



**Minutes of the  
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2011**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Catherine Atkin President  
Nancy Lewis Vice President  
Suzanne Whyte, Board Member (6:08 pm)  
Michael Hartigan, Board Member  
Gail Wetzork, Board Member

Staff: Jane Chisaki, Library Director  
Christina Baines, Recording Secretary

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

An asterisk indicates items so accepted or approved on the Consent Calendar

- A. \*Report from the Library Director Highlighting Activities for the Month of July/August 2011.
- B. \*Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board Meeting of July 13, 2011.
- C. \*Library Services Reports for the Month of June & July 2011.
- D. \*Financial Report Reflecting FY10 Expenditures by Fund for July/August 2011.
- E. \*Bills for Ratification for the Month of July/August 2011.

President Atkin called for questions on the consent calendar, there being none she asked for a motion to accept the items as presented. Board Member Wetzork so moved; Member Hartigan seconded the motion which was carried by a 4-0 vote.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Neighborhood Library Improvement Project (G. Wetzork) (NLIP) Director Chisaki stated that as indicated in her Board letter this is basically a done project, will pattern the final accounting in City format, and will be completed when the Finance Accountant returns next week and information will then be included the

October packet. Member Wetzork indicated that his wife had visited the Library and was very pleased, but the automatic check outs threw her, but she likes it. Director Chisaki expressed her gratitude for Mrs. Wetzork's favorable comments.

Member Wetzork followed up with further questions on the status of the lights at the West End Branch. Director Chisaki indicated the custodian and maintenance assistant have done as much as they can a formal maintenance request in; it is not high on the priority list

Board Member Suzanne Whyte arrives at 6:08PM; apologizes for being late

- A. Update on Status of State Funding (J. Chisaki) Director Chisaki reports anticipate no money coming from the state. The Library will continue to submit our reports for the sake of continuity. One concern is Alameda Reads. The Friends will be voting to fund 10K in the current fiscal year and have requested that the Library put the \$10,000 request for Alameda Reads in the annual funding request. The Librarians will be submitting their request for program funding at the next Friends meeting. The Foundation will donate \$10,000 to Alameda Reads. Alameda Reads operating budget is just under \$20,000, with the City paying for two part-time staff. Director Chisaki assumed, since the Foundation gives unrestricted money, those funds would be earmarked for Alameda Reads. One of the Foundation Board members would like the Foundation to consider funding Alameda Reads separate from the unrestricted funds that they are already providing. They are fully behind funding Alameda Reads. It will be one of their battle cries going into the fund raising mode for the concerts. The Foundation is doing these fund raising events to fund the literacy program, to fund technology, and to help refund our collection budget.

David Hall may not receive the balance of \$19K grant from the State. Our Library cooperative also receives some funds and they are okay with continuing minimum services best they can from reserves and membership fees.

Vice President Lewis said thank goodness for the Friends.

President Atkin requested that Kevin Minney send the Boards' appreciation to the Friends

## NEW BUSINESS

- A. Review of Library Strategic Plan (C. Atkin). President Atkin requested of the Board consider holding over any unfinished discussions on this item until the November meeting, and that due to her and Vice President Lewis' absence in October that Board Member Hartigan Act as Chair for the October Library Board Meeting. Member Hartigan agreed. President Atkin pointed out the Website was also part of the Strategic Plan and asked Director Chisaki if she would like to have it discussed as a stand alone item. Director Chisaki explained the City guidelines of the city based

website, and also mentioned to the Board that currently a new media policy is being discussed. The Board indicated they would like to have input on the media policy and the director indicated she would pass that information on.

Member Hartigan commented that the strategic plan is something we are half way through and would like to see something from library staff indicating what the objectives are and for staff to come back with this is where we are meeting they objectives and this is where we are not, so the Board can look at them and have something to check off. The strategic plan is not something we are going to be able to just look at - it's not just a one-, two- or three-meeting process, it is something that is ongoing, we are half way through it, it is ongoing, the transition of our next major project. We need to see our objectives and see where we need to go from here.

