



Library Commission Meeting Minutes

Zoom Webinar – Pleasanton, CA December 2, 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: Heidi Murphy, Director of Library and Recreation; Lia Bushong, Assistant Director of Library & Recreation; Yu Tao, Library & Recreation Manager; Renee Freidus, Senior Librarian; Julie Eseltine, Librarian, Jeff Gibson, Senior Librarian; Chris Spitzel, Librarian; Zack Reda, Management Analyst; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

None.

MINUTES

1. Approve regular meeting minutes of October 7, 2021.

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

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

2. Introductions/Awards/Recognitions/Presentations **A. Teen Poet Laureate Update**

Ms. Bushong introduced commissioners to the Teen Poet Laureate Nikita Jayaprakash and asked Nikita to share with them some of the great things she has been working on.

Ms. Jayaprakash provided details about the workshops she has been providing during the past several months with elementary school students. She advised that she has held four workshops getting students to use their own creativity in writing without needing to adhere to specific structure and provided details about the different mechanisms she used to help get students to open up and be creative.

Commissioners were advised by Ms. Jayaprakash that she plans to hold some workshops at the Senior Center as a way of getting middle school students to collaborate and interact with senior citizens on projects such as writing together.

Additionally, Ms. Jayaprakash provided commissioners with background details on how her love of writing and poetry evolved and how she hopes to inspire this same love in some of the students she reaches.

Ms. Murphy informed commissioners that Ms. Jayaprakash would be reading one of her original poems at the holiday tree lighting ceremony and invited them to attend.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Jayaprakash for her presentation and for doing such excellent work in her Teen Poet Laureate position.

B. Library Budget Overview

Ms. Murphy advised that she and library staff members were happy to be able to review with the commission a library budget overview and asked commissioners to hold their questions until all the presentations were finished. She advised that she would review the personnel budgets and then Lia Bushong would review non-personnel expenses.

Commissioners were advised by Ms. Murphy that the budget review captures four years of data looking at fiscal years from July 1 to June 30th of each year. She noted that 2020 shows a budget in which the library was closed for over a quarter of the year and in 2021 it shows slow re-openings of the library.

Ms. Murphy commented on the shutdown of the library due to COVID and how library staff had collaborated to provide services virtually. Commissioners were advised that because of the pandemic entire city departments were required to make significant cuts to their budget with revenues being predicted to be extremely low and because of this temporary staffing was stopped and permanent staff were asked to step up and take over additional duties. She noted

that a benefit of having a combined department was when the library was able to reopen the entire staff team was able to provide services that included sidewalk services.

Ms. Tao provided information about non-personnel services that are divided into four categories that include, professional services, contract services, miscellaneous supplies and new equipment machinery and equipment. She commented on the integrated library system that contains catalog data for searching library materials and patron data that is for library card registrations and the services that these provide. Ms. Tao noted digital resources and research databases, a patron notification system and account management.

Additional information provided by Ms. Tao included details about online reference tools, link plus services fee, contract services, shelf ready services, and property stamps data. She noted that the library purchases an average of about 10,000 card each year and will be partnering with the commission on a new library card design contest. Ms. Tao also noted that the machinery and equipment account covers all library materials including books, CD's, music CD's, DVDs, and magazines.

During the pandemic Ms. Tao advised that many of the services provided by the library shifted from physical materials to virtual materials to provide the community with better access. She then asked Ms. Bushong to provide year-by-year details on discrepancies and trends.

Ms. Bushong reviewed the budget for the various years commenting on the changes to the budget that became relevant during the pandemic and when the shelter-in-place was mandated during the first quarter of 2020. She commented on amounts budgeted and actual amounts designated noting that since vendors halted deliveries and staff was not able to be onsite to receive materials, orders were paused. Commissioners were informed that during the pandemic library services were greatly impacted and required increasing digital spending in order to be able to provide services virtually, this required adjusting the budget and moving funds from physical materials to virtual materials to cover this change in expenses.

