



DATE: June 25, 2024

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

FROM: Councilmember Hamilton

SUBJECT: Future of the Bellevue Library Advisory Board

BACKGROUND

Library Advisory Boards are established by individual cities that have annexed to the King County Library System (KCLS). Members of these community boards are appointed by and serve in an advisory capacity to City officials on matters regarding the KCLS community library they represent. They are not advisory to KCLS, which has its own county-appointed board.

According to KCLS staff, there has been an evolution on library boards and a steady trend of sunseting local library advisory boards. Since 2017, Shoreline, Renton, Issaquah, Mercer Island, Snoqualmie, and Bothell have all sunset their library advisory boards, generally for redundancy and lack of purpose to continue. Of the 35 cities served by the KCLS, only 9 cities continue to maintain advisory boards, including Bellevue.

Specific to Bellevue, in 1993 the Bellevue Public Library was assumed by KCLS. At that time, the Bellevue Board of Library Trustees, which had performed an advisory role for the Bellevue Public Library, became the Bellevue Library Advisory Board (BLAB) and Chapter 3.67 BCC was amended to reflect this revised title and to modify the board's role accordingly. The BLAB has two responsibilities pursuant to BCC 3.67.040:

- (1) to make periodic reports and recommendations to the Council and City Manager related to KCLS library services and, to the extent requested by the City Manager, represent the City's interest before the KCLS Board, and
- (2) at the request of KCLS, make studies regarding library buildings, property, or equipment and make recommendations to KCLS regarding rules and regulations for the libraries.

CURRENT STATUS

As the current Council Liaison to the Bellevue Library Advisory Board, and given my past service on the Parks Board, I take very seriously the role City advisory boards play in our community.

Earlier this year, the BLAB contemplated what its goals or workplan might look like. There have also been several resignations from the BLAB this year, adding to the challenge of this board. I have spoken with the current chair of the BLAB about my interest in the future of the board and whether or not it is time to change its role going forward, given that the KCLS has its own directly-appointed governing board. I would like to work with city staff, KCLS, and the current

board members to explore the future of the BLAB, including the possibility of sunsetting the BLAB as other neighboring cities have done.

REQUEST TO THE COUNCIL

Given the time already spent by staff on this topic, I am asking for the Council's support to have staff continue to conduct the necessary research, outreach and analysis, beyond the eight-hour limitation, and bring back a recommendation for Council consideration at a future meeting.

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to direct staff to conduct the necessary research, outreach and analysis to bring back a recommendation for Council consideration at a future meeting on the future of the Bellevue Library Advisory Board.