

FRIENDS OF THE PALO ALTO LIBRARY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
September 12, 2017
Rinconada Library
MINUTES

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Nigel Jones at 9:35 a.m.

Present: Tom Clark, Nancy Cohen, Peter Dehlinger, Charlotte Epstein, Nigel Jones, Tina Kass, Suzanne Little, Shaun Maguire, Gerry Masteller, Karen Neier, Jim Schmidt, Martha Schmidt, Steve Staiger

Absent: Gerry Masteller

2. Agenda

The following item was deleted from the draft agenda:

- Repository (Nigel will remove this item permanently)

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

► **Karen Neier moved to approve the draft minutes of July 12, 2017. The motion passed unanimously.**

4. President's Report (Nigel Jones)

- *On-line Sales:* The FOPAL online sales operations (both Amazon and Ebay) remain very complex.
 - Ebay: FOPAL is selling very well on Ebay (\$4000 last month, all DVDs). Jerry is focusing on this given the problems with Amazon.
 - Amazon: As reported by Nigel over the summer (see his email of 8/28/2017 for the most recent report) the FOPAL Amazon store has been reinstated with a requirement that we use Fulfillment by Amazon (FBA) for all sales from now on. As a result, FOPAL is required to package bulk shipments to send to Amazon for fulfillment. Nigel provided details on changes to the FOPAL fulfillment process as a result of this change and noted the following:
 - Advantages for FOPAL: With FBA there is no shipping cost for Amazon Prime buyers, items show at the beginning of the Amazon list and the fulfillment process for the seller is simplified (once we figure out exactly how our internal process will work).
 - Disadvantages: Based on FOPAL analysis it makes financial sense to send only books priced at \$20 or more through Amazon FBA, and FOPAL pays for shipping to Amazon plus an additional fee for the FBA service. Nigel suggested that we should assume a 10-15% reduction in on Amazon net income, although we won't really know the effect on the net income for some months.
 - All newly-received books will be sold via the Amazon FBA process as of now. These books will be stored in G9 and the Annex. Books that were on the now-defunct FOPAL Amazon site are no longer listed on Amazon, but all remain in the FOPAL stacks in the Annex. FOPAL has a complete record of these titles, but the challenge will be how to re-list and process them in Amazon FBA, particularly given the \$20/title minimum.
 - The first shipment to Amazon FBA was sent in the past week. This turned out to be quite time consuming, although the hope is that it will be a much more efficient process once Jerry and others have a better understanding not only of the Amazon requirements, but, more important, how to handle the very large inventory.

► **Nancy Cohen moved the following: Resolved, that the FOPAL Board acknowledges the difficulties of transferring the high value operation to the Fulfillment by Amazon (FBA) system and commends Jerry Stone for his diligent exercise of his expertise in setting up and implementing a new listing and shipping system. The motion was seconded by Karen Neier and passed by a vote of 11 in favor and 2 against.**

- *Foreword:* Completed and going to printer in the next week or so.
- *Annual Meeting:* The Board agreed that we will have no special agenda for the required annual meeting; the annual meeting agenda will consist of a brief report on the prior year's financial results and election of Board members and officers, and the remainder of the meeting agenda will focus on ongoing business items. Notification requirements will be accomplished by an announcement of the meeting in the next Foreword.
- *Cubberley Open Studios:* There was a suggestion some time ago that a FOPAL book sale be coordinated with a Cubberley Open Studios event. That will occur on November 11, 2017.
- *Meetings:* Nigel has met with the new Library Commission. He also attended the City Council meeting for the discussion of a City-PAUSD proposal to fund a consultant to review possibilities for the Cubberley site. The City Council voted to fund the consultant, but the PAUSD has not voted on the consultant yet.
- *Volunteer Lunch Cost:*
 - **Karen Neier moved to approve that the FOPAL Board fund the volunteers lunch from January through June 2018 at a cost of \$1500. Nancy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

5. Library Director's Report (Gayathri Kanth)

Gayathri Kanth reported on a number of items that will be announced to the public later today:

