



Library Commission Meeting Minutes

Zoom Webinar – Pleasanton, CA August 5, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Larry Damaser.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Pam Cosby, Joanne Hall, Michaela Hertle, Wendy Kimsey, Sharon Murphy, Pranesh Ragu, Sonia Rai, Cindi Sabatini, and Chairperson Larry Damaser.

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Lia Bushong, Assistant Director of Library & Recreation; Yu Tao, Library Manager; Lori Carducci, Librarian; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

Ms. Bushong advised that item 6 should be removed from the agenda and will be reviewed at a later meeting.

MINUTES

- 1. Approve regular meeting minutes of January 7, 2021, and Civic Arts and Library joint commission meeting minutes of May 21, 2021.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Sabatini, seconded by Commissioner Hertle, to approve the January 7, 2021 meeting minutes. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Rai, seconded by Commissioner Sabatini, to approve the May 21, 2021 Civic Arts and Library joint meeting minutes. **The minutes were approved unanimously.**

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

2. Introductions/Awards/Recognitions/Presentations

Chairperson Damaser introduced and welcomed new members of the commission and asked the rest of the commission to provide them with details about how long they have been working on the commission.

3. Public Comment from the audience regarding items not listed on the agenda.

None.

MATTERS FOR THE COMMISSION'S REVIEW / ACTION / INFORMATION

4. Review and Discuss Library Reopening Updates

Ms. Bushong stated she was pleased to be overseeing the meeting then introduced Librarian Lori Carducci and asked her to provide an overview on the library reopening.

Ms. Carducci commented on the past year at the library and the different types of changes in the library. She noted that for safety reasons the library closed to the public and staff on March 17, 2020, and staff began working from home and providing remote reference help over the phone. Several library staff worked with Open Heart Kitchen helping to prepare meals that were picked up every day.

Commissioners were informed by Ms. Carducci that staff completed training and pivoted to bring programs to the community virtually and to provide library services. Staff learned new ways to bring programs like literacy online. The library began offering library story times, with some story times in multiple languages. Library launched an online book club using the Hoopla platform for simultaneous eBook use and later an online film club utilizing the Kanopy service.

Ms. Carducci reviewed with commissioners that a Library Reboot Team was formed In May 2020, with a clear goal to develop a proposal to provide core services in reopening, follow CDC guidelines and develop a staffing model to support serves. The Reboot Team developed a detailed and phased plan for the reopening of the library that included visitor safety, sanitation protocols, operation services and being able to put programs back into place.

Ms. Carducci shared that in June 2020, the library began offering curbside services to pick up books and materials and staff continued to follow safety protocols and quarantine materials based on the Reopening Archives, Libraries and Museums guidelines (REALM). In summer of 2020, the library resumed receiving of shipments of books and materials. She noted that the library continued to provide remote and virtual programs during this period. Library staff assisted

with summer childcare for the parents of essential workers. Later in the summer, the library responded to community feedback and adapted the curbside service to sidewalk service, allowing patrons to text to pick up materials faster, rather than needing to make an appointment for pickup. Printing services and LINK+ service, with delivery from other California libraries, also resumed at this time.

Commissioners were provided information about the library facility reopening to the public on November 12, 2020, and the welcoming back of library patrons. The library provided limited hours of operation, reduced occupancy, health screening of patrons and other safety measures that had been recommended and implemented by the Reboot Team. In addition to open hours, the library continued to provide the popular sidewalk service and “Book Bundles”, preselected titles brought outside to patrons.

Ms. Carducci informed the Commission that the library reclosed again on December 6, 2020, because of the COVID-19 surge in the winter. The library was excited to open again on March 16, 2021. Ms. Carducci advised that reopening services have had a gradual increase in allowing full occupancy of the library, and the reintroduction of summer reading and the Paws to Read program in a virtual format. The sidewalk service was phased out due to significant staff needs to offer this service, but other options have been provided.

