



**Minutes of the
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD
OCTOBER 11, 2006**

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
Alan Mitchell, Board Member
Leslie Krongold, Board Member

Absent: Mark Schoenrock, 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 October 2006. Accepted.
- B. *Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board meeting of September 13, 2006. Approved.
- C. *Library Services Report for the month of August 2006. Accepted.
- D. *Report from Finance Department reflecting FY 2005-06 Library expenditures (by fund) through September 2006. Accepted.
- E. *Bills for ratification. Approved.

Board Member Mitchell questioned the expenditures in Equipment Acquisition which put the Library \$16,000+ over budget in that account. Staff will re-direct the charges so they appear under the appropriate line item.

President Butter inquired about bottled water services. Library Director Chisaki said the service would not be continued for the Main Library once the move was complete, however, the branches will continue the service due to their aging facilities.

President Butter also asked about an increase in the collection budget. Director Chisaki indicated that the Library had received a 2% increase. She had been hoping for more; however, because of staffing additions, the collection increase was low. Chisaki remarked that when mid-year budget adjustments come around, there will be several areas she will request increases for. A lot of additional expenditures have arisen with the new building that were unexpected. As an example, 6 new phone lines have been added to help monitor security and AED equipment. Another concern will be the late billing received from the Alameda Unified School District for utilities charges. The Library will still be liable for several months' worth of charges later this year, perhaps into next year, depending on how the billing cycle works out. The recent payment of \$50,000 to AUSD for space rental will carry us through the month of November; no further charges to this account are expected.

Board Member Mitchell mentioned an article he had read about a bomb planted at a library in Salt Lake City. Mitchell inquired as to whether we would have security monitoring equipment in the new library. Director Chisaki responded in the affirmative – there will be video cameras strategically placed around the building, and will show on monitors at the Circulation Desk. The cameras are not recorders, however.

President Butter wanted to know how statistics would be calculated going forward due to the changes occurring. Supervising Librarian David Hall is currently looking into how numbers will be extracted from our new systems.

President Butter asked about a payment that had been made to Tapes Unlimited, and was billed to janitorial supplies. Recording Secretary Merrick explained that Tapes Unlimited is the dba name for Alameda Office Supply. The City purchases both office and janitorial supplies from this entity on a regular basis. Alameda Office Supply gives a 30% discount to the City of Alameda.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Materials Security and Inventory System – Update (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki stated that the tagging process continues and is nearing completion. The RFID gates arrived and have been installed. They were tested then de-mounted for safety purposes. With all the contractors, equipment and opening day collection movement going through the area, there was the real possibility of damage to the gates. The gates are also installed at the branches, but won't be operational until the Main goes live. The project is moving forward very well.

B. Meeting Room Use Policy – Final Review (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki sent out the room use policy in the board packet once again as the City Attorney's office made some language changes and additions. President Butter asked about groups setting up and putting away chairs, etc. for their meetings. Director Chisaki explained that depending on how large the group is might determine whether or not we would require them to do this. Mostly it would be for groups that have some very specific idea on how they want things set-up.

Board Member Mitchell asked about item 13 regarding advertising or selling of products or services being prohibited. Director Chisaki explained that for instance, if you were giving a lecture and wanted to sell your book to a participant that would be okay. However, you could not leave any books, business cards, etc. behind in the conference room – all items must be cleared away when leaving the room.

Board Member Krongold made an inquiry about the rooms that are non-reservable (the small study rooms). If you are using one of these rooms and you want it for a longer period, you could stay in there as long as nobody else wants to use the room. The Reference Desk will be in charge of the sign-ups for these rooms.

Board Member Butter asked about item 9 regarding decoration restrictions in the conference rooms. The language comes straight from Park & Recreation's room use policy. The language will be revised slightly to direct meeting room patrons to use push pins on the tackable wall surfaces, and not use other wall surfaces.

President Butter asked for a motion to accept the Meeting Room Use Policy with changes. Board Member Mitchell so moved, Board Member Krongold seconded, and the motion was carried by a 4-0 vote.

President Butter asked Director Chisaki to provide an update at the January 2007 Board Meeting and note any problems that have been encountered with meeting room use. In six months, the Board will re-review the policy and make any necessary changes.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Branch Library Report (A. Benzie-Youssef)

Supervising Branch Librarian Arta Benzie-Youssef was in attendance to give the Board an update on how the branches were coping during the closure of the Main Library. Benzie-Youssef first thanked the Board for inviting her to the meeting. She went on reminding the Board of the two-week Main Library closure earlier in the year when the RFID tagging process was underway. This was a good "trial run" for the branches to see how they would do when the lengthier Main closure occurred.

During the March closure, circulation at the West End Branch increased by almost 2,500 items over the same period last year, and at Bay Farm Island, over 1,300 items. Hours had not been extended, and it was quite rainy which tends to depress circulation. During the current Main closure, West End hours were extended to include Sundays, 1:00-5:00, and Bay Farm is open on Fridays, 9:30-5:30. All Main Library reserves are being picked up at the West End, and all Main check-ins are being handled there as well.

Some reference items are now at the West End - the Reference Department is sorely missed. Lots of questions on local history, etc. are difficult to answer without them.

