

Session 20-01, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Vice Chair Emilie Springer at 5:45 p.m. on February 4, 2020 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska. One seat remains vacant from the resignation of Boardmember Connor Schmidt on December 16, 2019.

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

ABSENT: BOARDMEMBERS KUSZMAUL AND PETERSON (both excused)

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY
CITY MANAGER KOESTER
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Vice Chair Springer asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

FAIR/FINN 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. LAB December 10, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Springer asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

FINN/FAIR MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Library Director Berry suggested that they discuss the Library Endowment Fund draft ordinance and resolution while City Manager Koester was present.

VERNON/FINN MOVE TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO DISCUSS PENDING BUSINESS, ITEM A: LIBRARY ENDOWMENT FUND AT THIS TIME AND STAFF REPORT NEXT.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Library Endowment Fund
- i. Draft Resolution 20-0XX, Establishing an Endowment Fund
 - ii. Draft Ordinance 20-XX, Transferring Funds into Endowment Fund
 - iii. LAB Chair Kuzmaul Report Re: January 29, 2020 Meeting with the Homer Foundation

Vice Chair Springer introduced the Library Endowment Fund agenda item. Library Director Berry directed the board to staff's memo in the packet and provided a brief overview of progress made to-date on creating a Library Endowment Fund.

Boardmember Finn initiated discussion with questions directed to City Manager Koester. Ms. Koester reviewed the draft resolution and ordinance provided and the revisions she is proposing. She facilitated discussion with the LAB and responded to boardmember's questions on the following concerns/subjects:

- Clarifying the purpose of having "Improvements or repairs to library facilities and services" listed under LAB's advisory guidelines to the Library Director as allowing the funds to be used towards a special project, and giving the LAB advisory powers to advise on it.
- Concerns that the City would spend endowment funds on something that is the City's responsibility, and essentially supplant operating dollars; can't necessarily "lock" that down given City Council has the final power of appropriation, but guidelines can be included in the ordinance/resolution and final contract with Homer Foundation to help limit funds use.
- Importance of leaving the verbiage general; it has to stay comprehensive since they are planning for the long-term and some services now may not be relevant 20 years later.
- Timeline to establish endowment fund by March 31st; if that is do-able then they would be eligible for the first quarter's percentage of earnings.
- Staff's recount of comments made by Boardmember Kuszmaul, who is absent, during their meetings; other LAB members were interested in knowing how Ms. Kuszmaul thought on the matter and if she supported what was being proposed.

- Definition of “Library CARMA” account listed in the ordinance; “Capital Asset Repair and Maintenance Allowance” fund, which is a City Council term for reserve funds that help take care of City assets.
- Funding amounts being utilized, and what could change, so the LAB can meet their initial contribution of \$10,000 to the Homer Foundation.
- Estimates that the library foundation may not have income from the fund until 2022, based on conversations with Homer Foundation, and considering a \$500 line item in the ordinance to account for any income received in the 2021 Budget.
- If inflation-proofing the principal needs to be taken into account and added to the resolution; Ms. Koester recalled the Homer Foundation stated they take inflation into account before making disbursements.
- Concerns or issues with the Homer Foundation and if there should be an agreement between THF and LAB first before the LAB approves it, which will delay the process, or approve the resolution that will allow the City Manager to move forward with the agreement negotiations.
- Verbiage used by the Homer Foundation (“Variance Power”) is standard to how all community foundations operate/are structured; boardmembers should not expect to get those parts of the agreement to change.
- Concerns with funds being locked in indefinitely; another standard aspect of community foundations that does not allow you to withdraw your funds whenever since that goes against the nature of an endowment fund. Staff noted that if the LAB is uncomfortable with the concept of not having full control over the funds, then they need to ask themselves if establishing an endowment fund is something they even want to do.

City Manager Koester clarified with the board that if they decide to approve the draft ordinance and resolution, that they are agreeing to the language in the documents and voting to recommend to City Council to both establish an endowment fund, approve an agreement with the Homer Foundation with the terms and conditions of that endowment fund, and transfer a combination of library donation funds and library reserve funds to establish that. She explained that there are a number of decisions laid out, but they are all advisory and the language is still subject to change at the Council level before final adoption. She pointed out that none of the questions/concerns they have asked about the Homer Foundation have anything to do with the language in the drafts, but have more to do with the relationship with the foundation; if that is in question, then the LAB needs to determine if they want to move forward at all with this endowment fund.

FINN/VERNON MOVED TO DELAY THEIR DECISION UNTIL THE LAB CAN GATHER MORE INFORMATION FROM THE HOMER FOUNDATION.

Boardmember Finn expressed her concerns with moving forward until her additional questions have been answered by the Homer Foundation and she has had time to consult with the two boardmembers that were absent from the meeting.

Vice Chair Springer spoke to the memo Boardmember Kuszmaul provided in the packet. She noted that Ms. Kuszmaul’s comments in her memo reflect the fact she is comfortable with moving forward with the endowment fund as written. Ms. Springer opined that the nature of bureaucratic language used is confusing, but if Ms. Kuszmaul is comfortable with it then she is too.

Student Representative Greear commented that if the LAB did postpone it, Mike Miller from the Homer Foundation should be present at the next meeting to help address their questions. Ms. Greear shared her thoughts on why it should not be postponed, noting that THF is trusted by the City (the LAB's larger entity) and that through the numerous discussions they already have had on the subject the LAB does have enough answers to be confident in the documents.

Boardmember Fair commented in favor of moving forward with a decision. Despite his reservations on some of the language used, such as Variance Powers, he agrees that it's just built-in contract language. Mr. Fair stated that the LAB has discussed this fund a lot and the consensus he gathered from Boardmember Kuszmaul and Peterson from previous meetings is that they should move forward with it. He pointed out that many people, including the City of Homer and Friends of the Homer Library have funds with the Homer Foundation, and that they would be in good hands.

