

1. CALL TO ORDER

Session 23-06, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Kate Finn at 5:32 p.m. on August 15, 2023 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar. A worksession was conducted on July 11, 2023. On the agenda was the Policies and Procedures.

PRESENT: BOARD MEMBERS BAILY, CARSSOW, FAIR, FINN, KUSZMAUL, MCKINNEY

ABSENT: BOARDMEMBER ASSELIN-MARTIN (EXCUSED)

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Finn read the supplemental items into the record: STAFF & COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS Item A and B Directors Report, 2022 & 2023 Statistics. Item C. Fundraising Update, Homer Foundation Quarterly Report 4/1/23 to 6/30/23 Item D. Legislative Update, Legislative Report for August 14, 2023 PENDING BUSINESS Item A. Updated Revision Library Policies Table of Contents- Alphabetical, Table of Contents Second Order Headings. Boardmember McKinney has provided notification that he must depart early from the meeting so I would like to amend the order of the items on the agenda to address Pending Business items and New Business prior to Reports and requested a motion and second.

MCKINNEY/BAILY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMEND.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)

4. RECONSIDERATION

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Unapproved May 16, 2023 LAB Minutes

KUSZMAUL/FAIR MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 16, 2023

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

6. VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

7. STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Director's Report for June 2023
Director's Report for July 2023
2022 Annual Stats – Supplemental Packet
2023 Annual Stats – Supplemental Packet

Chair Finn introduced the item and deferred to Library Director Berry.

Library Director Berry reviewed his reports in the packet and noted that the statistics were included in the supplemental packet.

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

- B. Fundraising Update – Boardmember Kuszmaul
Quarterly Report from the Homer Foundation – April 1-June 30, 2023

Chair Finn introduced the item and invited Boardmember Kuszmaul to provide the report.

Boardmember Kuszmaul provided her report that was available in the Supplemental Packet.

Library Director Berry provided a clarification on the available funding for Fiscal Year 2024.

Boardmember Kuszmaul provided an update on the status of the installation of Copper Fish on the Fish Wall.

- C. Legislative Update

Chair Finn reported that there was no legislation outstanding from 2023 and currently there is no legislation that involves libraries for 2024. She provided a lay down on the Freedom to Read Foundation. She opined that it was a very important decision and an interesting read.

8. PUBLIC HEARING(S)

9. PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Updated Revision to the Library Policies

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading of the title and opened the floor to comments from the Board.

Board member Kuszmaul recommended amending the following:
Page 44, Item #5 Amend the term "Board" to "LAB" to be consistent throughout the document

Page 47, Under Funds, first sentence, recommended that the word “director” should be removed, details are addressed further down and there are two ways to donate and that is to the Library or the Friends of the Homer Public Library

Discussion ensued that there was a third option through the Homer Foundation and delineating the details within the first sentence when it is explained how later on in the section.

Page 51, under Joint Letter of Appreciation, advocated for further description to include nature of the gift.

Library Director Berry stated that each section is structured with the same format and he would like to keep it like that.

Boardmember Fair supported Library Director Berry intent on the formatting and recommended it stay the same.

Page 62, Collections Development, section Collection Evaluation and Collection Goals move forward to the front of the section and renamed Collection Goals and Collection Evaluation as it explains the purpose of a Collection Development Policy. IT was believed to be a good foundational statement and philosophical approach to this section.

Library Director Berry was agreeable to make that change.

Boardmember Fair stated it made sense and actually helpful.

Page 107-108, Request for Reconsideration of Materials or Programs Form, question number three on page 108, might be redundant with the first question on page 108. Opinion was expressed that these questions would elicit the same responses and by removing the third question you could provide more room for details in response to the first question on page 108.

Board member Fair commented that it may pull the same information, but really felt that it would depend so he recommended that it be left.

Boardmember McKinney agreed with Boardmember Fair.

Boardmember Carsow inquired if this would be able to be an electronic document available online, that would make it easier in responding to the questions. She also agreed with leaving both questions on the form.

Library Director Berry stated that they could have it available electronically.

Deputy City Clerk Krause provided input stating that it would be in compliance with ADA to provide the form electronically for the very reason supplied by Boardmember Carsow.

Boardmember Baily expressed concerns with page 78 of the packet 48 of the policies, regarding access to minors under 18 noting that the paragraph that he relied heavily on in weighing his vote when the books were

challenged was a provision that the Board as a whole relied upon making their decision. He believed it could be modified to provide a more concise argument if they receive future complaints. He cannot draft the language at this time that would be appropriate but believes that it could be more specific that the parent or guardian has the personal responsibility of the underage users.

