

# APPROVED

## MINUTES

### Library Advisory Commission (LAC)

February 26, 2009

Council Conference Room

250 Hamilton Avenue

7:00 p.m.

**Commissioners Present:** Leonardo Hochberg, Raj Mashruwala,  
Robert Redfern-West, Valerie Stinger, John Stucky,  
Susan Thom

**Staff Present:** Diane Jennings, Cornelia van Aken, Evelyn Cheng

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Stinger called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS – None

### BUSINESS

1. Approval of draft minutes of Regular Meeting on January 22, 2009.
  - Without corrections, Thom moved to approve minutes of Regular Meeting on January 22, 2009. Redfern-West seconded. Minutes were approved, 5-0.
2. Adoption of Resolution commending Sanford Forte for outstanding public service as member of the LAC
  - Stucky read the draft Resolution honoring Forte for outstanding public service as member of the LAC from March 2004 through January 2009.
  - Redfern-West made Motion to pass the Resolution, Stucky seconded. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.
  - Forte expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to work with the Commission and the City; Jennings thanked Forte on behalf of staff.

3. Welcome new LAC Council Liaison Larry Klein
  - Klein was unable to attend this meeting but Stinger said the LAC looks forward to working with Klein as the Council Liaison to the LAC. Klein was instrumental in helping the Commission during the process of developing the Library Service Model Analysis and Recommendations (LSMAR) report.
  - Stinger added that Klein will be at the LAC Retreat scheduled on March 5 at Downtown Library.
4. Election of 2009 LAC Chair and Vice Chair
  - Stucky nominated Stinger as Chair; Stinger expressed her appreciation but said she would prefer to follow past practice to have the LAC Chair serve for one year.
  - Stucky nominated Thom as Chair, seconded by Redfern-West. Thom was elected as Chair of the LAC, 4-0 (Mashruwala, Redfern-West, Stinger, Stucky).
  - Redfern-West nominated Stucky as Vice Chair, seconded by Stinger. Stucky was elected Vice Chair of the LAC, 4-0 (Mashruwala, Redfern-West, Stinger, Thom)
5. Staff Presentation of New Online Services: *BookLetters* and *Evanced*
  - Jennings introduced Kathy Shields, Senior Librarian assigned to Main Library, and project team leader who worked on the implementation of these new services.
  - Shields gave a demonstration of *BookLetters* and *Evanced Calendar*, and pointed out some of the special features. *BookLetters* is a service that provides customized newsletters and booklists geared to customers' particular interests. Children, teens and adults will discover great new reads, exciting programs and useful library resources. *Evanced* is an interactive events calendar that helps customers locate library events and have information delivered on-line with e-mail notifications.
  - Members of the LAC asked questions and provided positive feedback on the new online services.
6. Update on Library technology planning process, review and comment on draft plan
  - Jennings said that the focus of this discussion is to get the LAC's general comments on the draft plan, the Library's technology vision and the proposed projects as outlined, and more importantly, which of the proposed projects would be most valuable in making a difference to the community, considering staffing and funding limitations.

- Lucien Kress of Kress Consulting, the consultant working on the full technology plan for the library system for the last several months, provided an overview of what is included in the draft report on *Palo Alto City Library's Technology Plan 2009-2013*, and the steps involved in the planning, analysis, evaluation and selection process.
- Kress said the Library makes satisfactory use of technology to support its programs and services but the technology vision to improve/expand current services and/or add new services with the facilities upgrades will make the Library not only a modern, comfortable and flexible physical space but also as a destination, a place to create, share information and connect to the rest of the world.
- The draft report included a candidate list of technology projects to implement during the next five years, including a high-level cost/benefit analysis and timeline estimate for each proposed project. Projects range in cost from small to large.
- Kress reviewed project descriptions and distributed a chart summarizing the project budget and timeline estimates, including initial and ongoing non-labor and staff costs.
- Kress also noted that current limitations in staff and financial resources will affect the implementation of the project plan and the Library's current projects that are underway (i.e., Link+ service) and proposed expansions of these projects already requires a significant investment of staff hours.
- Members of the LAC provided comments, asked questions and provided feedback on what they considered as top priority technology projects for the Library.
- The LAC expressed concern for the City's current website design constraints which do not allow the Library to provide a wide variety of attractive and useful services through its website, and consequently affect its effectiveness from the perspectives of usability and findability.
- Discussion followed about the challenge to balance technology investments, given the major costs for implementing Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) and Automated Materials Handling (AMH) compared to the other proposed projects.
- Kress outlined the next steps and encouraged the LAC to send additional feedback, if any, to Jennings:
  - evaluate the availability of staff resources and funding to implement projects;

