory that has been the traditional and ancestral homeland to the Lhaq'temish (the Lummi People), the Nooksack People, and other Coast Salish tribes of this region Since Time Immemorial.

We honor our shared responsibility to this land and these waters, we commit to learning from Indigenous wisdom, and we strive to repair and deepen our relationships as neighbors and friends.

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|---|-------|
| 1. Call to order and introductions | 1 min |
| 2. Approve/modify agenda | 1 min |
| 3. Public comment
This time is set aside for members of the public to make comments.
Remarks will be limited to three minutes. | 3 min |
| 4. Consent agenda (see packet materials)
All matters listed on the consent agenda are considered routine and may be approved in a single motion. A Trustee may ask that an item be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications and FYI• Minutes: August 19, 2025: Regular Board Meeting• Library performance & activity measures: August 2025• Financial reports
Claims: August 2025
YTD report: August 2025 | 2 min |
| 5. Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board Chair• Library Board members• City Council liaison• Friends of Bellingham Public Library• Library Director (see packet materials) | 5 min |

Time check: 3:42

6. Policy Retirement – Action Item (see packet materials)	3 min
• Rebecca Craven, Board Chair	
7. Libby Level-Up Presentation	45 min
• Katie Bray, Adult Services Librarian	
	Time check: 4:30
8. Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update	5 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director	
9. 2026 Budget update	5 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director	
10. Central Library Renovation update	15 min
• Authorizing Library Director to execute a Lease Agreement for expansion space during Central Library renovation (Action Item) - Rebecca Craven, Board Chair	
• Review of floor plans – Rebecca Judd, Director	
	Time check: 4:55
11. New business	3 min
12. Agenda items for next meeting	2 min
	Time check: 5:00
13. Adjourn	

Accessibility:

The Bellingham Public Library Board Room is ADA accessible. Elevator access to the upper floor is available at the Central Avenue entrance. If you require a sign interpreter or other accommodation, please allow the library 48 hours' notice. For additional accommodation, contact the Administrative Assistant at 360-778-7220 in advance of the meeting.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Lecture Room, Central Library, 210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, Washington



Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, August 19, 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:	Rebecca Craven, Kendra Bradford, and Deborra Garrett
City Council Library Liaison:	Hannah Stone
Library Management Staff:	Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hoglund, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Madeline Rosenvinge
FOBPL Representative:	Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison
Guest Presenter:	None

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Chair, Rebecca Craven.

Approve/modify agenda: Deborra Garrett moved to approve the agenda. Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: One member of the public submitted contact information; no public comment.

Consent agenda: Deborra Garrett moved to approve the July 15, 2025 Regular meeting minutes and the July 2025 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report:

- Nothing to report.

Board member reports:

- Nothing to report.

City Council liaison report:

- Hannah Stone reported that City Council recently discussed the need for more library space at Barkley. In a follow-up conversation, Talbot Group representatives noted that negotiations/discussions are underway to move forward with this.

Friends of BPL report:

Carol Comeau reported:

- The Wander Brewing fundraiser raised \$870.
- A \$250 donation will be given to the Whatcom Community Foundation for the Renovation Fund.
- The 2026 book sales will include a January sale for certain, a likely May sale, and a probable cancellation of the September sale due to the Central Library renovation.
- The Friends continue to encourage donations to the Renovation Fund.

Library Director report:

Rebecca Judd reported:

- A correction to last month's report: the Cascadia Daily News charge should have been \$108, and a Cascade Natural Gas charge of \$2,400 was omitted.
- Congratulations to WCLS on their recent levy success!
- Thanks to the Friends for attending the Parks Department PROS Open House in August.
- Board members are invited to attend a September 25 WCF nonprofit event from 4-6 p.m. at Kulshan Trackside; Bethany Hoglund and Annette Bagley will attend.
- As part of the City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, the Library has been asked to present the Bellingham Public Library Facilities Master Plan to City Council in September for formal adoption.
- The Talbot Group presented to City Council about the Barkley development. Councilmember Stone spoke to the need for additional library space.

Board questions and discussion:

- Kendra Bradford asked why recent events are being held at Hotel Leo instead of the Library. Annette explained that the Library could not accommodate the expected attendance. Hotel Leo can seat 160 people at tables. Registration for two upcoming events is nearly full.
- Kendra asked about "nonbillable client interactions with HEART" on page 35. Katrina Buckman explained that Lake Whatcom Center requires full names for billable interactions, but the Library asked them to include all interactions regardless of name.
- Deborra Garrett asked about the total number of staffed HEART hours. Katrina Buckman will follow up with more detail.

Policy Retirement Discussion: Rebecca Craven noted that Deborra Garrett and Shirin Deylami were emailed the policy documents for review. Due to their straightforward nature, a Policy and Personnel committee meeting was not scheduled. There was no further discussion about the retirement of the policies. They will be presented as an action item at the next Board meeting.

