

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 7, 2018

Session 18-05, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Jacque Peterson at 5:33 p.m. on August 7, 2018 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: BOARDMEMBERS PETERSON, KUSZMAUL, MASSION, SPRINGER, FINN, AND FAIR

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR DIXON
CITY CLERK JACOBSEN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Boardmember Finn inquired if the laydown item she brought regarding IMLS Funding needed to be included as an agenda item. It was clarified by Chair Peterson and the Deputy City Clerk that the topic was already on the agenda and no further action was needed.

FINN/MASSION MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS WRITTEN

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 1, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes

Library Director Dixon requested additional wording in the second paragraph of the Library Director Report to clarify, in addition to what was said, that "Homer Library cardholders can then borrow books from participating libraries in the rest of the state."

Chair Peterson noted that Boardmember Springer was present at the May 1, 2018 for inclusion under Present.

MASSION/FAIR MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 1, 2018.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

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Motion carried.

REPORTS

A. Library Director Report

Library Director Dixon summarized staff reports for May, June, and July. The reason she brought up one patron's concern of the cleanliness of the bathrooms is because of her observations of how understaffed the Maintenance Department is. She asked boardmembers to consider supporting the Maintenance Department during the budgeting process for additional janitorial services.

She also noted the great garden work being completed, with the empty spots being improved upon over time. The Navy Woodwind Ensemble of the Northwest Division recently held a concert at the library.

Library Director Dixon reported that she's currently working on the annual report to the state, and started work on the City budget. She also has been busy with a library business grant; Homer applied with six other libraries for an inter-library cooperation grant to improve library resources for entrepreneurs and businesses, and better communicate those available resources. The main project for the grant has been preparing a survey to send out to these individuals.

Boardmember Finn requested additional info regarding the entrepreneur survey. Library Director Dixon explained the process of how the surveys will be sent out and to who. Boardmember Finn also asked how the Library Advisory Board can provide budget support for more janitors. Library Director Dixon responded that the Maintenance Department may have already requested the additional funding in their budget, and that when she testifies for the library she can voice support for it then.

Boardmember Kuszmaul noted the announcement of one library employee retiring, and inquired if the Library Director saw any issues with the position being refilled. Library Director Dixon explained the plan to fill the vacancy: how cross-training is already being conducted, rearranging tasks among existing employees, and hiring a new part-time person.

Chair Peterson offered kudos to an employee for thwarting a library theft. Discussion ensued regarding the incident.

Boardmember Massion asked for a status update on the Rasmussen grant application. Library Director Dixon explained it has been started, but since it must be completed in sections she has been unable to continue until the audited 2017 City financial report is available. Boardmember Massion clarified the use of the grant, and what will be requested.

Library Director Dixon stated the library has had an overall feeling of it being busy in general, with an influx of attendees from the cruise ships to mainly use the library Wi-Fi and/or computers. Discussion progressed into questions and answers on any increases in cost due to the Wi-Fi use, and how those costs are covered. Further discussion covered various topics including reciprocal cards, the handicap button at the library entrance, and 2017/2018 statistic comparison.

B. Friends of the Library

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Brief discussion covered the Friends of the Library newsletter that was in the packet material.

Boardmember Kuszmaul reported on the last Friends of the Library meeting she had attended. The major discussion at that meeting pertained to the renovation of the flower beds and the good deal on landscaping work they received from Dutchboy Landscaping.

Boardmember Finn shared her positive experience with the “Bob” Bookmobile, encouraging the other board members to participate in it next year, and gave kudos to the event.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Library Policies: Discussion & Approval

1. Updated Circulation Policy

Library Director Dixon requested clarification on if the policy had already been approved or not; Deputy City Clerk Tussey clarified drafts were presented at the May meeting with final motions scheduled for the August meeting, and had not yet gone to Council for approval.

