



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, March 17, 2026 – 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:** Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness, Kendra Bradford, Deborra Garrett, and Shirin Deylami  
**City Council Library Liaison:** Daniel Hammill  
**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.

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**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:32 p.m. by Chair, Rebecca Craven.

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

**Public comment:** None.

**Consent agenda:** Deborra Garrett moved to approve the February 17, 2026 Regular meeting minutes and the February 2026 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Shirin Deylami seconded. Motion carried. A correction was noted that the year-to-date total for new borrowers was inaccurate.

**Board Chair report:** Chair Rebecca Craven noted that the Trustees and the Friends sent letters to state officials in support of day shelter funding.

**Board member reports:** Kristy Van Ness expressed appreciation to Library staff for their work on the Whatcom Reads event, noting its success. Deborra Garrett added that she heard from community members who also had a wonderful experience at the event.

**City Council liaison report:** Dan Hammill reported that the Public Safety Committee is considering a temporary fencing measure for the alley behind Hotel Leo due to crime and overdose activity in that area. He clarified that the intent is not to displace individuals experiencing homelessness but to address ongoing drug-related concerns. He also noted that work is underway with Jace Cotton on the renewal of the Home Fund.

**Friends of BPL report:** Carol Comeau reported that the Friends Board will meet the following day to discuss operational planning once the Central Library renovation begins. She stated that the recent tour of the Bellis Fair space was helpful for considering storage and sales needs.

**Library Director report:** Rebecca Judd reported that the Library received an anonymous \$25,000 donation to the unrestricted fund through the Whatcom Community Foundation. She described her participation in a simulation exercise involving community partners to examine post-incarceration support systems and identify gaps in existing services. She also attended the Washington Library Director Retreat, which included presentations from the State Library, WLA, and others, as well as a tour of the renovated Tacoma Public Library, which provided valuable insights into renovation planning.

**Library Giving Day and National Library Week update:** Annette Bagley reported that Library Giving Day on April 1 will continue to support the renovation campaign. Staff are updating web content and preparing campaign text that Trustees will be able to share with their contacts. She provided historical context on past Giving Day results and emphasized that this campaign focuses on online donations. Rebecca Judd also noted that National Library Week is April 19–25, with National Library Workers Appreciation Day occurring on Tuesday, April 21. The Friends will provide treats for staff, and the April Board meeting will include a trustee group photo for the Library's historical archive.

**Immigration enforcement - Discussion (see packet materials):** The Board discussed recent immigration enforcement activity near the Library, including a March 9 detainment despite newly posted signage. Rebecca Judd noted a recent PLA webinar related to immigration enforcement in libraries that has provided helpful guidance. Rebecca Craven and Rebecca Judd met with the Mayor and Janice Keller to discuss the challenges the Library is facing. Rebecca Judd expressed deep appreciation for support from the Bellingham Police Department during the Whatcom READS event at MBT, including advance walk-throughs to ensure staff and patron safety.

**Director Review Process – Discussion (see packet materials):** Shirin Deylami presented a draft of proposed Library Director review questions, adapted from Whatcom County Library System materials. Deborra Garrett reported that the draft attempts to reflect the core responsibilities of the Director's role and invited further feedback.

**New Statistical Reports – Discussion** Madeline Rosenvinge presented an overview of the newly formatted statistics section in the Board Packet (*See attachment #1 at the end of the minutes*). She explained the motivations behind the updates, emphasizing the need to improve accessibility for web users and screen-reader functionality. She also shared examples from other public libraries and invited Trustees to provide feedback on what would be most helpful moving forward.

**Central Library Renovation Update:** Jennifer Vander Ploeg provided updates on the Central Library renovation. Youth engagement activities are underway to support development of design ideas for the 1% for the Arts program. Meetings with Miller Hull continue as the Library refines contract details. Contracts for carpet installation and a key-card door scanner for the Bellis Fair temporary space are in progress. Jennifer has begun developing an FF&E (Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment) catalog and has conducted preliminary shelf load tests at the temp Bellis Fair space, with encouraging results. Programming may begin at the temporary Bellis Fair space before the Central Library fully closes. The current project timeline anticipates approximately two more months of design work, followed by permitting in June and a bid process in late summer.

**Fundraising Committee update:** Kristy Van Ness reported that the Capital Campaign Committee continues to meet regularly. The Committee is partnering with a graphic designer to develop donor recognition concepts and is identifying individuals who may serve as community champions for the fundraising effort.

**Day Shelter Committee update:** Deborra Garrett reported that state capital funding for a community day shelter has been approved, crediting Trustee outreach and community advocacy as important contributors. Carol Comeau added that in contacting Senate offices for support, she encountered staff who were unfamiliar with the day shelter request, highlighting the need for improved communication with legislative staff on urgent local issues.

**New Business:**

- None.