Board training schedule and outreach calendar draft: Rebecca Judd outlined the Board training and Outreach calendar draft schedule in the packet. There was no further discussion. Rebecca will bring a draft 2026 training schedule to the Board at year-end. She noted that Madeline Rosenvinge and Kate Dunphy will be revising the onboarding procedure for new Board members in 2026, in consultation with the Board.

Staff safety and mental health/welcoming space update

Rebecca Judd reported:

- The survey work of Library property is complete. Thank you to Public Works for their help on this project. The final report will be filed with Whatcom County.
- Rebecca Craven asked if there is a formal agreement between the Library and the Parks Department regarding oversight of Lee Memorial Park. Rebecca Judd said there is not an official agreement, but discussions are ongoing. Deborra Garrett asked about trespass enforcement. Katrina Buckman explained that Library exclusions and trespasses can extend to the park, and Parks has authorized security to extend park exclusions and trespasses to the Library if necessary.
- Due to the number of after-hour incidents in Lee Memorial Park and the Library grounds, the Library is in conversation with Parks and Public Works about restoring overnight security coverage. In addition, we are exploring whether it might be necessary to turn off the external Wi-Fi boosters that were added during COVID.
- Library Incident Report data is being collated to support conversations in the community about shelter-related needs, such as camping and storage.
- A cleanup of Lee Memorial Park is scheduled for September.

Central Library Renovation update

Rebecca Judd reported:

- Design work is moving forward with \$8.5 million in secured and pending funding.
- The existing contract with Miller Hull will be revised.
- Two state grants will be presented to City Council in September.
- Graphic designer Katrina Lyons will be working on pieces to support fundraising, based on a scope of work approved by the Fundraising committee.

Budget Planning: Rebecca Judd noted that if service reductions are necessary in 2026 due to budget constraints, a Sunday closure is the preferred option, over Saturday afternoon. A Sunday closure allows better coverage on the days we are open, and is a safer option with limited staff.

New Business:

- None

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Policy retirement vote
- Katie Bray's Libby Level-Up presentation

Executive session:

- The Board went into Executive Session at 4:25 p.m. to discuss a potential lease agreement at the Bellis Fair Mall. The executive session was for information only and no action was taken. Board Chair Rebecca Craven called the meeting back to order at 4:45 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting: September 16, 2025 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Bellingham Public Library - Performance & Activity Measures, August 2025

	August		Year to Date		YTD comparison
	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025 with 2024
Holdings - Number of materials in the library's collection					
Physical copies added to collection	1,291	1,655	12,402	14,772	-16.04%
Electronic copies purchased by BPL	160	338	876	1,256	-30.25%
Physical copies withdrawn from the collection	(364)	(382)	(14,506)	(14,859)	-2.38%
Total physical holdings			180,272	183,162	-1.58%
Total electronic holdings available to BPL			169,625	158,915	6.74%
Total Holdings (Physical and Electronic)			349,897	342,077	2.29%
Circulation - Number of items checked out or renewed; includes Interlibrary Loan and Outreach activity					
Central Library					
Adult	37,637	41,562	310,084	325,828	-4.83%
Youth	43,918	45,576	327,175	335,979	-2.62%
Sub-Total Central	81,555	87,138	637,259	661,807	-3.71%
Fairhaven Branch					
Adult	5,066	5,000	39,283	39,738	-1.14%
Youth	3,022	2,990	22,848	21,106	8.25%
Sub-Total Fairhaven	8,088	7,990	62,131	60,844	2.12%
Barkley Branch					
Adult	4,766	4,709	36,431	37,179	-2.01%
Youth	5,343	4,911	40,090	33,433	19.91%
Sub-Total Barkley	10,109	9,620	76,521	70,612	8.37%
Bellis Fair Branch					
Adult	1,464	1,174	11,039	9,830	12.30%
Youth	2,154	1,962	15,597	14,965	4.22%
Sub-Total Bellis Fair	3,618	3,136	26,636	24,795	7.42%
Bellingham Technical College					
Adult	38	32	308	284	8.45%
Youth	2	4	40	38	5.26%
Sub-Total BTC	40	36	348	322	8.07%
Whatcom Community College					
Adult	112	164	1,382	1,189	16.23%
Youth	8	24	192	221	-13.12%
Sub-Total WCC	120	188	1,574	1,410	11.63%
Western Washington University					
Adult	162	209	2,069	1,615	28.11%
Youth	59	35	556	592	-6.08%
Sub-Total WWU	221	244	2,625	2,207	18.94%
Sub-Total Physical	103,751	108,352	807,094	821,997	-1.81%
Online Services					
Kanopy	1,912	1,513	15,925	14,523	9.65%
WA Anytime Library Overdrive	40,895	39,936	326,031	324,636	0.43%
Overdrive Magazines	8,788	4,319	62,667	47,526	31.86%
Sub-Total Online	51,595	45,768	404,623	386,685	4.64%
Total Circulation	155,346	154,120	1,211,717	1,208,682	0.25%
Holds Activity					
Items placed on hold shelf	49,213	52,823	405,825	418,848	-3.11%
Services					
Persons Visiting - Number of persons counted as they enter the libraries					
Central Library	31,360	31,800	259,190	241,446	7.35%
Fairhaven Branch	3,126	3,156	26,038	25,026	4.04%
Barkley Branch	3,028	2,944	21,506	21,119	1.83%
Bellis Fair Branch	2,384	2,123	16,158	16,746	-3.51%
Total Persons Visiting	39,898	40,023	322,892	304,337	6.10%
Website Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org	41,787	41,010	336,755	336,356	0.12%
Bibliocommons Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to Bibliocommons	27,959	38,355	208,996	269,783	-22.53%
Total Website Visits	69,746	79,365	545,751	606,139	-9.96%
Computer Usage - Number of sessions					
Central Library					
Adult & Teen (30 terminals)	3,408	3,341	27,274	24,990	9.14%
Childrens (3 terminals)	138	78	793	600	32.17%
Fairhaven Branch (6 terminals)	291	294	1,880	1,905	-1.31%
Barkley Branch (4 terminals)	133	173	1,041	1,259	-17.32%
Bellis Fair Branch (4 terminals)	197	131	1,114	1,009	10.41%
Total Computer Usage	4,167	4,017	32,102	29,763	7.86%
New Borrowers Registered					
Central Library	643	619	4,695	4,967	-5.48%
Fairhaven Branch	43	42	302	304	-0.66%
Barkley Branch	24	45	227	254	-10.63%
Bellis Fair Branch	50	33	339	396	-14.39%
Total New Borrowers Registered	760	739	5,563	5,921	-6.05%
Programs - Library sponsored or co-sponsored educational, recreational, or cultural programs					
Programs	82	48	859	693	23.95%
Attendees	1,532	2,055	20,397	19,930	2.34%
Volunteer Hours	307	277	3,176	3,431	-7.44%

