

Session 13-11 a Special Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Groesbeck at 5:05 p.m. on December 10, 2013 at the City Hall Upstairs Conference Room located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: BOARD MEMBERS GROESBECK, GORDON, STROBEL, POLSTER, PORTER

ABSENT: BOARD MEMBER KLOUDA

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR DIXON
DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

Chair Groesbeck welcome the two new members to the Board.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Groesbeck requested a motion to approve the agenda.

GORDON/PORTER – SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

The agenda was approved as presented by consensus of the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no public comments on the agenda.

Chair Groesbeck requested a motion to suspend the rules to address Item 12, Comments of the Audience after a discussion and clarification from the Clerk on procedure.

STROBEL/GORDON – MOVE TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ALLOW AUDIENCE COMMENTS.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

RECONSIDERATION

There were no items for reconsideration.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Meeting Minutes for the Regular Meeting on October 1, 2013

Chair Groesbeck requested a motion to approve the minutes.

STROBEL/GORDON – MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS

There were no visitors scheduled.

STAFF AND COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Friends Report

Mr. Strobel noted that he did not attend the meeting as the meeting date/day was changed and he was unable to attend. Ms. Dixon reported that they worked on the Budget and events such as the Nutcracker Faire.

Mr. Strobel commented that despite his efforts his required attendance at a meeting prior to the Friends has been running late so it is hampering his attendance but he would like to let it go for the next couple of months to see if his prior meeting will be conducted in a more expedient manner

B. Next Friends Meeting October 9, 2013 at 6 pm in the Library Conference Room

Mr. Strobel stated he will try to attend this meeting but he is on the Fireweed Academy Board and since he no longer runs the meetings they have been very long thus delaying or prohibiting his attendance at the Friends. He will endeavor to get the minutes though to aide in his report.

C. Directors Report and Monthly Statistics

Ms. Dixon noted that the Library was one of the few places that were doing anything in regards to recognizing Native Heritage Month.

She further commented that she belongs to a small group that has been discussing alternative options to Listen Alaska. She explained that big library systems in the country will purchase digital materials and install them on their servers and maintain them. The downside to a subscription is limited and controls access and we cannot make any changes. She stated that they are looking into options of what they can do. November was very interesting month. They call the Police to remove a person who was passed out in the entrance who could not be roused so the paramedics were called.

Ms. Dixon then related an incident where a person wanted to bring in his companion animal which is different than a service animal. She continued to state that a service animal is considered a dog or miniature pony/horse. The Library is not allowed to request proof that it is an actual service animal.

Chair Groesbeck suggested that the city should have a uniform policy related to service animals that applied to all city facilities.

D. Art in the Library

Chair Groesbeck introduced the item and gave the floor to Ms. Dixon.

Ms. Dixon announced that they have the new hanging system in place. A meeting of the selection committee is scheduled for December 12, 2013 to review four submissions. They have received a traveling exhibit that is a photographic exhibit on Liberty and Justice. This will be launched in January.

E. Facilities Report

Ms. Dixon stated that the building has been plumbed for gas but she is unsure when the conversion will take place. She will contact Public Works to get a status update. Chair Groesbeck asked about the parking lot icing. She will have to ask Public Works about that issue and the status of getting it taken care of.

Mr. Polster commented on sanding the sidewalks towards Safeway and noted that they were really treacherous.

PUBLIC HEARING

There was no public hearing scheduled.

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Draft Strategic Plan 2013

Chair Groesbeck read the title into the record. He further noted that Council expressed no concerns regarding the presented Strategic Plan. He reported that he informed the Council that it was a work in progress and would change and be updated periodically and currently was not in any priority order.

Chair Groesbeck read the Strategic Plan into the record.

Discussion ensued focusing on prioritizing the goals stated in the plan. The following order was given to these goals actions were taken:

1. Correct the lack of drainage in the parking lot in the area of the Handicapped Parking spaces to negate the icing issues that happens every winter.
2. Writing and Updating Policies –
 - Collection Development Policy which includes the Selection Policy
 - Internet and Security Policy
 - Social Media Policy
3. Strengthen ties with Advocacy groups most especially the Friends of the Homer Public Library

Further work will ensue on this by the board. It was suggested to work on the policies during the monthly meetings to assist Ms. Dixon.

