

FRIENDS OF THE PALO ALTO LIBRARY
MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 10, 2014 FOPAL Annex

1. Call to order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by President Peter Dehlinger.

Present: Tom Clark, Nancy Cohen, Peter Dehlinger, Gretchen Emmons, Charlotte Epstein, Nigel Jones, Ann Justice, Gerry Masteller, Frank McConnell, Karen Neier, Jim Schmidt, Martha Schmidt, Steven Staiger, Ed Walker

Absent: None

Guests: Monique le Conge, Janette Herceg, Tina Kass, Suzanne Brown Little, Bob Moss

2. Agenda Approval

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. November board minutes

The November minutes were approved.

4. Library Director's Report - Monique le Conge

The gate count for the Mitchell Park opening was 5500 which exceeded the goal of 5000. There were people everywhere and people were still trying to come in at the closing hour of 5 PM. 240 library cards were issued. Many people did not know about the soft opening but still during the period of the soft opening 30,000 people and 50,000 items were counted. Currently there are 100,000 items at MP but MP is constantly getting new books and books are coming out of storage. Everyone was thrilled with the reception particularly kids and teenagers.

Monique remarked that the staff made it all look easy but they have had extensive training including new ways of thinking about customer service.

There was a question about the requirements for a library card. Monique answered that anyone who lives in the state of California is eligible for a Palo Alto library card. The library can be flexible with these requirements in special circumstances such as for foreign exchange students.

There was a question regarding the litigation for MP. Monique answered that the CEO of Flintco has been in discussion with the city.

There was a question regarding the library budget. Monique answered that there will be three new positions in January but otherwise the budget has remained flat. Hours will not be increased under a flat budget but the staff is looking into the issue. Lots of people have commented that there should be more hours with the new libraries. Palo Alto has a budget of \$7 million for 5 libraries which is on the low side. Cuts were made in 2010 as part of the city wide cuts.

There was a question for Bob Moss about the LAC. The LAC does lobby for more money for hours and for increases in the collection. Bob thinks that the new council will be more receptive to the needs of the library especially when the council sees the positive response to the new libraries.

Monique commented that the libraries had a combined \$1.5 million from the Council, the Palo Alto Library Foundation, and FOPAL for new books. Some of that has been spent but there will still be a significant amount for new books at Rinconada. All of it will be spent by July 1 2015.

Staff will start moving into Rinconada in late December. Temporary Main will close around January 7 then there will be some days to check that everything is working before the soft opening. The hard opening is scheduled for Saturday February 14, 2015 and the opening will include events for the other community partners in the area.

5. President's Report: Recognition of Retiring Board Members

Peter continued the tradition started by Tom Wyman of presenting certificates of appreciation to retiring board members who this year are Gretchen Emmons, Frank McConnell, and Ed Walker.

6. Reports of officers/committees

6.1 Treasurer - Karen Neier

The annual appeal has brought in \$4795 so far and is on track with last year. The MP FOPAL store has brought in \$867 for the month.

Total book sales income for November was \$27,391. Total book sale expense was \$18,847.24 leaving a net book sale income of \$8,544.75. Other income was

\$5,754.01 and other expenses were \$367.79 for a net total income without grants of \$13,930.97.

6.2 Book Sale - Nancy Cohen/Janette Herceg

Janette participated in an Our Town Grant meeting focused on making Cubberley a cultural center where people will linger. One suggestion is to have an evening art/cultural crawl where the public would be encouraged to attend a variety of programs in one evening. The Bargain Room might remain open for such an event. FOPAL will be open to collaborating with a variety of groups.

FOPAL had great visibility at the MP opening. FOPAL had a community table and handed out lots of material. Many people were not aware of our sales and some wondered if the FOPAL store at MP meant that we were not having book sales anymore. The point was made that the best FOPAL books will still be found at the sale or online for HV books. The suggestion was made that the retiring board members each receive one of the 10 remaining FOPAL T-shirts.

