

FRIENDS OF THE PALO ALTO LIBRARY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
November 9, 2016
Rinconada Library

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Nigel Jones at 9:30 a.m.

Present: Tom Clark, Nancy Cohen, Charlotte Epstein, Nigel Jones, Ann Justice, Tina Kass, Karen Neier, Jim Schmidt, Martha Schmidt,

Absent: Peter Dehlinger, Suzanne Little, Gerry Masteller, Steve Staiger

Guest: Monique leConge Ziesenhenne

2. Agenda Approval

▶ **The agenda was approved unanimously as proposed.**

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

▶ **The draft minutes of October 2016 meeting were approved unanimously.**

4. President's Report (Nigel Jones)

- *Theft Restitution:* Nigel reported on the judgment in favor of FOPAL at the November 2nd court hearing. The former volunteer was not present, but the action was not delayed because of that. He is now waiting for official notification of judgment, after which he will arrange to place the liens on her property.
- *Cubberley Space RFP:* Donna Hartman (manager of real estate for City of PA) has notified Nigel that there was a possible small room (with an attached locker room and shower room) available for FOPAL at Cubberley. Nigel asked her and Hamid Ghaemmaghmi (now a FOPAL principal contact at the City's Real Estate Department) about available office space instead. Hamid was able to offer an unfinished room (G6) of about 400 sf, and they are now working on a lease for that space; it's not clear what the expectations of the City will be as far as any rent. Nigel noted that we are now paying \$200/month for Althea's garage; this would replace the garage.
▶ **Nancy Cohen moved that the Board authorize Nigel to proceed with negotiating a lease for additional space with the city not to exceed \$400/month for usable Cubberley space. The motion was seconded by Martha Schmidt and passed unanimously.**
- *Annual Appeal Letter:* This is ready to mail. We are now using the bulk mailing rates, resulting significant savings on mailing expenses.
- *Amazon Sales Report:* Listings are strong right now, after a dip resulting from some volunteer absences a month or so ago.
- *Inventory:* Nigel has put together an inventory of books, hardware/software/furniture in addition to the computer equipment inventory that he distributed last month. He will send a copy to all Board members. The board briefly discussed the continuing question of who will be responsible for maintaining and storing this inventory and other official FOPAL documents.

- *VIP mailing list*: Nigel proposed that FOPAL send a copy of the *Foreword* to a group of Palo Alto “luminaries” (20-30) to highlight FOPAL’s activities. The list would be separate from the basic membership data base and would include City Council members, active contributors to the Library Foundation, etc. He will send the list to the Board for suggestions as he develops it. The Board was enthusiastic about this initiative, agreeing that it is a very good idea.
- *Kickoff Meeting (January) for 2017*: Although the Board no longer plans annual off-site retreats, members agreed that we should address substantive topics at the January meeting. Karen Neier thought that there would likely be topics coming out of the external review and suggested that we discuss those at the January meeting. Jim Schmidt suggested that we ask Suzanne Little about any personnel matters that should be discussed.
- *Grants*: Nigel is discussing possible proposals with Monique to be submitted to the annual grant programs of the Rotary Club and the Palo Alto Weekly.

5. Library Director’s Report (Monique LeConge Ziesenhenné)

- Rinconada Library now has a Seed Library, which complements Master Gardener programs at the site.
- Rinconada hosted early voting during the month of October and the weekend before election.
- Staff is planning events that will be part of the New Americans Program: ESL classes, Halloween-themed events, etc.
- Monique is starting to prepare next year’s budget. She expects no major changes, although City Council (at its joint meeting with LAC) expressed interest in adding evening hours at Rinconada and Mitchell Park, as well as during the day at College Terrace and Downtown. This would require significant additional funding.
- In response to a question from Jim regarding whether FOPAL should target subject areas in its grants to the PACL, Monique responded that her staff is sort of doing this, but by focusing on collection age rather than specifically on subject areas. The two are related.

6. Officer/Committee Reports

Treasurer (Karen Neier)

- *October report*: Karen pointed out the “Unassigned Income” category which is new; this is cash found in donated books. The Amazon income reflects three cycles, not the usual two.
- *Book Sale support*: Karen asked for a volunteer to help at the next Book Sale.
- *Process Review/Audit*: The individual who is conducting the process review expects to have a report ready by Thanksgiving for Karen and Nigel, and he is willing to come to the December FOPAL meeting to discuss it. His main concern at this point is the large amount of cash that FOPAL handles on Book Sale weekends and he has some recommendations about ways to improve money handling. Nancy suggested a thirty minute report from him in December; all agreed and Nigel will add it to the agenda.
- *Internet Service*: Karen has been investigating the possibility of improving Wifi service in the Main Room. This is likely to involve upgrading the service, although she will ask our vendor (Sonic) to confirm that the wiring is not damaged as well.
- *Document Retention*: Although we have an extensive list of who’s responsible for which official documents, we still have not considered the possibility of some kind of central storage of the documents, to ensure that they are not only safely stored, but

also that they are easily accessible to Board members who need them. One possibility is to set up a service such as Dropbox, which would provide reliable storage and accessibility at what could be relatively low cost. Nigel will talk with Frank McConnell about the possibilities.

Book Sale Committee monthly report (Suzanne Little)

In Suzanne's absence it was reported by other Board members that the FOPAL website has been updated to read:

“We gladly accept. . .

Ephemera (e.g. vintage posters, postcards, travel brochures, greeting cards, etc.) Maps (folded or rolled)

Puzzles, games, and toys

Sheet music

Small collectibles, (e.g. figurines, bookends, souvenirs, etc.). . .”

There are changes still to be made regarding ephemera. However the committee decides to handle these items, they will be sure that the website reflects the policy/practice.

Membership (Martha Schmidt)

- The member Early Sale is next month.
- Martha has talked with Raji Ramamurthi, who has volunteered to take on responsibility for the membership database and the process for recording and acknowledging membership fees and gifts, beginning in January 2017. Raji has very strong computer skills and is enthusiastic about the task. She now has access to the membership database, but has expressed some concerns about it. Martha and Raji will be meeting about this very soon.

Website (Charlotte Epstein)

Although there are no new items to report, Charlotte noted that Frank is still working on the “to-do list” related to the FOPAL website.

Marketing (Ann Justice)

Ann reported that the new “Saturday House Rules” will be posted at the Book Sale and distributed to all sale visitors. The document specifies the rules for FOPAL visitors on entry, book purchase caps, etc. It was reviewed and approved by the Book Sale Committee.

7. Other Business

Nigel reminded Board members that we've discussed the possibility of reaching out to local technology companies for possible donations, which he is planning to do. He asked for any contact information that he can use to reach the right people.

8. Adjournment

► **Someone moved that the meeting be adjourned at 11:05 a.m. Passed unanimously.**