



**LIBRARY COMMISSION AND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING MINUTES**

Date: 12/18/2024
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Locations: Teleconference and
Belle Haven Library - Makerspace
100 Terminal Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Vice Chair Lee called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Crockett, Dawkins, Grass, Herrick, Lee, Orton, Pollack, Sherman, VanBuren, Westcott

Absent: Joshua, Emms, Shafer

Staff: Library and Community Services Director Sean Reinhart, Assistant Library and Community Services Director Nick Szegda, Library and Community Services Supervisor Tricia Mullan

C. Presentations and Proclamations

C1. Year in Review (Staff Report PRC-2024-040 / LC-2024-040)

Director Reinhart, Assistant Director Szegda and Supervisor Mullan made the presentation (Attachment).

D. Commissioner Reports

D1. Individual Commissioner reports.

Commissioner Herrick reported out on the ad-hoc subcommittee's recent visit to the Hayward Library (Attachment).

E. Adjournment

Vice Chair Lee adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Assistant Library and Community Services Director Nick Szegda



YEAR IN REVIEW - 2024

Parks and Recreation Commission and Library Commission

December 18, 2024

A LOOK BACK AT 2024

- The Library and Community Services department team had a very active and successful 2024
- It's not possible to list every noteworthy achievement in a slideshow
- If an achievement is not listed, that does not mean that it is any less important than these selected highlights!





THE DEPARTMENT

Library and Community Services provides a diverse array of lifelong learning and recreational opportunities for Menlo Park residents of all ages, abilities, and lived experiences.

- Public libraries
- Indoor recreation
- Outdoor recreation
- Early childhood education
- School age childcare
- Aging adult (senior) programs
- Community events

FACILITIES

Library and Community Services operates eight public facilities to serve the residents of Menlo Park:

- Arrillaga Family Gymnasium
- Arrillaga Family Gymnastics Center
- Arrillaga Family Recreation Center
- Belle Haven Child Development Center
- Belle Haven Community Campus (actually 5 facilities in 1)
- Burgess Pool
- Menlo Children's Center
- Menlo Park Library



POLICY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024



Parks and Recreation Commission

- Signage display policy
- Facility rental policy
- Recreation scholarship policy
- Event sponsorship policy

Library Commission

- Library collection development policy
- Library meeting room use policy
- Exhibits and displays policy

Both commissions

- LCS Strategic Plan 2024-26





2024 - BY THE NUMBERS

- Circulated over 550,000 library items with 23,400 Menlo Park resident library cardholders
- Enrolled almost 4,000 gymnastics students in 440+ classes
- Added over 6,000 new recreation client accounts - more than doubling the number of accounts
- Provided quality care to over 250 children in daily child care programs
- Provided over 500 free educational and cultural programs to the Menlo Park community, supported largely by donations
- Completed over 14,000 senior shuttle trips
- Served over 7,000 nutritious, low-cost lunches to Menlo Park senior center visitors.







PARK RENOVATIONS



- Willow Oaks Park
 - New playground
 - New dog park
 - New pathways
- Burgess Park
 - New “tree house” playground equipment
- Nealon Park parking lot
 - Resurfacing, reconfiguration
- Bedwell Bayfront Park - Flyway trail
 - Salt pond restoration
 - Don Edwards Nat’l Wildlife Refuge



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Suggestion boxes
- Aquatics user survey
- Aquatics open houses
- Child care needs survey
- Belle Haven Community Campus working group
- Library Commission
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Youth Advisory Committee
- Library teen advisory group



TEENS AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)
- Teen aquatics focus group
- Teen makerspace research
- Library Teen Advisory Group
- Teen media days and movie nights
- Middle grade book group
- Video game and board game nights
- Library “Teen Zones” gathering spaces





COMMUNITY EVENTS



MENLO PARK CELEBRATES



- Black Liberation Month
- Egg Hunt and Spring Fest
- Youth Poetry Voices
- Juneteenth Celebration
- 4th of July Parade
- Music in the Park concert series
- Halloweek!
- Shop Local! Light Up the Season
- Photos with Santa
- 500+ smaller-scale educational and cultural programs.







