



**Minutes of the
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD
DECEMBER 13, 2006**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

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 December 2006. Accepted.
- B. *Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board meeting of November 8, 2006. Approved.
- C. *Library Services Report for the month of October 2006. Accepted.
- D. *Report from Finance Department reflecting FY 2005-06 Library expenditures (by fund) through November 2006. Accepted.
- E. *Bills for ratification. Approved.

Board Member Schoenrock asked why our payments to Baker & Taylor for the Opening Day Collection only totaled \$20,000. Actually, Baker & Taylor was paid on two different check registers during the month of November for a total payment of close to \$65,000. The library is still waiting for additional billings to come in for the Opening Day Collection.

Board President Butter asked for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Board Member Krongold so moved; Vice President Belikove seconded the motion which carried by a 5-0 vote.

At this point, Director Chisaki asked President Butter if the Board would consider going out of regular order to allow the Wood Museum to make their presentation. Butter agreed, and AUSD Representatives Paul Ruffino and Nancy Ely gave a brief Power Point display showing past art pieces created by Wood Middle School history students in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades. The students write a paper and put together a label for their art piece as well. Last year, over 250 students participated in the program.

The board as a whole was impressed and agreed that the Library would be happy to host the Wood Museum in 2007. In the coming months, logistics will be worked out with AUSD. The opening day reception for the Wood Museum will occur on April 23, 2007 in the large meeting rooms at the Main Library.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Art Display Policy and Gifts of Art for the Main Library (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki had prepared a draft display policy, and inquired if the Board thought she was going in the right direction before she tackled writing up procedures. Board Member Schoenrock asked if there should be a review process for complaints either against an exhibit or about consideration for an exhibit. The appeal might start with the Library Art Exhibit Committee, then if not satisfied with the outcome, move on to the Library Board, and then finally to the City Council as a last alternative.

Exhibits being offered to the Library range from Bay Area photography, to sculpted masks made out of feathers. A woman from the Frank Bette Center has come forward to be a volunteer curator if needed, and also has quite a bit of art that could be displayed from local artists who now have no venue. The Library would really like to showcase local art. There is one unlit display case in the living room area by the fireplace, but it has yet to be utilized.

One challenge would be hanging things on the walls without causing damage. A suggestion was made to mount wooden strips at ceiling level and drop a line down.

The Board agreed that a 5-person committee would be about the right size. The committee should have at least one Library employee, besides Director Chisaki, that could represent her or at the very least, walk potential exhibitors around the building to show them the spaces available for their art.

Before being allowed to exhibit, the artist would have to sign a waiver that the Library would not be responsible for any damage or loss. Conversely, if the exhibit caused damage to the building, the artist would be responsible for the repair cost.

Director Chisaki will return at the next meeting with procedures that go along with the policy, and possibly an application the exhibitor would complete as a request.

B. Friends of the Library “Day” (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki found out it would be relatively easy to have the City Council designate a Friends of the Library day, week or perhaps month, by writing a resolution. This could be put on a City Council agenda under Special Orders of the Day, or if a party were planned, the Mayor would come and read the formal proclamation there. The board thought a Friends week might be appropriate with planned activities going on such as celebrity book readings.

Friends President Skeen said she would put together a committee to come up with some ideas, and also plan an anniversary party which the Friends had wanted to do anyway around the end of March. Director Chisaki will write up the Council resolution for the Board’s review.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation on the Wood Museum (P. Ruffino and N. Ely)

See notes above on the presentation for the Wood Museum.

B. Library Board’s Visibility in the Community (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki asked for some direction from the Board on where they wanted her to go with this item. Board Member Krongold stated that she had been searching for materials from a strategic training session done previously, but hadn’t come up with anything yet. When she locates her notes, she will pass them on to Director Chisaki who can copy and release them in an upcoming board packet.

Vice President Belikove would like to see a big effort made to visit culturally diverse communities within the City, and talk to members about getting involved in library activities such as story sessions. Director Chisaki indicated that after the first of the year, there would be a series of Russian story readings taking place.

Belikove mentioned having a resource list for people to refer to which would contain names of people in the community with special talents to offer as well.

C. Alameda Free Library Foundation (A. Mitchell)

There had not been a recent meeting so there was nothing to report. The Board asked how much money the Gala had raised; ticket sales took in over \$20,000. A presentation by the Foundation is planned for the January Board meeting.

A question arose on naming an area of the Library after Regina K. Stafford who left a large bequest to help fund the building of the new Main Library. It was suggested the large Community Meeting Rooms be re-named the Stafford rooms. All were in favor, and it was discussed how to approach the Foundation with this idea. Because

the money came to the Library, President Butter wondered why the naming decision lies with the Foundation and not with the Library Board. Director Chisaki was not sure how this came about, but believes the Library Board should take the initiative in this instance. Director Chisaki will write a resolution for the Library Board to sign, and Board Member Mitchell can take it to the next Foundation meeting. The Foundation will be responsible for ordering and funding the signage.

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

Friends President Molly Skeen mentioned that their first author night in the new Library was on the schedule for the following evening. "Unreleased Beatles Music & Film" by rock historian Richie Unterberger will take place on Thursday, December 14th starting at 7:30 p.m.