The Board discussed the policy draft and its components, including questions and comments on:

- Separate policy for inter-library loans
- Refund/replacement fees
- Age restrictions on using digital devices
- Kits
- Video versus DVD verbiage
- The City’s collection agency

Chair Peterson read the title into the record and requested a motion to approve the Updated Circulation Policy.

MASSION/FINN MOVED TO APPROVE THE UPDATED CIRCULATION POLICY.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

2. Updated Displays-Exhibits Policy

Boardmember Finn initiated discussion, asking if the exhibit committee is a changing or pre-staid committee. Library Director Dixon clarified that the committee in action during her tenure has been the Art Selection Committee, including one boardmember from the Library Advisory Board, held once a year. She reiterated there isn’t a lot of space for art in the library.

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Boardmember Finn commented that the paragraph under Selection Processes is an excellent guideline and overview.

Library Director Dixon provided background information on the newly included sections in the draft, specifically the policy on Solicitation, Petitions, and Distribution of Materials. Situations have come up in the past in terms of distribution of religious literature or requesting petition signatures, which prompted the Library Director to consult the City Attorney. The legal opinion is that the library building itself is a “limited public forum”, meaning rules and conditions can be set for exhibits/displays as long as they’re equally applied. Library Director Dixon explained this is why she included the new section to specify which areas are available and for what kinds of materials, so that when these situations arise she can reference the detailed policy. She brought up one question pertaining to a line on permission from staff, asking the Board for their opinion and stating it may be a question for the City Attorney and City Manager. Boardmember Finn voiced concerns that the policy currently written does not address the process for handling permissions, notifications, and time frames, and should be detailed out more. Boardmember Fair agreed, emphasizing the need for further clarification of the process.

Discussion ensued on detailed verbiage related to permissions, and seeking legal opinion to make sure the process is acceptable. It was agreed by the Board to move the exhibits policy to the next meeting so the Library Director could consult the City Attorney on the matter.

Chair Peterson confirmed placing the Displays-Exhibits Policy on the September 4, 2018 agenda for review and consideration.

3. Draft of Library User Conduct

Boardmember Finn questioned the verbiage on allowed areas for sending/receiving cellphone calls, asking if there were other designated areas. Library Director Dixon clarified that cellphones are used in the study and meeting room.

Boardmember Kuszmaul brought up concerns pertaining to service and emotional support animals. Library Director Dixon confirmed there had been issues in the past. Research into federal and state regulations found differences between the two entities, that only two questions can be asked, that the animal is not required to wear the vest, and all the person needs to say is that it’s their services animal. Not much else can be done unless the animal messes on the floor or bites other people.

Library Director Dixon further explained that the library does not have to accept emotional support animals, only service animals, which are defined as dogs or miniature ponies. Boardmember Kuszmaul opined that if emotional support animals don’t have to be accepted then it should be clarified more in the user policy. It was discussed how specific the verbiage should be, how much the current wording is open to interpretation, and if it should include or reference state coding.

Boardmember Kuszmaul stated she’d like to make a motion that amended the verbiage on emotional support and service animals. There was discussion on what language to use and she explained her reasoning for the amendment, that it should address the exclusion of emotional support animals while also referencing state statutes.

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KUSZMAUL/MASSION MOVED TO AMEND THE BULLET POINT ADDRESSING SERVICE ANIMALS BE EDITED TO INCLUDE LANGUAGE THAT PROHIBITS EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS PER STATE STATUTE.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Peterson read the title into the record and requested a motion to approve the Library User Conduct as amended.

FINN/MASSION MOVED TO APPROVE THE LIBRARY USER POLICY AS AMENDED.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Rescheduling of October Meeting for Library Advisory Board

Chair Peterson confirmed the reasoning behind rescheduling was because of DirLead, an annual conference for library directors in the State of Alaska. The October meeting also falls on Election Day. The Board discussed options for rescheduling, the consensus being October 1st would be acceptable.