**HILLVIEW
MIDDLE SCHOOL
MENLO PARK, CA**





A DREAM COME TRUE

BELLE HAVEN COMMUNITY CAMPUS





BELLE HAVEN COMMUNITY CAMPUS

- Belle Haven Library
- Belle Haven Pool
- Belle Haven Youth Center
- Menlo Park Senior Center
- Onetta Harris Community Center





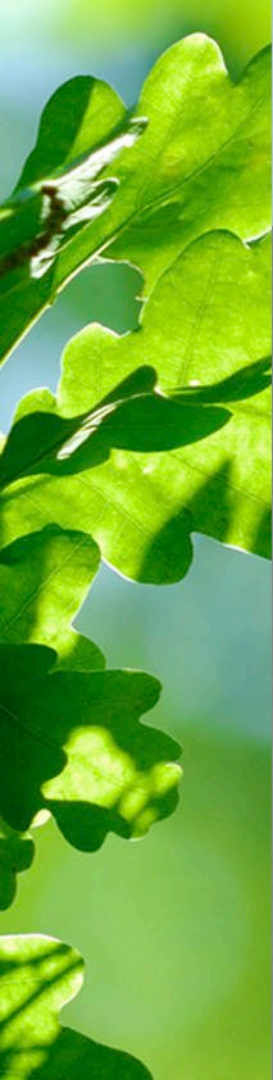








BELLE HAVEN COMMUNITY CAMPUS
100



A LOOK AHEAD TO 2025



THANK YOU

Menlo Park Library of the Future
 Library Commission Ad Hoc Committee
 Update for fellow commissioners
 December 16, 2024

Proposed library visits - January-February 2025

Library	Presumed Contact	Budget	Population Served	Ad Hoc Member	Others Visiting**	Date of visit
Burlingame	Brad McCulley	6.3 million	35,000	Brian Westcott		
Redwood City-Downtown Library	Derek Wolfgram	10.8 million	80,000	Michael Herrick		
Palo Alto-Mitchell Park Library	Gayathri Kanth	12.1 million	70,000	Brian Westcott	Carol Orton	
Mountain View	Tracy Gray	8.067 million	86,500	Kim Crockett		
Los Gatos	Ryan Baker	3.398 million	33,529	Kim Crockett		
Hayward	Jayani Addleman	7.880 million	155,000	Michael Herrick	Kim Crockett, Brian Westcott, Carol Orton	12/11/2024
Menlo Park	N/A	3.3 million	31,000	N/A	N/A	N/A

Please contact the Ad Hoc committee member listed above, **by the first week in January, if interested in joining a specific library visit team

Main topics of information gathering

Topic	Comments
Branch libraries	
Size of Main Library	
Year opened	
Programming	
Staffing	
Collections	

Community Collaborations	
New and Innovative Activities	
Future Aspirations	
Challenges	

Background information to look into before the visit:

- 1) Population served?
 - a) Number of people
 - b) Demographic characteristics (age, languages, ethnicities)
 - c) Budget
 - d) Staffing
 - e) Programming
 - f) Collections
 - i) physical (size, any particular emphases, etc)
 - ii) Digital
 - iii) Non-text, non-video, non-audio aspects?

Prompting questions during the visit:

- 2) What are you most proud of about your library and the services it offers?
- 3) What types of community collaborations and partnerships does your library have?
 - a) How do you figure out if your programs and services are meeting community needs?
 - b) What method (surveys, etc.) do you use to gather feedback? How often?
- 4) What are some things which are not working/could be improved?
- 5) What is one new thing you have implemented in the last year?
- 6) Looking to the future, what are your plans?
- 7) Do you have a wish list or a pie-in-the sky aspiration for future library services?

Sample information gathered from the 12/11/2024 Hayward Library visit

Topic	Comments
Branch libraries	1 undergoing renovations currently; Measure C 0.5% sales tax, which funded the Downtown Library construction, is slated to fund the construction of another branch library
Size of Main Library	58,000 SF
Year opened	2017