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

AUGUST 2025 CLAIMS

LIST OF CLAIMS AGAINST THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES AND THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM TO BE CONSIDERED AND APPROVED AT THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2025, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RCW 27.12.210 AND 27.12.240.

	VENDOR	AMOUNT
Materials, Equipment and Supplies		
Fairhaven Lock Repair	Arrow Lock	44.15
Books; DVDs; supplies; child masks	Amazon	1,655.86
Books	Baker & Taylor	10,820.97
Periodicals	Bellingham Herald	1,079.94
Water (Barkley & Bellis Fair Branches)	Clearwater	74.33
Wipe dispenser	Crowd Control Warehouse	107.33
Periodicals	Ebsco Subscription Services	5,209.56
Barkley lights	Home Depot	66.96
Books	Ingram Library	231.02
Periodicals	Lynden and Ferndale Tribune	98.00
DVDs, CDs, recorded books	Midwest Tape	1,097.25
Thank you card	My Garden Nursery	5.45
Vehicle fuel	Nelson-Reisner Distributor	217.58
Periodicals	Puget Sound Business Journal	230.00
Periodicals	Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society	60.00
Return shipping for Barkley door opener	Postal and More	50.19
Periodicals	Seattle Times	850.46
Spare cabinet key	ULINE Shipping Supplies	25.34
Lost ILL	University of Texas	115.92
Materials, Equipment & Supplies Sub Total		\$22,040.31
Services and Interfund Charges		
Barkley Branch cleaning	Action Cleaning	722.11
Prime membership	Amazon	140.61
Preprocessing	Baker & Taylor	3,327.76
Pest management	BioBug	147.15
Natural gas service	Cascade Natural Gas	97.82
Banking & credit card fees	City of Bellingham Interfund	26.48
Computer replacement allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	20,635.92
Facilities allocation (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	79,950.00
Fleet Services	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,510.00
IT Service allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	45,674.00
Postage	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,012.21
Qualified Energy Conservation Bond sinking fund	City of Bellingham Interfund	2,275.59
Radio Communications Allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	685.76
Risk Management	City of Bellingham Interfund	8,430.72
Technology replacement allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	8,784.76
Telecom Services	City of Bellingham Interfund	3,199.57

