



**Minutes of the
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
April 11, 2007**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Karen Butter, President
Ruth Belikove, Vice President
Leslie Krongold, Board Member
Mark Schoenrock, Board Member

Absent: Alan Mitchell, 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 April 2007. Accepted.
- B. *Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board meeting of March 14, 2007. Approved.
- C. *Library Services Report for the month of February 2007. Accepted.
- D. *Report from Finance Department reflecting FY 2006-07 Library expenditures (by fund) through March 2007. Accepted.
- E. *Bills for ratification. Approved.

President Butter asked if the current budget was overspent, and Director Chisaki replied that overall the Library was still in good shape. The City Manager had advised Chisaki that she would not be granting additional monies in this budget cycle, and wanted to see where the Library ended up at the end of the fiscal year. Adjustments will be made going forward for next year's budget.

Member Schoenrock asked if storytimes were at a seasonal low. Director Chisaki said that coming out of the holidays it is always that way, but it will pick up with summer coming.

President Butter commented on the large decrease of circulation at Bay Farm while the Main's is increasing. Director Chisaki stated that uniformly statistics for both the branches are down. At some point Chisaki expects to see this level out.

Director Chisaki told the board that she had taken Internet training statistics out of the services report and substituted Internet log-ins in its place. There is now a volunteer that will do one-on-one Internet trainings, but the board said they would be fine with the data being captured under volunteer hours.

President Butter was pleased to see the audio book statistics in the report, and Director Chisaki said it had turned out to be an easy item to capture data on. It is too soon to know if the reported figure will be considered high, low or moderate in size.

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

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA (Public Comment)

Director Chisaki took this opportunity to introduce the new Supervising Librarian for Children's Services, Eva Volin. Volin spoke about her background growing up in Alameda and how she had worked in the Children's Department of the Alameda Library while she was at San Jose State getting her degree. She went on to the Stockton/San Joaquin library system and is now glad to be "home" in Alameda. Ms. Volin is interested in starting book clubs for children as she has experienced much success with this previously. She has already gotten a couple of programs booked to coincide with the upcoming summer reading program themed "Get a Clue" which is all about discovering mysteries. Volin is looking into getting a movie license so the Library can show the previous Harry Potter movie just prior to the latest movie being released this summer. The Board extended a warm welcome to Ms. Volin signifying they were very happy to have her there.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Strategic Planning Consultant RFP (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki is ready to release the RFP if it meets Board approval. Chisaki had spoken to the Mayor the previous day, and Council seems to be behind the plan to move forward. Member Schoenrock suggested that we ask for a strategic plan for library services and not just facilities. Director Chisaki will add that language in.

President Butter inquired as to who and how the RFP responses would be evaluated. Director Chisaki stated that depending on how many responses were received, she would take a look at them with the Deputy City Manager, Lisa Goldman, so they could weed them down to the top 4. The next step would be a joint interview of the candidates between Chisaki, Goldman and one or two Library Board representatives.

Chisaki will make the changes so the RFP reads more strategic plan than facilities, and hopefully release it the following week. President Butter asked if there was a timeline outlined in the RFP on how long the consultant would have to do this work. That requirement is already included in the RFP. Director Chisaki hopes that the process will be completed by fall.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Speaker for Wood Museum Opening Reception (J. Chisaki)

The Library is hosting the Wood Museum of Artifacts, and their Opening Night Reception will be held on April 26th. There is interest in having a member of the Library Board present to say a few words of welcome, so Director Chisaki asked if anyone was available. Vice President Belikove said she would check her calendar and would be happy to do it if she was free that evening.

B. Exhibit Policy – Library Committee Board Appointees (J. Chisaki)

The exhibit policy states that the Library Director, a library staff member, and three members at large who would be appointed by the Library Board, would make up the art selection committee. Technical Services Supervisor, David Hall, has done this type of thing in the past and enjoys it, so has volunteered to be the staff member on the committee. Director Chisaki asked what type of selection process the Board would like to see for recruiting the three at large members. Should there be any qualifications required such as being an Alameda resident; would they need an art background, etc. Will there be a formal interview process, or would the potential candidates come to a board meeting to speak on their interest?

President Butter suggested getting a letter from each interested individual saying why they are interested in being on the committee and listing any qualifications. Member Krongold said that something could be put in the newspaper asking for responses. Vice President Belikove felt it would be important that these members have some knowledge of art. Butter said that someone on the committee should, but you might find yourself with too many differing opinions. Member Schoenrock pointed out that not everything we choose to exhibit will necessarily be art anyway. In the end, it was decided that the committee should be a broad reflection of the community.

A press release will be prepared saying the Library is forming an art advisory committee and are soliciting community members to submit letters of interest expressing their desire to serve as a volunteer. Responses should be limited to no more than one page. Member Krongold suggested that an announcement be sent to Deborah Owens at the Frank Bette Center for the Arts, and Molly Skeen said she would also put it in the Friends newsletter.

C. Library Foundation Activities (J. Chisaki)

Library Staff Appreciation Day is coming but there will be no formal program. A representative from the Foundation or the Friends will visit all the Library locations and bring lunches for the staff that are working that day. The Foundation and Friends have teamed up to purchase posters to be displayed for National Library Week, and there will be floral arrangements and plants brought in as well.

