



**Minutes of the
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2012**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order by Board President Atkin at 6:05pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Catherine Atkin, President
Nancy Lewis, Vice President
Michael Hartigan, Board Member
Gail Wetzork, Board Member
Suzanne Whyte, Board Member

Staff: Jane Chisaki, Library Director
Christina Baines, Recording Secretary

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, AGENDA (Public Comment)

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

An asterisk indicates items so enacted or adopted on the Consent Calendar.

- *A. Report from the Library Director Highlighting Activities for the Months of March and April 2012.
- *B. Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board Meeting of March 14, 2012.
- *C. Library Services Report for the Month of February and March 2012.

Board Member Hartigan expressed concern with the downward trends on the Services Reports; specifically the door count. This item was discussed in detail by the Board, and Direction was given to the Library Director. Member Lewis suggested audio downloads may be part of the downturn in doorcounts by substituting an e-book instead of coming in to check out something in person. Member Whyte asked the question about how to go about identifying the cause of downward trending. Member Hartigan commented that the number of hours the Library operates has increased so, that is not a cause. Director Chisaki said it could be that while there are more operating hours there are fewer programs being offered. Board Member Wetzork stated that the entire book industry is in turmoil and that affects people. That both Amazon and Apple are being sued by the government, and it has an effect, the smaller book businesses are being forced out because they cannot get into the electronics' business because the

government won't let them. Director Chisaki suggested the current hours of operation may be part of the issue; however, our neighboring libraries are not experiencing the same downward trend. President Atkin suggested a study may be helpful. Board Member Wetzork said he is in agreement with Board Member Hartigan, but that we can't make the problem go away if we don't know what the problem is and comparing the library to other libraries is not helpful because they do not offer the same things as Alameda. He indicated the townspeople are very upset with City Hall right now; he is very connected to the community and the feedback he is getting is that the city is in financial trouble and doesn't recognize there is a problem and kicking the can down the road a year or two at a time is not going to solve anything. He believes the money that runs the city comes from the businesses; and we need to look at the problem very carefully. President Atkin indicated that bringing someone in will be a cost; do we want to ask the Director to look at it? Board Member Whyte asked what service/s are we not providing that folks are going elsewhere to get what they need, and how do we go about finding out what that is? Member Hartigan interjected that it was the Strategic Plan that was used to identify the services the Library has to offer and the Board has looked at this, it was several years ago; which is why we are currently reviewing the Strategic Plan. To say it is a nebulous, we don't really know what it is.... to answer the question, we do know what the community wants, we had a variety of folks provide input on the services the library provides and they are incorporated in the Strategic Plan. We have identified what the community wants. President Atkin suggested that she'd like to see someone talk about current trends at their next meeting. Director Chisaki indicated that Debra Doyle, will be speaking at the upcoming Foundation retreat and will be discussing this subject. President Atkin indicated that she plans to attend the retreat and will report back at the next meeting the information presented by Ms. Doyle, and ask the Board to summarize the direction they wanted to go with this item. President Atkin suggested the Board attend the retreat at least during the portion Ms. Doyle is speaking. The Board requested that this item be added as a regular agenda item for further direction and or discussion. They Board would like to see a door count by the hour/day rather than a monthly lump-sum; and a short explanation of what is going on at those times of day if anything in way of programs etc.

*D. Financial Report Reflecting FY12 Expenditures by Fund for March and April 2012.

Board Member Hartigan commented on the AT&T bills and wanted to make sure the line items are being monitored.

*E. Bills for Ratification for the Months of March and April 2012.

Board Member Hartigan moved approval of the minutes; Member Wetzork expressed concern with the minutes; he said he was quoted as having said something that he may not have said. President Atkin said that the minutes can be corrected if he identifies the error. Vice President Lewis seconded the motion and it carried with a 5-0 voice vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Library Strategic Plan/Update (J. Chisaki) (continued to July meeting)

The Board requested the remaining nine items left for review be completed by January 2013, and suggested the Library Director not spend a lot of time on it or make it more than it is.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Informational Discussion: Library Budgets FY06-07 to FY11-12 (J. Chisaki)

Most of the numbers provided are direct from the State Report. Cost allocations are now being charged to departments now, where in the past this was not the case. Also of note, the capital outlay is due to the new building, branch renovations, etc. Board Member Hartigan thanked the Director for responding to this request as it provides ammunition and proof of the position the Board is being placed. The materials portion is what I'm looking at, for example, and it is downward every year and I think that is criminal. President Atkin thanked Board Member Hartigan for requesting the report.

B. Art Exhibits in the Stafford Room (written: D. Hall).

The Board accepted the report. Director Chisaki reported that the alarm on the door has been fixed and it is not being used as much.

C. Alameda Free Library Foundation (J. Chisaki).

The Foundation is going to have a Strategic Planning Session on May 19. The Foundation is looking at ways to market the Library. The retreat will be their first meeting since the concert; the \$40K is the net for the event.

D. Friends of the Alameda Free Library (J. Chisaki).

Kevin Minney has stepped down as Friends' liaison to the Board so he can dedicate time to and take care of family issues. The Friends are looking for his replacement. The Book sale was this last weekend, there were approximately 1,200 boxes of books. The Coast Guard helped with moving the books.

E. Patron Suggestions/Comments (Speak-Outs) and Library Director's Response. None. But a couple of e-mail thanking the library and staff.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA GENERAL

None.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Board Member Whyte stated the crooked light is out at the West End Branch.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

Updated the Board on current library position vacancies and the schedule to fill them. Additionally, the dot on the I at that Bay Farm Branch has been stolen again. The Board requested a photo of the sign so they can see what it looks like without the ball, to determine if it is needed.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS NON-AGENDA GENERAL:

None.

ADJOURNMENT

President Atkin adjourned the meeting at 7:23pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Chisaki
Library Director
Secretary to the Library Board

The agenda for this meeting was posted in accordance with the Sunshine Ordinance.