



Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees

Tuesday, August 18, 2026 – Central Library Lecture Room, 3:30 pm

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, Shirin Deylami
City Council Library Liaison	Dan Hammill
Library Management Staff	Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Jennifer Vander Ploeg, Hillary Thomsen
Friends of BPL Representative	Carol Comeau
Guest Presenter	N/A

Call to order and introductions

- Chair Rebecca Craven called the regular session to order at 3:32 p.m.

Approve/modify agenda

- Shirin Deylami moved to approve the agenda. Kendra Bradford seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Public comment

- No public comments were made.

Consent agenda

- Kendra Bradford motioned to approve the consent agenda. Shirin Deylami seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Board Chair report

- The Board Chair had no updates to report.

Board member reports

- Board members had no updates to report.

City Council liaison report — Dan Hammill:

- The City Council passed the removal of parking minimums. At the state level, Senate Bill 5481 limits minimum parking requirements for new residential and commercial developments and will go into effect in January 2027.
- The Regional Fire Authority (RFA) planning committee will be holding a public hearing on Monday, October 19, at 6:00 p.m. specifically setting forth its proposal to impose a fire benefit charge. The proposed funding model combines a property tax of up to 80 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value with a benefit charge based on building square footage and fire risk, which will go to a public vote in February 2027, pending approval. This required public hearing on the benefit charge satisfies the legal prerequisite to place the combined measure on the ballot, where it triggers a 60% supermajority requirement to pass.

Friends of BPL report — Carol Comeau:

- The book sale held at Wander Brewing generated over \$800 in sales. These funds will be directed toward the renovation project. The event received excellent feedback from both the hosts and attendees.
- The Friends of BPL September book sale is scheduled to take place from Sept. 24 - Sept. 26.

Library Director report — Rebecca Judd:

- A representative from the Office of Secretary of WA State is coming to do a series of Participate in Democracy workshops at the Central Library in September and October, followed by two additional programs in November in the new Bellis Fair Library Multipurpose room.

Renovation report — Jennifer Van VanderPloeg:

- New project estimates now include furniture and shelving, which are currently being reviewed to ensure architectural drawings are complete. Caleb Savage is awaiting cost estimates for hazardous materials testing to finalize the bid packet materials.
- Detailed planning for Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment (FF&E) will continue once the bid packet progresses further.
- A cleaning contract is officially in place for the new temporary library space at Bellis Fair.
- The clean-out of Central Library spaces is underway to dispose of unneeded items prior to relocating for the renovation.
- The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the 1% for the Arts project has been published, with a submission deadline in mid-September.
- The fireplace at the Fairhaven branch is now fully operational.

2nd Quarter Action Plan — Rebecca Judd:

Renovation-Related updates include:

- The library is establishing temporary storage and operational spaces at Bellis Fair for the Friends of the Library, collections, and Children's services.

- Bethany Hoglund, Annette Bagley, and staff are organizing programming spaces at Barkley Village, the Maritime Heritage pavilion, and the Bellis Fair Library multipurpose room. The team is determining locations for Skillshare programs, setting final dates for meeting room reservations, and transitioning programs to alternative sites. September storytimes will begin in the new Bellis Fair space.
- Significant efforts are being directed toward the Major Donors campaign. While monthly donor events were paused in August, a large-scale event is scheduled for Sept. 29 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Central Library building.
- A youth representative from the teen committee will serve on the selection jury for the 1% for the Arts project to ensure youth input.

Non-Renovation-Related updates include:

- Q2 efforts focused on updating Level of Service (LOS) standards, alongside compiling a gap analysis and formal funding requests.
- Staff learning hours, developed by Staff Development Coordinator Kate Dunphy, are being implemented to formalize self-directed training.
- Bethany Hoglund and Jon McConnell are managing the transition to new vendors and preprocessing workflows following the closure of Baker & Taylor. Onboarding with Ingram is nearly complete.

Fundraising committee update — Kendra Bradford:

- The upcoming donor anniversary event will feature historical photo albums, renovation floorplans, and behind-the-scenes tours. Additional details will be provided as they are finalized.
- The committee did not meet this month but reported an updated fundraising total of over \$2.6 million toward the \$3.5 million campaign goal. Matching donation opportunities are currently being negotiated with potential donors.

2027 Budget development & strategic planning update — Rebecca Judd:

- The library submitted its budget proposal last month. The City requested a 3% reduction scenario, which the library fulfilled; very few additive requests were submitted city-wide, and the library had none. The budget remains with the Mayor's office through the end of August before moving to City Council in September for review and adoption.
- Rebecca Judd met with the Mayor on August 11 to present the Level of Service document (page 19 of the packet) and discuss pathways for expanded level of service. To meet the Library's level of service goals, \$5.5M (total) in additional operating funding will be required over the next 10 years, which averages \$550,000 in additional funding per year for the next 10 years. On the capital side, to meet the Library's level of service goals for facilities, \$30M (total) in additional capital funding will be required over the next 10 years, which averages \$3 million per year for the next 10 years.
- Discussions with the Mayor also explored whether this level of service increase could be fully funded via the Regional Fire Authority (RFA) or a combination of the RFA and a future library levy.

- Board Chair Rebecca Craven noted that the promotional flyer should state "additional funds needed" to ensure clarity.
- Melissa Moran, Communications Director at the City, is handling communications regarding the RFA, with further updates to follow.

Day Center update — Rebecca Judd

- The proposed Pacific Street Day Center project will not move forward. Bart Hunter from Road2Home indicated that they are still pursuing a day center model with private backing, as they were unable to finalize contractual terms with the City.
- The Library is discussing the long-term need for behavioral health support at the library following the discontinuation of the HEART program. We have reached out to Lake Whatcom Center to explore partnership logistics. Essential services previously assisted by HEART remain critical, ongoing needs.
- Kendra Bradford inquired about HEART funding. Rebecca Judd clarified that while the City provided partial funding, more than half came from the county Health Department, whose budget constraints forced the program's end. Reinstating the program independently would require closing a deficit of over \$100,000. We are evaluating private funding and operational logistics for the closure period.

Trespass appeal update – Rebecca Judd

- Rebecca Judd, alongside Board members Deborra Garrett and Shirin Deylami, convened with Katrina Buckman, Cam Birman, and Sarah Chaplin under the newly established review process to evaluate an active trespass appeal.
- The panel voted to reduce the one-year trespass penalty issued to Juan Perez to three months. Mr. Perez will be permitted to return to the library on October 18, 2026.
- A procedural adjustment was proposed (page 21 of the packet) to add the Head of Security to the Appeal Committee as an advisory reviewer. Under this proposal, the formal voting members would consist of the Library Director and two members of the Board of Trustees. The Trustees proposed no edits to these changes.

New Business: No new business.

Agenda items for next meeting: None discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:17 pm.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting:

September 15, 2026 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 pm.