The Café is in its third open week and the Friends have been working through various operational issues. The biggest challenge is getting enough volunteers to cover all the shifts. The Friends are actively seeking a volunteer coordinator, and if they can't find one soon, they may have to shut down until they are better prepared. Gross sales are running between \$60 and \$120 a day.

E. Library Building Watch (M. Merrick)

Recording Secretary Marsha Merrick reported that she was again unable to get an issue of the newsletter out. She cited an overwhelming workload in relation to the new Library which is expected to lessen as time goes on, but hasn't happened yet. A December issue being released was considered unlikely as Merrick's vacation time was coming at the end of the month.

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

Several requests for clocks were made, and by the time of the current board meeting, 5 clocks had been installed in various places around the building. Labels on DVDs and videos instruct patrons not to put them in the bookdrops, but policy has changed. Staff is removing these labels as quickly as possible. A request for a step stool at the self-checkout counter so children can reach the equipment was made. A stool will be located and placed in that area. A recycle bin was requested for the print room. Bins have been placed in each printer alcove.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA (Public Comment)

Audience member Marc Lambert asked for an update on the CALTAC workshop. Director Chisaki responded there is no update as no new information had been received. The room has been booked and we are awaiting direction. Lambert related a story about a group of youngsters that were on the same bus as he was on the trip across town. They were all excitedly talking about going to the Library.

LIBRARY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Board Member Krongold does tutoring at the Library, and when she was waiting for her learner one evening, there was a line of 5 or 6 people at the check-out desk. The self check-out stations were completely free, and Krongold asked if anyone in line would like to try using them or if she could assist them if they were unfamiliar. The group met her with some pretty frustrated looks, but one woman came over and said if she could figure it out she might use them. Krongold was trying to help her, and felt that the woman clearly wasn't able to follow the instructions. She suggested that a display stand with some step by step instructions might be helpful and would be happy to help set that up.

Board President Butter had just attended a Planning Board meeting that Monday night, and suggested that "Oral Communications, Non-Agenda" be moved up on the regular Library Board Meeting Agenda. This section gives audience members a chance to speak to the Board on topics of interest to them. By moving the section up on the agenda, the public will not have to sit through most of the meeting waiting for their chance to speak. Recording Secretary Merrick verified that "Oral Communications, Non-Agenda" would be placed on the agenda directly after the Consent Calendar piece.

Butter then asked what was going to be done about the branches now. Director Chisaki is planning some public meetings to take place after the New Year. If the Board agrees, there will be two public meetings for the West End Branch, and two for the Bay Farm Island Branch. One of the meetings will be held right in each of the branch libraries, and the other meetings would be held in a community meeting place, such as a church, closely located to each branch. Director Chisaki asked the board if they thought a Library Building Team, on a smaller scale than the Main Library's Building Team, would be appropriate. President Butter, who had been on this team, said it is a good concept because it enables you to bring in standpoints that are lacking in the Board, such as architectural expertise. A disadvantage for the Board is that they might feel a little left out from some of the decision-making. Director Chisaki also stated that the Recreation Commission would have to be involved if expansion was planned for the Bay Farm Island branch, because it would impinge on Leydecker Park.

President Butter asked Director Chisaki if they could sit down with Honora Murphy, who had been the Chair of the Library Building Team, and get some input from her perspective. Board Member Schoenrock suggested a scaled down team but with similar representation. Having members of the public on the team would almost guarantee community enthusiasm.

There is about \$2 million dollars available for branch improvements, plus whatever the Foundation and Friends can contribute. With other projects in town underway, such as the theater and parking garage, it is unsure where the branch improvement would fall in the construction or renovation schedule.

After more discussion had ensued, Director Chisaki suggested that the community meetings should happen first so it could be seen in which direction the public wanted to go, and then make committee or team plans accordingly. The Board agreed with this concept.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

The three full-time positions, Supervising Librarian-Adult Services, Supervising Children's Librarian, and Library Technician are all open right now and the filing period closes on Friday of the current week. There are 5, 6 and 2 applications respectively; however the Human Resources Department speculates that more applications will come in right at the deadline. The applications that have been turned in all seem to meet the minimum qualifications. One of the major duties of the Library Technician position will be coordinate Library volunteers. Part-time Aides, Technicians and Librarians will be hired after the full-time positions are filled to help pick up the additional workload created by the size of the new facility.

Mid-year budget adjustments are due at the end of the month, and the Library will be asking for some significant increases as it is very expensive to live in the new building. Being the closest public restroom to Park Street has taken a toll on the janitorial supply budget dollars.

Bob Haun's last day in the building is the following week, at which time he will be on vacation until the end of the year. He thanks the Board for their cooperation and patience throughout the process and has enjoyed working with them. There are only five items left on the contractor's punch list and they should be resolved very soon.

Staff will have training with the Police Department at the end of the year so they can effectively deal with the behavior problems presented by the public in the Library.

Board Member Mitchell said that the new Library was mentioned in a Library Hotline issue. He inquired about the date for the next Foundation meeting which Director Chisaki confirmed. Mitchell also asked about the Ethics Training the Board was required to take.

ADJOURNMENT

Board President Butter called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Board Member Mitchell so moved, Board Member Krongold seconded the motion, and it was carried by a 5-0 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.