SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Date:	**1/27/2025**
Time:	**6:30 p.m.**
Locations:	**Teleconference and**
	Menlo Park Library
	800 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A.   Call To Order

Chair Orton called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

B.   Roll Call

Present: Crockett, Herrick, Orton, Pollack, Saher, Westcott
Absent: None
Staff: Library and Community Services Director Sean Reinhart, Assistant Library and Community Services Director Nick Szegda, Librarian II Nora Mercer, Library Assistant III Juan Quinonez, Library Assistant III Stephanie Shen

C.   Presentations and Proclamations

C1.   Library statistics (Attachment)

Librarian Mercer, Library Assistant Shen and Library Assistant Quinonez made the presentation (Attachment).

D.   Regular Business

D1.   Approve the meeting minutes from the November 25, 2024 meeting and the December 18, 2024 joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (Westcott/ Crockett) to approve minutes from the November 25, 2024 meeting and the December 18, 2024 joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission, passed unanimously.

D2.   Ad-hoc subcommittee update (Staff Report LC-2025-001)

Commissioners Crockett and Westcott gave an update on the subcommittee's activities.

D3.   Select Commission Vice Chair (Staff Report LC-2025-002)

ACTION: Motion and second (Crockett/ Shafer) to select Commissioner Herrick as Vice Chair and to extend Chair Orton's term as Chair through September 2025, passed unanimously.

E.   Informational Items

E1.   Star Libraries and Benchmark (Staff Report LC-2025-003)

E2.   Library End of Year Statistics Report (Staff Report LC-2025-004)

E3.   City and library and community services department mission and values statements (Staff Report LC-2025-005)

E4.   Library and community services department statistics and recent activities (Staff Report LC-2025-006)

E5.   Library Commission tentative agenda calendar (Attachment)

ACTION: By acclamation, the following items were added to the tentative agenda calendar:
- February: ad-hoc subcommittee survey and survey methods
- February: ad-hoc subcommittee report out

F.   Commissioner Reports

F1.   Individual Commissioner reports

Chair Orton reported on recent activites of the Library Foundation board.

Commissioner Westcott reported an update given to the Friends of the Library board on the ad-hoc subcommittee's activities.

G.   Adjournment

Chair Orton adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

LIBRARY STATISTICS:
WHAT DOES THE DATA TELL US?
Library Commission – Jan. 27, 2025

LIBRARY PRESENTATION SERIES

Staff is preparing a series of presentations to the Library Commission. All dates and topics are tentative and are subject to change:

Library Overview:
Who We Are and What We Do
September 2024

Library Programs:
Enrichment through Experiences
November 2024

Library Statistics:
What Does the Data Tell Us?
January 2025

Library Outreach:
Bringing the Library to the Community
March 2025

Library of the Future:
What's Next for Libraries and for MPL
June 2025

Library Budget:
Collection Development and Operations
July 2025

WHY COLLECT DATA?

- Collecting data is a best practice for record keeping and transparency
- Data helps us evaluate our need for resources
- Data helps us evaluate how well we are meeting our stated goals and fulfilling our mission
- Collecting data is strongly encouraged by Institute of Museum and Library Services and California State Library.

"[Having reliable services] requires knowing what impact or outcomes you want the service to have. These outcomes are agreements between the library and the community. Does a service need a certain number of uses to justify it? Is it more important to build the library's reputation externally for this service?"

– R. David Lankes, Expect More: Demanding Better Libraries for Today's Complex World

PATRON DATA

City of Menlo Park population: 33,780

Languages spoken at home
- English
- Spanish
- Indo-European
- Asian and Pacific Islander

Income
- $160,784 median household
- $85,710 per capita

Age
- 8% - under 5 years
- 17% - 5 -18 years
- 61% - 18 - 65 years
- 14% - 65+ years

Education
- 8% High school or equivalent
- 9% Some college
- 73% Bachelor's Degree or higher

- https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/menloparkcitycalifornia/POP010220
- https://data.census.gov/profile/Menlo_Park_city,_California?g=160XX00US0646870
- https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/3/city-managers-office/documents/city-clerk/redistricting/draft-maps/draft-map_menlo-park-plan_b2.pdf

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PATRON DATA

- 70% of City of Menlo Park residents have a library card
- 28,667 total library accounts
- 82% are City of Menlo Park residents
- 3.2% of accounts are residents of the Belle Haven/ Bayfront area
- 18% of all accounts are non-residents
- 27% of all accounts were used for physical item checkout in 2024.

