

FRIENDS OF THE PALO ALTO LIBRARY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

DECEMBER 11 2013

The meeting was called to order by President Peter Dehlinger in the FOPAL Annex at 9:04AM.

1. Roll Call

Present: Nancy Cohen, Peter Dehlinger, Gretchen Emmons, Charlotte Epstein, Ann Justice, Gerry Masteller, Frank McConnell, Jim Schmidt, Martha Schmidt, Steven Staiger, Ed Walker, Tisa Abshire Walker, Tom Wyman

Absent: Tom Clark, Gene O'Sullivan, Camille Sarrant

Guests: Verna Graham, Janette Herceg, Nigel Jones, Monique le Conge, Karen Neier.

2. Agenda approval

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. Approval of the November minutes

The minutes of the November board meeting were approved as presented.

4. Library Director's report - Monique le Conge

Monique told us that the new assistant director, Eric Howard, will bring his experience with public service in New York in supervising the Palo Alto branches and working with programs for children and adults.

Flintco, the Mitchell Park contractor, has received a letter of default with items to fix at Mitchell Park by December 14. The City Council will discuss the next step with respect to Flintco at their meeting on Monday December 15. The aim for full occupancy is early in 2014.

Main Library construction is on time and on budget with an expected opening at the end of 2014.

Circulation has remained steady over the last year in spite of smaller spaces.

Brew University is returning this month. This was a very popular program in the summer.

5. LAC Report - Bob Moss

Bob Moss was not present at the meeting.

6. President's Report

Peter brought up the issue of the annual retreat with the intent to set the direction for the agenda now. The retreat has usually been held in lieu of the January meeting which in 2014 would be Wednesday January 8. Last year's agenda concerned the declining revenue. His thought is that this year we take five components of the monthly revenue and look at those areas for improvement. Board members will take ownership of these areas and be prepared to discuss at the retreat.

The areas are:

- monthly book sale revenue with Nancy and Ed
- high value books with Nancy as head of book sale committee
- monitoring and controlling costs with Tom Wyman
- membership, website, and Foreword with Verna, Ann and Peter
- corporate sponsorship with Nigel

Nancy volunteered her home for the retreat on Wednesday January 8 at 9AM. There will be a catered lunch after the meeting.

7. Reports of officers/committees

7.1 Treasurer - Ed Walker

Total book sales income for November was \$22,304.51. Total book sale expenses were \$15,188.98, leaving a net book sale income of \$7,115.55. Total other income was \$8,904.07 and other expenses were \$0 for a net total income without grants of \$16,019.62.

Karen Neier now has a dedicated computer bought by FOPAL that will contain all necessary programs for her work as treasurer.

7.2 Book Sale Committee- Nancy Cohen/Janette Herceg

The committee is encouraging more book lookup by section managers. Dick Grote ran a training session last month for new section managers for about 20 people. A few people are interested in being assistant managers to help with lookup.

The December book sale newsletter will feature a column about book pricing indicating that we are moving closer to 50% of the Amazon price rather than 30%. The newsletter will also indicate that outside food and drink will no longer be allowed in the room to prevent damage to our books.

The Members Early Sale on Saturday December 14 will feature artisan roasted coffee. There was a question on the expected number of life members who will be there from 9-10AM. The answer was that over the past two years the maximum number has been about 13 people.

There will be additional maps of our locations with respect to Cubberley Center on our website plus floor diagrams for rooms.

Safety folks will walk through in January to check the fire extinguishers, their location and appropriate signage.

Marcia Goodman, who is responsible for the original box hang tags, has made some changes to the sorting room. There is now a high value cart with boxes providing better storage for high value items, the mailboxes now occupy the previous high value shelves and ephemera has a better location. There is also a new box for Romance and the Psychology section has split into Psychology Self Help and Psychology Professional.

There was a question regarding whether there are enough computers for lookup. Mornings and lunch hours are usually not crowded but the computers are often in demand in the afternoon between 2-4PM.

8. Other business

8.1 Resolution on bank signatures - Ed Walker

As we change officers starting on January 1 2014, we need to change signature cards at the banks. The banks want to see the resolution regarding approved signers in the minutes.

The board approved the following motion - "Be it resolved that effective January 1, 2014, Peter Dehlinger, President, Karen Neier, Treasurer, and Camille Sorrant, Assistant Treasurer be the approved signers individually and/or

collectively with all privileges on all financial accounts belonging to the Friends of the Palo Alto Public Library. All other signers currently on the accounts are to be removed.”

8.2 Discussion/Resolution on purchasing HV software - Nancy Cohen

Nancy sent her report on FOPAL's visit to the SF Friends High Value area to the board prior to this meeting. SF Friends has used Seller Engine software for 5 years for their Amazon sales and they are very satisfied with it. It allows repricing and produces inventory tags. The consensus of those who made the visit is that Seller Engine would be very useful for FOPAL. We would need a transition time to do a physical inventory and possibly shut down sales for a week. Jerry Stone and Dick Grote would do a trial run before the complete turnover to Seller Engine.

There was a question about whether there has been a cost benefit analysis of Seller Engine. One answer to that would be to reevaluate after a year. One benefit is that it will be easier to find books which will be less frustrating for volunteers.

After some discussion there was a resolution presented that we acquire Seller Engine followed by an amendment to the original resolution.

The board approved the following amendment: The Board will formally review Seller Engine after a year and there will be a cap of \$1000 for incidental expenses.

The board approved the following resolution including the preceding amendment: Resolved, that after a successful trial by one or two people working in the high value FOPAL area, the Board authorizes acquisition of Seller Engine software for the management of high value books on Amazon at a cost of \$50 a month plus incidental start up expenses. The Board will formally review Seller Engine after a year and there will be a cap of \$1000 for incidental expenses.

8.3 Set time and place for Annual Retreat in January

The Annual Retreat will be held Wednesday January 8, 2014 at 9AM at Nancy's house. There will be a catered lunch and the meeting will end by 2PM.

8.4 Website - Ann Justice

Ann will send a link to the test site and encourages everyone to test it as much as possible. The goal is to launch the new site early in 2014. Frank has established us on a new host provider which provides free hosting to 501(c)3 organizations. Janette mentioned that we have a new volunteer who will be our webmaster.

There was a question of where donations should go. All donations and membership information must go to the membership chair and all money information must go to the treasurer.

8.5 Retiring board members

Peter thanked retiring board members for their work on the board.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:36 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte Epstein
Secretary