As the library reopened, Ms. Bushong advised that many library services were able to be resumed and patrons were able to access materials more easily. Digital services continue to increase and have become a larger budget expense, so adjustments have been necessary. She advised that the 2022 budget is on track materials for both and services.

Finally, Ms. Bushong provided information about a state library project that has been launched for career resource spending that will free up money from the current library budget for other digital resources.

Chris Spitzel advised that the Collection Development Work Group is responsible for the acquisition, maintenance of and deaccessioning of library materials. The group orders and maintains specific collections and for this year have a budget of \$220,000 that is used for purchasing books, DVDs, and audio books. They receive carts of forthcoming titles through the materials vendors website that provides access to publishing industry journals. Analytics utilities from the primary vendor enhance the selection process and the utilities algorithm processes various data points.

Commissioners were advised that the vendor has recently debuted a module that analyzes the library's collection in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusions and is able to make recommendations that will allow the library the purchase more books that reflect the community's diverse experiences and views.

Additionally, Ms. Spitzel advised that a vendor called Better World Books picks up the library's boxes of weeded books and sells or recycles them and the Friends of the Library receive a dividend from the sale.

Ms. Spitzel advised that Pleasanton is part of the Overdrive Northern California Digital Library Consortium and shares the platform fee with about a dozen other small Bay Area libraries. Membership in the Consortium allows the library to offer more titles than the budget would allow. She also spoke about other digital services, including Hoopla. She noted that digital book use and circulation rose dramatically during the pandemic while print circulation fell.

Mr. Gibson advised that he leads the team that oversees the libraries digital resources known as the Library Technology and Systems. He noted that physical circulations dropped during the library's closure while digital circulations doubled and now as the library reopens digital circulations are decreasing slightly, but staying well-above pre-pandemic numbers.

Commissioners were provided information on how spending shifted from print materials to digital materials as the community's requests changed which also meant an increase in digital materials expenses. Mr. Gibson commented on the titles of materials purchased and the providers that are used.

Mr. Gibson commented on the professional services budget, noting that the foundation of a library is its data storage and retrieval system, known as IOS or Integrated Library System. He noted that the library currently contracts with a vendor known as Innovative Interfaces Incorporated that tracks items owned, orders made, bills paid, and patrons who have borrowed and this year will spend approximately \$65,000 for the services this organization provides.

Commissioners received information about an inter-library loan service called Link+ that is used by the library for approximately \$30,000 a year and provides a research resource sharing network between numerous public libraries throughout California and allows patrons to borrow materials from these other libraries. The library buildings broadband public and internet services are purchased through Bibliocore, CENIC and Zendesk for a total cost of \$51,000 per year.

Mr. Gibson also commented on an online patron assistance portal that allows patrons to submit questions online and provided information about a newly formed library digital work group responsible for the evaluation, acquisition, and marketing of all databases. He provided details about a service that hosts educational tools and A-Z databases that is a directory and marketing database that holds 30 million business listings and 220 million resident listings.

Commissioners were informed about a Pacific Library Partnership, Technology, and Innovation grant that the library applied for and was awarded \$5,000 that allowed for the purchase of 10 Chromebook laptops and the additional contributions made by the Friends of the Library group

for a storage cart. This all allows for the library to provide a lending service of 30 Chromebook laptops. Additional funding is also being sought through the American Rescue Plan Act.

Ms. Freidus commented on programming services that the library provides to the community such as education enrichment, education, promotion of life resources and services, and creating a sense of community. She noted that the Strategic Plan plays a big part in how the library chooses programs noting the four main goals of the plan.

Commissioners were advised by Ms. Freidus that programming is a thoughtful process, and staff wants to be sure that the library is serving all ages and keeps in mind diversity, equity and inclusion while serving the community. She commented on the process for a program idea, some adaptations made to programs during the pandemic, and provided information on some of the programs such as Story Time and Summer Reading.

Ms. Freidus noted that the library is fortunate to have the Friends of the Library group pay for many program expenses. She also provided information about programming grants.

