

FRIENDS OF THE PALO ALTO LIBRARY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

DATE: March 9th 2016

Embarcadero Room, Rinconada Library

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 AM by President Nigel Jones.

Roll Call

Present: Nancy Cohen, Peter Dehlinger, Charlotte Epstein, Nigel Jones, Suzanne Brown Little, Gerry Masteller, Karen Neier, Martha Schmidt, Steven Staiger

Absent: Tom Clark, Ann Justice, Tina Kass, Jim Schmidt,

Guests: Diane Lai

Agenda

Charlotte is acting secretary for this meeting.

Ann's report on publicity is moved to next month.

Steve has a suggestion that named funds with a balance of less than \$10 be rolled over into the general grant fund for clarity in the financial report.

The agenda was approved with the changes noted.

Minutes of February 2016

The February 2016 minutes were approved as presented.

President's Report

• LAC

In February Nigel gave a presentation to the LAC. From his discussions there he learned that LAC is not familiar with how we operate. When Nigel suggested that the loss of Cubberley would mean the loss of the library programs that FOPAL supports, the LAC was very interested. The LAC will be having a conversation with the city council on April 25 when the LAC will bring up FOPAL's concerns about Cubberley and they will recommend that FOPAL have a study session with the council about Cubberley.

Nigel will act as the FOPAL liaison to LAC and attend their meetings.

- Library drop box

Nigel reported that Monique indicated that the library drop boxes for returned books will be in place by the end of the fiscal year.

- Cubberley

Today Janette is attending the signing of the compact between the city and the school district as part of the process to begin the planning for the future of Cubberley. On March 19 Nigel will speak at a meeting between the city and the school district on the Cubberley future.

- Retention of Files

Tina gave Nigel a banker box with a variety of FOPAL papers. Nigel has no intention to add any material to this box and he assumes that anything that is important is now electronic. This raises the question of a policy for document retention. Nigel passed out a paper titled "American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Sample Document Retention and Destruction Policy" which the board should look at and be prepared to discuss next month.

Steve said that he would take the banker box for the Palo Alto Historical Association and the historical association can determine what might be valuable in 50 years. They might save a sample of the minutes rather than all of the minutes. He raised the question of how long electronic stuff will last while paper lasts essentially forever. Some electronic materials can no longer be accessed because the necessary hardware no longer exists.

- Non-profit Management Software

It became clear at the recent membership meeting that our membership software is inadequate and that maintaining the membership records is a difficult process. Martha indicated that she has tried to turn the membership materials over to someone else but the process is labor intensive and no one has been willing to take on the process.

Nigel suggested that we should look at available non-profit managements systems. We have multiple lists of people - members, volunteers - that cannot be coordinated within our current system. Nigel will look at possible software packages and come back next

month with suggestions. Nigel stated that we are no longer a small organization as we have employees, volunteers, and customers so we need a system to match our needs.

There was a question regarding what other friends groups do for their membership needs. Nigel is trying to set up a meeting with other friends groups for April. Many groups are much smaller than we are so they might not be good models for our needs. He has suggested MP as a meeting place.

The development of procedure manuals such as a membership manual will be a big help as we move to a new system.

- Other topics

- There will be a library membership table at our April Sale in conjunction with National Library Week.
- The Foreword is on schedule to be distributed in April. Steve is doing a history of FOPAL.
- The FOPAL brochure is being updated so it can be distributed at the Cubberley meeting on March 19.
- The storage unit is on schedule to be empty by the end of the month.
- Notify Nigel if or when there are any changes to the FOPAL 2016 calendar.
- Nigel stated that Jerry reported that we have 9800 items in inventory with no significant changes but sales have been low recently.
- The installation of the shed is scheduled for March 16.
- The motion sensor lights at the Children's Room are not working and there are no motion sensor lights for the Main Room. Nigel will have his handyman work on the replacement lights for the Children's Room and if that is successful, then Nigel will authorize lights for the Main Room. The total for this work is estimated to be about \$200.
- Nigel made an estimate of the number of books in the three rooms based on the existing shelving. He estimated that at capacity there are 72,000 items plus 10,000 items online.
 - Main = 36,000
 - Bargain = 23,000
 - Children's = 13,000
- There was a question about the FOPAL book club that is mentioned on our website. The board was generally unfamiliar with the club. Nigel will call the book club president for more information.

Library Director's Report - Diane Lai (substituting for Monique Le Conge)

Monique will be at the April board meeting to discuss grant status.

Diane Lai is responsible for Sierra and Book Acquisition. Diane interacts with FOPAL in the collection area on grants related to book acquisition.

There are three collection development librarians - one for adults, one for juveniles, and one for teens. The juvenile collection librarian works 12 hours a week and the other librarians work full time. The juvenile collection librarian was a juvenile librarian for 35 years and prefers to buy multiple copies of books to reduce waiting time for books. There are total of 11 librarians that work to maintain the collection. They are public service librarians who monitor the collections, respond to the needs of customers, and promote collection items to the public. Overall then there are 13-15 librarians involved in the collection process.

The staff is responsive to customer input and monitors the Hold ratio. Normally the Hold ratio is 3 holds to 1 copy for books and 6 holds for DVDs. Even with that model there are some popular titles that exceed that ratio. There is always the question of what to do with the extra copies once the interest in the item has diminished. One possibility is that the books could be donated to FOPAL.