The Foundation is planning on doing a wine and cheese board recruitment night in the Stafford Meeting Rooms on May 9th. Movers and shakers of various companies and businesses will be invited in hopes they could recommend people from their organizations that might be a good fit on the Foundation Board. Director Chisaki had just been advised that the Foundation was not quite ready for this yet, so they will be hosting a donor recognition reception for all the past contributors instead.

For this event, and upcoming Chamber mixers the Foundation will be hosting, they would like to serve wine. Due to the Library policy of no alcohol on the premises, Director Chisaki spoke to the City Attorney's Office, and they drafted an addendum to the room use policy that would make it okay if the event or organization that is sponsoring the event would support the mission of the Library. They would still have to get the one day ABC permit, and additional event insurance.

Member Krongold said it didn't seem fair that some people can have wine but not others. Director Chisaki said that with the exception of Livermore the other libraries she talked to also have the no alcohol policy unless it is a Library related event.

After much discussion, President Butter asked for a motion to accept the policy addendum for a six month trial period. Vice President Belikove so moved, Member Schoenrock seconded, and the vote was 3-1 for acceptance of the policy addendum. Member Krongold stated for the record that her negative vote was a reflection of the unfairness to groups not affiliated with the Library.

D. Alameda Free Library Foundation (A. Mitchell)

Conversation had centered on the upcoming events mentioned previously. The Foundation will have a table for the 4th of July fair at Rittler Park. They are also thinking about what to do for the Library's 130th birthday celebration coming up on August 11th this year. The Foundation has banked their money in tiered accounts so it is not sitting in a non-interest bearing checking account.

E. Friends of the Alameda Free Library (M. Skeen)

The next book sale is the first weekend of May. Café operations are going along well. To everyone's relief, the money they thought had been stolen was found.

The Friends are still going to get a safe, however, as it would be sound business practice to do so. The Café has purchased umbrellas for the tables in the courtyard. They have a quote for a large neon sign that will hang in the Café window looking out into the Library. They are working with Director Chisaki to change the signs in the Library that say “No Food or Drink Allowed in the Library” to something more positive that will invite people to have food and drink in the Café.

F. Library Building Watch (M. Merrick)

Recording Secretary Merrick had nothing to report.

G. Patron suggestions/comments (Speak-Outs) and Library Director’s response.

The Library needs to enforce a “quiet” rule and possibly post signs around the Library to help reinforce that policy. The response directed use of the Quiet Reading Room or small study rooms. Please purchase Obama’s books; the Library has done this. Video suggestions for “I Spit on Your Grave” and the Ancient Warriors, Spartans and Rome DVD series are being considered for the collection. Cub Scout Den tours covering both energy conservation as well as traditional Library resources; the Main and both branch libraries are always happy to host scout field trips and help with special projects. A working space table for the copy area to organize papers, etc. while working; a table has been placed in the first floor alcove, and the second floor has a built-in counter area. A wastebasket at the door inside the women’s restroom; wastebaskets have been placed by the door of all the public restrooms.

LIBRARY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Vice President Belikove mentioned a literary tour available through the Solano County Library Foundation for any interested parties. There is also a National Library Week program with Michael Pollan happening at the Oakland Museum the following night. Belikove talked about the art pieces purchased at an auction that she had brought in as a donation to the Library. Belikove asked what the timeframe is between the order and receipt of new books. Director Chisaki responded that it depends on the order; if it’s a best seller and in stock, it could arrive very quickly – probably within 2 weeks time. If there is a backlog in Tech Services, they hold off on some purchases so they are not buried when too many books come in at once. Chisaki went on to describe other types of orders and the sequence in which they are purchased and processed. Belikove inquired if there was a policy about book displays. Chisaki indicated that Adult Services puts up displays on the wooden shelving next to the books on hold.

Member Krongold made the observation that it was the third meeting in a row that Member Mitchell had missed and wondered if there was some sort of protocol to follow in this situation such as sending a card with get well wishes. Director Chisaki said that she had sent a card previously and Member Mitchell told her it was not necessary to send another.

Director Chisaki had spoken with SAB rep Rebecca Kozak, who will be attending the upcoming Library Issues Breakfast. Ms. Kozak will also attend the May Library Board meeting.

President Butter said that at the CALTAC workshop they had been advised there would be follow-up on several items discussed, but Chisaki said there was nothing new at this point on their website.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Legislative Day is the following Wednesday and so far only Marc Lambert, former SAB rep, will be attending with Director Chisaki. Vice President Belikove expressed her interest in attending at this point, so Chisaki will make the reservations for all three of them.

Earth Day is coming up and the Library has been selected to receive a "Green Award" on April 21st. Director Chisaki will be going to accept the award and invited any interested board members to attend as well.

The Foundation has agreed to name the large meeting rooms in honor of Regina K. Stafford and are looking in to getting signs made through Cairdea who is the graphic designer that works with the Foundation. Director Chisaki passed around some samples of what the lettering might look like and encouraged the board to pick the style they liked the most. After a bit of discussion, the Board settled on the all-caps option B.

ADJOURNMENT

Board President Butter called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m. Vice President Belikove so moved, Board Member Krongold 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.