President Atkin agrees about the Strategic Plan and getting the benchmarks and the small number of things and in what order. Member Hartigan suggested a breakout group to study items. Member Wetzork agreed with Member Hartigan.

Member Hartigan left at 6:40pm

President Atkin requested following Member Hartigan's suggestion for goals and objectives with a list of items that could be checked off. Something simple so the Board can see where we are. At the same time, a suggestion would be a subcommittee. The Board feels they need to ask the City to allow the Library to change the website.

Member Whyte commented that the web designers may not realize how much of a resource to the community the Library website is and how inaccessible it has become.

Comment from the Public in Attendance, suggested Board Members think of the website not as a webpage, but as a fourth branch of the Library. Library facilities with reduced hours, we cannot serve you unless you go to our fourth facility, the website.

Another Public comment, "It's a membership site, this is what we offer and this is how we do it. They pay for us why can't they use us. We provide services to our members and we are not able to do that with this website."

President Atkin: The Library Board has a range of issues regarding the website that they would like to sit down and discuss with the Deputy City Manager including limited resources, reduced hours, and limited service to Alameda residents. She asked if Director Chisaki needed a subcommittee of the Board at this point and Director said no, she needed to meet with staff and come back to the Board.

Director Chisaki will update her copy of the Strategic Plan report and add to it to indicate where the Library is, and will add comments where appropriate on each category.

President Atkin: Requested the Strategic Plan be ready by the November meeting. Website information would be presented at the October meeting and the Strategic Plan information at the November meeting.

B. Alameda Free Library Foundation (J. Chisaki)

The Foundation is focused on selling concert tickets, they can be purchased individually/or a series. More has been sold than expected. After the first concert it will be individual sales only. Now that the Foundation has a full Board they have split into work groups, they have a fund raising committee and a communications committee. The Board hopes to raise \$50K by the end of 2012.

C. Friends of the Alameda Free Library (K. Minney)

Member Wetzork left at 7:05PM

Mr. Minney had nothing to report other than the Book Sale coming up.

Director Chisaki reported the Friends were looking for volunteers for the book sale, and they are undertaking a recipe book project and are looking for recipes as a fund raising project.

D. Patron Suggestions/Comments (Speak-Outs) and Library Director's Response

1. Would appreciate a beginner's class on a Mac computer; and a regular forum on current events with guest speakers. Library's response: do not have Mac equipment but can attend Mac users group offered at the Library; and due to budget cuts we do not have staff to offer such programs.
2. Can you please provide Chinese newspapers, six of which were written in Chinese on the request form. Library's response: explained that the budget had been reduced and we could not expand the collection at this time. However, we do already subscribe to *World Journal*.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA (Public Comment)

Li Volin stated that she had been approached by others about the possibility of leaving the back patio door open to the Café during the morning hours so that patrons waiting for the library to open could wait there until the library opens.

Director Chisaki explained that the Café Committee made an informed decision and chose not to open the Café during these hours because the folks who came would read the paper and bring their own coffee. The Café was making coffee and the volunteer was just standing there, they were not making any money. The Café is open Monday mornings.

Mr. Minney asked about the sidewalk cleaning. Director Chisaki stated she has information about this under the Director's Comments.

#### LIBRARY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

None.

#### DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Chisaki: Following up on the Board's direction from July to obtain estimates on cleaning the sidewalks, the bid is from the Library cleaning service expert is also a certified cleaner and follows all the appropriate guidelines required by the City, to pressure wash completely around the building once a month for \$875. The recommendation is to clean now, see how long it takes to get dirty again and then schedule a second cleaning. The agreement has been signed and the first cleaning should have happened by our next meeting.

President Atkin will attend and Member Whyte will try to attend the Energy Kiosk dedication on October 6, 2011.

Personnel Announcements:

Library Technician Aida Merriweather announced her retirement effective October 11, 2011.

The Library's Birthday was discussed and is in the tentative planning stage.

#### ADJOURNMENT

President Atkin adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Chisaki, Library Director and  
Secretary to the Alameda Free Library Board