The library recently instituted the Lucky Day collection which is entirely funded by FOPAL. The Lucky Day books are often books with 50 to 100 holds. However, a few copies are put on the Lucky Day shelves to be taken out immediately for a maximum of 7 days with no renewals.

The temporary Main leased collection was entirely funded by FOPAL and had very good circulation. When Main was completed earlier than expected, the library was refunded about \$20,00 due to the shorter lease time. The library decided to use the refunded lease money for Lucky Day books. There is a Lucky Day collection in each of the 5 libraries.

Diane indicated that the recent period when there were not many new titles in the system was due to the work for the implementation of the new library system. The library is now back to the normal ordering cycle so collection grant fund money should be spent by the end of June. The money will be spent for high demand popular titles and for replacing titles. Two years ago a vendor did a study of the age of the collection and found that 70% of the collection was in need of either updating or replacement. Since then the library has been writing grants for replacement on a 3 years plan. This

year the FOPAL grant was for technology, medicine and science. The prior year was for medicine, gardening, and cookery. There will likely be a another grant request to finish the project.

There was a comment from the board that it would be helpful if the customer would be notified when a customer book request is fulfilled and that the book is available. Diane replied that this was not possible under the old system but this change will probably be coming with the new system.

Diane remarked that the library is always concerned about how to connect with customers who don't have an email or a telephone listing.

There was a comment from the board that books with barcodes barcodes on the front of books are difficult to sell and that it would be preferable for barcodes to be placed on the back of the book. Diane replied that she thinks that vendors now put the barcodes on the back but she will check on this.

Reports of officers/committees

- Treasurer's monthly report - Karen

Total book sales income for February was \$30,398.58 and other income was \$2,146.20 for a total gross income for February of \$32,544.78. Total book sale expenses were \$20,893.62 leaving a net book sale income of \$9,504.95.

The new shed is listed under "other expense". Karen will depreciate the shed as appropriate. Our monthly expenses will be reduced when the storage unit is emptied.

Steve suggested a motion that a named fund that shows a balance of less than \$10 be rolled into the general Library Lover's Fund. Karen said that some funds may be refunded but she will try to make the report of the named funds easier to read.

There have been changes to the cash handling process to provide more security for the cash. Another help is the use of credit cards as there is then less cash at the end of the day.

Frank McConnell updated two donated 4S iPhones so they can be used for the credit card sales. More volunteers are needed to handle the credit card sales.

There was a question from the board regarding the willingness of volunteers to use the credit card devices. There was reply that volunteers are often reluctant to make changes but often will be happy once the change is made. The express lane in the BR is one example of an innovation that is now accepted.

- Finance Committee - Karen

At the membership meeting Karen was asked about the number of membership coupons used at the sales. Karen replied that there are probably less than 20 a month. Martha thought this was not very many coupons considering how many are mailed out.

Our new insurance policy includes DNO and is much cheaper.

Amazon sales are on budget.

Nigel commented that we are underperforming at Cubberley but BR and Children's Room are on budget. One possibility is that the Cubberley budgeting is not accurate. Another possibility is that we are cannibalizing the MR for the Mitchell Park store and the gondolas.

- Book Sale Committee - Suzanne

Suzanne is encouraging Janette to talk with section managers who are not filing their shelves. Many section managers feel that they are the only arbiters of their section. They are not open to suggestions and might quit rather than be subjected to too much interference.

There were some suggestions to improve the book sales: that more books should face out; that sections have sub-sections; that there be more information at the point of sale; and that social media be used for photos.

Thanks for Nancy for her work on obtaining the shed and for implementing the express lane in the BR.

- Personnel Issues - Suzanne

New volunteers would benefit from a Volunteer Procedure Manual.

Action Item - Peter will call Janette to discuss this issue.

- Membership - Martha

The major take-away from the recent membership meeting is that we need to address the inadequacy of the membership database and find a replacement database. Martha has not been able to turn over the membership process to anyone else because no one has wanted to take on the complexity of the current process.

Action Item - Nigel is going to start this process.

- Website - Charlotte

Charlotte created a spreadsheet with suggested corrections and updates for the website which she emailed to Nigel and Frank M.

Nigel will schedule a meeting on the website when Tina is available.

Action Item - Charlotte will send her spreadsheet to all board members.

- Marketing - Ann

Rescheduled for next month when Ann will be present.

- Nominating Committee - Nancy

The committee is still looking for a treasurer. Nigel suggested that a Treasurer's Manual might help volunteers understand the scope of the job and be less hesitant about accepting the position.

Nancy has some possible board members and some thoughts about a treasurer.

- Volunteer Manager - Janette

Janette is attending the meeting at Cubberley.

- Action items from last month

Identify all of the IT support issues and then figure out how to address them. For example, can't the secretary and treasurer update the website with agendas/minutes/monthly reports?

The Secretary and Treasurer are taking over the responsibility for updating the website with their reports.

Google for Non-Profits

Nigel is not pursuing this at the moment.

Calculator - Peter

Calculators are no longer important as we move to credit cards.

Volunteer Procedures manual - Suzanne

Peter will be talking with Janette about this.

Membership Procedures Manual - Martha, Karen, Tina

A procedure manual would highlight what we need to look for in a new system.

Bylaws - Tina

Tina is absent from the meeting. Nigel will check with her about the status of the by-law changes on the website.

Other business

There was a suggestion that meetings be scheduled for two hours since that has been the tradition and two hours still seems necessary. Suggestion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte Epstein

Acting Secretary