



**Minutes of the
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
May 9, 2007**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order at 7:04 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 May 2007. Accepted.
- B. *Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board meeting of April 11, 2007. Approved.
- C. *Library Services Report for the month of March 2007. Accepted.
- D. *Report from Finance Department reflecting FY 2006-07 Library expenditures (by fund) through April 2007. Accepted.
- E. *Bills for ratification. Approved.

Director Chisaki noted that meeting room use statistics have been added to the Library Services Report. Member Krongold requested that an additional category be included under this section that will show how many times Stafford Meeting Rooms A & B are used in a combined fashion. This will illustrate how many larger groups are utilizing the space. Recording Secretary Merrick will add this statistic to the services reports going forward.

Vice President Belikove questioned whether the figures in the "Reserves" category were accurate as the placed and filled numbers almost matched in size. Director Chisaki indicated that this is a rare occurrence but it does happen. These numbers are computer generated, and are correct as presented.

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

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA (Public Comment)

Director Chisaki introduced Library Technician Aida Merriweather who brought in quilt squares depicting children's stories. The squares will eventually be assembled into three quilts, nine squares each, which will hang on the wall in the children's storytime program room. The board members were quite impressed by the handiwork and look forward to seeing the completed quilts. The official unveiling is planned for the Library's 130th birthday on August 11th.

Director Chisaki then introduced SAB rep, Rebecca Kozak. Ms. Kozak gave a brief report and indicated there had not been much SAB activity. No workshops are being planned because there had not been good enough participation in past offerings. There is also too much overlap with CALTAC workshops and activities. Ms. Kozak is sitting on the committee that reviews the plan of service. There was a public relations campaign in the spring for National Library week. The Public Library Foundation has never been fully funded; Director Chisaki suggested that individual letters might be written for support.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Strategic Planning Consultant RFP (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki has released the RFP to ten different people, and placed it on the library consultant's website. There has been no response so far, but it is early yet. The final date for submitting a proposal is June 1st by 5:00 p.m.

B. Six Month Review of Room Use Policy (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki told the Board about some of the experiences the Library staff have had with the room users. People can tend to be very demanding, and it seems to be a trend that the room users expect staff members to "fetch and carry" for them while they are here. There have been several such unpleasant incidents, and a possible solution would be to charge an attendant fee and have someone here to specifically assist the room users.

Another ongoing issue is that people have been bringing children with them to meetings and they seem to think it is okay to let them run rampant through the Library while they conduct their meeting. There is no adult supervision, and this tends to put staff into that role. People are now being told they either need to keep their children in the room with them, or bring someone else who will watch them.

Director Chisaki gave several other examples of issues experienced with the meeting rooms. President Butter asked Chisaki to make the changes to the room use policy that she thinks would be effective for the Library to be able to better manage the space, and bring them back to the Board for review at the next meeting in June.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Homeless People in the Library (L. Krongold)

Board Member Krongold had visited the Library and was disturbed when she witnessed a woman washing her hair in the restroom sink, and wanted to inquire what the Library policy was in regards to homeless people. Director Chisaki responded that as long as they weren't bothering other patrons, they are left alone. If a problem arises and they won't leave when asked to, the police are called to escort them out. Part of the Library Behavior Policy specifically states that there is no washing clothes or bathing allowed in the restrooms. The Red Cross has been contacted and the SSHRB took our list of homeless services locations to help anyone they come into contact with. This seems to be an issue all around town at public sites now, including Mastick Senior Center. They have actually had fights break out there between the homeless people, and have no choice but to call in the police. The SSHRB has indicated they will start calling around town to find organizations that might be able to assist with the problem.

B. Alameda Free Library Foundation (A. Mitchell)

There is a donor appreciation event going on in the Stafford Meeting Rooms, for which the Foundation invited people who had given \$100 or more to attend. It appears that some of the invitations may have gone astray, as Director Chisaki's family members who donated did not all receive an invitation. There seem to be some issues as to how the Foundation maintains their mailing list that need to be worked out.