Commissioners were informed that the library officially opened to full hours on August 9, 2021 and has been able to bring back temporary staff to help with shelving by using vacancy savings. With schools reopening in early August, information about library hours and service was shared with the Pleasanton Unified School District and the Pleasanton Middle School, and staff is looking forward to welcoming students to the library after school and staff has enjoyed seeing several students coming in to say hello to staff. She noted that curbside assistance will continue to be provided to patrons who still feel uncomfortable going into the library, and informational and promotional displays will be brought back. Staff continues to be flexible in responding to changes and thinking about how to provide the community with the services they desire.

Ms. Carducci advised that in the fall months, the library is bringing back the Friends book sale outdoors, providing in-person literacy volunteer training that is tentatively scheduled for October 9th, offering story times at the Firehouse Arts Center, and discussing the Paws to Read program. The library is also looking for ways to bring back volunteers, to provide more in-person programs, along with study rooms. Donations continue to be paused at this time but will resume when there is space and volunteers to do so.

Commissioner Sabatini questioned why the story time program is to be offered at the Firehouse Arts Center when the goal is to try and get people going back to the library and get books. Ms. Carducci advised it is because the plan is to return to providing pop-up story times throughout Pleasanton at different locations while staff are still working out of the library meeting room for safety reasons. She commented that pop-up programs began during the construction of the integrated office spaces for library and recreation personnel.

Commissioner Kimsey asked about the literacy training dates and advised she is in contact with people who are interested in participating. Ms. Carducci advised that a decision still needs to be

made on whether it will be done virtually or in person and whether there will be sufficient staff to support the program and no announcement will be made until the end of August.

Commissioner Sabatini asked about the loss of temporary employees and why the library was not able to open to seven days Ms. Bushong responded that the library and recreation did mid-year adjustments to the temporary staffing budget due to the city's economic issues brought about by the loss of sales/property taxes caused by the pandemic. Ms. Bushong noted that the city and staff did whatever they could to provide as many services as possible during this difficult time and are now happy to be able to open the library seven days a week and provide all possible services. Ms. Bushong informed commissioners that because the City of Pleasanton has been able to open its library and were among the first to open for in-person services they were asked to share the reopening plans with other public libraries in California.

Commissioner Sabatini asked about future staffing plans so librarians can focus on programs and not shelving books. Ms. Bushong advised that staffing plans are being discussed. Ms. Carducci added that staff is trying to get the library back to operating full hours and being sensitive to the needs of the community taking into consideration that some people are still uncomfortable going inside the library. Ms. Bushong noted that the library is recruiting for a Library and Recreation Coordinator which is an individual that will help with programs.

Chairperson Damaser questioned whether people are still being asked to wear masks in the library and whether any patrons were challenging the requirement. Ms. Carducci advised that they are complying, and Ms. Bushong commented on the recent mandate that has been put in place making this a requirement. Commissioner Rai asked if the mask mandate is temporary would the library, then go back to checking vaccination cards. Ms. Bushong indicated that this would depend on what next requirements are indicated by the County and State.

5. Review and Comment on the Library and Recreation Department Quarterly Report for April – June 2021

Ms. Bushong reviewed with commissioners the April-June 2021 Library and Recreation Department Quarterly Report. She advised this report is published four times a year by the Community and Public Relations Coordinator, the report focuses on services and different metrics to show what is being done.

Ms. Bushong commented on the virtual and literacy programs along with services such as sidewalk pickup for printing, virtual story times, and hosting of virtual book/film clubs. Ms. Tao provided information about the legal services offered by volunteer lawyers that was still popular, and Ms. Carducci provided details on services that literary volunteers were able to provide online.

Additional information was provided by Ms. Bushong on physical and digital book checkouts, new ways that patrons can place holds on books that are checked in to pick up later, staff's excitement regarding the giant barometer at the entrance to the children's department that indicates the number of reading minutes by children, and about services and programs offered by Civic Arts, Recreation and Senior Center. She advised that sports had been taking place

during the summer, and the Alviso Adobe, Gingerbread Preschool, and the Senior Center have reopened. She shared that programs and camps and Senior Center had reopened initially with reduced numbers and hours, in a phased approach like the library.

Commissioner Murphy questioned whether the Senior Center Peddler Shop has reopened, and Ms. Bushong advised she was unsure but would check on this. She also advised that the city trying to determine when the Amador Theater will be able to reopen.

