

Session 16-06, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Acting Chair Jacque Peterson at 5:37 p.m. on November 1, 2016 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: BOARDMEMBER KUSZMAUL, MASSION, PETERSON, FALLON, MONTGOMERY

ABSENT: BOARD MEMBER SPRINGER

STAFF: CITY MANAGER KOESTER  
LIBRARY DIRECTOR DIXON  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

#### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

KUSZMAUL/MASSION - MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

#### RECONSIDERATION

#### VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

A. Kelly Cooper, President, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly & Willy Dunne, Assembly member South Peninsula Area – Discussion and Information on funding options for the Homer Public Library

Deputy City Clerk Krause explained that the Assembly members for the City and South Peninsula area and the City Manager were invited to attend the meeting to discuss options available to the Library for funding.

Board member Peterson explained for Assembly members Cooper and Dunne and City Manager Koester that the Board held a worksession on October 25, 2016 to create a plan for funding for the Library. The library currently has a service area that covers from Ninilchik south across Kachemak Bay to Seldovia and Nanwalek. Due to the fiscal environment budgets are being cut but services have not so the Board is looking at many avenues to maintain the funding needed to provide the many services the Library currently provides to the large area it services.

Discussion ensued on the attempt a couple of years earlier to form a service district at that time focusing on recreation. The group lost momentum on the issue. The following points were discussed or brought up by the assembly and Board:

- The Kenai Peninsula Borough (Borough) does not have Library powers; it is a second class borough

- The Borough is experiencing the same funding constraints and had attempted in the recent municipal election to make some changes to the sales tax cap and senior exemption amounts which did not pass.
- The Borough does not have any line item funding or grants that would be available to assist the Library with any one time purchases such as the public computers
- One of the only options available would be to create a service area, Assembly President Cooper provided a brief outline on the process stating that a service and operating agreement would have to be made between the City and the Borough since the facility is owned by the city but would be managed by the Borough if a service area is formed.
- The Library employees would maintain their employment with the city under that agreement.
- A Service Area Board would be created and members elected and they would be responsible for managing and approving the budget and expenditures of the library.
- Creating a service area similar to the South Peninsula Hospital service area would almost cover the service area of the Library and this would be an additional mil rate added to the property tax but that funding would also need to cover the established libraries in Ninilchik and Anchor Point. If the service area for the library extends across the bay then those property owners and libraries could be included.
- If the proposed boundaries and mil rate are submitted to the Borough they can pull up the information on the proposed amount of revenue that would be available for reference
- The full process to create a service area can take up to 18 months
- Assembly President Cooper recommended that they include other groups such as parks, trails and recreation to create voter buy in since the creation of a service area adds to the property taxes it is better to have as much support as possible.
- Assembly member Dunne supported the idea of the Borough providing some funding for libraries and opined that people would be willing to pay to support the Library
- The City also has options to dedicate a percentage or add a percentage to the existing sales tax but was not sure if that would be approved if it had to go before the voters since Homer already has one of the highest sales taxes but can also implement other taxes such as an increase in the property tax mil rate to be dedicated for the library
- It was pointed out that Seward is running into the same issues with funding their library.
- Refinancing options, research will be looked into on the Borough side
- Questioned whether the City of Homer would have to provide as much support/budget as it currently does if a service area is approved
- Assembly member Dunne spoke on his experience in creating the Seldovia Recreational Service Area
- it has been determined that implementing user fees for non-city residents is against the purpose of a public library and typically a public library is supported by tax dollars
- Mat-su Borough funds the Public Libraries in the borough and partially funds the Libraries in Wasilla and Palmer operating expenses based on numbers served which had always been a fluctuating number in the past
- Libraries in the Mat-su small communities acting as regional libraries but using the same system so there is a cost savings
- Homer Public Library has about 10,000 card holders, about half are in city limits half outside and presently the Library can only track them by zip code which limits the way they can track those card holders that live outside city limits but there are 1186 cards from Anchor Point, 97 from Ninilchik and 43 from Seldovia which amounts to 13%. There is no way, without incurring more staff overhead, to determine the cardholders with a 99603 zip code.

