

Session 19-08, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Marcia Kuszmaul at 5:30 p.m. on November 5, 2019 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: BOARDMEMBERS PETERSON, SPRINGER, KUSZMAUL, SCHMIDT, FINN, FAIR, VERNON,
AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE GREEAR

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Kuszmaul asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

FAIR/PETERSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Special Meeting Minutes for October 7, 2019

Chair Kuszmaul asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

SCHMIDT/FINN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 7, 2019.

Boardmember Peterson requested clarification from staff and the rest of the board on the minimum donation amount stated by Mike Miller, presenter from The Homer Foundation.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

A. Anne Garrett, Alaska Community Foundation

Chair Kuszmaul noted that Anne Garrett was not present at the meeting; no presentation was given.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Library Director Report dated October 30, 2019
 - i. 2019 Statistical Report (laydown)
 - ii. 2018 Statistical Report

Library Director Berry reviewed his staff report with the board and facilitated discussion on the following topics:

- Events throughout October including the Friends of the Homer Library Soiree, showing of *The Public* at the Homer Theatre, and the Book and Plant Sale;
- Numerous meetings and research done for the Library Endowment Fund;
- Library facility issues related to building wiring, printers not working, and a natural gas smell;
- Discussion during/after the movie event about support for a men's shelter;
- Status of the StoryWalk posts and display boards being replaced.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Draft Ordinance Establishing a Library Endowment Fund
 - i. Draft Ordinance 19-xx Establishing a Library Endowment Fund
 - ii. Example Ordinance from Warren-Newport Public Library District
 - iii. Example Ordinance from Wilsonville Public Library Board

Chair Kuszmaul introduced the agenda item. She gave a brief overview of the ordinance, that Library Director Berry was encouraged by City Manager Koester to draft it and now was the time for the LAB to provide their input. Mr. Berry explained the reasoning and sections of the ordinance draft, and shared what he learned from the City Manager and the Homer Foundation when writing the ordinance.

The board discussed the draft ordinance, noting and directing questions to staff on the following:

- The LAB is advisory, meaning it's not an administrative board, so it cannot be a recipient of funds; Section 2 creates a 3-person board to oversee allocation/disbursement of funds.
- Has to be a "field of interest" fund since we are a municipality.
- Per recommendation from councilmembers, Section 4 outlines what the purpose of the funds would be for.
- Section 5 will transfer the existing Library Gifts fund (currently under \$4,000) to the future Library Endowment Fund account to get it going.
- Number of members that would be on the Library Endowment Board: the board mutually agreed to keep it at three; the public member should be a resident of the City, or be a member of the library service area.
- Adding "for the duration of his/her" term for the appointed LAB member.
- Adding another "Whereas" to state the LAB's recommendation of having the endowment fund and using verbiage from the LAB's bylaws on aiding in setting policy.

- Changing the word “spend” to “appropriate” under Section 4.
- Possibly adding “Special Projects” or something worded similarly, in Section 4 to give a bit more wiggle room to the purposes rather than just the three listed. Boardmember Finn gave an example of a special project. Mr. Berry explained his reasoning to leave it as-is and open, and that adding in a section about special projects may overstep into the FHL since that’s specifically the service they provide.
- Describing the essence of what the endowment fund would be used for.

Chair Kuszmaul reminded the board that there will be other opportunities to amend this draft ordinance from the City Attorney, from the sponsoring councilmembers, and from the City Clerk’s Office. There was brief discussion with staff on what action from the board may be needed at this time.

KUSZMAUL/FINN MOVED TO HAVE LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY MAKE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE DRAFT ORDINANCE, AND THAT IT BE THE DRAFT THAT IS SUBMITTED TO THE CITY ATTORNEY AND COUNCILMEMBERS VENUTI AND ADERHOLD FOR FURTHER INPUT.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

- B. Proposal to City Council Regarding a Library Endowment Fund
- i. Draft Proposal for a Library Endowment Fund

Chair Kuszmaul introduced the agenda item. Library Director Berry explained that the goal is to have a scheduled worksession with City Council where the LAB can present their Library Endowment Fund Proposal, detailing out the gathered information on endowment funds, The Homer Foundation (THF), the Alaska Community Foundation (ACF), revenue projections, and the ordinance setting it up.

Mr. Berry noted what components of the proposal were new and shared feedback he received from other clients of the foundations; overall mostly positive. He explained that shortly after the agenda was set, Anne Garrett with ACF had contacted him about voluntarily withdrawing their proposal from consideration and why. Ms. Garrett stated that the ACF did not realize it was a competitive process and they didn’t want to be in competition with a local foundation, and highly recommended the City goes with THF unless we had a good reason we don’t want to select them. Mr. Berry opined that it seemed ACF wasn’t fully closing the door on the possibility, but that they were encouraging to go with THF.

Boardmember Peterson commented that ACF is still technically a “state” local foundation, therefore why wouldn’t Homer be considered local. She voiced her concerns with only having one option with the Homer Foundation, issues she sees with THF, and her reasoning for preferring ACF over the other.

Boardmember Fair stated that the LAB should hear from ACF but that it likely will have to be insisted. He reasoned that internal politics may have had a role in them withdrawing, but it seemed they had “left the door open” and we could still try to schedule a presentation in December.

