

FRIENDS OF THE PALO ALTO LIBRARY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 13, 2015 FOPAL Annex

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 AM by President Peter Dehlinger.

2. Roll Call

Present: Tom Clark, Nancy Cohen, Peter Dehlinger, Charlotte Epstein, Nigel Jones, Tina Kass, Suzanne Brown Little, Gerry Masteller, Karen Neier, Martha Schmidt, Steven Staiger

Absent: Ann Justice, Jim Schmidt

Guests: Monique le Conge, Bob Moss

3. Agenda Approval

There are some requested changes to the agenda. One item has already been resolved by the Book Sale Committee, the mission statement discussion can be delayed until after the fund raising discussion and the Nominating Committee discussion is postponed.

3. Minutes of April meeting

The April minutes were approved as presented.

4. Library Director's Report - Monique

The library has begun the budgeting process for the next fiscal year with a presentation to the Budgeting Committee. New council members seem supportive of the request to substantially increase hours at Rinconada and Mitchell Park. One goal is to have more predictable hours. Children's will be open 7 days a week. There will be a 14% increase in total hours for 260 hours across 5 locations. This will be 90 more accessible hours than libraries for our closest cities. The library is recommending adding 14% to staff. Palo Alto gets significant value from its staff as the library system has 5 branches some of which are open 7 days a week.

There was a question concerning the possibility of using volunteers in the libraries as a way to supplement staff. Monique replied that volunteers can be used for extra activities but cannot do anything that the staff is contracted to do. Volunteers help with tech tutoring and special events. Volunteers cannot be used in positions that would require database access due to privacy

concerns. Volunteers are used to help with shelving and putting books on the Hold shelves. There has been an effort this last year to use teen volunteers to help plan teen programming and advise on collections. There are plans to change the organizational structure so there can be more robust volunteer opportunities including expanding the home outreach program.

Rinconada needs a minimum of 3 full time staff members when it is open and Mitchell Park needs a minimum of 4-5 staff members to provide the most basic services. There are about 435 patron visits at day at Rinconada and close to 1500-1700 at Mitchell Park. The peak time for checkout is around 4 PM.

There was a question as to whether the number of patrons at Rinconada is declining. Monique would need to look at pre-construction usage numbers but her impression is that the numbers have been tending down.

There was a question regarding the possibility for the return of drive-by book drops. There are no current plans to replace them. There is always the problem of getting the books inside from the book drop. There were many design decisions related to reducing the staff effort required to get books back on the shelves and emptying the drive-by book drops would increase the staff effort devoted to shelving.

5. LAC Report - Bob Moss

The LAC requested more money and more staff at the meeting last month. Starting in August the libraries will stay open later which has been a major request from the public. The LAC is considering the ways that libraries should be functioning today. Libraries have added conference rooms, ebooks and more hours. LAC is trying to be on top of the way people use the libraries and to provide the materials that people want.

6. Reports of officers/committees

6.1 Treasurer's Report

Total book sale income for April was \$24,831.03 and other income was \$1,796.28 for a total gross income for April of \$26,627.31. Total book sale expense was \$16,374.28. Net Total Income w/o Grants was \$9,653.03.

The grant for the Lease Collection is now spent. There will be more grant requests for Collection replacement.

Some of the program grant money has not been spent due to the delayed openings of the libraries. Now that the libraries are all open, there will be more staff available to produce programs.

There was a question regarding the procedure for grant requests for next year. Karen has not yet met with library staff. In the past the staff has made up requests which are then tailored to what is allocated by FOPAL. An alternative would be that FOPAL receives all the staff requests and then FOPAL makes the grant decisions. Monique and Karen will meet to discuss grant priorities.

There was a question regarding the purchase of new classical and jazz CDs. Monique replied that the borrowing of CDs is down considerably so limited purchases are being made. A comment was made that the down turn in the borrowing of CDs might be the result of the lack of new CDs. Monique will look into this.

6.2 Book Sale report - Suzanne Brown Little

FOPAL's Mitchell Park store took in over \$1000 in April.

Book sale receipts have been down for the past two months.

There was a comment from a cashier that the number of receipts seems to have stayed the same but that the receipt totals are down.

There was a comment that donation quality is down. Tom Clark indicated that we have two large donations scheduled for pickup.

There was a proposal that there be a section in the main room to offer higher value books in the range of \$10-20. Selling them in the main room would save the time and effort of listing.

There was a question about whether the number of dealers has declined. A suggestions was made that we ask people who are standing in line for tickets if they are buying for resale and if they drove more than 10 miles to the sale. This may be tried at the next sale.

Karen reported that FOPAL allowed the use of credit cards for this sale. Jerry was running the Saturday sale so he could offer his technology expertise for this first time trial. Comments from buyers were very positive. There were 16 Paypal transactions on Saturday for \$1264.50 and 10 on Sunday for \$285.50. With the 2.7% fee - \$41.85 - our net was \$1508.15. Karen will offer the credit cards again for the next sale. Cashiers will total the books then send the customer to the credit card person. Using credit cards leaves us less cash on hand which is safer and reduces the time required to add up cash after the sale.

The consensus of the board was that offering credit cards is a good idea.

The board was in Executive Session from 10:25 AM to 10:30 AM.

Suzanne will send out a list of the goals for FOPAL employees to all board members.

There was a discussion about the possibility of making the Members Only sale a quarterly event rather than a semi-annual event. There needs to be prepared lists of members for each event. Having these lists prepared at Kinkos costs \$60-100 but Martha will look into less expensive copying. It was decided that the summer Member Sale would be in July and not June because there are many other June events.

There was a suggestions that more copies of the current issue of the Foreword with its story about donations and the processing of these donations be printed to be made available in places such as the MP store.

The discussion about new board members was postponed because Jim was not in attendance at the meeting. Tina will contact him by email to find out the status of the nominating process.

We still need an Assistant Treasurer who will not be a board member and we also need to plan for a replacement for the Treasurer.

7. Policy on what we sell and/or don't want to sell - Suzanne

This issue has been resolved prior to the meeting.

8. Meeting place for future board meetings - Suzanne

There was the suggestion that we consider meeting in one of the conference rooms at any of the libraries. This would help our relationship with the libraries and the library rooms are more pleasant spaces than the Annex. As the libraries don't open until 10, the agenda could be modified so that Janette would come early then leave for work. Most board members were willing to try for a change in time and location. Tina will contact Monique about the availability of rooms for our meetings.

9. Nominating Committee Update - Jim Schmidt

Jim was not in attendance at the meeting.

10. Raising money for targeted library projects by on-line or other fundraising efforts - Peter

As it seems that book sales are declining we need to consider other ways to raise funds. PALF is the model for successful fund raising based on a clear mission statement, clear goals and sophisticated fund raising.

We could consider other ways such as GoFundMe but the consensus was that the library staff would do the work to develop the program that needs funding and then that we could support that program through GoFundMe. Peter will call Eric Howard to find out if he has any projects in mind.

11. Mission Statement

This discussion has been postponed.

12. Other

No other business.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte Epstein
Secretary