

APPROVED

MINUTES

Library Advisory Commission (LAC)

September 25, 2008

Council Conference Room

250 Hamilton Avenue

7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Sanford Forte (Vice Chair), Leonardo Hochberg, Raj Mashruwala, Valerie Stinger (Chair), John Stucky, Susan Thom

Commissioners Absent: Robert Redfern-West

Staff Present: Diane Jennings, Cornelia van Aken, Mary Minto, Evelyn Cheng

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Stinger called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS – None

BUSINESS

1. Approval of draft minutes of Regular Meeting on July 10, 2008.
 - Without corrections, Thom moved to approve minutes of Regular Meeting on July 10, 2008. Forte seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.
2. Welcome new LAC Commissioner Rajesh Mashruwala
 - Stinger welcomed Rajesh “Raj” Mashruwala, new member to the LAC.
 - Mashruwala gave a brief overview of his personal and professional background. He spoke about the importance of libraries to the community.
3. Discussion on length of Commission Meetings
 - Members of the LAC agreed to set a limit on the discussion time of agenda items and to designate a timekeeper at the start of each LAC meeting to optimize the productivity and effectiveness of meetings.
4. Follow up discussion on LAC’s educational outreach efforts
 - The LAC sub-committees reported on their efforts to address community topics as part of the LAC’s continuing outreach efforts, one of the Commission’s objectives for 2008.

- Members of the LAC agreed to send an editorial piece to local newspapers next month, to provide background about the LAC process, Library needs and address current discussions in the community about the bond measure.
 - Mashruwala will join the sub-committee (Stinger, Stucky) to work on the draft.
 - Jennings will have the City Attorney review the draft for non-advocacy.
 - Stinger will contact local newspapers to check when the article can be published.

 - Thom moved
 “that the LAC leave it to the sub-committee to investigate on writing an article on behalf of the LAC.”
 Mashruwala seconded. Motion passed, 6-0 (Redfern-West absent).

 - Hochberg gave an update of his work as LAC liaison to the Youth Council. He is in regular contact with the City’s counselor to the Youth Council and hopes to start dialogue with the group to get ideas from Palo Alto youth on the kinds of service Library can offer, and encourage them to educate their peers to tell parents about the November bond measure and what this means for Library.

 - Stinger and Forte met with van Aken, Assistant Director, to get an overview of library services for the boomer and senior population in Palo Alto and neighboring cities. Stinger will be collecting data to help identify the kinds of service and program that are/can be made available.
5. Update and response to State Budget and impact on Palo Alto City Library (PACL)
- Jennings gave a brief report on the State budget and explained how cuts in programs affect public libraries.
 - *Public Library Fund* (allocation for funds distributed to all public libraries based on population) Jennings said the amount fluctuates each year and for this year, the fund is delayed. Palo Alto adds this fund to the Library’s mid-year budget, usually used towards furniture, special projects and/or collection but not for staffing.
 - *Direct loan* and *Interlibrary loan* programs (incentives to share resources with non-residents or between libraries) Jennings said reduction in incentive does not affect Palo Alto since the Library does not receive funding from the direct loan program, but Palo Alto receives limited funding from interlibrary loans and will be eligible for more when the Library joins Link+ and shares resources with other public libraries in California.
 - Other reductions, i.e. literacy programs. Jennings said Palo Alto does not participate in this program.

- Discussion followed with members of the LAC asking questions/clarifications.
- Jennings provided an overview of the City's budget process and how additional funds from the State are added to the Library's mid-year budget.
- Jennings concluded that the impact of the budget cuts is not significant for Palo Alto since the City does not anticipate funding library service with State money.

6. Update on Boomer Proposal

- van Aken reported that the Library's application for a State grant to develop a series of programs for "Transforming Life after 50" has been approved.
- The project, "Feed Your Head – Nourish Your Boomer Brain at the Library" will offer five programs focusing on the brain and the body, starting in May 2009, to be held at the Downtown Library during lunchtime. The goal is to introduce boomers to techniques that stimulate and enhance mental capacities to maintain quality of life and healthy aging.
- Members of the LAC agreed that this will be a great program for older adults and seniors in the community.

