



**Minutes of the
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
November 14, 2007**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Leslie Krongold, President
Karen Butter, Vice President
Alan Mitchell, Board Member
Mike Hartigan, Board Member

Absent: Ruth Belikove, Board Member

Staff: Jane Chisaki, Library Director
Marsha Merrick, Recording Secretary

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

- A. *Report from Library Director highlighting Library Department activities for the month of November 2007. Accepted.
- B. *Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board meeting of October 10, 2007. Approved.
- C. *Library Services Report for the month of September 2007. Accepted.
- D. *Report from Finance Department reflecting FY 2006-07 Library expenditures (by fund) through October 2007. Accepted.
- E. *Bills for ratification. Approved.

President Krongold asked about an item in the September 2007 board minutes regarding whether it is mandatory for the Friends President to attend Library Board meetings. President Krongold said that Honora Murphy did attend most Library Board meetings prior to Molly Skeen, but didn't know if it was required. Recording Secretary Merrick will re-write this part of the minutes and bring it back to the Board for approval at the December 2007 meeting.

President Krongold asked for an update on the smoke detectors; Director Chisaki said they are in the air intact ducts. The reason the one in the Teen Room didn't go off when the smoke bomb was thrown was because it needed new batteries. There are about a half dozen in the ductwork, and Chisaki will check on whether they are hardwired into the electrical system.

Director Chisaki had mentioned in her Board letter that Adult Services Librarian, Annemarie Meyer, had started a “Staff Picks” book blog on the webpage. President Krongold thought it would be a good item to highlight in the next Library newsletter.

President Krongold wondered why the Board had not been involved in the selection process for the new Library logo. Director Chisaki explained that it had been created by a college student, and had cost the Library nothing. Library staff had looked at the options and liked this one more than the previous logo, especially with the tag line of “Inspiring People Since 1877” which was used for the 130th birthday celebration. Chisaki said it might be an interim logo until something else was found, but Member Hartigan cautioned against that idea. The majority of the board was not impressed with the new logo, so Chisaki will remove it from the web page and put the old logo back up.

President Krongold asked for a motion to accept the Consent Calendar as presented. Vice President Butter so moved; Member Mitchell seconded the motion which carried by a 4-0 vote.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA (Public Comment)

Audience member Marc Lambert asked if BALIS is still in existence. Director Chisaki indicated that system consolidation will be discussed at the Library Director’s retreat she will attend November 30th. There is also a system-wide marketing program set to be revealed after the first of the year. Lambert then asked for clarification of upcoming computer classes. Chisaki explained that class participants sign up for a particular subject, and then attend all the sessions scheduled; each session will touch on a different aspect of the application being presented.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Re-evaluation of “Alcohol Use in Library Meeting Rooms” Policy Addendum (J. Chisaki)

President Krongold inquired whether there had been any complaints or questions about the policy addendum. Director Chisaki had received none, and indicated that the Foundation has been the only group to serve alcohol at an event. Krongold questioned the order in which the addendum was written, thinking that specifying what type of group might be eligible to serve alcohol at an event should be first. Chisaki indicated that the City Attorney had put the items in this order and had written most of the wording. Krongold asked for a vote to approve the alcohol use policy addendum; all were in favor with a 4-0 vote.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Status of Consultant Contract for Strategic Planning & Branch Improvements (J. Chisaki)

The contract is with the City Attorney for approval, which is taking longer because there is a new attorney working on it. Once the contract comes back from the City Attorney’s office it will go to the consultant, Ruth Metz, for signature, then to the City Council for final approval. Ms. Metz is ready to move forward and meet with the Board as soon as everything is finalized; she projects the entire process will take approximately 6-8 months.

There was quite a bit of discussion on securing space at Alameda Point for a new branch library, and about the scope of work the contractor would be expected to perform. Director Chisaki would like to identify staff members who will take part in the project as well. Laptops which will be used inside the Library have been ordered as part of the branch upgrades.

B. Art Exhibit Committee (R. Belikove)

In the absence of Member Belikove, Director Chisaki reported that there was a communication problem regarding when the last committee meeting was to be held. Library Board Member Belikove and Library staff representative David Hall were in attendance, however, only one other member showed up. A variety of Alameda art groups are expected to come on the Friday following the Library Board meeting to give their input. The person in charge of displaying and hanging art at Rhythmix Cultural Works came by and walked the Library to help better define what spaces could be used and what methods might work for art here.