There are now two good candidates interested in the position of assistant treasurer - Diane Cohen and Toby Burrin. There was a discussion on how to divide the work between two people. The consensus was that we accept both of them and Karen can work out the exact details of the job division in the future.

FOPAL has a co-promotion with Transition Palo Alto in H6 from 1 to 3 PM on Sunday December 14. Transition runs Share Fairs where people can exchange craft materials and other items.

Stanford Credit Union contacted Karen to request that their flyers be handed out at our sales. If they provide the flyers, we will hand them out.

The Section Managers and Sorters meetings will be held at MP next year.

There was a question regarding the possibility of a computer or scanner that could be used near the sections to avoid moving books from the section to the sorting room and back again. The Book Sale committee will look into this and report back to the board.

FOPAL received 80+ boxes of children's books from a teacher who used them in her classes. We will manage these for a sale in H1 in January or February. Already 3 books have been listed online for over \$100. There may be appropriate books for the MP FOPAL store in these boxes.

Suzanne commented that the MP store is going very well. The challenge will be how to keep good books there. The store will provide income and be a good base from which to publicize the sales and to raise awareness of FOPAL.

There was a question regarding the number of people that come to the sales. Nigel answered that he counts the number of receipts in the Main Room which average out to about 560 receipts a month. This count could be used as a very rough approximation of the number of attendees at the sales. At the moment there is no similar count for the Children's Room or the Bargain Room. It would be good to have an accurate count to use as a talking point to the city to indicate that sales are an important community event that is attended by X number of people a month. There was a discussion of how to get a good count of how many people attend. Some people go to all rooms and some might only go to one room.

There was a question regarding how the tabs are handled in the Children's Room. Maybe the tabs could provide a basis for counting people. Janette will look into this and discuss at the Book Sale meeting. The goal should be a reasonably accurate count of the number of people at the sale.

6.3 Lease Agreements - Karen, Ed, Nancy

The lease cost for the Annex modular unit is going up 35% a month. There was some discussion that the new cost will still be below market rate so the recommendation from the Finance Committee is that the board approve the new rates.

The new leases on the Annex and the Main Room will both expire in November 2019. The 5 year lease was selected on the assumption that we do not know what the city is going to do with the Cubberley property. The new rent is 56 cents per square foot which is very inexpensive. The two ground leases are free but the city could renegotiate. There was a question about what we would do if we lost the Cubberley space. There were comments that we would be unlikely to find another space that would be affordable.

The board passed the motion that we accept the Mobile Modular changes to the leases with both leases expiring in November 2019. The details were provided to the board in a spreadsheet.

There was a comment that the Fund for the Future was setup to handle moving expenses but since it is unlikely that we could find another place, we should consider this as a transitional fund. We could use these funds to pay the exit fees from the modulars which might amount to a \$30,000 charge for disassembling and moving.

7. Update on Wyman Plaque at the MP Library - Steve

Steve has contacted Tom Wyman's son who is enthusiastic about helping with the wording for the plaque. There was a suggestion that Steve discuss with Tom Wyman Jr. if the Wyman funds be directed toward any particular subject areas.

8. Update on Rotary Club Grant Proposal - Nigel

FOPAL was not selected for a Rotary Club Grant. There was significant competition with 66 entries. Nigel considers that this has been an educational process and that we should learn more and enter every year.

Bill Johnson of the PA Weekly invited us to bid on the Holiday Fund which supports non-profits focused on children.

Nigel suggested that we look at other grant opportunities

9. Update on place and agenda for Board Retreat - Peter, Tina

The Board Retreat will take place on Wednesday January 14, 2015 in the MP Community Room. We have the room from 9AM to 2PM but the meeting will start at 10AM and there will be lunch possibly catered by Ada's Cafe. Peter is the point of contact for the room reservation.

There was a question regarding the process of room rentals for the libraries. Monique replied that the libraries uses LiquidSpace which is working well.

The agenda will include a presentation by Jerry Stone on the future of books sales. After his presentation we will have time to discuss his remarks and any ideas we have for what comes after or in addition to the books sales.

10. Other

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte Epstein
Secretary