Library Director Berry responded that the excerpt comes from the Computer Use and WIFI Internet Policy. The LAB would only hear material challenges not computer use challenges. He continued by stating that a lot of the language is stilted because it is being quoted directly from the Children's Internet Protection Act which the Library is required to comply with, he noted that is why "hacking" is inside quotation marks. He directed the Board to refer to page 62 of the packet, as this was the very beginning of the collection development policy, third paragraph under Intellectual Freedom, first sentence states that the responsibility of reading choices and information accessed by children rests with their parents or legal guardians not the library. He noted the remainder of paragraph dealt with the parents' authority and right to monitor their own children's reading material.

Boardmember Baily argued the difficulties in going back and forth in the policies different sections and advocated for a more concise paragraph regarding the matter.

Further discussion ensued on having the same paragraph in two places of the document as a tactical move over a technical move; the first paragraph under the section Access by Minors states that parents "must" and that is the guiding sentence, one addresses materials and one addresses computer use. It was determined to leave it as is and that this is a living document that can be changed again over time. Additional references within the document addressing children and topics related to children and there is no section as a whole that addresses children solely in the library. Further argument was made to having a better more concise location for information and policy related to minors but it was stated that throughout the document all concerns addressing minors and that the parents or legal guardians were responsible. Placement of the concise statement would be preferred to be under Access by Minors.

Library Director Berry recommended amending the first paragraph under Access by Minors section as follows: "Parents and legal guardians must assume responsibility for deciding which library resources are appropriate for their own children, and must guide their children in the use of Internet and inform them about materials they should not use."

A brief discussion ensued about not wanting to extend this topic over to the September meeting, this document will be on their February agenda for review. The Board agreed by consensus to make the amendment to the paragraph as read by Library Director Berry.

Library Director Berry then reviewed the Table of Contents provided in the Supplemental Packet. In review of the Alphabetical Table he initially thought it would be harder to read but he stated that it actually works pretty well, makes more sense. There appeared to be consensus from the Board for the Alphabetical Table of Contents instead of the Heading and Topic style Table of Contents. He had one final question, during their worksession in July there was a question on "in full" under the Complaint policy, that the LAB shall read all of the challenge materials in full." Library Director Berry stated that he removed it from the existing document but wanted to make sure the LAB was okay with that amendment.

Boardmember Fair stated that he would prefer that it remain. The document requiring the people who are responsible for removing material from the library present a thoroughness when requiring that they read the item in full.

Boardmember McKinney brought forth a scenario if there was a complaint against the Book of Genesis in the Bible and the Board would be required to read the entire Bible. Does the Board have to read a whole book when the complaint was about a specific section or chapter in the book?

Boardmember Fair countered with the example of the Color Purple and if someone filed a complaint about the section regarding lesbian stuff on pages 56-60, you could technically just read that part although it would be a shame since the whole book is a great book, but he believed it just depends. Whatever the complaint is and the nature of the complaint he believed that the LAB should address the nature of that complaint in full whether that means reading the whole thing if it's a children's book or if it's a passage in Genesis or all of the first three books of the Bible he believed that the LAB should perform the due diligence, read whatever the complaint is on the complaint form.

Boardmember Kuszmaul questioned on the form, did you read, view, or listen to the entire work or program? If not, what parts? But if the response is that they did not but the illustration on page x is too graphic, what should be done then? Do we require the complainant or patron to read the entire work before the Board entertains their complaint or do we address the part that they are complaining about? She expressed that if the LAB requires the complainant to read the entire work or book, whether they did or not, they will just report that they did.

Library Director Berry stated that if the LAB requests if the complainant has or has not read the whole book and they state that they haven't substantially weakens the complaint in his opinion, but it is still a legitimate complaint, and the LAB is justified in giving a weaker response.

Discussion continued on the following:

- Page 44 of the packet, removal of the words, "in full" removing the language as presented or amending to read, "prior to the meeting all members of the LAB will read, view or listen to the materials subject to the complaint"
- The Board should be consistent on both ends, if the complainant is required to read the whole thing, should not the board read the whole thing.
- In the interest of being thorough and in the interest of trying to diffuse as much public rage as possible the LAB's job is to be as comprehensive and in depth as it can possibly be while the process may appear to drag on for a long time and very slow but it showed that the LAB did its job.
- It is part of the Boardmembers job to read the materials in the complaint, and there is an option not to hear or accept the complaint.
- There are more willingness to think of evil and what is stopping someone from filing complaints on dozens of books and really tie up the LAB.
- The LAB has the right to set the time for review.
- The requirements of filing a complaint on numerous books or determining if the complaint is capricious

CARSSOW/MCKINNEY MOVED THAT THE WORDS "IN FULL" BE ADDED TO THE FIRST SENTENCE IN ITEM NUMBER SIX ON PAGE 44.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON- OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Deputy City Clerk Krause suggested amending “city clerk” in first sentence on page 44 at the top to City Clerk’s Office stating that allows any staff member assigned to the LAB to include in the packet.

The Board agreed by consensus to that amendment.