7. Update on Library Technology Plan

- Jennings introduced Mary Minto, Head of the Library's Collection & Technical Services Division.
- Minto gave an update on the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) and Automated Materials Handling (AMH) study and the final report by Lori Ayre, Principal Consultant of The Galecia Group, on "Analysis, Evaluation and Recommendations for Materials Handling System and RFID at Palo Alto City Library" which was first presented to the LAC at the June 25 meeting. The final report incorporated the LAC's comments and recommendations.
- Minto said Ayre's basic recommendation is unchanged: Palo Alto Library to proceed with RFID tagging of its entire collection and then have AMH systems installed at the Main, Mitchell Park and Children's libraries.
- Minto pointed out that the method of analysis Ayre used to calculate return of investment/payback time for the entire system changed from the method used in the draft presented to the Commission in June. However, staff is not comfortable with ROI calculations and has concerns on the methodology, figures and assumptions.
- Discussion followed with members of the LAC providing comments and observations, asking questions/clarifications on the final report's findings and recommendations and the timing for an AMH system in Palo Alto.

- Jennings provided a background to the Library Technology Plan process and explained the next steps: Lucien Kress of Kress Consulting will start working next month on the full technology plan for the library system, including estimated timeline and costs. He will be collaborating with the Library's Citizen Technology Advisory Group and Library stakeholders and provide an assessment of technology in libraries today, compare costs and benefits with other technology projects and innovations, and identify recommended direction for library technology at PACL.
 - Jennings added that the LAC will be meeting with the consultant to discuss the approach and envisioning. Jennings will try to arrange for Kress to attend the October meeting.
8. Update on Library Facility Projects
- Jennings said while the Main, Mitchell Park and Downtown Libraries facility projects will depend on the result of the November bond election, the College renovation project is moving forward.
 - The diseased eucalyptus tree adjacent to the Library was removed on August 21 and 22.
 - The Historical Review Board will review the updated report on the planned project in October.
 - College Terrace will maintain operations through the end of this fiscal year as the timeframe for starting this project is June/July 2009.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. The staff report, *Library Department Update on Progress of Audit of Library Operations Recommendations*, will be discussed by the City Council on October 6. The report will appear under the "Reports of Officials" portion of the Council meeting. The appendix details the 32 audit recommendations and provides an update on the status (completed, in process or not started) as well as whether additional funding is required to achieve completion. Jennings acknowledged staff's time and hard work to address/implement the recommendations.
2. Board and Commission members are invited to attend a Brown Act training that will be conducted by the City Attorney on October 28, 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm, in Council Chambers. Commissioners should contact Library Administration before October 7, if they are available. Jennings will also send the Commissioners a copy of the Attorney's July summary letter discussing the basic Brown Act principles.
3. Library has a number of staffing changes and vacancies, due mainly to retirement, which will provide some promotional opportunities for current staff:
 - Public Services:* Abby Boyd with 33 years of service, Deborah Angel with 15 years of service, Annette Longuevan with 8 years of service
 - Technical Services:* Maggie Lam with 38 years of service

Managers who will be retiring: Melinda Wing, Children's Library, retiring in November; Sylvia Baker, Main Library, at end of 2008.

4. Cheryl Lee, Librarian at Children's Library, has been accepted to the American Library Association's (ALA) "Emerging Leaders" program, a multi-year program that enables new people in the library profession to participate in projects and workshops in a leadership capacity, and engage in opportunities toward networking with fellow peers in the program.
5. Van Aken is elected Vice President/President Elect of the Public Library Section of California Library Association (CLA) and Jennings is incoming President of Management Services Section of CLA.
6. The CLA Annual Conference and Exhibition will be held in San Jose, from November 14-17. There is special registration rate for Boards and Commissions who are interested in attending. Members of the LAC can go to the CLA website for full conference details. Library staff will be presenting at the conference this year.
7. Starting in October, Library will be working with Innovative to join Link+ on a 24-month pilot project starting in early 2009, which will allow customers of the Library to borrow books from other member libraries.
8. Library customers will have the ability to pay library charges online soon.
9. Members of LAC are invited to join the City's Family Resources Ambassador Development Program, to enhance knowledge of resources and awareness of the needs in the community.

REPORTS

Commissioner reports and questions:

- Forte brought up the question about whether or not the Commission should meet in October since it is close to the November election: Members of the LAC agreed that they will meet as scheduled (October 23).
- The Friends of the Palo Alto Library will hold its annual meeting on the same night as the LAC meeting on October 23.

COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Stinger made reference to an e-mail from a citizen to City Council commending Jennings who "unfailingly responds to her e-mail messages within 24 hours and often instantaneously" and expressed her appreciation for Jennings' professionalism.

AGENDA for meeting on October 23, 2008:

The items suggested for the meeting are:

- Follow up discussion – Youth Council & outreach to seniors
- Update on Library Technology Plan
- Summary of comments made by community – tailored to facility needs

Forte moved to adjourn.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:30 p.m.