

FRIENDS OF THE PALO ALTO LIBRARY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING RINCONADA LIBRARY February 10, 2016

Call to Order: Nigel Jones called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Tom Clark, Nancy Cohen, Peter Dehlinger, Charlotte Epstein, Nigel Jones, Tina Kass, Karen Neier, Steven Staiger

Absent: Gerry Masteller, Ann Justice, Suzanne Little, Jim Schmidt, Martha Schmidt

Guests: Carolyn Davidson, Janette Herceg, Monique Ziesenhenn

2. Agenda Approval

- **Nancy Cohen proposed adding a new item regarding the bylaws. The addition to the agenda was approved by consensus of the Board.**

3. Minutes of January Meetings

Karen Neier moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. Charlotte Epstein seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Children's Book Room

Nigel welcomed Carolyn Davidson, noting that the smooth operation of the Children's Room is crucial to the FOPAL program. Carolyn reported on the work of the volunteers (who include retired teachers and librarians). She outlined the process of accepting and sorting donations, as well as cleaning and checking for completeness (for example, being sure that puzzle and game pieces are all in hand). The volunteers use pre-printed price dots for pricing materials (50 cents to \$3.50). All are shelved by the Friday afternoon before the Book Sale. Board members commented on the impressive collaboration among the volunteers who work on this collection, resulting in a very effective operation. Some noted that it would be good to see such cooperation among the various sections in the Main Room and Bargain Room. Board members considered paying more attention to and acknowledging the Children's Room volunteers.

5. President's Report

- *Items related to theft in 2015:* 1) Nigel reported that he has presented the agreed-upon statement to volunteers and section managers, and will be presenting it to cashiers this weekend. He said that there was little reaction from volunteers when he met with them, and he understands that there's been little discussion in other venues. 2) The initial repayment of funds from the former volunteer has been made on schedule.
- *President's communication to volunteers (2/3/2016):* Board reaction was generally positive. Board members thought it should be posted on the website.
- *Calendar:* Board members agreed that the calendar for 2016, as presented by Nigel, appears to be complete.
- *Future meetings:* Nigel confirmed that the Board will meet at Rinconada at 9:30 for the remainder of the year, except for May, when the meeting will be in the Annex.

- *PA Weekly Holiday Fund*: The FOPAL proposal (for a “Library Bikemobile”) wasn’t successful. This is likely because it didn’t really fit the interests of the program. FOPAL will try again next year with a different proposal.
- *Cubberley*: Nigel has been in touch with Elena Lee who is the City staff member overseeing the PA Comprehensive Plan in the hope of determining how FOPAL should be involved in discussions of the future of Cubberley. Steve noted that Cubberley is part city, part PAUSD, part “other.” All agreed that it’s not likely that anything will happen in the next five years or so, and agreed that FOPAL should continue to be aware of discussions, but not make any extraordinary effort to participate in them at this point.
- *High Value Sales*: High Value inventory is down (Jerry is finally reviewing books on the shelves) and revenue is up. Getting one or two additional volunteers who can do listings would be almost certainly result in real benefit.

6. Library Director Report (Monique Ziesenhenn)

- Monique reported that the libraries (except for the archives at Cubberley) will be closed next Monday (for the President’s Day holiday) and Tuesday (for the transition to new system (Sierra Library Services Platform). The libraries will reopen at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday with the new system running. There will be orientation for users; information about the new system is now available on the Library website (<http://cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=3340&TargetID=140>). On February 25th, Link+ (which has been unavailable for a number of months) will be integrated into the new platform and will resume service. When available again, Link+ will include lending (i.e., from PACL to other libraries) as well as borrowing, and will include media. Since a number of nearby libraries (MC, SCC SV, etc.) use this system there was a brief discussion of the possibility of creating a joint (or union) catalog.
- The PACL budget will remain flat for FY17, in contrast to the past year, during which the library received a substantial increase to support more staffing after the openings and full functioning of all the city libraries.
- The PACL did well on the City Auditor’s FY15 Performance Report. Of those who responded, 91% rated the PACL as good or excellent—not surprisingly, this was an improvement over last year (81%) before all the libraries were re-opened. A goal for the PACL for next year will be to improve the excellent/good percentage regarding the library collections. This year that percentage was lower than the overall ranking.
- Monique will not be able to attend the FOPAL Board meeting in March, but Diane Lai (in charge of PACL collections) will provide a report to FOPAL Board.
- Nigel asked if the library will have a table at the March Book Sale to solicit library registrations. Monique isn’t sure that there will be someone in March.
- Nigel asked how the library is connected to the Silicon Valley Reads program. Monique explained that the PACL didn’t participate during the lengthy library construction period, but now does. SLR chooses 2-3 books and the library reflects the SVR program with its own programming. This year the topic is drought. The current SVR book is *Memory of Water* by Emmi Itaranta. Monique distributed some of the PACL material to Board members, and pointed out that FOPAL is listed as a sponsor on publicity material. Nigel suggested that FOPAL should consider how or if it should participate in these programs in the future.