There were no other goals prioritized.

B. Budget 2014 Review – Update

Chair Groesbeck read the item into the record and asked Ms. Dixon to provide her good news.

Ms. Dixon informed the Board that the Council approved the budget for making the Children's Librarian fulltime and also the increase to the book budget remained. She noted that it was totally unexpected that Council would approve the budget to increase Claudia's position to fulltime.

Chair Groesbeck felt that it really helped their position with council by presenting them with the information and receiving the letters of support from the public.

Ms. Dixon reported that the mood of the Staff was very pleased. She stated it will be really great to have Claudia full time and able to be proactive. She noted that the insurance part wasn't a great thing for staff morale in response to Mr. Gordon's question/statement on morale. She further commented on the people who attended the Council meeting and spoke in favor of the budget request.

Chair Groesbeck stated that there were several people who spoke in favor of imposing a bed tax in order to bring more revenue to the city. He went on to comment on the availability of other taxes that do not affect the resident but would add revenue to the city.

A brief discussion regarding negative comments from a person involved with the Voice for Business group ensued and that the information this person provided was incorrect.

Mr. Groesbeck stated they could celebrate for the remainder of the year but should continue to work on the next budget season.

Ms. Dixon stated she wanted to find ways to connect with the business community. They connect with some elements but not all of them.

C. Landscape Committee – Discussion on Continuation of the Committee

Ms. Dixon stated that a meeting was scheduled but no one showed up last month.

Chair Groesbeck brought the discussion forward asking if the new members would be interested in conducting the business of the committee.

Ms. Krause recommended withholding a decision on the committee since planning was in progress to review all the powers of the commissions and the board to create committees by Council and changes were going to be effected. Mayor Wythe is very concerned about the committees that are formed to address items then end up as a continuing or standing committee. There is talk of no committees being formed with the approval of Council first. There are other changes pending.

Mr. Gordon inquired about Ms. Klouda who was appointed to the committee and asked if he would be allowed to contact her to find out the situation. Ms. Krause will provide her contact information after the Board agreed that it would be a good idea.

It was noted that action was postponed until a decision by Council was made on the status of committees.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Welcome New Boardmember!

Chair Groesbeck welcomed the new members and asked them to tell the Board a little bit about themselves and why they joined the Advisory Board.

Ms. Nan Porter provided a brief history, she was a lifetime resident of Homer, raised her kids and now they are raising their kids here. She volunteers at the Library a few hours a week and why she signed up to join the Board – because she was asked. Ms. Porter commented that she is not political though when it was noted that they attend Council meetings.

Mr. Jack Polster stated that he wanted to be part of the community and volunteer. He was a long time user of the Library but did not want to elaborate on that interesting story. He commented that on the application it asked for his qualifications for being a Board member and he put down his degree in Forestry. When he related this information to an acquaintance who responded how did that related to the library he responded, “I worked in the pulp industry and they make paper out of pulp which is in turn used for books.”

The Board heartily welcomed the new members. Chair Groesbeck looked forward to the new members sharing their valuable experience and fresh ideas.

B. City Council Meeting Calendar – Board Representation

Chair Groesbeck requested the Board to review the calendar and to take time to email Ms. Krause with the month’s that they will attend the Council meeting. He provided a brief synopsis on what the purpose is for attending the meetings.

Ms. Krause requested a volunteer to step forward for the Month of January and reiterated that they are only required to attend one Council meeting not both. Mr. Gordon stated he would cover January but could only attend the meeting on the 13th.

There was no further discussion.

C. Recruitment of New Board members – Creating an Action Plan

Chair Groesbeck read the title into the record. He noted that since Ms. Porter joined because someone asked her she could now ask someone since she was a “veteran” board member.

Mr. Gordon suggested Mr. Polster bring his whole posse.

Ms. Krause commented that a young person would be nice and if they are 18 they are welcome to apply and have full voting privileges. Mr. Polster asked if there was a notice at the desk in the Library. He commented that way the young people would be aware of the need. He believed he might have seen an ad in the paper was the reason he joined.

