

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Mount Vernon City Library Board of Trustees
January 7, 2016**

Board members present: Bill Craig, Laura Riquelme and Hal Verrell.

Library staff present: Director Brian Soneda.

A. Call to order: Ms. Riquelme called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

B. Approval of minutes from the December 3, 2015 meeting: Mr. Craig moved that the minutes of the December 3, 2015 meeting be approved as submitted. Mr. Verrell seconded the motion; all were in favor.

C. Visitors: Margaret Redfern and Frank Replier, not-yet-confirmed incoming trustees, were in attendance. Introductions and welcomes were shared.

D. Surplus Material: Ms. Riquelme explained the surplus process to the incoming trustees. Mr. Verrell noted the relatively high number of late year withdrawals to be surplussed, and then moved that items withdrawn between December 2 and December 30, 2015 be declared surplus and transferred to the Friends of the Mount Vernon Library. Mr. Craig seconded the motion; all were in favor.

E. Budget Reports: Mr. Soneda reported that spending, with a few small exceptions, was completed for the 2015 Budget year, and that slightly more than 99% of the allocated budget had been spent. He called it “uncomfortably close to fully spent.” Ms. Riquelme asked about the overspending in the Books – Endowments line. Mr. Soneda responded that this was intentional, as the disbursement from the Bichler endowment in support of the book collection had come in \$1,400 higher than projected, largely based on Skagit Community Foundation investment in the strong stock market in 2015. Mr. Craig asked a similar question on the revenue side about the Library Services line. Mr. Soneda responded that this too was a projection based on past allocations from the County in support of library service to non-residents, and would come in at several hundred dollars less than the projection of \$16,000.

F. Approval of Disbursements: Ms. Riquelme gave a brief explanation of the approval of disbursements process, again for the benefit of the incoming trustees. Mr. Craig then moved that disbursements from Period 12 in the amount of \$16,706.77 be certified as reviewed. Mr. Verrell seconded the motion; all were in favor.

G. Monthly statistical reports: Mr. Soneda described the overall statistical results for the full 2015 year as “all things considered, pretty good.” The last quarter or so of the year was relatively strong compared to the last quarter of 2014, and lessened and in some cases turned around projected lower numbers for 2015 that looked like a certainty in late summer. Items Circulated was fairly significantly down in 2015 from 2014. Mr. Soneda noted that while he had no “proof” that this was due to increasing vagrancy issues in the

downtown area including the library area, he strongly believed that this at least partly explained the smaller Items Circulated number. Based on this belief, he added that he was very pleased with the small increase in the Library Attendance number in 2015 from 2014. Ms. Riquelme asked if the repositioning of the book drops and their relatively new “always open” status had impacted Library Attendance, reasoning that some of the people who in the past were required to come into the library to return books now returned them to the book drops and never entered the building, thus triggering the gate counter. Mr. Soneda responded that this was sound reasoning but to this point, if this did have an impact, it was not yet noticeable, but it did bear watching in the future.

H. Director’s Reports:

a. 2016 Board meeting dates. Mr. Soneda presented the dates for meetings in 2016, all based on the first Thursday “norm” except in two cases where first Thursday fell on the first day of the month. Because this did not give enough time for staff to prepare materials and statistics for the trustees, on these two months (September and December) the staff recommendation was that those meetings be held on the first Tuesday of the month. After short discussion, Ms. Riquelme called for the motion. Mr. Verrell moved that the 2016 meeting dates be approved as submitted. Mr. Craig seconded the motion; all were in favor.

b. 2016 Library Goals, final reading. Mr. Soneda presented the Goals, which had been slightly revised since last meeting based on trustee and staff input, as well as some input from Mayor Boudreau. Trustees were very comfortable with the Goals as submitted. Ms. Riquelme asked if this item could be a regular item for each meeting throughout the year, with a report from the director on the progress of meeting the action items supporting the goals. Mr. Soneda agreed that this was a good idea. Mr. Craig then moved that the 2016 Library Goals be approved as submitted. Mr. Verrell seconded the motion; all were in favor.

c. Outreach. Mr. Soneda reported on recent and future outreach opportunities. One outreach opportunity in 2016 would be “September is Library Card Signup Month” which has been done routinely at the library but has usually run into timing problems. Young readers and readers-to-be logically could best be marketed to while concentrated together at schools, but most students were not in school during the months directly preceding September. Trustees discussed the need to do quality pre-marketing of the effort before school let out in the spring, and making sure principals and PTA’s/PTO’s were in the loop. Ms. Riquelme also suggested a direct dialog with Superintendent Carl Bruner about the project.

d. Staffing update. Mr. Soneda reported that part-time Public Service Assistant Mayra Fernandez had resigned to take a full-time job at Burlington-Edison High School, and that he expected that interviews to fill this position would happen later in January. He also reported that the part-time Public Services Assistant II position vacated by Cheryle Neuwirth in December had been replaced with a PSA I position that was filled by Shellie Richter, who had been a strong candidate for the last opening for a PSA.

e. other. Mr. Soneda shared that he would be out of office on January 20 for the Washington Public Library Directors meeting in Federal Way and on January 21 for Library Legislative Day in Olympia. He would thus miss the highly anticipated Chris Hoke reading/book signing on January 20, but invited trustees to attend. Finally, Mr. Soneda reminded trustees that he would miss the next Library Board meeting, as he would be visiting his mother in Hawaii at that time.

I. Around the Table:

Mr. Verrell passed.

Mr. Craig shared that he had run into the former director of the Welcome Baby program, Meredith Baker; he regretted the demise of that effective program due to County budget cuts. He also noted his even higher level of empathy for library staff members and their efforts to serve the community's more challenging members, as his new housing authority job in downtown Mount Vernon put him in daily contact with some of these same individuals. He also reminded all that he would miss the February meeting.

Ms. Riquelme asked the soon-to-be official trustees if they had any questions or comments at this time.

Mr. Replier noted the new location of the book drops and asked if future moves were planned. Mr. Soneda responded that staff was in discussion with City officials Rick Prosser and Gary Owens about a future move of the book drops to an internal location, with patrons able to drop off materials into slots in the wall under an awning. He will keep trustees posted on this project.

Ms. Redfern found the new 2016 Library Goals interesting and asked if the library did outreach to and programming for day care facilities. Mr. Soneda responded that Youth Services staff did some of both, but that trustee advocacy for more was welcome and could very well have impact.

J. Board Chair's Report: Ms. Riquelme noted that she had no opening comments and discussion immediately went to officer elections.

a. Officer elections. After short discussion, notable for the sincere interest in serving as Chair by two very qualified individuals, it was agreed that the 2016 officers nominated should be Mr. Craig as Chair, Ms. Riquelme as Vice Chair, and Mr. Verrell as Secretary. Mr. Verrell moved that this slate of officers be approved. Mr. Craig seconded the motion; all were in favor.

b. Annual Evaluation of Library Director (executive session). Ms. Riquelme called the meeting into executive session at 7:15 PM. She called the meeting back into regular session at 7:30 PM.

K. Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 PM. The next meeting of the board of trustees will be on Thursday, February 4, 2016 at 5:30 PM at the library.

Minutes by Brian Soneda, Library Director