PETERSON/MASSION MOVED TO RESCHEDULE THE OCTOBER MEETING TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2018 AT 5:30 P.M.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Preliminary Library Budget Review

Chair Peterson deferred to the Library Director to initiate budget discussions. Library Director Dixon reported she has only started compiling numbers; no major budget items at this point except requesting the book budget be restored to the 2015 level and funding the replacement of computers/equipment. She touched on other budget items such as:

- Staff changes – salaries and benefits
- Professional services, contracts, software subscriptions – commonly increase by 5% every year
- Addition of membership dues – more staff participation in professional organizations such as the Alaska Library Association and American Library Association

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- Security cameras – becoming obsolete and need replacement

Boardmember Finn asked how much the membership dues for the ALA organizations are. Library Director Dixon stated individual dues are based on your salary and how many sub-memberships you're enrolled in. Example: one employee belongs to the basic ALA and Public Library memberships, as well as the Children's membership and the Young Adult membership. Half of that is paid out of the employee's own pocket. Library Director Dixon further explained that many of the library grants require memberships to these organizations, and for cataloguers it gives them access to necessary information.

Chair Peterson inquired when a more formalized budget can be anticipated. Library Director Dixon stated that they're supposed to have a budget/budget proposals by September, but that she will not have discussed the library budget with the City Manager and Finance Director by the next Library Advisory Board meeting since that staff meeting occurs the second or third week of September.

Chair Peterson asked the Board if there were additional questions. There was no further discussion.

C. IMLS Future Funding Support

Chair Peterson initiated discussion on future funding of IMLS and referred to Boardmember Finn for her report. She began by stating the articles on the topic were fabulous; they explain what libraries do, what they are, and have fantastic supportive information. Boardmember Finn provided the Board with a written summary (as a laydown) on the three federal statutes and up-to-date information on their current status, and expects the information to lead into a discussion about funding for the library.

Boardmember Finn thoroughly reported the findings of her research on bills S.2271, H.R.6470, and S.3158. She explained the level of support each bill is currently receiving from Alaska's congress members, and the strong need for them to sponsor these bills.

Chair Peterson referenced the library article by Lisa Pete, stating how the president has requested the defunding of IMLS, and questioned if these bills signify a work-around of that. Discussion ensued on the steps/process of funding through the senate and house, and how the passing of these authorization bills mean there could be funding available for IMLS.

Boardmember Finn continued reporting on the information she received from the congressional staff in Washington D.C., explaining the deadlines these bills face and what will happen if not passed by October 1, 2018. She emphasized that now is the moment to ask elected officials for support even if the bills most likely will not be voted on until the beginning of the year. She shared with the Board how easy it is to utilize the tools at www.congress.gov to look up information on these bills. Boardmember Finn concluded with noting which congressional members are doing what for the bills, and posing the question to the Board how we can show support and leverage pressure to get these bills passed.

The Board and Deputy City Clerk Tussey discussed the specifics on where the support should come from, and how congress should be contacted to request they sponsor the three bills:

- From the City of Homer via resolution – Finding a councilmember willing to sponsor the resolution
- From Friends of the Library – Let a community-driven entity submit a letter
- Appropriateness of a letter from the Library Advisory Board directly

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- All of these options

There was discussion of giving a presentation and prepared statement of support at the next Friends of the Library meeting on September 5, 2018. Boardmember Finn and Massion agreed to attend that meeting and writing a support statement based on the Board's suggestions. Discussion ensued on what to include in the statement.

Boardmember Kuszmaul asked the Board if there was value in having a City resolution, which prompted the question: what is the level of support the Homer Library receives from the federal programs, and is it a relevant amount of funding? Library Director Dixon explained the process of how those funds from LSTA are distributed on the state level. She added there are other grants, such as continuing education grants that helped send library employees to conferences, and small, early literacy grants that help with materials, early childhood learning toys, and sometimes training. Chair Peterson added that additional block grants have been received through IMLS. Boardmember Kuszmaul concluded from the response that if that federal funding amount did disappear, that it would have an impact on local services, therefore asking City Council for a support resolution is worthwhile.