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

AUGUST 2025 CLAIMS

Water/Sewer/SSW service (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	2,609.16
Copies	Copiers Northwest	58.86
Printing	Copy Source	369.94
Alarm system monitoring	Guardian Security	352.20
Copier leases and copies	Kelley Create	1,413.66
Preprocessing	Midwest Tape	206.27
ILL & tech services	OCLC	30,413.28
eBooks, eAudiobooks	Overdrive Inc	2,660.28
Bellis Fair internet service	Pogozone Wireless	367.49
Newsstream Subscription	Proquest LLC	652.06
Electricity service	Puget Sound Energy	7,894.30
Bellis Fair Custodial	Seal	1,275.30
Digital subscription	Seattle Times	19.96
Barkley Branch operating costs	Talbot Services LLC	1,066.66
PWB Subscription	Team Software Solutions	300.00
Tech Soup Subscription	Tech Soup	1,700.00
Borrower notices	Unique Management	3,422.00
Hotspot service	Verizon Wireless	636.90
EZProxy Service	WCLS	3,021.82
B&O Taxes	WSDO Revenue	257.04

Services and Interfund Charges Sub Total \$235,317.64

Gift Fund

Books and supplies	Amazon.com	771.65
Books	Baker & Taylor	2,453.59
Books	Center Point Large Print	99.48
Audiobooks	Midwest Tape	928.41
Anti-Racist digital media	Overdrive Inc	1,799.61
Summer Reading Prizes	Scholastic Inc	2,764.42

GIFT FUND OUTLAYS Sub Total \$8,817.16

Total General Fund claims 257,357.95

Total General Fund & Gift Fund claims 266,175.11

Library - Budget to Actual - General Fund

August 2025 66.66% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Grants	2,794	0		
Print and Copy Fees	12,172	15,000	2,828	81%
Lost, Damage & Non-resident Borrower Fees	6,786	16,100	9,314	42%
Fairhaven Auditorium Rental Fees		5,000	5,000	0%
Miscellaneous Revenues	548	0	(548)	
Total Revenue	22,300	36,100	13,800	62%
Expenses				
Salaries and Wages	2,279,446	3,369,234	1,089,788	68%
Personnel Benefits	934,621	1,368,283	433,662	68%
Physical Materials, Equipment and Supplies	165,640	307,932	142,292	54%
Services, Digital Materials and Interfund	1,856,435	2,672,160	815,724	69%
Total Expenditure	5,236,142	7,717,608	2,481,466	68%

Library - Budget to Actual - Gift Fund

August 2025 66.66% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Donations	89,453	150,000	60,547	60%
Total Revenue	89,453	150,000	60,547	60%
Expenses				
Gift Fund expenses	52,319	50,000	(2,319)	105%
Total Expenditure	52,319	50,000	(2,319)	105%



DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR September 16, 2025



The Bellingham Public Library team has received the 2025 [Peace Builder Award](#) for Public Service. This award, presented by the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center, celebrates "the inspiring individuals and organizations whose dedication to community-building has created lasting, positive change throughout our neighborhoods, schools, and all of Whatcom County. It's a night where we come together to honor the extraordinary work being done to strengthen the fabric of our community." I'm enormously proud of our BPL team and honored to accept the award at the October 24 ceremony. (Rebecca Judd, Library Director)

WELCOME & INCLUDE

This Fall in Skillshare: Skillshare offers 27 programs at the Central Library in September, with the following new and returning highlights:

- 9/4 Affordable Homeownership in Bellingham with [Kulshan Community Land Trust](#).
- 9/15 and 10/17 [Voter Registration with the League of Women Voters](#).
- 9/16 [Opportunity Council Community Resource Connections](#) has returned and is scheduled twice a month through February.
- 9/30 Our very own Katie Bray is starting a readers advisory series, starting with [Top 10 Book Lists: New Mysteries](#).

(Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Data Tracking and Reporting: Two new data reports are being designed and prepared. First is a "Summer Activation of Lee Memorial Park" report which highlights all the programs that took place in the park this summer, indicates the additional work staff do to ensure the safety of these programs, and compares the number of incident reports on days when the park is activated to those on days when there are no events. The second report is a "Snapshot of Library Incidents" in and around the Central Library which will show year-to-date and monthly numbers of incident reports, types and numbers of actions taken to address incidents, the number of HEART contacts, and some examples of incidents with names redacted. Both reports will be shared with the City's Downtown Forward group and will complement other data prepared by the Police Department and Solid Waste team. The aim of the reports is to show the work and preparation that go into keeping the Library a safe and welcoming shared public space as well as

identify areas where more community support outside of the Library is needed. Both reports will be included in next month's Board packet for Board review. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Security Staff Updates: Security and Information Attendant Rudy Cortez will be retiring at the end of September. Rudy has been providing security support within the Library for almost one year. He has been a great asset to the team. Public Works hopes to post the open position soon and will be able to include additional hours, likely making it a full-time position. The position is currently in the Human Resources queue. Security Supervisor, Cam Birman, will be taking medical leave starting September 23, 2025. Katrina will provide support to the security team while Cam is out of office. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Number of HEART Staffed Hours at the Central Library: Last month there was a question about the total number of staffed hours that were reported by HEART. The Central Library was open 56 hours per week from January to May and 52 hours per week from June to August. HEART hours tracked at 51-53 hours per week from January to May and 48-50 hours per week from June to August. There is some variation due to the variability of lunch times (30-60 minutes per day), meeting times (2-2.5 hours per week), and time prior to opening and after closing to prepare for or finish notes for the day. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