- Assembly member Dunne was interested in how the Mat-su Borough funds their libraries and how they have library powers.
- The general response of the public is that they do not want to pay additional taxes but still expect services, many agencies and organizations are coming forward requesting funding for the services that are provided but cities cannot provide those funds any longer; money is expended on an emotional basis.
- Seldovia and Kachemak City are the only incorporated entities all other communities are Borough. Kachemak City had contributed for the construction of the building

Discussion ensued on a possible scenario of how a service area would manage or provide for the Library and that before more details are addressed the Library Advisory Board should decide if they do want to explore the petition process and what that would be like; the boundaries would need to be identified first. The last group could not reach consensus on the area, lost momentum and just fizzled out. **The Library service area was established as far back as the 1980's but no document has been located yet since the actual year is not certain.**

Any grants that are available are provided to non-profits and provide services that a governmental entity would normally provide.

Assembly person Dunne encouraged the Advisory Board to connect with Tim Dillon at the Kenai Economic Development District since there are numerous small businesses using the library services and conducting their businesses.

The Library Advisory Board thanked the Assembly members for coming and speaking with them and providing some ideas and feedback. Assembly President Cooper provided some information on formation of Service Area and appreciated the opportunity to discuss the options with the Board. Assemblyman Dunne commented on the aspects of long term fiscal planning and the great efforts of Senator Stevens and Representative Seaton and that it will not remain all doom and gloom at the state levels.

Boardmember Peterson thanked City Manager Koester for attending their meeting and looked forward to more discussion on possible solutions.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Minutes for the October 4, 2016 Regular Meeting

MASSION/MONTGOMERY - MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

Boardmember Kuszmaul noted that on page 5, under Rare Book Report, a typographical error and should reflect "The Board" **not "A"**. Boardmember Peterson called for additional corrections or changes.

KUSZMAUL/MASSION – MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.

There was no additional discussion.

VOTE: YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

## REPORTS

### A. Library Director's Report

#### 1. Statistics for 2015 and October 2016 (Laydown)

Library Director Dixon had provided the statistics. She reported that she is still struggling with the e-rate application, drainage issues in the parking lot has been reviewed and Public Works has proposed to dig a ditch that will go through part of a flower bed, in response to the issue of providing services in or out of the city, Library Director Dixon informed the Board that a teacher who does not live in the city limits stepped up and paid for a subscription to Tumblebooks, this is a service that provides digitized picture books that can be viewed on a computer or iPad and is highly used. That subscription was going to be unfunded this year at the amount of \$800, she cannot only do it this year and the Wall Street Journal subscription will not be cancelled as a gentleman who lives in Anchor Point came in and wrote a check for that subscription. So those residents who live outside the city limits consider the library theirs too.

Circulation has increased and there is still two months left of the year.

Library Director Dixon answered the following questions:

- **the Bookmobile is operated by the Friends and at this time they are not set up to issue child's library cards** and those cards can only be issued upon application for a card by a parent or guardian.
- they are implementing a new category of Library Card to be issued with limitation for Flex Kids these are minors that have been emancipated or are living on their own.
- Using the donation fund to purchase all the public use computers has a down side since there is no funds available if something happens during the year however the City Manager has allotted \$60,000 into the Depreciation reserves , there is only \$14,000 since City Council has not been funding reserves over the last several years.
- this will help but as long as the budget is approved they will get through another year without canceling any subscriptions.

### B. Friends of the Library – October 12, 2016 Meeting

Board member Massion was unable to attend the meeting. Board member Fallon offered to attend the November meeting.

### C. Worksession October 25, 2016

Boardmember Peterson provided a summary of the worksession which consisted of the following ideas that were discussed:

- In attendance were Board members Massion, Kuszmaul and Peterson and Library Director Dixon

- The amount the budget was cut was approximately \$30,000 which the majority was taken from the Book/Materials budget
- Debt service for the construction of the building is \$99,000 annually with \$50,000 as interest
- Asking the Borough Assembly members to attend the next regular meeting to discuss possible funding opportunities from the Borough, refinancing or grants for one time purchases
- Annual gala fundraising event for the Library planned and coordinated with the Friends
- Creating an Amazon Wish list of Books, this was used by the new Mountainview Library in Anchorage and was very successful. It is simple and allows just about anyone to donate on all levels. It is easy and sustainable.
- Funding options are limited so they need to fundraise themselves and not count on anyone else. This will also show Council that they are trying to be proactive.
- Determine a long term plan and not just talk about the issues; find a path forward that will provide broader base funding going forward.
- Short term and long term goals were discussed
- Need to create a tag line for an advertising campaign that is a yearlong event not just one time

Board member Peterson added that she thinks that Legacy or Estate gifts should be promoted, that they did not discuss this but it can be done in a tasteful manner and she was certain that people would be open to that however is not sure on what type of mechanism is needed to do that. This would allow a real connection to people to where their money was being used. They can provide various options such as paying down the debt, purchasing materials, etc.