At the heart of the operation now are the Library Aides. They make sure everything gets back on the shelves quickly, and with increased circulation there is a lot more to this. The Aides have also been doing a great job at keeping the shelves in order, and Benzie-Youssef is very pleased with this.

The biggest challenge for the branches is the lack of phones. More specifically, with the Main being unreachable, it is very difficult to help with delinquent collections, obituaries, homebound items, etc.

The branches will pick up some extra staff now to help with the increased demand for services. Between the two branches, there is a Library open 7 days a week. Benzie-Youssef suspects that after the new Main opens, it will be very quiet at the branches, as everyone is so excited about the new building opening.

B. Alameda Free Library Foundation (A. Mitchell)

Board Member Mitchell was very disappointed that there were not firmer plans in place for the Gala. It was as if the Foundation was still trying to figure out what to do. Director Chisaki said that is usually how the meetings go. They are now meeting every week, and at last weeks meeting they were still going sideways. Part of the problem is there is no set agenda, and when they get off the subject being discussed, they don't come back to it.

The Foundation is halfway to their goal of selling 300 tickets. Now that the event is drawing closer, ticket sales are picking up. Letters encouraging attendance have gone out to Board and Building Team Members, Department Heads and Council Members. No comps are being offered, so everyone pays their own way. The Friday edition of the Alameda Journal is supposed to have an ad on the Gala and information on how to purchase tickets.

The banner advertising the Gala, Grand Opening and Family Day events will go up over Central the last two weeks of October. The supplement for the opening will

come out on October 20th. The invitations for the Grand Opening still aren't quite done, however. The graphic designer has put together some really nice drafts, but the invitations aren't at the printer yet. Foundation members will go into the Library right after the docent training on October 24th and put the shelf tags in place.

There have been donations of water, some wines and hors d'oeuvres from local restaurants for the Gala. There will be music in four different areas in the building. The architect, Tom Hacker, will be attending and he may be asked to speak. Yuki Nagase, artist of the *Oracle of the Tree* behind the circulation desk, and the *Cadence of the Water* limestone medallions on the outside of the building, will be in attendance as well.

All the posters advertising the Gala have been distributed around town. There are plenty of bookmarks and pamphlets still available, which won't be any good after the Gala event.

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

Friends President Molly Skeen was not in attendance for the meeting, so Director Chisaki spoke in her place. The book sale the previous weekend at the O'Club grossed \$13,000. \$8,000 came in on Friday night alone. It was a very nice turnout. There were 100 boxes of children's books because two elementary schools weeded their collections. The Friends beautiful new book bags were on sale as well.

D. Library Building Watch (M. Merrick)

Recording Secretary reported that because of having no office equipment to speak of due to the move, it wasn't possible to release an issue of the Library Building Watch. Merrick is hopeful, however, of getting one more issue out prior to the Gala and Grand Opening events, to make them fresh in people's minds.

Board Member Krongold suggested having something visible at the Gala so people could sign up to receive the newsletter. Perhaps people could just drop a business card if they were interested. Having some copies of previous issues displayed was also suggested.

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

Director Chisaki indicated that there were no speak-outs this month from either the branches or the Main Library prior to it closing.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA (Public Comment)

Li Volin was in the audience and mentioned that she went to the Independent Booksellers Association the prior weekend for an author signing. She brought along the new Friends book bag and it was decided that it rated number two from the assortment that day. The only bag scoring higher had pockets for a cell phone and water bottle on the outside.

LIBRARY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

President Butter commented that she received information on *The Hummingbird's Daughter* because she was on the San Francisco Friends group mailing list. There was a nice pamphlet describing how book clubs could participate, discussion questions, etc. Director Chisaki said the "One Book Program" is definitely something she would like to see happen at the Alameda Free Library as well. There are generally events all year long relating to the book that's being promoted, such as themed and cultural programs, etc. The Friends and Foundation have already expressed their interest in assisting with this endeavor. President Butter said the Board would also be interested in participating in any way they could.

President Butter requested that "Selection of Art for the New Library" be put on the agenda for the November meeting.

Board Member Mitchell mentioned one library that had a swashbuckling theme for their readers and it was very well received, probably due to the Pirates of the Caribbean movie coming out at the time.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Chisaki spoke about how well the building was coming along. It is the third day of the collection move, so books can now be seen through the front window. The Library has not experienced any problems with the moving company, Doubleday. Circulation Supervisor Laura Chaquette is the lead for the move, and deserves a lot of the credit for how smoothly things are going. The staff furniture was delayed, which delays installation of computers and phones. The furniture did arrive and is being installed now. Everything seems to be right on schedule.

The invitations have not been delivered to the printer yet as the speaker list is still being finalized. Director Chisaki was uncertain if she should speak herself. The board encouraged Chisaki to do so, perhaps at the end of the program to thank everyone for coming out. Board Member Krongold said that it might be the first time the public in general would see her, so she might want people to know who she is.

Board President Butter inquired if all board members would be attending the Grand Opening ceremony. The members present responded in the affirmative, and Director Chisaki said that Member Schoenrock, who was absent, would be there as well.

ADJOURNMENT

Board President Butter called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Board Member Mitchell so moved, Board Member Krongold seconded the motion, and it was carried by a 3-0 vote. (Vice President Belikove left the meeting at 8:02 p.m.)

The next meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board will be held in the new Main Library.

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.