- evaluate impacts of City projects, facilities projects, and other Library projects on timeline;
  - select and refine projects as needed;
  - revise plan and write executive summary;
  - publish and distribute final technology plan.
- Members of the LAC agreed that the draft report provided valuable and helpful information and thanked Kress for his work.
  - The draft Technology Plan is posted on the City's website at <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=14899>

#### 7. Planning for March 5 Commission Retreat

- Thom and Stinger drafted a planning document for the LAC Retreat scheduled on March 5. The goal for the retreat is to set the Commission's priorities for 2009/10, determine LAC roles, as well as to review the LAC's charge and meeting schedule.
- Members of the LAC provided comments/suggestions for the Retreat Agenda and agreed to follow the discussion points as outlined in the draft.

#### LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. The Library Journal's new national rating of public libraries, the LJ Index of Public Library Service, identified 256 "star" libraries with ratings based on four per capita service indicators: library visits, circulation, program attendance, and public Internet computer uses, and based on 2006 public library statistical data published by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Palo Alto is one of sixteen CA libraries recognized as America's Star Libraries. More information is found at [www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6629180.html](http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6629180.html).
2. Ouida Charles is the new Supervising Librarian at Main Library, replacing Sylvia Baker who retired in December.
3. Palo Alto City Library is finalizing work to bring Link+ service to customers by end of March. This new service enables customers to borrow books from a consortium of 50 academic and public libraries in California and Nevada for free.
4. The City Clerk's Office received two applications for the vacant seat (Forte's) on the LAC. The City Council will select the applicants to be interviewed at the March 2 meeting.
5. The City Council will be asked to approve a \$3.8 M contract with Group 4 Architecture for the design services for the Downtown Library and Mitchell Park Library and Community Center. The first meeting of the Project Stakeholders Committee is scheduled on March 12, which would include two representatives from the LAC.

6. Staff researched options for temporary locations for operations during construction with a focus on keeping the cost of these temporary locations as low as possible. It was decided:
  - when Downtown Library closes, the Technical Services staff will move to Cubberley Community Center and Library Administration will relocate to Lucie Stern Community Center.
  - when Mitchell Park Library closes, public services will be located in the auditorium of Cubberley Community Center.
7. The annual legislative breakfast sponsored by the Silicon Valley Library System (SVLS), Bay Area Library and Information System (BALIS), and Peninsula Library System (PLS), will be held on Saturday, April 25, at the Stanford Park Hotel in Menlo Park. The speakers this year are Senator Joe Simitian and Mary Hughes, political consultant. Invitations will be issued in March, and Commissioners are encouraged to attend.
8. Library's first Spring Author Series - "Families & Friends" - begins on March 6 through April 28 with four Bay Area authors scheduled to present their works: Firoozeh Dumas, Pearl Sofaer, Meg Waite Clayton and Brian Copeland.
9. Significant financial challenges are anticipated in the development of the City's 2009-2011 budget. The City Manager's Office and the Executive Staff continue discussions on proposals ranging from 2.5 to 5% reductions in departments. A copy of the presentation by City Budget staff made to City Council on February 2, updating the City's 2009-2019 Long Range Financial Forecast, was distributed to the LAC. Jennings will provide an update on the Library's proposed budget at the LAC meeting in April.

## OTHER REPORTS

### Commissioner reports and questions:

- Stinger will not be able to attend the Friends of the Palo Alto Library (FOPAL) Board Meeting on March 11.
- Thom attended the Library Foundation's Board Meeting in February and related some of the highlights: recruitment of new board members, new website and logo developed, and a new Operations Manager, Lynn Drake, has been hired to assist with the Foundation's operations.

## COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

AGENDA for meeting on March 26, 2009\*:  
The items suggested for the meeting are:

- Update on Library Budget
- Update on Link+
- Report on Project Stakeholders' Meeting
- Information about Automated Materials Handling (AMH) as part of Library bond and breakdown of AMH costs

\*update: March 26 meeting was canceled, next meeting date will be on April 23, 2009.

Stinger moved to adjourn.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:00 p.m.