Ms. Krause suggested posting on the Library Facebook page.

D. Library Staff Reorganization Plan – Ann Dixon, Library Director

Ms. Dixon stated that made it through a fairly intense November. Amy has the biggest load of cataloguing materials. Claudia is still learning and doing well. Ms. Dixon is so thankful that the hours were budgeted. They are looking at training David he has a lot of library experience and his really sharp. As soon as they get through with the budget they will need to update the software, she will look into partial processing but the big crunch is ordering and cataloguing.

Mr. Gordon inquired if processing would be a budgetary item. Ms. Dixon responded that it would come from the book budget.

She noted that she will reevaluate in the New Year to see if they need to redistribute duties.

E. Establishing the 2014 Regular Meeting Schedule

Chair Groesbeck requested the members to put the meeting dates on their calendar. They will meet on the first Tuesday of each month.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Bill & Linda Gates Foundation – The PEW Research Center’s Internet and American Life Project

Chair Groesbeck commented that if the Board has not read the article that they should do so as it was very interesting.

There was a very brief discussion on the articles information.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Mike Haines, city resident, proposed conducting a Qualitative Assessment on the Homer Public Library pro bono. Mr. Haines provided his back as an economic developer/entrepreneurial center developer in different countries. He was instrumental in creating the Biz Idea contest that is conducted every year by the Friends. He has spoken to Andy Haas who is a member of the Friends. Mr. Haas has presented the idea to the group and they are excited about the process.

He believes that there is a misunderstanding on the value of the Library to the community. He believes that a quantitative measure is easy however a qualitative value to the community could possibly open a can of worms. He did some brief research and has not found any qualitative assessment for a library with the exception of a theoretical analysis of the qualitative measures of a Library on an academic level from a person in Glasgow, Scotland. He does not want to proceed until he has received “buy-in” from all the groups involved such as City Administration, the Friends and this Board.

He believes that he can do the quantitative analysis as that is what he does but the qualitative analysis may take a bit of work.

He did not want to start talking to people before approval from all parties. He also noted that this will be a long process and will take some time.

Mr. Polster stated that it would be fascinating what Mr. Haines proposes. Quantitative would be no problem; qualitative may open up a can of worms. GDP is strictly quantitative. He has always had a problem with that; he went on to state he was drafted during Vietnam and the general population believed that every casket made and came back added \$3000 to the GDP and that was good. Tell that to

a family. So qualifying is going to be difficult. So if you can do it He would appreciate him telling how he was going to do it and wished him the best of luck.

Mr. Haines responded that it would take some interpretation and he knows that there are some parts of the Library that will be difficult to put a qualitative value on. He stated that he does not know of other similar facilities that have had an assessment on it but that doesn't mean that after further research he may find one and not have to reinvent the wheel.

The Board expressed favorable consensus on Mr. Haines proposed assessment. Chair Groesbeck informed Mr. Haines that he will get back to him by the end of the week.

A brief discussion ensued and Mr. Gordon was given the green light to contact Mr. Haines to further flesh out the different groups he wanted approval also.

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

There were no comments from staff.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

There was no Council member in attendance.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Groesbeck congratulated Ms. Dixon for a successful budget and she deserved a lot of the credit for all her work. He welcomed the new members. He thanked the older members for a very productive year. He informed the Board that he would be stepping down at the end of the year. He will forward some of his files to Matt and encouraged him to work with Ms. Krause. He needed to move on.

COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Mr. Gordon commented that Mr. Groesbeck has done a magnificent job and has helped this Board tremendously. He wished him luck with whatever he was going to be working on.

Mr. Strobel commented that he was not excited about taking over, they will need to cultivate a new chair, but he will not run away. The meetings will be casual. He was excited that the Children's Librarian, he is a super user, but he avoids the Story Hour like the plague, too crowded, parents are there to talk. He will bring some more children's library issues before this group.

Mr. Polster and Ms. Porter had no comments this time in the interest of saving time.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 7, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, and Alaska.

RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved:_____