Boardmember Fallon requested clarification on the use of the donation fund.

Library Director Dixon explained for the Board how the donation account is set up and the donations received by the Friends is used to purchase books, who by the way would like to have the Board take on the responsibility and should be discussed at a future meeting.

Additional discussion ensued on doing the legwork for setting up the Amazon Wish List, the donations from members of the community to pay for the subscriptions, the giving nature and creating a big presence in the community would work for the benefit of the Library; further ideas offered memorials, Christmas tree of books; discussion with a consultant that works with issues that libraries deal with such as funding.

#### PUBLIC HEARING

#### PENDING BUSINESS

##### A. Budget 2017

The Board members and Library Director Dixon discussed attendance at the next City Council meetings to advocate for the Library budget and to maintain funding. Boardmember Kuszmaul agreed to attend the November meeting and Boardmember Peterson will attend the December meeting.

Staff expressed to the Boardmembers the importance and unknowns with advocacy and the Council actions during budget time.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of a Chair and Vice Chair

Deputy City Clerk Krause opened the floor for nominations of chair.

Boardmember Kuszmaul nominated Boardmember Peterson. Boardmember Massion seconded the nomination.

Deputy City Clerk Krause inquired if there were any additional nominations for chair, hearing none she closed the nominations. She inquired if Boardmember Peterson accepted the nomination of Chair. Boardmember Peterson responded with consent.

The Board elected Boardmember Peterson as Chair.

Chair Peterson called for nominations of Vice Chair. Boardmember Massion nominated Boardmember Kuszmaul as Vice Chair. Boardmember Fallon seconded the nomination.

Boardmember Kuszmaul accepted the nomination.

The Board elected Boardmember Kuszmaul as Vice Chair.

B. 2017 Regular Meeting Schedule

Chair Peterson requested guidance on procedure. Deputy City Clerk Krause explained the process. Board member Kuszmaul requested clarification on keeping the same number of meetings and Ms. Krause explained that this is the time that the Board can choose to keep the schedule the same, meet monthly or even quarterly or any variation thereof.

The Board briefly discussed the meeting dates.

KUSZMAUL/PETERSON - MOVED TO ADOPT THE 2017 REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE.

There was a brief discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

C. Strategic Planning for Library Advocacy

Chair Peterson and Vice Chair Kuszmaul will work with Library Director Dixon on a presentation for Council. Vice Chair Kuszmaul requested some clarification on generating options such as having the Borough obtain Library Powers. It was determined that they schedule a worksession during the 2<sup>nd</sup> or third week in January.

Boardmember Fallon offered to work on slides regarding other ways that libraries benefit the community and run them by Library Director Dixon.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. 2016/2017 Board member Attendance at City Council Meetings

There was a brief review of the process and Boardmember Massion volunteered for February 2017.

B. Appointments/Reappointments to the Board

Chair Peterson inquired if they were in need of reappointments.

Deputy city Clerk Krause responded that all terms expire April 1<sup>st</sup> and most terms are three years however some members are appointed to complete terms where Boardmembers left before their term expired. Boardmember Massion stated that his term expires in April next year so what would he need to get reappointed. Ms. Krause responded an email requesting reappointment. He noted that he will need a reminder in March.

Chair Peterson welcomed new members Montgomery and Fallon and thanked them for joining the Board, noting that their appointments will allow them to meet the required quorum needed to hold meetings.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Boardmember Massion commented it was a nice meeting and welcomed the new members.

Boardmembers Fallon and Montgomery did not have any comments.

Boardmember Kuszmaul commented that she was excited about being a more active Board and believed that the things they talked about are things that the Board should address and is looking forward to that; she also requested clarification on

Chair Peterson commented that she was going to try to emulate former Chair Strobel in conducting a meeting as efficiently as possible.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Krause commented that Chair Peterson did very well conducting the meeting.

Library Director Dixon had no comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_