Programming	Very popular (young) children story hour which has already outgrown the space designed for it; homework help; much of the programming is self-serve in that there are many meeting and collaboration spaces which community groups can use to engage in their own activities/programming.
Staffing	[research more]: Not able to open Sundays
Collections	Standard digital offerings (in the BALIS consortium, part of PLP, which runs in a similar way to PLS); Print collections are not highlighted in the building design. The building itself features meeting spaces and use space much more than books which are in shelving ranges on each floor but not prominently placed
Community Collaborations	Many: from diaper distribution to Community College and CSU East Bay enabled "homework help" programs; music programs come into the library making the ground floor a community space, the sounds of which filter up to the quieter 2nd and 3rd floor study spaces. The building's original design was built around distinctive art highlighted throughout the building and there are continuing efforts to add and enhance this feature. Meeting spaces are well used and sought after by multiple populations for many uses.
New and Innovative Activities	There is great art everywhere. The architects facilitated this but ongoing collaborations continue to augment this aspect of the physical spaces. The amount of technology throughout the library. This was an intentional design feature pursued in mid-2010s. Touch screen and other interactive computer equipment for children as young as 2 or 3. Every floor of the library has technology-focused design features. It is a Net Zero building but that has also led to challenges since the building's infrastructure (radiant floor heating/cooling) requires extra attention.
Future Aspirations	To bring diversity initiatives front and center; bring services into more local communities through 2 bookmobiles, refurbishing an existing branch library and building a new branch library
Challenges	Staffing to keep the building open and accessible to meet community demand. Closes at 7:00 in the evening which is especially a problem for utilizing the great meeting spaces in the building. The design of the library prohibits having these community spaces open when the library is closed since full staffing is necessary. The design features of the building were more ambitious than the contractor was always able to handle so it led to some difficulties getting the building open on time.



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – DRAFT

Date: 11/25/2024
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 6:30 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Herrick, Orton, Pollack, Shafer, Westcott, Wise
Absent: Crockett
Staff: Library and Community Services Director Sean Reinhart, Assistant Library and Community Services Director Nick Szegda, Library and Community Services Supervisor Rose Waldman, Senior Program Assistant John Weaver, Librarian Ella Hadrovic

C. Presentations and Proclamations

C1. Library programs: Enrichment through experiences (Attachment)

Supervisor Waldman, Librarian Hadrovic and Senior Program Assistant Weaver made the presentation.

D. Regular Business

D1. Approve the meeting minutes from the October 21, 2024 meeting (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (Wise/ Westcott), to approve the minutes from the October 21, 2024 meeting, passed 6-0-1 (Crockett absent).

D2. Recommend updates to the library collection development policy (Staff Report LC-2024-036)

Assistant Director Szegda introduced the item.

ACTION: Motion and second (Shafer/ Pollack) to recommend the updates to the library collection development policy, passed 6-0-1 (Crockett absent).

D3. Approve the 2025 Library Commission meeting calendar (Staff Report LC-2024-037)

Assistant Director Szegda introduced the item.

The Commission discussed the potential of adding a special joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission, tentatively to be held at the Belle Haven Community Campus.

ACTION: Motion and second (Wescott/ Pollack) to approve the 2025 Library Commission meeting calendar as amended, passed 6-0-1 (Crockett absent).

D4. Ad-hoc subcommittee update (Staff Report LC-2024-038)

The Ad-hoc Subcommittee provided an update on their activities, including a planned visit to the Hayward Library on Dec. 11 that will require special event noticing by staff.

ACTION: No action taken.

E. Informational Items

E1. Library and community services department statistics and recent activities (Staff Report LC-2024-039)

Assistant Director Szegda introduced the item.

E2. Library Commission tentative agenda calendar (Attachment)

ACTION: By acclamation, the Commission added the following items to the tentative agenda calendar:

- Dec. 18 joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission at Belle Haven Community Campus
- Ad-hoc subcommittee report out and list of libraries to visit – December

F. Commissioner Reports

F1. Individual Commissioner reports

None.

G. Adjournment

Chair Orton adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Assistant Library and Community Services Director Nick Szegda



LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

Library Commission – Nov. 18, 2024



LIBRARY PRESENTATION SERIES

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

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

Library Outreach:
Bringing the Library to the Community
March 2025

Library Programming:
Enrichment through Experience
November 2024

Library of the Future:
What's next for Libraries and for MPL
May 2025

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

Library Budget:
Collection Development and Operations
July 2025

OUR FOCUS TODAY

Above and beyond the books on the shelves, libraries engage with and cultivate community. Programming is critical to this interpersonal approach. Today, we are talking about:

- What program engagement looks like at our libraries
- Making the library welcoming for teenagers
- How and why we train staff to provide storytimes
- Other programs we offer, and some attendance statistics

“Bad libraries build collections. Good libraries build services (of which a collection is only one). Great libraries build communities.”