At the request of Boardmember Finn, Library Director Berry provided his staff recommendation to move forward with the Homer Foundation in establishing the endowment fund and giving the City Manager to proceed. He noted the board brings up legitimate concerns, but they can be addressed at the Council level and during THF agreement negotiations.

VOTE: YES: VERNON
NO: FAIR, SPRINGER, FINN

Motion failed.

FAIR/VERNON MOVED THAT THE LAB SUPPORTS THE CITY MANAGER'S DRAFT ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION AS WRITTEN.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES: SPRINGER, FINN, FAIR
NO: VERNON

Motion failed.

City Manager Koester left the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

Library Director Berry requested the board provide direction to staff on what step they would like to take next. Discussion ensued on if the board has exhausted their questions towards the Homer Foundation, reiteration of their concerns with THF and lack of other options, and speculation on how absent Boardmembers Kuszmaul and Peterson feel on the matter. Mr. Berry reiterated that the questions concerning an out-clause and changing variance powers have already been addressed in other meetings, and the answers were no, they will not change because those are standard practices for all institutionalized community foundations; if you're going to establish a fund, you're committing to it, and does the LAB want to do it?

The board discussed their opinions on if there are any other questions to THF that are important enough to delay the entire decision, or if they are ready to move forward now.

At the request of the board, Deputy City Clerk Tussey explained the process of making a motion of reconsideration and what other options are available to the LAB for taking action on the library endowment fund. Ms. Tussey clarified that the previous motion made was to approve the resolution and ordinance as written, and that the board can still make a motion to approve the drafts but with recommended amendments to City Council. Discussion ensued on motion verbiage.

VERNON/FINN MOVE TO APPROVE THE VERBIAGE IN THE DRAFT ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A LIBRARY ENDOWMENT FUND WITH THE HOMER FOUNDATION, WITH THE ADDITION OF AN OUT-CLAUSE SO THERE WOULD BE A WAY TO TAKE THE MONEY OUT IF THE HOMER FOUNDATION WAS NOT MATCHING THE MINIMUM INVESTMENT GOALS.

Student Representative Greear inquired if the board really feels the LAB is going to get an out-clause. Boardmember Finn commented that by making the motion it states the wants of the board for the record.

VOTE: YES: VERNON, FINN, FAIR, SPRINGER

Motion carried.

Vice Chair Springer called for a recess at 6:44 p.m.

The meeting was called back to order at 6:50 p.m.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Library Director Report dated January 28, 2020
- i. 2019 Statistical Report
 - ii. 2020 Statistical Report (laydown)

Library Director Berry provided his staff report and facilitated discussion with the board on the following items:

- Meeting with Christine Thorsrud, head of Kachemak Bay Campus Library, to explore the idea of a joint program based around King Lear in May.
- The need for new security cameras; funds were already approved by Council, looking to get a Request for Proposal out soon.
- The Friends of the Homer Library applied for a \$50,000 Google Grant to help finance business incubator functions in the library, such as workshops and networking events.
- Lighting issues and continuation of switching over to LED.
- Census 2020 kicks off April 1st; library staff is already working on helping people complete forms and provide access to computers.
- Limited number of paper PFD applications; the State of Alaska is pushing to sign up online.
- Upcoming events/meetings and monthly statistics.

PUBLIC HEARING

NEW BUSINESS

A. Annual Review of Library Policies, Rules & Regulation

Vice Chair Springer introduced the Annual Review of Library Policies, Rules & Regulation and opened the floor for discussion.

Boardmember Finn directed questions towards Library Director Berry. She reviewed the library policies online and it seemed they have not been updated in a while and are ready for an update. Mr. Berry noted that staff did not have any significant changes at this time, but he wanted to recommend the board discuss this subject at their next meeting. Ms. Finn recommended that Mr. Berry consult with library staff on what policies could be updated, and to have it on the March 3rd agenda.

There was brief discussion. Boardmembers Fair, Springer, and Vernon agreed to have the matter on the LAB's March 3, 2020 agenda.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Friends of the Homer Library January 2020 Newsletters
- B. Literary Hub Article "In 2019, More Americans Went to the Library than to the Movies" dated January 24, 2020
- C. Gallup Article "In U.S., Library Visits Outpaced Trips to Movies in 2019" dated January 24, 2020
- D. LAB 2020 Calendar
- E. Boardmember Attendance at 2020 City Council Meetings

Boardmember Finn commented on the articles provided.

There was discussion on upcoming City Council meetings and who will be attending the next meetings. Boardmembers Finn and Vernon announced they will be absent from the LAB's March meeting. Deputy City Clerk Tussey noted she will follow up with the absent members to confirm there will be a quorum for the March 3rd LAB meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Library Director Berry commended the board for all their efforts. He thinks they do the kind of work that general citizens should expect from their government bodies, that pays thorough attention to detail and thinks things through that he, as a citizen, would really appreciate.

Deputy City Clerk Tussey had no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Vice Chair Springer had no further comments.

COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Boardmember Fair thanked Library Director Berry for all his work. He said he will try to find volunteers to fill the vacant seat.

Boardmember Finn reminded the board that Winter Carnival is this weekend and the League of Women Voters and Kenai Peninsula Votes will be marching to celebrate 100 years of women's voting.

Boardmember Vernon confirmed with Deputy City Clerk Tussey the appointment/reappointment process through the Mayor and City Council.

Student Representative Greear had no further comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m. A regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

RACHEL TUSSEY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: _____