Chair Peterson requested the City Clerk to follow up with the City Manager on if the Library Advisory Board could offer support directly. City Clerk Jacobsen clarified that the City Clerk's Office could prepare a memo for the upcoming council meeting summarizing the discussion and impacts to the City, bringing awareness to council, and prompt a council member to sponsor a resolution. The Board agreed with that course of action. Boardmembers Finn and Massion additionally agreed to help find a council member sponsor before the City Council meeting.

There was further discussion on the next steps to progress the resolution after the council level.

D. Findings from Published Library Studies/Reports

1. "From Awareness to Funding" – Voter Perceptions & Support of Public Libraries in 2018
2. American Libraries – The State of America's Libraries 2018

Chair Peterson initiated discussion on the two articles provided, sharing her thoughts on how the information on libraries was presented. There was in-depth discussion on various aspects and components of the studies within the articles, and how they applied to the Homer Public Library and community. The discussion sparked an analysis of what kind of community groups in Homer met the descriptions outlined in the articles and what kind of outreach the Board or library in general could be doing. The conversation led to types of assistance in the library, including involving high school students volunteering to help with computers and other tech-related issues, and a current need in the community for more voting assistance.

Boardmember Fair suggested the Board schedule a worksession to hash out these report details and find a direction relevant to the library. Boardmember Kuszmaul concurred, sharing additional thoughts on a strategy for tackling all of the information in the articles.

There was Board discussion on the best time to schedule a worksession, concluding January would be ideal. Deputy Clerk Tussey offered to have a memo at the September meeting proposing January worksession dates that the Board could discuss and choose from. Chair Peterson requested clarification from the Clerk on what months are outlined in the Library Advisory Board's bylaws. It was

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clarified that there is not a regular meeting scheduled for January, but the Board would like to still meet via worksession and what the members could be doing to prepare for that in the interim.

Boardmember Finn proposed to the Board in general that the materials in the two articles would make a great letter to the editor or opinion piece in the newspaper to promote libraries.

E. Board Member Absences

Chair Peterson reported on the memo explaining the number of absences of Boardmember Sansom and the rules pertaining to declaring vacancies. Deputy Clerk Tussey referenced the code language in the memo stating that “if any Library Board member is absent for three consecutive meetings, unless a majority of the other members have previously granted a leave of absence, the seat of that member shall be declared vacant and a new member appointed by the Mayor.”

The Board discussed the reasons for Mr. Sansom’s absences, when he was originally going to begin, and if the absences merit declaring the seat vacant. It was agreed by the Board that Mr. Sansom can always re-apply if he reconsiders serving.

Chair Peterson read the title into the record and requested a motion to declare Board Member Sansom’s seat vacant due to his consecutive absences in accordance with Homer City Code 2.48.060(b).

FINN/MASSION MOVED TO DECLARE BOARD MEMBER SANSOM’S SEAT VACANT.

There was brief discussion on who notifies Mr. Sansom of the vacancy. Deputy City Clerk Tussey confirmed it is the City Clerk’s Office that sends out notice. Boardmember Kuszmaul requested clarification on if Mr. Sansom was notified of the pending vacancy. City Clerk Jacobsen explained that he had been notified of every other meeting up to this point and has not reached out to the City Clerk’s Office.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

F. Museum & Library Services Act of 2017

Chair Peterson read the title and asked the Board if there was further discussion on the topic. There was no further discussion.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Announced 2018 CLIA Winners

Chair Peterson read the title of the information item. Library Director Dixon stated that “Bob” the Bookmobile was one of the winners. She clarified it won a particular award, the CLIA Sue Sherif Award for Literacy, named after a retired librarian who worked many years in the state including as a bookmobile librarian.

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COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Boardmember Finn commented she appreciates all of the information on the library provided by Library Director Dixon and how she knows more about the library than she has ever known while being on the Board.

There were no further comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board Chair Peterson adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 4, 2018 at 5:30 P.M. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

RACHEL TUSSEY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved:_____