ConnectED – Bellingham School District: ConnectED, the public library/school partnership that provides each student enrolled in the Bellingham School District with a limited-use public library account, finished the 2024-2025 school year with strong use. Over 23,000 digital items were borrowed from Overdrive (eBooks, eAudiobooks and digital magazines) and over 800 physical items were checked out. Jon McConnel is currently working with the District to upload the 2025-2026 students. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

ConnectED – Whatcom Intergenerational High School: BPL is working to bring Whatcom Intergenerational High School (WIHS) on as a ConnectED school. Jon McConnel and I met with WIHS staff and administration to discuss the collaboration and will take steps to get their 100+ students ConnectED accounts. This process involves creating and signing a one-year MOU, coordinating data uploads and providing instruction on library resources available with ConnectED accounts to teachers and students at WIHS. WIHS is located in Bellis Fair Mall and is the closest school to any BPL branch. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

Fiber-optic Work May Impact Barkley Branch: As part of the construction project for the new [City Operations Building](#) at the Pacific Street Operations Center, a contractor is moving the main interconnect point for the City's internal fiber-optic network to a new switching room. On one day toward the end of the month the work will take the Barkley Branch offline for at least half a day. We are evaluating whether we will be able to remain open during the outage, should the work be scheduled for a time when the Branch is open. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

New Official Newspaper: If all goes as expected at the City Council meeting on Sept. 15, the City will soon have a new official newspaper to serve as the paper of record. Cascadia Daily News was the only respondent to an RFP the City published over the summer, so it will become the new source for publishing the City's legal notices once the Consent agenda is passed on the 15th. Per RCW 35.21.875 each city must designate an official newspaper, and it must be a 'legal newspaper' per RCW 65.16.020. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Hotspots: The Friends-funded project to refresh our collection of hotspots is wrapping up. The last round of new devices has been purchased and are currently in processing. The last of the old devices are in the midst of being withdrawn from the collection before their service plans expire at the end of this month. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

READ & LEARN



Summer Reading Success: Thank you to the staff and community for another fun and engaging Summer Reading program!

- Summer Reading for children had 1,596 finishers, age birth – 12 years, which is 54 more than last year!
- Summer Reading for teens had 122 activity cards turned in by youth age 13 – 18
- Summer Reading for adults had 341 finishers, which is 77 more than last year and included 26 staff participants.

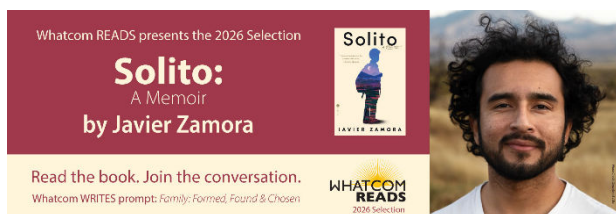
Summer reading is made possible by the generosity of the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library and our many prize partners. Special thank you to all the staff who enthusiastically promoted and awarded Summer Reading prizes from June 1 – August 31. Also, Pageturnicus, the Summer Reading dragon, will remain up through fall. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

Youth Programming Restarts: Following an end-of-summer recess, storytimes for ages birth – 10 years restart the week of September 15 at the Central Library and Bellis Fair Branch. In addition to regular, weekly storytimes, Youth Services staff have fun and engaging program offerings for children, tweens and teens including Builders Club, Middle Grade Book Group, crafting programs, Pokémon Club and Pajama Storytime. Staff are also honoring Water Week with a Storywalk® collaboration with Public Works along Taylor Dock on Friday, September 12. A full calendar of events can be picked up at all library locations, and is available on the library's online events calendar. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

BPL Major Community Events: The Library's adult programming committee is continuing to move plans forward to host two major events in November, thanks to significant funding from the Friends. Each of these highlights a BPL initiative and collection, and has received tremendous response from our audiences. Both are free and open to the public.

- Sat., Nov. 1, 10am – 1pm, [Listen Deeply: Community Voices Film Fest](#), at Hotel Leo currently has 135 people registered to attend.
- Sat. Nov. 15, 10 am – 1 pm, [Book Club Social](#) at Hotel Leo currently has 160 people registered to attend with a waitlist activated.