Ms. Eseltine advised that she is a librarian and the coordinator of Pleasanton Reads which is the library's program that serves adult learners of the English language, a program that is open to residents aged 18-years or older who need help to become fluent in English. She advised that the program not only supports the learners in language fluency but also cultural fluency.

Commissioners were advised that prior to the pandemic the program was offered exclusively in person with the help of 140 volunteers, however, during shelter-in-place they had to transition to a virtual program with about 43% of tutor/learners continuing to work together during this time and currently the program is operating both virtually and in-person with 59 volunteers.

Ms. Eseltine provided details about a new service that will be introduced during this fiscal year and is an app called Learning Upgrade which is a resource for learners on the library waitlist and will provide an assessment of their English skills and lessons and activities customized to their learning levels and matched with a volunteer tutor.

Ms. Eseltine commented on the grant they receive from the California State Library Literary Services and funding from the City of Pleasanton.

Ms. Murphy thanked staff members for their presentations to the commission and noted that since Ms. Eseltine has taken over the literacy program, she has been able to access more funds for the program.

Chairperson Damaser thanked staff for their presentations and felt the reporting had been very impressive and comprehensive.

Commissioner Sabatini commented on the number of hours of service provided by temporary staff and how this was being made up during the time temporary staff are not used and also how the funds were used. Ms. Murphy provided details and noted that currently permanent staff members are backfilling to fill spaces vacated by temporary staff, stating everyone is helping

with shelving, etc., and that vacancy savings from some currently unfilled permanent staff positions are being translated into temporary dollars. She noted that the hope is that at mid-year when the budget is reviewed, revenues will be projected higher than thought.

Commissioner Kimsey commented on it not making sense to not have pages who have a lower pay rate and having higher paid individuals do their jobs. Ms. Murphy indicated that the goal was to be able to retain full-time staff and moving forward revenues are an uncertainty, and while it would be good to have pages return it is important to determine what revenues will be.

Commissioner Kimsey commented on the State of California's large budget surplus and hoped that it would be similar for the City. Ms. Murphy noted that mid-year adjustments were usually made by March and because the city did not want to go over budget and wanted to maintain its goals of being a fiscally stable city was why it was important for the library to be conservative for this year and the next and wait until revenues increase before adding in expenditures.

Commissioner Sabatini questioned whether salary increases had been given to full-time staff members and noted that the budget for personnel was lower for 2022 than in 2019. Ms. Murphy advised that the 3-year contracts had been negotiated with the labor unions in advance of the pandemic and increased from \$2.85M to \$3.1M.

Commissioner Sabatini questioned the need for librarians to work overtime when covering for another librarian who might be on vacation. Ms. Murphy noted that with a less programs in place employees can cover for each other and pages and clerks are being called to work as needed.

Commissioner Hertle clarified her assumption regarding salaries for temporary workers, currently something not heavily utilized, and discussed the restarting of programming services along with the utilization of full-time staff members to cover for temporary staff. She commented on a situation within her own business and how she has absorbed duties to cover for staff with childcare or vacation issues.

Ms. Murphy noted that the library was only operating at about 70% of where it was before the pandemic and staff members have been able to cover for each other, but temporary employees are being used as needed and pages are being called to cover book returns and shelving duties as needed.

Commissioner Hertle commended Ms. Murphy and the staff members on their phenomenal presentations of the library budget, stating she had expected a minimal budget overview, but what was presented was in-depth and went well beyond her expectations. She discussed the level of programming being done and the information provided on where funding comes from.

Commissioner Hertle challenged commissioners to begin publicizing to the community some of the services they have learned about from this presentation, providing information about services and programs that are available and what can be done in-person. Commissioner Kimsey agreed indicating she had forgotten about some programs and is excited to be able to promote them. Commissioner Hall commented on learning about all the databases available that she is now able to promote.