Chair Kuszmaul shared her concerns that she didn't think bringing one choice without any other options doesn't give them a strong leg at the Council level. She felt that they wouldn't have done their due diligence if they opt for just one. Boardmember Vernon noted that the foundation's rate of return should be important and suggested considering the Juneau Foundation.

The board discussed their concerns with ACF withdrawing, the issues with only having The Homer Foundation as one choice. They mutually agreed that doing their due diligence is their obligation as a board and what is important is that people see they're giving their money to the library, not which foundation is managing it.

PETERSON/FAIR MOVED TO ASK THAT LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY DO A FOLLOW-UP REQUEST WITH THE ALASKA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AND TO HAVE THEM PRESENT AT THE LAB'S DECEMBER MEETING.

Mr. Fair inquired on what the board will do if ACF declines to present, and if they'd follow up with a different foundation, such as the Juneau Foundation. Mr. Vernon commented that the Juneau Foundation does work with other communities. There was discussion on the motion and that the board will decide to contact other foundations at their next meeting once they know if ACF will accept their request or not. Boardmember Schmidt voiced his concerns with some of THF's policies on limiting fund withdrawals.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

Chair Kuszmaul shared some of the positive feedback and support given by Councilmember Venuti. She pointed out aspects of the presentation that were based on the feedback from both councilmembers, and other sections she wanted the board to be aware of.

There was discussion on other general aspects of having an endowment fund and the possibility and timing concerns with scheduling a worksession. Deputy City Clerk Tussey shared the Council meeting information she gathered from the City Clerk. Mr. Berry voiced his concerns with delaying the worksession/proposal past January or February. The board mutually agreed to have a joint worksession with City Council at their January 13, 2020 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Encouraging Students to Obtain Library Cards

Student Representative Greear spoke to what she learned on trying to find outreach options at her school on encouraging students to obtain library cards. She stated that the principal was not enthusiastic about offering incentives unless the school was getting reimbursed for discounts. The principal was willing to allow library card application forms be kept at the front desk and to hang posters in the hallways. She shared her experiences with advocating for change as a student.

Boardmember Springer inquired on where the need of encouragement was coming from. Discussion ensued among the board and Library Director Berry on the reasons, specifically that Alaska has some of the worst literacy outcomes of the country, and encouraging students at all grade levels to promote reading is an ongoing struggle. Students also are unaware of the services that are provided at the local library; part of the outreach is to show students what is available.

Discussion ensued on ideas and concepts for encouraging student participation at the library, Ms. Greear having assistance with approaching entities/businesses that would be interested in offering discounts or incentives, possibly holding an event during April's National Library Month, and what can be "engaging" to non-engaged students.

- B. LAB Goals for 2020
 - i. LAB Goals for 2019

Chair Kuszmaul explained that she wanted to share the current LAB goals and requested that boardmembers spend some time thinking of suggestions and come to the December meeting prepared to formalize their 2020 goals.

- C. Meeting Schedule for 2020
 - i. Resolution 19-0XX Establishing 2020 Regular Meeting Schedule

Chair Kuszmaul introduced the agenda item and asked the board if they saw any need to change their regular meeting schedule.

Boardmember Finn requested clarification on the resolution's whereas pertaining to the consequences of failing to give minimum meeting notice and the conflicting verbiage used in HCC 1.14.010. Deputy City Clerk Tussey provided some insight into the meaning of the code, prompting brief discussion among the board and staff. Ms. Tussey clarified for Ms. Finn that the word "consequences" would mean if the City was in violation of State law, that we could be liable and open to being sued.

VERNON/PETERSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2020.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Friends of the Homer Library October 2019 Newsletter
- B. LAB 2019 Calendar
- C. Boardmember Attendance at 2019 City Council Meetings

Boardmember Vernon confirmed he will be covering the November 25th City Council meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Thelma Gower, city resident, voiced her concerns regarding the Homer Foundation’s responses to the board’s interview questions. She referenced her 40 years of experience working as an investment banker and addressed the most disconcerting responses she saw. She highly encouraged the LAB to continue their due diligence and investigation into foundations, or even consider utilizing Vanguard or Fidelity to do their own investing without a foundation given the small size of their fund. Boardmembers directed questions to Ms. Gower, requesting further input from her on some of the Homer Foundation’s interview responses.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Library Director Berry shared the library’s revised Donor Recognition form.

Deputy City Clerk Tussey had no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Kuszmaul acknowledged that it was a long meeting but thought it was a good discussion and thanked the board for their participation. She stated that she will be reporting volunteer hours differently and confirmed with the board that they were in consensus.

COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Library Director Berry noted that he will not be available at the December 3rd meeting. Boardmembers discussed whether another library staff person could fill in for Mr. Berry or if the board preferred rescheduling so he could be present at the meeting, especially if Alaska Community Foundation would be presenting. The board requested that Deputy City Clerk Tussey look into the meeting schedule and tentatively plan for Tuesday, December 10, 2019.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m. A regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10, 2019 at 5:30 P.M. at the Council Chambers located at City Hall, 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

RACHEL TUSSEY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: _____