– R. David Lenkes,
@rdlanke

WHY LIBRARY PROGRAMS?

Libraries are books. And people. And connections.

People have different learning styles, and we try to satisfy their need for information, and their curiosity—and even spark further curiosity—in different ways.

The experiences we offer can add depth, texture, and context to book learning, as they lead participants to our other resources to learn more.

Our youth and family programs bring school assembly-style programs to the entire community, in a time when fewer schools are able to share these learning resources.

Program attendees learn about our other available resources, as they get to know the library environment and staff.



ENGAGEMENT WITH THE LIBRARY

Building Community Connections

Listening to our current patrons: we learn more about them, and they about us, when we share experiences. Both parties benefit.

Seed Library: When we wanted to launch a Seed Library, one mention at a library program led to an attendee stepping forward. Our thriving program (including monthly Garden Talks) is led by this volunteer and another she brought in.

A 20-something man in tech attended a beading workshop, and expressed gratitude for something to do with his hands that did not involve a keyboard. He provided insight as to the best timing for events for people in his field.

Cultural programming often brings in first-time users of our library, introducing them to our offerings, and allowing them to share their cultures with us, and our presenters, and each other, providing ideas for further opportunities.



TEEN PROGRAMMING

- Purpose of teen programming:
 - Shows teens how to interact with the library space and library staff
 - Provide important social experiences to the public
- Offering a mix of programming:
 - Passive programming: D&D sheets, coloring, and themed posters
 - Active programming: teen films, video game sessions, Teen Book Group, and volunteer opportunities



STORYTIME

“Baby’s first book group,” and consistently our most popular program! Storytime introduces early literacy concepts and a group experience for the children, and modeling prompts for reading at home for the caregivers, setting the stage for a lifelong relationship with the library.

Successful in-house training program

- Born of necessity in the early pandemic
- Emphasis on intentionality, all-are-welcome inclusivity, cleaving to the purpose of the activity
 - Early literacy
 - Anti-bias
- 5 “graduated classes” since 2020
- Allows for interchangeability of storytimers with internal consistency of quality, message, and format
- Positive feedback from trainees

Our Storytimes

Belle Haven Library:

- Tuesdays at 7:15pm
- Fridays at 5:15pm
- Saturdays at 10:15am

Menlo Park Library:

- Thursdays at 10:15am
- Fridays at 10:15
- Saturdays at 11:15am

City Child Development Facilities

- Menlo Children’s Center (MCC): Tuesdays at 9:30am
- Belle Haven Youth Center (BHYC): Tuesdays at 4:15pm
- Belle Haven Child Development Center (BHCDC):
Wednesdays at 9:30am



STATISTICS AND STAFFING

- Emphasis on expertise – both from staff and outside presenters
- Average attendance across events:
 - Storytimes at Alma St: 47
 - Book Groups: 17
 - Monthly event attendance: 1,006
- Library Adventure:
 - July 18, 2023: 200
 - February 2, 2024: 278
 - July 24, 2024: 212
- Summer Lawn Events: 221 average attendance
- BHCC weekend events since opening: average 65 per event



JUST A FEW MORE OF OUR PROGRAMS

Weekly	Monthly	Recurring	A few times a year	Once a year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytime (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday) • Teen Media Days (Wednesdays and Friday) • English Conversation Club (Tuesdays and Saturdays) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiction • Sci-Fi/Fantasy • Mystery • Melanated Women Read • Youth Book Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle Grade Book Group • Teen Book Group • Garden Talks • Global Language Storytime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informational Lectures and Workshops • Hands-on programs mixing learning with creation • Virtual Museum Visits • Cooking Lessons • Live music, in both performances for all ages and First Concert Series for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library Adventure (at the Menlo Park Library in July and at the Belle Haven Library in February) • Bookish Trivia • Raise a Glass • Stuffed Animal Sleepover • Author visits • Special exhibitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Month (collaborative with San Mateo County Health) • Summer Reading Game • Puppetry Festival • Storytelling Festival • Library Reads Banned Books (in October for Banned Books Week) • E-Resource Night



THANK YOU