Our thanks to the Friends for making these events possible. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)



Whatcom READS Updates: BPL is collaborating with local teachers who are creating plans to include [Solito: A Memoir](#) by Javier Zamora in their 2025-26 curriculum. The submission deadline for the annual writing challenge [Whatcom WRITES](#) is Sunday, Oct. 12, 2025. The Whatcom WRITES theme for 2026 is

Family: Formed, Found and Chosen, drawn from the storyline of Solito. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Whatcom Reads Title Selection for 2027: Adult Services Librarian Suzanne Carlson-Prandini leads the Whatcom Reads Selection Committee which is wrapping up their work on selecting a 2027 title. This committee, which Suzanne has facilitated for seven years, is comprised of 13 stakeholders including representatives from the academic and public libraries in Whatcom County, the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library, Village Books and two community members. This endeavor translates to a herculean amount of reading and listening on their personal time. So far, the committee has read and evaluated 32 titles, suggested by community members, within a 5 month span. This committee will forward their top 3 picks to the Whatcom Reads Steering Committee for reading, discussion and final selection. Huge thanks to Suzanne for leading this committee, and to all members for their careful, thoughtful and intentional work on selecting an engaging title for the community. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

Major Author Event: Through funding from the Friends, BPL is partnering with the City of Bellingham and Village Books to bring Pulitzer Prize-winning author Isabel Wilkerson to the Mount Baker Theatre on Friday, Feb. 6, 2026. Tickets are on sale now at [MountBakerTheatre.com](#). To help promote the event, the Library has purchased 100 read-and-release copies of Wilkerson's book [Caste: the Origins of Our Discontents](#) to be distributed at our Nov. 1 and Nov. 15 community events. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)



INFORM & INVOLVE

Community Partner Events: Pickford Film Center will feature the documentary [The Librarians](#) on Monday Oct. 6 at 3pm and Saturday, Oct. 18 at 11am as part of its Doctober celebration. The description reads: "This doc takes us into America's libraries, focusing on communities where efforts to ban books are backed with real political firepower, and defiance comes with real consequences." BPL will partner with the Pickford by tabling in the lobby on those dates. BPL will also partner with the Community Consortium for Cultural Recognition for Indigenous Peoples Day. A free community event will be held on Monday, Oct. 13, 5pm at Lummi Nation School. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Media Coverage: Two recent articles by Cascade PBS focused on ChatGPT use by government employees, featuring the City of Bellingham and City of Everett.

- [Washington city officials are using ChatGPT for government work](#) | Cascade PBS
- [Washington cities' AI policies play catch-up as officials embrace new tech](#) | Cascade PBS

(Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

THRIVE & GROW



Lee Memorial Park: Lee Memorial Park was given a comprehensive cleanup by the Parks Department on the weekend of Sept. 6. This included removing bushes, shrubs, and some trees, as well as clearing spaces that were overgrown and creating safety issues. Cleared areas have been covered with mulch. This cleanup addressed many of the safety concerns identified by staff and the public, as well as areas identified in the 2023 CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental

Design) Assessment done at the Library. Next, the Parks Department will be replanting areas as part of Phase 2. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

File Migration Plan: Jon McConnel, Jen Vander Ploeg, Doug Dickinson, and Katrina Buckman met with IT services recently to discuss the Citywide project to migrate all files from local servers to the Microsoft cloud. IT provided some data and other reports to aid us in the transfer. It will likely be a smooth transition with all our folders, files, and metadata preserved. Once the transfer takes place, staff will have a greater ability to share, view, and edit files and the added ability to tag files. We are anticipating the migration will occur in October. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Baker & Taylor: Earlier this month it was announced that book wholesaler ReaderLink, a major supplier to retailers like Walmart and Fred Meyer, would acquire the assets of Baker & Taylor, our primary book vendor. The deal is planned to close before the end of September. We will be evaluating impacts in the months ahead. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Judd

Recommended Motion: To retire *1.801 Library Safety and Security Policy* as a Board Policy

Rationale:

- There is a City-wide Policy related to employee safety (PER 14.01.01), information specific to the Library can be better covered and more easily kept current in department procedures.
- City Policy PER 14.01.01 recommends that departmental procedures be created to encompass department specific information.

"5. Departments Establish Safety Procedures

Each department establishes written safety procedures appropriate to the various kinds of work assigned to employees:

- *Always, when required by law*
- *Additionally, when such procedures would enhance and assist in maintaining a safe work environment and practices*
 - *Considering employees recommendations*
 - *In the judgment of management*
 - *For departments who have citizen volunteers, the department establishes safety guidelines for those volunteers"*
- Points below related to Security are covered in the Rules of Conduct Policy and library-specific procedures.
- The information in this policy is largely out of date, inaccurate and is a duplication of other existing policies and procedures.