**Agenda items for next meeting:**

- Picture Day
- Statistical Trends: Inputs and Outputs through 2025
- Open Hours Level of Service Draft Revision – Discussion

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:24 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting –April 21, 2026 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.**

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees



**Bellingham Public Library**

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2026 Board Report Redesign

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### Board Reports to Update

- Performance and Activity Measures (HIGH Priority)
- Board Claims (MEDIUM Priority)
- YTD Report (MEDIUM Priority)

**Future reports to update:**

- Quarterly Donation Report

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### Performance & Activity Measures

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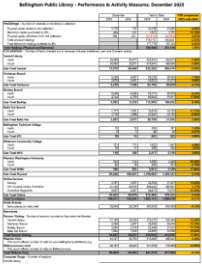
3

### Performance and Activity Measures - Before

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**Problems:**

- Difficult/impossible for screen reader to read
- Too much information (especially for one page)
- Difficult to absorb information
- Does not tell a story
- Boring presentation/does not capture look/feel of BPL



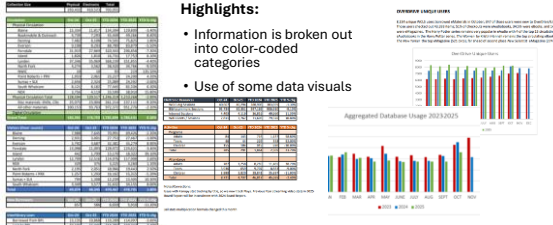
4

### Examples from Other Libraries - WCLS

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**Highlights:**

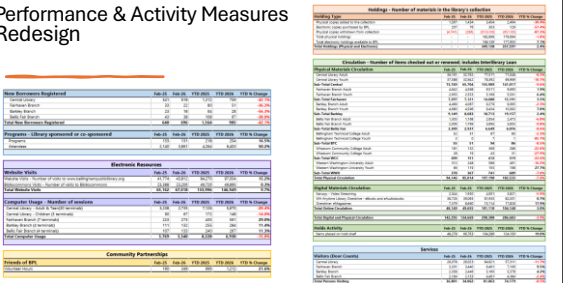
- Information is broken out into color-coded categories
- Use of some data visuals



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### Performance & Activity Measures Redesign

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# Performance & Activity Measures Redesign

**Key changes:**

- Order of year is reversed, starting with last year on far left, in line with standard practices
- Data is separated out into defined color-coded sections
- Each data set is set up as its own table, making it better for screen readers
- Spread out to two pages
- Negative percentages are in red
- Added logo at the top for branding continuity

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# Board Claims

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## Board Claims- Before

**Problems:**

- Slightly difficult format for screen reader to read
- A lot of information (somewhat unavoidable with this one)
- Harder to differentiate general fund vs gift fund
- Does not tell a story
- Lack of branding (logo and colors)

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## Examples from Other Libraries

- Sno-Isle just includes a long list of all transactions

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## Guiding Visual

We want our Budget/Claims reports to reflect the pie chart from the 2026 Proposed Library Budget

**2026 Budget Snapshot:**

- Elimination of 4 vacant positions (2.23 FTE) including Outreach Specialist 3, Branch Specialist in Public Services Clerk, and Library Assistant
- Reduction in public open hours, the library will operate on days & weeks, closing on Saturdays
- BRIDGES 2.0 reduction in Library material budget
- EBR investment through REET Funding for next phase of Central Library renovation

**2026 Work Plan:**

- Sustain high circulation, visitor engagement
- Maximize early literacy and school readiness through activities for children ages 0-5
- Continue programing and events that support community engagement at all levels of reading and learning
- Facilitate digital literacy and access through providing WiFi hotspots, one-on-one tech help, and public computing with staff assistance at all Library locations
- Strengthen community and being through inclusive spaces, collections, and programs that support connection & inclusion
- Complete design and begin construction on phase 2 expansion of the Central Library

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## Board Claims Redesign

**Key changes:**

- General fund vs Gift fund separated out into defined color-coded sections
- Each data set is set up as its own table, making it better for screen readers
- Rearranged the categories to match the guiding visual (excludes payroll and benefits)
- Added Library logo at the top for branding continuity

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# YTD Report

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## YTD Report- Before

**Problems:**

- Slightly difficult for screen reader to read
- Slightly difficult to absorb information
- Hard to differentiate general fund vs gift fund
- Does not tell a story
- City branding

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## Examples from Other Libraries - WCLS

**Highlights:**

- They separate out their revenue budget from expense budget
- They have a comparison to previous year
- Pie charts show expenses by category and department

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## YTD Redesign:

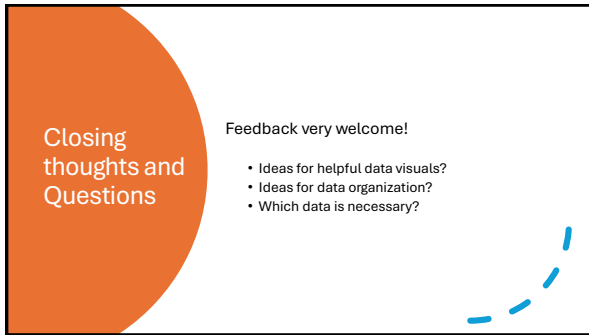
**Key changes:**

- General fund vs Gift fund separated out into defined color-coded sections
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- Added logo at the top for Library branding continuity

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Closing thoughts and Questions

Feedback very welcome!

- Ideas for helpful data visuals?
- Ideas for data organization?
- Which data is necessary?