Commissioner Kimsey asked when the library would be accepting book donations and Ms. Bushong indicated this was something staff was working because of the issue on where to store them, noting that with the recent construction at the library storage space is minimal and with the pausing of the book sales, the books have not been cleared out as usual.

Commissioner Sabatini asked about the possibility of pointing out trends in the quarterly report so comparisons can be made on activities from previous quarters to determine if numbers are going up or down. She distinguished the quarterly report from the lengthier annual report and confirmed that the quarterly report graphics and numbers were good for the general public.

Commissioner Hall had questions about distribution of the report and was informed by Ms. Bushong that it is distributed to each of the five commissions in the Library and Recreation Department and is available on the city's website and when made possible will be handed out with other library materials. Commissioner Hall indicated she agreed with Commissioner Sabatini's comments about showing increases and decreases in programs.

Commissioner Murphy questioned whether staff has noticed any trends in the phone calls they receive and with what patrons are asking. Ms. Bushong and Mr. Carducci felt this depended on stages of the pandemic and had received several calls about unemployment and rent early in the pandemic. Ms. Tao noted that many calls had also been received from senior citizens who needed help with downloading ebooks.

Chairperson Damaser agreed with Commissioner Sabatini's comments about needing to be provided additional information to better understand the numbers being reported.

6. Review Municipal Code Section 2.34.020 Regarding Library Commission Duties and the Library and Recreation Strategic Plan 2019-2024

Item withdrawn from the agenda.

7. Select Committee Assignments for August – December 2021

Chairperson Damaser provided information about the Library Commission's Outreach and Policy Committees advising that he and Commissioner Rai are currently assigned to the Outreach Committee and Commissioners Hertle and Sabatini are assigned to the Policy Committee. He advised that the Outreach Committee visits groups and organizations and provides information about the library and its programs and services, and the Policy Committees works on policies such as the recent policy that eliminated library fines and fees.

Commissioner Kimsey had questions about the Outreach Committee and Chairperson Damaser and Commissioner Hertle provided details of what had been done previously visiting church functions, community events, Rotary meetings, etc.

Ms. Bushong noted that staff is interested in looking at updating several library policies, with the first being the library's internet policy that is closely tied to grants and she advised there is something called The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). She commented that for the library to qualify for certain grants, they will need to ensure they are CIPA-compliant which means having certain computers with filters in place and an updated internet policy.

Commissioner Cosby stated she had no preference and would be happy to be on either committee. Commissioner Murphy felt the Outreach Committee would be a good fit for her and Commissioner Ragu and Kimsey indicated this would also be good for them. Commissioner Hall asked to be placed on the Policy Committee and Chairperson Damaser confirmed that he was also placing Commissioner Cosby on the Policy Committee.

MATTERS INITIATED BY THE COMMISSION

- **Friends of the Library Booksale**

Chairperson Damaser confirmed the Friends of the Library Booksale is scheduled for September 25, 2021, and traditionally members of the Library Commission volunteer to assist at this event. Commissioner Murphy noted that the Friends of the Library group would meet at the end of August, and she will provide them with information about the commission volunteers.

Commissioner Sabatini questioned whether the Library Commission would be having a meeting in September. Ms. Bushong indicated that they would. Chairperson Damaser advised that meetings would continue to be held via Zoom and Ms. Bushong added that City Commissions would not meet in-person until City Council meetings had in-person audiences as well.

Chairperson Damaser reminded commissioners to read agenda packets prior to meetings so they are prepared at meetings, noting that often questions they may have can be answered by reading the materials. He added that agenda packets are typically made available by staff a week or two before meetings.

Commissioner Damaser advised that if desired commissioners can tour of renovated library by contacting Ms. Murphy and scheduling a visit and Ms. Bushong noted that the library was also excited to roll-out to commissioners a catalog app that can be loaded on phones, iPads, etc. and will be asking them to provide feedback.

Chairperson Damaser asked commissioners to provide discussion topics for other meetings and Commissioner Hall was advised that this could be emailed to him or staff. He informed Commissioner Sabatini that staff would like to receive these items about two weeks prior to a meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

Next Meeting: September 2, 2021