**Bellingham Public Library
Policy**

Title: ~~1.801 LIBRARY SAFETY AND SECURITY~~

Code: ~~1 Administration Services~~
Chapter: ~~1.800 Safety~~

Type of Policy: ~~Departmental~~

Date Developed: ~~1 May 1983~~

Date Revised: ~~7 July 2004, 5 May 2006, 18 July 2006, 19 April 2011~~

Revised by: ~~Beth Farley and Pam Kiesner~~

Developed by: ~~Claudia McCain~~

Approved by: ~~Library Board of Trustees~~

Scope

~~This policy applies to all library staff.~~

Definitions

Accident/Hazard report forms: When there is an accident or injury involving a library patron or a safety concern reported by a patron, staff uses the Library Patron Accident/Safety Concern form. When there is an on-the-job accident or injury that involves library staff or library staff want to report a hazard, staff uses the City of Bellingham Safety Program Accident-Hazard form.

Incident database: An online database of incidents involving problem behavior of patrons in the library. Database also includes accidents or hazards involving patrons. Accidents or hazards involving staff are kept separately. This database is for internal use unless authorized by the Library Director to be shared outside the Library.

Incident report form: A form for filling out details of incidents. Form is available online and on paper, and is for internal use unless authorized by the Library Director to be shared outside the Library.

Safety: The condition of being safe, free from danger, or risk of injury while working in library buildings. Safety practices concern how employees interact with their physical environment.

Security: The condition of being secure from danger, risk, or injury while working with library patrons. Security practices concern how employees interact with other people in the library.

Policy/Conditions

1. Library strives to provide a safe and secure environment for its employees and patrons.

To create a safe and secure environment, the Library:

- creates safety and security procedures and trains employees in their use;
- shares and tracks safety and security incidents through the use of the library incident database and activities of the Library Safety and Security Committee;
- complies with the City of Bellingham safety and security policies and programs as well as all applicable federal, state and local health and safety regulations; and,
- employs Library Security and Information Attendants.

2. Library cooperates with and benefits from City Departments who provide safety and security services.

Facilities Department:

- maintains library buildings for safe operation; and,
- provides routine security checks and assist with closing when needed.

Police Department:

- provides library "walk through" visits during open hours;
- responds to 911 incident calls; and,
- assists in library employee security training.

Fire Department:

- inspects alarm systems;
- responds to 911 incident calls; and,
- assists in library employee safety training.

Benefits and Safety Department:

- conducts City Central Safety meeting for City Department representatives; the Library has a representative on this committee; and,
- provides assistance in resolving hazardous conditions and accidents involving library staff or patrons.

3. All library employees are responsible for helping to maintain a safe and secure work environment.

Library employees:

- work together to foster a safe work environment and a safety-conscious work culture;
- observe all library safety practices and procedures, including the Library Rules of Conduct (4.101) and accompanying procedures (4.101.100s) as well as the Building Security Policy (1.802) and accompanying procedures (1.802.100s);
- report unsafe situations or conditions to their supervisor, discuss general safety issues and concerns with their supervisor, and submit an Accident/Hazard form or Incident Report when appropriate; and,
- cooperate in incident investigations.

Library employees who are Security and Information Attendants:

- respond to security or emergency situations directly or by contacting appropriate staff, law enforcement, or other emergency personnel as necessary;
- explain and enforce the Library Rules of Conduct and policies to maintain appropriate patron behavior;
- patrol library buildings and properties to prevent theft and vandalism; and,
- represent the Library at City Central Safety Committee meetings.

Library employees who are Supervisors:

- promptly train and educate new employees on Library safety practices and procedures;
- ensure selected staff receive CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation), First Aid, and AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) training and maintain their currency as required by State law;
- investigate every accident, injury, or reported hazard and determine corrective measures; and,
- ensure prompt incident debriefing after traumatic incidents.

4. Library management staff has special responsibilities regarding safe work practices.

Administration staff:

- ensures the development, implementation, and maintenance of an appropriate safety program in the Library in accordance with City safety policies;

- ensures supervisors and employees receive appropriate training and education in methods necessary for safe work;
- ensures supervisors' prompt investigation of accidents, injuries, hazards, or security concerns;
- establishes and oversees the Library Safety and Security Committee;
- establishes safety guidelines for volunteers; and,
- conducts prompt debriefing after traumatic incidents.

5. Library Safety and Security Committee provides support in maintaining a safe and secure library work environment.

The Library Safety and Security Committee is established by the Library Director. Membership of the Committee consists of at least three employees from different departments and/or physical areas of the library, one Security and Information Attendant, and one member of Administration. Meetings are held as needed.

Committee members:

- modify or create new library safety procedures and recommend policy changes as needed;
- maintain safety supplies and the currency of emergency flip charts;
- arrange or conduct education and training programs for staff;
- maintain safety bulletin boards and keep records of all Safety Committee meetings and training programs;
- review all Accident/Hazard reports;
- may investigate accidents, injuries, or hazards and recommend corrective measures;
- send a representative to the City Central Safety Committee meetings; and,
- send a representative to monthly All Staff meetings to provide Safety and Security updates for library staff.

6. Library Board reviews this policy.

This policy is periodically reviewed, revised, or reaffirmed by the Library Board of Trustees.