- **Loan Period:** As of October 1st, the standard loan period will be reduced from 4 weeks to 3 weeks. The expectation is that this will mean shorter wait times for patrons who have reserved books. The end of Measure N PACL funding for materials means that the PACL will no longer have the means to purchase additional materials to meet shortened wait-time expectations of patrons. This shortened load period is common in many of our peer public libraries.
- **Hoopla:** Since August 1st, the library has reduced the checkout limit for Hoopla from 10 items to 5 items per month per cardholder. The change was necessary because of the high cost to the PACL resulting from an overwhelming demand for the service, which is priced on a per-item basis. The Library stated in its announcement: "In our current state of limited materials funding, we want to ensure patrons can utilize the Hoopla service while also maintaining and adding to other collections."
- There will be a number of new services:
 - The PACL started the Canopy service on Sept 1st. Canopy is a broad array of movies, TV shows, courses, etc.
 - Brain Fuse provides a variety of resources for students including one-on-one homework assistance, learning sessions for students to master state-aligned skills, a 24-hour writing lab and a test center with practice materials for standardized tests. There are also learning tools for adults (skills building, US citizenship testing, and other career-related areas).is now available
 - Safe drug disposal program: As of November 1st, community members can receive free mailing envelopes and instruction on how to mail unwanted medication for safe disposal.
 - Two new programs:
 - Collaborators for the Future (October 10th): Discussion of the future of libraries with local library/information professionals. Note: There will be an announcement of this program in the next Foreword.
 - Celebrating Cultures: The first in this series will be celebration of Diwali, the Indian Festival of Lights, on October 29th. Activities will include story-telling, music, dance, Henna art and food trucks.

6. Officer/Committee Reports

Treasurer (Shaun Maguire)

- Regarding the Book Sale in general, the income is steady, with the only variability in income numbers coming from the Amazon sales. There are a few variations in the Expenses area, but nothing major. Shaun indicated that the Treasurer's Reports for June through August were preliminary because the Accumulated Depreciation of Fixed Assets would be updated based on the adjustment to be made by our Tax Accountants as part of the Form 990 work.
- Form 990 should be completed and filed later this week.
- A growing proportion of monthly book sale receipts are credit card transactions, which accounted for 29% of sales at the September book sale, and the average size of those charges is \$30; this is very positive. More devices are needed as is a volunteer to help Karen Neier with these purchases during the book sale. There was a question about whether we should impose a minimum, with general agreement that we should, given the charges fixed imposed by Paypal.
► **MOTION Shaun moved that we impose a \$5 minimum for credit card purchases. Steve Staiger seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- There is nothing new to report regarding investment alternatives but Shaun is to pursue this with Charles Schwab later in the week. Nancy Cohen indicated she would put Shaun in contact with an investment specialist at TIAA, which works with non-profits.continuing to investigate this.
- Shaun suggested that the Board Roster include the end date of officer terms; Tina Kass will add this information to the roster, which is stored on the Repository.

Book Sale Committee (Suzanne Little)

- Janette Herceg will be on vacation from Sept 14-24.

Volunteer Manual (Nancy Cohen)

- The Sorter and Section Manager sections have been completed and distributed to all those who work in these areas. The High Value section will need to be rewritten, given the changes in FOPAL's Amazon status.

Nominating Committee (Nancy Cohen/Charlotte Epstein)

- Current volunteer Neelima Meka will be nominated for FOPAL Board. Nancy Cohen read a brief biographical statement, which will be included in the Foreword.
- Officers:
President: Nigel Jones
Vice President: Charlotte Epstein
Secretary: Tina Kass
Treasurer: Shaun Maguire
Assistant Treasurer: Karen Neier
- There will be no combining of the Vice President role and Book Sale Committee Chair role from now on.

80th Anniversary of FOPAL

- Jim Schmidt reported that he has met with Monique leConge Ziesenhenné about a possible gift commemorating the 80th anniversary of the establishment of FOPAL. He reminded the Board that we should consider carefully the amount we want to spend. Shaun noted that we should be looking at the FOPAL net worth (about \$350k) when considering the amount of the grant. Jim suggested a few principles to keep in mind:
** FOPAL will want to establish a program/award/etc that will endure.
** This will be a special gift and should be one that FOPAL can put its name on.
Monique had no ideas about what we could do, but the Board made some suggestions and will continue to discuss possibilities at the next few meetings. Jim noted that we should make a decision by the end of December.

7. Adjournment

▶ **Steve Staiger moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m. The motion was approved.**