



LIBRARY COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
December 8, 2008 6:30 pm
Menlo Park Library
800 Alma Street
Menlo Park, Ca. 94025

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Zara called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Zara, Chair (P), McDonough (P), Sloo (P), Soto (P), Tedrow (P), Traum (A),

STAFF PRESENT:

Susan Holmer, Director of Library Services

A. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

B. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Report on October 23 meeting of City Manager and commission chairs & vice-chairs and plan for meeting with Mayor
 - Ms. Zara reported that the City held a meeting between commission heads, city department heads, and liaisons to the commissions. The purpose was to open up better communications between the city manager and the commissions.
 - One key topic of conversation was improving the process for generating and overseeing the Project Priorities proposed to the City Council by the commissions each year. Goals include closer alignment between the Council's priorities and the commission project proposals, the possibility of a new timeline so that commissions have more time to prepare considered proposals, and more transparency about which projects get approved and why.
 - Mayor Robinson intends to visit each commission and give a presentation and discuss this topic.
 - The due date for this year's Project Priorities has not yet been established. The Library Commission may need to add a second meeting in January to discuss its proposals for this year's Project Priorities.
2. Current outreach activities in the Library

- Ms. Zara reported to the Council on current library activities on October 21, 2008.
 - In order to keep the Council better informed about the activities of the library, Mrs. Holmer prepared the draft of a document containing the library's 2008 activities. Mrs. Holmer noted that many programs have been very well attended. The library's recent Nutcracker program with the Western Ballet drew approximately 350 people.
 - The Commission asked how Belle Haven residents know about these programs. Mrs. Holmer indicated that the librarian directing the Belle Haven library publicizes events at her discretion, mainly through the school. Belle Haven library also offers its own events.
 - The Commission discussed the possibility of finding more ways for do outreach to Belle Haven.
3. Commission report to City Council for mid-year budget review
- The Commission would like to ask the Council to reinstate funding for two hours of library operations at the mid-year budget review. The date of the budget review has not yet been set. Traditionally this review occurs sometime in February, after the council has received a report from the Finance department about the first half of the year.
 - The library will be receiving less money from the State Library for Transaction-Based Reimbursement than expected this year. Mrs. Holmer estimates the shortfall will be approximately \$40,000. These funds are used to pay for the transfer of books from one library to another, including books between libraries in the Peninsula Library System. Because the Menlo Park Library lends out more books through this system than it borrows, those funds are especially useful.
4. Commission activity timeline draft
- In order for the Commission to be better prepared for regular activities such as Project Priorities requests and quarterly reports to the Council, Ms. Zara introduced a draft of annual timeline the Commission might follow. The Commission was unanimous in its support of the timeline and suggested several minor alterations.
5. Commissioner Reports
- a. Letter to Sanjoy Goyle:
 - A letter to Sanjoy Goyle, thanking him for his service to the Commission was signed by Commission members.
 - b. Foundation:
 - The Foundation has almost met its fundraising goals. As of December 2, the Foundation has raised \$453,000, including

the contribution from the Friends. They will address some new fundraising sources and hope to raise the remaining \$47,000 by the end of the year.

- Jane Wyman was appointed to be the new treasurer of the Foundation.
- The Foundation is looking for a new board member, due to the retirement of an existing member.
- The Foundations expects to launch a new fundraising campaign next fall. The goal of this campaign remains to be determined.
- In the future, the Foundation will meet five times per year instead of 10: February, May, September, October, and December.

b. Friends

- The mini book sale held on December 12, 2008. It was successful, raising approximately \$1000 for the library.
- The Friends are doing very well with online sales. Online sales revenues are growing larger than book fair and auction revenues.
- PLS Advisory Board:
- No report this month. PLS has not met.

5. Priorities for Library Commission FY 08-09 – update

a. Belle Haven demographic study.

- The draft request for proposal is ready to be sent out to prospective vendors.

b. “Green” collection.

- The Green Collection is now installed in the library, in the area behind the reference desk. The budget has not yet been spent: there are still purchases to be made for DVDs, children’s materials, and materials for Belle Haven.

a. Library website redesign.

- Mrs. Holmer met with the city IT department and learned more about what the library can do on its new Web portal page. On the IT department’s advice, the library acquired the Dreamweaver Web authoring package (thanks to a donation) in order to develop the new page.
- The library will update the look and feel of its existing home page, with the goal of making it a more active place, while it goes through the design process of creating a brand new page.

4. Agreement with Ravenswood City School District
 - Mrs. Holmer informed the commission that the library continues to await payment from the Ravenswood School District for last year's Belle Haven library operations.

C. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Election of chair for the 2009 term.
 - Mr. McDonough was elected to the position of chair of the Commission.
2. Election of vice-chair for the 2009 term.
 - Ms. Sloo was elected to the position of vice-chair of the Commission.
3. Election of secretary for the 2009 term.
 - Ms. Zara was elected to the position of secretary of the Commission.
4. Approval of the minutes of the October Commission meeting.
 - Postponed to December.
5. Staff Communications
 - a. Children's room renovation.
 - Now that the Foundation has raised most of the required funds, Mrs. Holmer is meeting with the architects to restart talks on the Children's Room renovation. Because it has been more than one year since the Library received construction estimates, Mrs. Holmer felt it would be helpful to revisit the design and cost estimates. The experience of the head of Youth Services in the current room over the last year has also led to some suggestions for alterations.
 - There is no estimate of when construction will begin, but when construction does begin, the Children's room will be closed for approximately one month.
 - b. Belle Haven
 - The Commission asked if there was any likelihood of the library receiving funding from the state or federal government for improvements to Belle Haven. Mrs. Holmer felt this was unlikely.
 - The Commission discussed the possibility of interim improvements to Belle Haven services until the demographic study is done. Mrs. Holmer supported these ideas, but explained that although the situation in Belle Haven may not be ideal, the community is much better served by the library in the school than it was when the reading room was located in the Onetta Harris Center. Ms. Sloo and Ms. Soto will meet with the branch librarian of the Belle Haven to learn more about the current services and possible improvements.

D. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.

Next regular meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday, January 12, 2008 at the Menlo Park Library main branch.

Respectfully submitted,
Alaina Sloo, Secretary to the Library Commission