C. Alameda Free Library Foundation (A. Mitchell)

Member Mitchell had not attended the last Foundation meeting, so Director Chisaki reported that they are still working on updating their website. They will go back to the original \$100 per shelf price, as opposed to the \$130 they were charging during the Library's 130th birthday celebration, as it was not very successful. The Foundation has updated their flyers, and they attended the Alameda Literati event on November 2nd, sharing a table with the Friends group. The Foundation will receive over \$500 from the proceeds of Angela's Friday Night Flights benefiting the Library, which is the biggest amount Angela's has ever made on one of these events in the two years they have been sponsoring them. The Foundation has established a goal to raise at least \$33,500 a year for the Library.

D. Friends of the Alameda Free Library (D. Fullerton)

Director Chisaki said that Friends President, Dorothy Fullerton, is trying to find someone to come to the Library Board meetings. Ms. Fullerton has been working the café during the author programs, which have been quite successful. The new refrigerator for the café was delivered that day; electrical connection needs to be installed, and hopes are that it will be in operation by the end of the month. A thank you tea was hosted for all the volunteers that keep the café running. The book sale had a record 1,045 boxes of books, and netted over \$16,000.

E. Alameda Free Library Newsletter (M. Merrick)

Recording Secretary Merrick reported that Annemarie Meyer, Supervising Librarian, will be putting newsletter copies around the Library soon. President Krongold asked if there were any statistics on how many people receive the newsletter, or how many new subscribers sign up each month. Director Chisaki indicated that Ms. Meyer is on the agenda for the next Board meeting, so it might be a good time to bring the subject up then.

The Board suggested that this item be removed from the regular agenda; however still provide a copy of the latest newsletter in the Board packet each month. Merrick will make that adjustment on future agendas, and continue to provide copies to the Board.

F. Patron suggestions/comments (Speak-Outs) and Library Director's response.

Purchasing suggestion for "Cult of the Amateur" – DVD will be ordered. Cleanliness of men's restroom and cleaning frequency questioned. They are cleaned at least once a day, with additional cleaning done as needed. Wheelchair bound patron could not turn in aisle because of potted plant. It blocks space not intended for passage and sometimes gets pushed where it is not supposed to be. Library staff can assist with this. There is too much noise in the Library, cell phone use, eating and drinking. Times have changed and the Library has become more of a community gathering place, however, signs are posted around the building discouraging cell phone use and indicating our no food or drink policy. Ask staff to help when needed. Request to put holds on DVDs just like books. The Library will allow this after the first of the year once adjustments are made to the computer system. Problem with volume while accessing the Internet. Using personal headphones was suggested. Patron disappointed with young adult collection and other YA amenities. The Teen Youth Council is meeting regularly to discuss needs and programs of interest to make the Library more inviting to this age group. There is also a Teen Book Group and "Active Afternoons" where video and board games can be played.

LIBRARY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Member Mitchell mentioned that business at the Main Library continues to rise and branch traffic continues to fall. Director Chisaki confirmed her belief that once improvements are made, it should help to increase branch patronage. Chisaki made mention of the in-house circulation count that was done the previous month, with results having been provided to the Board. Statistics showed the branches are experiencing 20% of their circulation in-house which was a little surprising. The branches have picked up a little this month due to more classes coming through. This is due mainly to the diligence of Supervising Children's Librarian, Eva Volin, who has personally sent letters to all the schools and individual teachers asking them to book visits with their classes to the Library.

Member Hartigan inquired about Internet access speed which had been questioned previously, and thought mention had been made of Comcast. However, the Board letter mentioned AP&T as the provider. Director Chisaki confirmed that things had changed, and the Library is working very hard with AP&T to get the same speed Comcast had promised, and at a better price.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

There was a picture in the board packet of the revised art design by Michael Carey. It was originally going to be a wooden trellis, but it would have been too tempting for children to climb on. It will now be a wall-mounted frieze. It will be highlighted with some of the colors that are in the alphabet mural. There was also a mock-up of the standing bronze, which will now be fashioned from wood instead. Carey is also considering doing some draping of the figure.

The Off-Agenda report on the revised hours plan has still not been given to Council. Chisaki has hopes they will see it before Thanksgiving.

Director Chisaki then shared a letter written to the Literacy Program from a student, who thanked them for matching her up with a wonderful tutor. All aspects of her life have been going much smoother since her reading and writing abilities have improved.

Prior to adjournment, Member Mitchell mentioned an article in the Library Hotline which had caught his interest: Maine Woman Swipes Sex Manual from Library. The Library attempted to get her to return it, but she would not. She will be fined and penalized accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

President Krongold asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m. Member Mitchell so moved; Member Butter seconded the motion which carried by a 4-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Chisaki
Library Director and
Secretary to the Library Board

This meeting's agenda was posted 72 hours in advance in accordance with the Brown Act.