Menlo Park Library Cards

18%

82%

■ Non-Resident ■ Residents
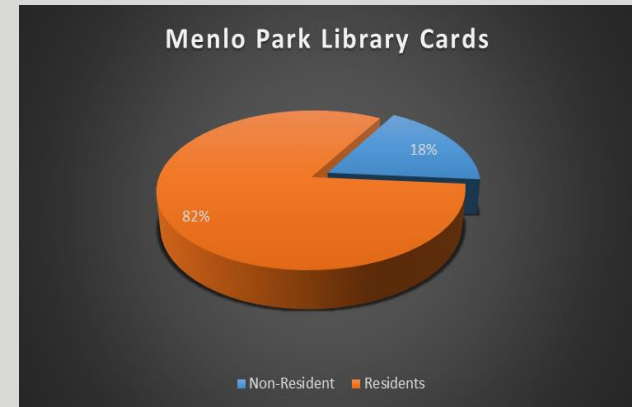
COLLECTION DATA

113,370 physical items in total collection

Circulation in 2024:
- 404,439 physical items circulated
- 198,885 online items circulated
- 36,337 total items loaned to other libraries
- 46,794 items borrowed from other libraries

Residents with library cards borrowed an average of 17 items per person in 2024.

ADULT BOOKS CIRCULATION	101,282	1645	102,927
CHILDREN'S BOOKS CIRCULATION	190,092	10,490	200,582
YOUNG ADULT BOOKS CIRCULATION	9,185	327	9,512
DVDs	26,774	548	27,322
CDs	6,204	n/a	6,204
Books On CD	3,692	2	3,694
Video Games	180	24	204
AUDIO-VISUAL CIRCULATION	36,850	574	37,424
Laptop	1,559	99	1,658
Computer/Electronic Device	424	11	435
WiFi Hotspot/Battery/Bike U-Lock	218	99	317
Park Passes	41	15	56
EQUIPMENT CIRCULATION	2,242	224	2,466
eBooks (+ comics)	117,360	n/a	117,360
eAudio (including music)	52,021	n/a	52,021
eVideo	11,205	n/a	11,205
eSerials	18,299	n/a	18,299
ELECTRONIC CIRCULATION	198,885	n/a	198,885
Total Collection Additions	6,850	7,583	14,433
Total Item Held	104,821	8,549	113,370

BELLE HAVEN LIBRARY – BEFORE AND AFTER

- 20% of City of Menlo Park's residents live in the Belle Haven/ Bayfront area.
- Circulation percentage is calculated as total item checkouts divided by total number of items.
- The number of items in the Belle Haven Library collection increased 123%

	Old location 413 Ivy Drive	New location 100 Terminal Ave
Items in collection	6924	8549
Percentage of total library collection	6%	7.5%
Percentage of collection circulated (total circulation over total collection)	47%	131%*

*For reference - percentage of collection circulated at 800 Alma St. is 371%

BELLE HAVEN LIBRARY – BROWSING-ONLY

As promised to community, Belle Haven Library is a browsing-only collection; it is not possible to remotely place holds on the items for shipment to libraries outside Menlo Park.

Benefits of browsing-only:
- Prevents items from being shipped to libraries outside Menlo Park. This helps keep items available to people who frequent Belle Haven Library in person, i.e. Menlo Park residents.
- This benefit is greatest in the immediate months after opening a new library when items are new and in demand, and decreases over time.

Downsides:
- Peninsula Library System's technical limitations are such that it is unable to adapt its system to designate Belle Haven Library for prioritization for incoming holds from libraries outside Menlo Park
- Shelves tend to become more full because shipping items to libraries outside Menlo Park historically has been a big percentage of circulation. This results in less room to grow the collection unless items are deselected, and less circulation data to inform decision-making about which items to deselect.

Conclusion: Staff is preparing to make some parts of the Belle Haven collection available for holds to libraries outside Menlo Park in the coming months.

HOW DO WE MEASURE UP?