Commissioner Ragu indicated he was unaware of all the interesting programs and services available at the library and indicated he could guarantee that his friends were also unaware. He stated that he would be sharing much of this information with his friends at school and encouraging them to return to the library enjoy all the changes that have been made. Commissioner Hall reminded him to advise his friends that many things can be accessed from home.

Commissioner Rai agreed with the comments made by Commissioner Hertle and indicated it was not just the content of the presentation but also the way that the staff members presented everything. Chairperson Damaser agreed. Commissioner Cosby also agreed the presentation was very well done and the services being provided on a regular basis are great. She felt the laptop services were amazing for those individuals who do not have their own laptop.

Commissioner Murphy felt Commissioner Hertle summarized her exact thoughts and felt the presentation was very well done, comprehensive, and got her excited about all that is being offered by the library and has encouraged her to take advantage of more things being offered.

Ms. Murphy introduced commissioners to Management Analyst Zach Reda, advising he manages all the library budgeting, invoicing, and payments and was who put together all the numbers in the budget presentation shared with the commission. Mr. Reda agreed that he too was impressed with the library budget presentations provided by the staff members.

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 Approve Commission Meeting Schedule for 2022

Ms. Murphy reviewed with commissioners the Library Commission meeting schedule for 2022 and asked them to advise if they wished to make any changes. She commented on the scheduled joint meeting with the Civic Arts Commission on May 2, 2022 and the lack of meetings in July and September because of holidays.

Ms. Murphy asked commissioners to approve this schedule and the commission agreed.

Commissioner Sabatini questioned Ms. Murphy on why the Library Commission has a scheduled joint meeting with the Civic Arts Commission. Ms. Murphy advised this was in conjunction with the Teen Poet Laureate position which is an item considered by both commissions.

5. Select Commission Chair and Vice Chairperson for 2022 and Select Representatives for the Teen Poet Laureate Selection Committee

Ms. Murphy advised that annually the Library Commission selects a Chair and Vice Chairperson to facilitate meetings and identifies subcommittee assignments. She asked the commission to select a commission Chair and Vice Chairperson for 2022 and select representatives for the Teen Poet Laureate Selection Subcommittee.

Commissioner Kimsey thanked Chairperson Damaser for the serving as the Commission Chair for 2021 and indicated she would like to nominate Commissioner Sabatini to serve as the Chair for 2022. Commissioner Hertle stated that she would like to nominate Commissioner Rai to serve as the Library Commission Chair for 2022. After conducting a verbal rollcall vote it was determined that more commissioners would vote for Commissioner Rai to be the Library Commission Chair for 2022.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hertle, seconded by Commissioner Kimsey, to nominate and elect Commissioner Rai to serve as the Library Commission Chair for 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Commissioners Cosby, Hall, Hertle, Kimsey, Murphy, Ragu, Rai, Sabatini, and Chairperson Damaser.
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

Commissioner Kimsey indicated she would like to nominate Commissioner Sabatini to serve as the Library Commissioner Vice Chairperson for 2022 and Chairperson Damaser stated he would like to nominate Commissioner Hertle for the same position. A verbal rollcall vote was conducted that determined more commissioners would vote for Commissioner Hertle to serve as the Library Commission Vice Chairperson for 2022.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rai, seconded by Chairperson Damaser, to nominate and elect Commissioner Hertle to serve as the Library Commission Vice Chairperson for 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Commissioners Cosby, Hall, Hertle, Kimsey, Murphy, Ragu, Rai, Sabatini, and Chairperson Damaser.
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

Chairperson Damaser asked for representatives for the Teen Poet Laureate Selection Subcommittee and Commissioners Rai and Kimsey volunteered.

MATTERS INITIATED BY THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Hertle indicated she would be contacting members of the Policy Committee to discuss the Materials Recovery Policy.

Chairperson Damaser discussed with Ms. Murphy the plans for returning to in-person meetings. Ms. Murphy advised that all commissions are being asked to remain virtual until a decision has been made for City Council to return to full in-person meetings, including members of the public.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Materials Recovery Policy.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8.36 p.m.