



**Minutes of the  
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING  
March 14, 2012**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order by Board President Atkin at 6:09pm.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

Arrived at 6:30 Suzanne Whyte, Board Member

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

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, AGENDA** (Public Comment)

Library Arts Committee Member Kumar Fanse expressed concern with the current practice/arrangement the Art Committee has with displaying art work in the Regina K. Stafford meeting room and why the room has to remain closed when no meetings/events are taking place in the room. He cannot understand why they cannot display art in the room. He indicated he would like to have new arrangements made to allow greater access to the area by the artist and public.

The Library Director responded that she had explained that security of both the art and Library materials are of concern with the back emergency door being left open, and that she put an end to it. Although the door is alarmed, people do not pay attention if the alarm sounds.

President Atkin inquired about art, and wondered if art was being displayed currently; to which the Director responded that art is being displayed in the room. Board Member Wetzork recalled that this was discussed at a prior meeting and the Board decided security was a great concern and the decision was to support the Library Director's suggestion at that time. Discussion of available spaces for art display was made. Board Member Hartigan agreed with Board Member Wetzork, but also expressed that displaying art at the Library is critical. He suggested this item be placed on the next Board agenda and the Art Committee provide a proposal for the Board to consider regarding use of the Regina K. Stafford meeting room for displaying art that addresses the Art Committee's display concerns and the Library's security concerns. Further, President Atkins suggested Public Works look at the door for different options. The Director indicated she would get the door fixed and this item would be placed on the next agenda.

Library Art Committee Member Ruth Belikove introduced herself to the Library Board as a former Library Board Member herself. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to display art in the

Library but, on behalf of the Committee for Library Art, indicated she has concerns with the current arrangement between the Library and Artists. Would like the Board to provide more time to have the artwork available for viewing by the public.

The Library Board requested this item be placed on their next agenda for discussion and requested the Art Committee to bring a proposal to them for their consideration.

### 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 January and February 2012.

\*B. Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board Meeting of January 11, 2012.

\*C. Library Services Reports for the Months of January and February 2012.

\*D. Financial Report Reflecting FY12 Expenditures by Fund for January and February 2012.

\*E. Bills for Ratification for the Months of January and February 2012.

President Atkin requested a review of the Library Services Report.

Board Member Whyte arrived at 6:30pm.

Director Chisaki walked the Board through the services report, pointing out the door counts, etc. President Akin and Board Member Hartigan both expressed concern with the downward trend on the report. Board Member Hartigan acknowledged the Library is operating with fewer hours, but believes the across-the-board downward trend is a concern. President Atkin asked about the overall trending in libraries and how the Alameda Free Library compares in regards to the trends of Library usage. In addition to the report, include the Library Director's opinion of why the change in trend.

Board Member Hartigan requested monthly Expenditure Reports be provided. Indicated he would like to see the report for February 2012.

Board Member Gail Wetzork moved approval of the Consent Calendar.

Board Member Mike Hartigan seconded the motion, which carried by the unanimous voice vote -5.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Library Strategic Plan/Update (J. Chisaki) None this meeting. Library Director Chisaki reported due to the press business and in preparing for the upcoming budget she was not able to devote time to the strategic plan for this agenda. President Atkin requested a briefing of how the budget was headed.

### NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Stafford Room use on Wednesday Mornings (J. Chisaki) Director Chisaki reported the Café Committee would like to see more activity in the Stafford room in the mornings, so they can open the Café. The Sing-along is interested in doing a Wednesday morning Sing-along because the Monday morning time slot is packed. The Youth Collaborative meets in this space, along with various departments of the City. What is the Board's preference on prioritizing who meets in the Library spaces? The Café Committee does not want to come in and open the Café without a program because they setup and staff the Café, and no one buys their products. Board Member Wetzork indicated he would like to support the community and the Café and keep them around. Board Member Hartigan suggested letting one group know it would not be available one week a month. Board Member Whyte inquired if the group would be agreeable to this compromise? President Atkin pointed out, as a priority, the Library is here to serve the community first and foremost.

Bi-monthly meeting schedules for City Boards & Commissions (J. Chisaki) Director Chisaki indicated the scheduled meetings of the Board are: May 19, July 18, September 12, and November 14<sup>th</sup>.

Board Member Wetzork indicated that he would have to leave at this point, but before doing so would like to share that the Concert was well attended and that he had contacted Eric Kos regarding publicity of the event.

Sunshine Ordinance Training/Declaration (J. Chisaki) President Atkin indicated the meeting would be adjourned, and the Board would hold the required Sunshine Ordinance training following adjournment of the Library Board meeting.

Alameda Free Library Foundation (J. Chisaki) Director Chisaki indicated the Concert was a resounding success; the counts are not in yet. A proclamation will be presented to Frederica von Stade at the April 3 City Council meeting. The Foundation is in the process of voting in a new Board Member.

President Atkin reported that she and Jane had met with Foundation Members Jan Greene and Carole Robie. They had conversations about marketing, the Foundation, and the Library. They invited her to attend a retreat to help foster deeper relations and shared vision. And, the concert was amazing.

Friends of the Alameda Free Library (K. Minney) Director Chisaki reported the cookbook item is dead; they did not receive enough recipes to make it viable. They are working with the Foundation to do the staff appreciation lunch, no date yet, but they are on board with it. The Friends and the Foundation are pairing up to do a children's program featuring story telling from the Asian Art Museum and gearing up for their next book sale.

Patron Suggestions/Comments (Speak-Outs) and Library Director's Response Director Chisaki read: I really like the restoration of the West End Branch Library, my library. As a senior who looked forward to the walk, and anticipation of finding the jewel, I was sorely disappointed at the reduction of the fiction and the mystery selection which could be partially solved by bringing back the paper book racks. Staff member Eva Volin responded: We really like the renovation of the West End Library too. We also share your concern about the much reduced size of the fiction collection which includes mysteries, science fiction, fantasy, and westerns. So, we shifted books around to add several bays of fiction under the Santa Clara side windows. In addition, the Alameda Free Library recently instituted a floating collection strategy, meaning books that are returned to a certain library stay at that branch regardless of where in our system that book was originally checked out. We are finding that this is helping to beef up the anemic collection of fiction at the West End, and we hope that as the collection continues to improve and change, you will soon be pleased with what you find on our shelves. As to the paperback spinner racks, because of the ADA requirements for Aisle size in public places, we no longer have room for the old paperback fixtures. They will not be returning to the West End Library.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS: None.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Just one, in my Board Letter I indicated the reductions were higher than they will actually be: there is a reduction, but not as much as I initially indicated. She further reported the City Manager's intent to include the Library in his proposed ballot measure to add a sales tax increase on the June Ballot.

Board Member Hartigan requested a report showing the past five-years of cuts to the Library's budget.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS NON-AGENDA GENERAL: None.

ADJOURNMENT

President Atkin adjourned the meeting at 7:23pm. The Sunshine Ordinance Training DVD was shown to the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Chisaki  
Library Director  
Secretary to the Library Board

\*\*\*\*\*

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