Comparing ourselves to similar libraries helps us:

- Know whether we are providing sufficient quality services to our community
- Understand what is reasonable to expect from our services
- Know how we could improve/better serve the community

"Good hard play leads to realistic and authentic benchmarks. These benchmarks need to make sense to the community and need to be available for review by the community as well."

– R. David Lankes, Expect More: Demanding Better Libraries for Today's Complex World

LIBRARY JOURNAL STAR LIBRARIES

What does Star Libraries measure?

- Library visits (physical & website)
- Circulation (physical & electronic)
- Program attendance
- Public computer use
- Wifi sessions

Comparison group and ranking:

- Libraries with budget $1-4.9mil.
- 1,094 libraries
- Does not account for different economics state-to-state
- Top 30 libraries per group are named Star Libraries
- MPL current rank: 120

LIBRARY	STATE	POPULATION OF LEGAL SERVICE AREA	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	NATIONAL RANK	LIBRARY LOCATIONS	TOTAL FTE STAFF	BOOK VOLUMES HELD	TOTAL COLLECTION EXPENDITURE
PLYMOUTH DISTRICT LIBRARY	MI	36,656	$3,974,492	27	1	33.27	192,271	$453,064
CARY MEMORIAL LIBRARY	MA	33,792	$3,505,256	29	1	32.80	218,566	$290,001
BETTENDORF PUBLIC LIBRARY INFORMATION CENTER	IA	33,215	$3,392,229	105	1	33.23	142,823	$423,735
BALDWIN PUBLIC LIBRARY	MI	35,350	$3,602,356	110	1	38.78	95,312	$587,701
MENLO PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY	CA	35,254	$3,795,759	120	2	25.00	111,447	$340,671
GLENSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	IL	36,259	$3,625,357	202	1	31.33	88,124	$296,340
OSSINING PUBLIC LIBRARY	NY	34,230	$3,754,773	232	1	27.59	98,794	$199,815
GUILDERLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY	NY	36,131	$3,801,016	269	1	61.41	112,414	$361,218
MICHIGAN CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY	IN	35,339	$3,639,855	601	1	37.00	71,145	$321,126

LIBRARY JOURNAL STAR LIBRARIES

- Ranking is based on out-of-date data (2020) and changes made would not see results for 3-4 years.

- Necessary changes at Menlo Park Library to achieve LJ Star Library rating (top 30 libraries)
  - Higher budget & staffing
  - Desktop computers
  - Eliminate sparsely attended events

- Staff is evaluating whether these changes add value for our community.

"By definition, service outputs do not reflect quality, excellence, effectiveness, or value of services to the library's community."

– Library Journal

PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LIBRARY BENCHMARK

What does Benchmark measure?
- IMLS Annual Survey
- PLA Annual Survey
- US Census American Community Survey

Our comparison group
- Suburban municipal libraries with service population that is <75% white & >35% college educated
- 161 libraries
- Can create custom comparison groups

"Benchmark is PLA's newest tool for data-driven planning and advocacy in public libraries. It features a range of interactive data visualizations that allow libraries to easily make peer comparisons across a wide range of metrics related to library programs, services, and operations."

– Public Library Association

PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LIBRARY BENCHMARK

Strengths
- Multiple sources of data
- Highly customizable
- Data more recent
- Measures input as well as output

Weaknesses
- Have to know what you want to know
- Some data inconsistent – some surveys optional
- User interface difficult to learn, data sets difficult to parse

- Not recommended as the ONLY tool for comparing ourselves to other libraries

- However, overall allows for significantly more nuance and productive conclusions about library operations

FINAL THOUGHTS

"Please note, however, that benchmark[ing] is not equivalent to numbers and statistics.

"Benchmarks must be negotiated and meaningful. Librarians and community members must set a desired outcome, then seek a common understanding of what evidence will demonstrate that outcome.

"That may be a number (people in the library), but it could also be the collected stories of the community, or consensus from focus groups, or a product of observing interactions in libraries and other community spaces.

"The bottom line here is that there are no longer standard numbers that describe a great library… ***Great libraries and great communities seek*** ***impact*** ***, not numbers."***

– R. David Lankes, Expect More: Demanding Better Libraries for Today's Complex World

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THANK YOU