The Foundation and Friends had brought in lunches for the staff working on Library Workers Appreciation Day, and also had an all staff picture taken. They purchased an 11 x 14 picture for the staff which now resides in the staff room. Staff members were very pleased and appreciative that they had been recognized this way.

The Foundation had sent Marc Lambert to a grant writing workshop put on by Compass Point who does trainings for non-profits. Mr. Lambert had enjoyed the two sessions he had attended and recommended that others go if possible.

The Foundation is starting to make plans for a celebration of some sort for the Library's 130th birthday which falls on Saturday, August 11th.

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

Friends President Skeen announced that their book sale the previous weekend had grossed \$14,351. A four-person task force has been formed to study the book sales and look at other options. Per an inquiry from President Butter, Ms. Skeen said that the Café book sale has brought in \$112.

An election of new officers will be held at the May Friends meeting later in the month. Kris Matarrese is the new Café volunteer scheduler. The Friends continue to work on signage for the Café, and Ms. Skeen brought a mock up to show of the neon sign that is being fabricated for them.

D. Library Building Watch (M. Merrick)

Recording Secretary Merrick indicated that she is finally feeling her workload lighten a bit, and hopes to get a new issue out later in the month.

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

The Library near the children's section is very loud because parents don't monitor behavior. Staff does their best, but is frequently helping other patrons and can't always step in. Organize DVDs by movie genre such as they do in the video store. This has been looked at but is too general for some movies, so current practice will continue. Other DVD titles were recommended. Longer computer usage time was requested. It is limited to one hour so everyone has a fair chance to use a computer when they visit the Library. Review book ordering process to ensure timely receipt of books. The popularity of the book in question caused it to be temporarily out of stock. When it was finally received, it had to be processed, which all in all caused a 6 month delay on getting it to the shelf. Vice President Belikove inquired about the McNaughton service she used to enjoy where rental collections can be provided for a fee. Director Chisaki said that most public libraries do not use this service anymore because of the cost and also because the books come unprocessed, so more staff time is consumed to get the books ready to circulate. Chisaki will check into the cost and feasibility of the service and report back at the next board meeting.

LIBRARY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Vice President Belikove had received a very nice letter from Nancy Ely of Wood School thanking her for speaking at their Wood Museum Opening Reception. Belikove had been happy to do it and very much enjoyed it as well. President Butter asked about the Board and Commission breakfast coming up on May 31st, and indicated that plans had changed and she would not be able to attend. Recording Secretary Merrick checked with the other Board members to verify that all other responses still remained the same.

Marc Lambert gave a commendation to Mike Dooley for the great work he had been doing as the Library's Volunteer Coordinator. He puts out a newsletter with the latest happenings, volunteer opportunities and statistics on how many volunteers the Library has and the number of hours they have put in. Mr. Lambert said that volunteering here and sitting at the Information Desk makes the Library experience that much more enjoyable.

Board President Butter had a copy of the latest Alameda Magazine and asked if everyone had seen the picture of Director Chisaki and comments about her top 5 favorite things in Alameda. The magazine was passed around the table for all to take a look.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Chisaki started out with her own kudos for Mike Dooley and the really terrific job he had been doing with the volunteers. There is volunteer information and an application out on the webpage, along with the different opportunities available.

The school media teachers, children's and teen coordinators and Director Chisaki will meet the following week to talk about services the Library can provide to the schools, as well as how the schools can help the Library.

The Teen Job Search workshop jointly sponsored by the Library and Recreation and Parks Department held in late April had been a big success. There have been talks about what worked well and what didn't, and there are plans to host another, or possibly two next year.

Board President Butter inquired about the digital photography workshops being held in May, wondering if they would be offered again in later months. Director Chisaki explained that the presenter, Marv Winzenread, uses our meeting room space to hold MAC users training. In exchange for us letting him use the room for free, he will periodically hold special workshops at no cost. If everything goes well with this first offering, there are plans to hold additional workshops down the road.

ADJOURNMENT

President Butter called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. Vice President Belikove so moved, Board Member Krongold seconded the motion, 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.