Recommended Motion: to retire *Library Building Security* as a Board policy.

Rationale:

- Policy as written is largely procedural (not policy), the details are subject to frequent changes – leaving it out of date and inaccurate.
- Most of the procedures are related to systems controlled by other City departments, and not under the purview of the Library.

**Bellingham Public Library
Policy**

Title: 1.802 LIBRARY BUILDING SECURITY

Code: 1-Administration Services

Chapter: 1.800 Safety

Type of Policy: Departmental

Date Developed: 21 November 2006

Date Revised: 19 April 2011

Revised by: Beth Farley, Pam Kiesner, and Christine Perkins

Developed by: Pam Kiesner

Approved by: Library Board of Trustees

See Also: **Library procedure**

1.802.101 Closing when Facilities staff is not present – Central Library

Scope

This policy applies to all library staff, volunteers, visitors, and selected City of Bellingham staff.

Definitions

Restricted areas: areas in Library buildings not open to the public

Key card reader doors: doors with key card readers which are kept locked at all times and can be unlocked by a programmed key card

City of Bellingham key card: a plastic card, similar to a credit card, containing data on an embedded magnetized strip that can electronically unlock a door; includes City department, staff name, and photograph.

Barkley Branch coded doors: doors at the Barkley Branch with electronic code locks requiring users to enter a code to unlock the door. Barkley Company programs the key code readers.

Policy/Conditions

1. Library staff have access to restricted areas in the library.

- Management Team and selected staff have key cards with 24/7 access to Central Library and the Fairhaven Branch.
- Management Team and selected staff know door codes to the Barkley Branch and the location of the staff workroom key.
- Selected staff have key cards with extended access to the Central Library.
- All other staff have regular key card access to the Central Library.
- Selected staff have key card access to the Fairhaven Branch.
- Selected staff are issued keys to Central Library and Fairhaven Branch.
- Administrative Assistant keeps master list of staff key card and coded door access, and any other keys issued.

~~2. Selected City of Bellingham staff have access to restricted areas in the library.~~

- Police and Firefighters have access to master keys located in a lock box outside the front doors of the Central Library and Fairhaven Branch.
- Facilities staff have keys and key cards with 24/7 access to the Central Library and Fairhaven Branch.
- Representatives of the Barkley Company, including designated City custodians, have access to door codes at the Barkley Branch and have keys to the staff workroom.
- City Mail Messengers have key cards with access to the Central Library.
- Library Director or designee may provide programmed key cards to others.

~~3. Friends of the Library and other volunteers have access to restricted areas when library staff are present.~~

- Friends and volunteers are encouraged to work in the Library during open hours, but may work in the Central Library and the Fairhaven Branch when library staff is present.
- For their safety, Friends or other volunteers are encouraged not to work in restricted areas alone.
- When necessary, Friends may enter the garage, when unlocked, and dial 200 on the garage phone. A staff member will come and unlock the interior door.
- Selected Friends have key cards to limited Central Library doors.
Administrative Assistant keeps master list of key cards issued to Friends.

~~4. Those with keys, key cards, or code knowledge will not loan or give keys or keycards or pass on key codes to anyone.~~

- Lost keys or key cards are reported immediately to the Administrative Assistant.
- Administrative Assistant issues keys and key cards to staff and volunteers at hiring and reclaims them when they no longer work for the library.

~~5. Members of the public have limited access to restricted areas.~~

- Visitors to library staff are accompanied by a staff member while in restricted areas. If a visitor is scheduled to arrive before the library opens, prior arrangement with a staff member must be made, so the visitor can be met at the Library door.
- Delivery persons may enter the garage, when unlocked, and dial 200 on the garage phone. A staff member will come and unlock the interior door.

6. Staff, volunteers, and contract workers wear name tags or key cards as identification while working in the library.

- All library staff wear City of Bellingham key cards while working in the library.
- All library staff, with the exception of Library Pages, wear name tags while working in the library.
- All Friends of the Library wear identification badges while working in the library.
- Other City staff wear City of Bellingham key cards and/or other identification while working in the library.
- Contract workers wear identification badges provided by the City of Bellingham Facilities Maintenance Department while working in the library.

7. Key card reader doors are locked at all times.

Exceptions:

- Door to the Administrative Assistant's office is kept unlocked when the Assistant is present.
- Delivery Entrance door is kept unlocked from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.
- Certain Central Library key card reader doors may be programmed to open for groups that have reserved a community meeting room after hours.
- Fairhaven's exterior key card reader door may be programmed to open for groups that have reserved a community meeting room after hours.

8. Central Library keeps its automatic garage door closed.

- The automatic garage door may remain open temporarily to allow exhaust from Library truck to dissipate.

9. Library Board reviews this policy.

This policy is periodically reviewed, revised, or reaffirmed by the Library Board of Trustees.