7. Volunteer Manager Report (Janette Herceg)

- Half-price sale at the last Book Sale (50% off all books @\$5 or less): It’s not clear that this was a great money maker, but it moved a fair number of books. Nigel suggested we try one more time, but probably not more unless it’s clearly a money-maker.
- The Bargain Room opened early at the January sale; we may add a second cashier in February and see how that goes. Doug Graham has retired (Bargain Room cashier for 10 years).

- Section Managers training at Rinconada on Jan 12th: Good turnout and good feedback. The training included a discussion of recycling and what happens to discards. All of the informational material provided at the training has been left in the Sorting Room.
- Meeting with Zero Waste: ZW people came to look at all of the waste/recycling practices in the Main Room/Bargain Room. One improvement will be the addition of multiple types of waste bins in the various rooms.
- More carts were purchased for the Main Room.
- Marcy Brown has agreed to take the lead position (head cashier, open/close, etc., etc.) for the Main Room.
- The Bargain Room has been cleaned and will soon have a microwave for volunteers who work there during odd hours.
- Red Bins (containers of books being donated at library sites or discarded by the library): Everything in these bins has been cleared at this point by a volunteer.
- Updated the volunteer book buying policy—no more envelopes. Karen said that this has helped quite a bit.
- Membership Brochure: This will be updated; we need to make sure all membership information is consistent (paper brochure and website)
- Peter asked about the Volunteer Manual: What's being given to volunteers at this point? Janette reported that she's given the current version of the manual to Suzanne who will review it and schedule it for a Book Sale Committee review in the next couple of weeks. There's nothing regarding high value guidelines in the current manual. Members of the Board agreed that these are very important since we need to find new volunteers to work in this high-profit area.
- Donations: Nancy noted that she and Jerry have recently discussed the lower quality of donations. Tom expressed concern that large book donations are down and wondered if some marketing efforts would be in order. In addition, he asked that messages left in the Book Room regarding pickup requests be sent to him right away; there have been delays in getting messages to him. People answering the phone in the FOPAL building should get contact information from callers and send that on in a timely manner.

8. Officer/Committee Reports

Treasurer (Karen Neier)

- Insurance Carrier: The plan is to go with a new carrier, partly because of the new company's D&O coverage. FOPAL currently has \$3m in liability coverage
- The Finance Committee met in late January, with very good attendance. The principal topic of discussion was cash handling and it was lively, with many opinions presented. The following changes are being made now:
 - Cash boxes in Sorting Room will be locked at mid-day when there's a shift change.
 - Karen will go to Bargain Room and Children's Room to pick up the cash.
 - Karen will put instructions on the lids of each cash box so anyone handling cash will have information about the process immediately at hand.
 - The procedure description for cash handling is still in progress.
- Treasurer's Report: Suggestions for improving the format of the monthly report were made at the committee meeting in January; Karen is still working on possible changes.
- Library Lovers Fund: Almost zeroed out.
- Some concern was expressed about handling large amounts of cash at end of sale days. Wew may want to discuss this further at a future Board meeting.

Book Sale Committee (Nancy Cohen)

- Nancy reported that Cubberley management has given permission to FOPAL to construct a shed, to be used for storage near the Main Room. The installed cost is about \$2400.
- **Nancy moved that the Board approve an expenditure of up to \$2500 for the purchase of a shed near the Main Room. Tom seconded. Approved unanimously.**

- Nigel reported that he has an agreement with Jerry to get all the boxes out of remote storage by the end of March. He asked Karen to end the contract on the rental by March 31st.

Nominating Committee (Nancy Cohen)

- Only one Board member reported that she would not be willing to sign up for another term (Ann Justice).
- The committee is working on finding a new Treasurer.

9. New Business

Website (Charlotte Epstein)

- There's some confusion about who's doing what and the Board needs to clarify responsibilities (i.e., content, technical, etc.).
- Her interest is in getting accurate and up-to-date information to volunteers.
- Charlotte noted that FOPAL is also on Facebook and Yelp. It's not clear who's responsible for this.

Credit/Debit Card Use

- Peter asked if people think this is working; his sense is that use is increasing slowly. Karen explained that the only way FOPAL can accept credit card payments now is by asking volunteers to use their own mobile devices. Other options (such as credit card terminals) typically require a power source (although some run on batteries) and a phone line. She will be looking at other options.

Other Local Friends Groups

- Nigel has been in touch with other groups and will report on this at the next meeting.

Bylaws Revision

- Nancy reminded the group that she sent a draft Bylaws revision to the FOPAL Board last night. She explained that this is a good time to add a section on Board indemnification and that her proposal contains standard language for non-profit boards. Steve noted that this doesn't seem to include volunteers although FOPAL could identify a volunteer as an "Agent." In response to a question, Nancy explained that California law protects volunteers on boards from liability.
- **Nancy moved that FOPAL Board adopt the addition, Staiger seconded. Approved unanimously**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Kass
Secretary