

FRIENDS OF THE PALO ALTO LIBRARY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
VIRTUAL MEETING
FEBRUARY, 2022
MINUTES

1. Call to Order: Board President Jenny Munro called the meeting to order at 9:35 A.M.
2. Present: Jenny Munro, Melinda Parry, John Wang, Helen Beevers, Nancy Cohen, Karen DalColletto, Charlotte Epstein, Nigel Jones, Tina Kass, Suzanne Little, Gerry Masteller, Karen Neier, Young-Jeh Oh, Steve Staiger, Jim Sutherland
Absent: Nancy Tillman
Guest: Gayathri Kanth.
3. Additions to Agenda: discussion of January Meeting:
Helen wished to clarify the process for Executive Sessions before submitting the minutes to the board for final approval.
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion to approve the minutes of the meeting January 12, 2022

Proposed: Melinda Parry

Seconded: Tina Kass

No Objections

No Abstentions

The minutes of the meeting of January 12, 2022 were approved by acclamation.

5. Librarian's Report (Gayathri Kanth):
 - As from Wednesday 16 February, library hours will return to pre-Omicron levels and all public rooms will be reopened.
 - Note: although the State will lift the mask mandate on Tuesday 15 February 2022, Santa Clara County will not so masks will still be required when visiting the libraries in Palo Alto.
 - Plenty of online events coming up to celebrate Lunar New Year, Valentine's Day and Black History Month among others.
 - Monday 14 February, Jenny Munro will represent FOPAL in presentation of non-profits to the council.
 - Thursday 17 February, Library will host Leadership in Palo Alto for half a day. Nancy C will present on behalf of FOPAL.
 - Elizabeth Stewart, children's librarian and leader of many a storytime, sadly passed away last week and is much missed by her colleagues.

Q: Suggested that Jenny includes the information that FOPAL pays rent to the city as well as contributions to the library in her presentation.

Q: Several positions for hourly posts are currently vacant. It is hoped that when they are filled libraries will be able to extend their opening hours. Volunteers are unable to fulfill these posts due to health & safety and customer privacy. Homebound volunteers continue to provide much needed and welcome support.

Gayathri left the meeting after giving her report.

6. Treasurer's Report (John Wang):

- John had a call with a TIAA representative, who informed him that TIAA is unable to assist FOPAL with investments due to our not meeting their minimum assets requirements; therefore the setting up of the Finance Committee has been delayed. Funds have been moved to the SFCU Checking Account for holding.
- Sales income from the three rooms for the month of January 32% down on December. However, FOPAL had returned to Friends & Family appointment shopping which only began in the 2nd week of January, 3rd week for the Bargain Room.
- Total sales income was down 17% this month.
- Unrestricted contributions has now been split into 'Contributions - Unrestricted' and 'Contributions - Annual Appeal' as Ed Walker was able to pass on the information required to Barbara. The Annual Appeal figure shows 3 months of appeal income (Nov, Dec, Jan) and so the unrestricted income figure has been adjusted to account for this.
- Total income is down 9% overall.
- The broken cart was removed many months ago by the cart dealer and has been taken off our fixed assets and insurance coverage.
- Rent expenses appear high as this month effectively shows a double payment of rent to Mobile Modular as FOPAL has switched from invoicing which takes a month to process to paying immediately by credit card.

Q: Monthly rent is usually \$4,500 to Mobile Modular and \$2,200 to the City.

- John has placed \$56,000 in a 7-month CD as per approval by the Board in January 2022.
- John asked for approval to place the funds from the TIAA account (currently held in the SFCU Checking Account) into a 7-month, no penalty CD.

Motion: to ask John to place \$130,000 in a 7-month no penalty CD

Proposed: Steve Steiger

Seconded: Melinda Parry

No objections

No Abstentions

The motion was carried unanimously.

- Nancy C will look more into TIAA investments. Previous experience has shown that TIAA could give better returns than Vanguard.
- John presented findings from his investigations into the Endowment Fund and the Fund for the Future. Previous Standing Rules showed there had been statements about purpose and how they

were funded. Minutes from 2017 showed further discussion of these issues and made reference to a 'Reserve Policy' which is no longer in the Standing Rules, although there appears to be no mention of why these were removed.

A further discussion revealed that: -

- The Endowment Fund was used for the building and refurbishment of Mitchell Park and Rinconada Libraries. However, no other huge projects seem to be on the horizon currently and a move out of Cubberley into retail space for FOPAL is not going to be financially viable in the foreseeable future.
- The Fund for the Future was set up after the fire in the main room. However, Friends & Family Sales have tied us over during COVID and the library has reduced their grant requests and programmes.
- Funds were removed in 2016 to cover 'normal' grants - not the intended purpose of the funds.

Suggestions for Moving Forward:

Finance Committee to be set up to investigate these funds further - in particular to discuss: -

- Are these funds still relevant?
If so....
- Should a separate account be set aside to hold these funds rather than the amount just being an accounting figure?
- How much should be held back?
- What purpose should they serve and when should funds be used?
- How should they be funded?
- Should we put the *Reserve Policy* back into the Standing Rules?

7. High Value (Nigel Jones):

- Amazon sold about 90 books in January and increased income to about \$5,000. It seems as the number of total listings decreases, the income goes up!
- Ebay now has about 1,200 items listed. Items sold rose from 58 to 85 in January bringing in \$4,100.
- Forest sold 112 books and brought in \$2,500. There are 20 more boxes to give to Forest for consideration. FOPAL has now sent about 2000 books to Forest to date.
- PBA sold 4 books at auction raising \$569. There are 5 books entered for another auction with a total opening price of \$850. 4 more books and a set are being reviewed.
- 6 new volunteers are currently being trained and Nigel will send their details to Tina when they are up to full speed.
- Karen D sold \$2,200 worth of ephemera to a dealer. This amount is currently included in the January figures for the Main Room. John will ask Barbara to adjust the book sale figures to show this income of \$2,200 was for a Special Sale - Ephemera. Karen D to let Susan Light know of any future income from such Special Sales.

8. President's Report (Jenny Munro):

- A Personnel Committee has been set up and consists of Jenny Munro, Melinda Parry, Suzanne Little and Susan Light.
- A decision on whether to go ahead with the March Sale will be made in a week's time.
- Jenny was sad to report the passing of 2 volunteers: Ed Rice and Rose Geamalis.
- Jenny asked if anyone had anything that she should include in her presentation to the Council on Monday 14 February, please could they email it to her.

Q: It was worth gently putting forward the idea that FOPAL should not have to pay rent to the city as any money we raised went back to the city and no other local Friends Groups pay rent. However, FOPAL does pay the lowest rent per square foot and no ground rent is charged for the Mobile Buildings.

Q: Jenny and Gayathri have been in contact with the Council to ask them to come to a Friends & Family Sale on a Saturday. This is proving to be more complicated than at first thought, but Jenny will persevere in following this through.

Q: As COVID numbers are decreasing, perhaps we could consider an in person meeting in March.

9. Old Business / New Business - None

10. Adjournment:

Steve Staiger moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:04.

Seconded: Suzanne Little

The resolution passed by acclamation.