Boardmember Baily brought forward an amendment to the Table of Contents by adding a section related to the amendment made to the statement regarding Minors that was made.

Discussion ensued on where in the table of contents that it would be placed and if a new section would be appropriate then pointed out that if a new section was needed they would not be able to approve this document tonight.

The Board agreed by Consensus to add the topic under Access to Collections and Services.

Boardmember Kuszmaul requested rewriting the first sentence under Administration – Complaints, page 42 of the packet Complaints regarding Library Programs or Materials. Suggested

CARSSOW/MCKINNEY MOVED TO ADOPT THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS AMENDED INCLUDING THE TABLE OF CONTENTS IN ALPHABETICAL FORMAT AND SUGGESTED CHANGES AS RECOMMENDED DURING THE MEETING TONIGHT.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Boardmembers expressed their appreciation of all the work that Library Director Berry did on the document.

Boardmember McKinney departed the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Draft 2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan - Review & Recommendation
Memorandum from Special Projects & Communications Coordinator as backup
Memorandum LAB 23-010 from Library Director as backup

Chair Finn introduced the item and deferred to Deputy City Clerk Krause.

Deputy City Clerk Krause reviewed the Memorandum from Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Carroll on the Capital Improvement Plan process. She then turned the floor over to Library Director Berry.

Library Director Berry reviewed Memorandum 23-010 for the Board. He provided information on the repairs and renovations needed for the Library regarding siding, entrance gate to allow after hours use without staffing, and adding a meeting room, which would require a remodel to the existing footprint to the west. He also noted that the restrooms needed to be renovated as well. To include ADA Compliance in general. He will complete the two forms if the LAB is agreeable. He then mentioned that it was late in the project and letting the process play out.

Discussion on including a new project that included all items can be submitted separate from the top three or four projects selected by the Board. The Board then took turns and listed their top projects:

Boardmember Fair: A Frame Water Transmission Line, Homer Harbor Dredging and Herndon/Svedlund Streets Sidewalks

Boardmember Kuszmaul: A Frame Water Transmission Line, Slope Stabilization & Erosion Mitigation, and Homer Coastal Erosion Mitigation Projects

Boardmembers Carssow abstained.

Chair Finn: Fire Department Fleet Management and A Frame Transmission Water Line, Recommended removing the East Hill Bike Lane

Boardmember Baily: Homer Coastal Spit Erosion Mitigation and A Frame Transmission Water Line

Boardmember Baily then added comments since he had the floor on the Homer Harbor Expansion Project and expressed his opinion that the Public is not receiving all the actual information.

Chair Finn noted that the Spit Erosion Mitigation would be taken care of during the Harbor Expansion as they certainly could not do that project without fixing the Spit Road.

Boardmember Baily then responded that the Harbor projects are all interrelated to the Harbor Expansion project with doing those other projects and he opined that it will end up like Elliot Bay.

Chair Finn questioned if the CIPs would be part of Homer's contribution for the Harbor Expansion project.

Boardmember Carssow commented on the Homer Harbor Expansion project noting that the LAB is not tasked with that issue and it is the responsibility as citizens to be informed but not address it as the Board.

Chair Finn requested that the Board continued to select their top projects in priority order.

Deputy City Clerk Krause proceeded to review the projects selected:¹

- #1 A Frame Transmission Water Line - four recommendations.
- #2 Homer Spit Coastal Erosion Project – two recommendations
- #3 Fire Department Fleet Management – One Recommendation
- #4 Slope Stability & Erosion Mitigation Program – One Recommendation
- #5 Homer Harbor Dredging – One Recommendation

- B. Creation of a Library Department
Memorandum LAB 23-011 from Library Director as backup

Chair Finn introduced the item and deferred to Library Director Berry.

Library Director Berry reviewed his memorandum and provided a synopsis of the actions taken at Council level noting there has been no opposition to creating a standalone IT or Library Department. There has been some discussion and questions regarding the Community Development Department. He was asking for a motion of support from the Board to create the Library Department. City Council introduced the ordinance and then postponed until September 25, 2023, there will be a worksession and all the chairs for the advisory bodies will be invited to participate in the discussion.

FAIR/CARSSOW MOVED THE LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD SUPPORTS THE CREATION OF A STAND ALONE LIBRARY DEPARTMENT FOR THE CITY OF HOMER.

Discussion on the previous sentiment and opposition in the beginning of the Library Director taking on IT and hearing this is great news. Question was posed why the ordinance does not reflect the Library Department when all other departments are titled, such as Department of Information Technology, etc. The Board was informed of the previous historical actions of Council that changed the library from a department.

Boardmember Kuszmaul expressed that she would like it clarified as the Public Library throughout the ordinance since there are a number of different types of Libraries.

Library Director Berry responded that Public may be easy enough to amend, but does not recommend tinkering with the remaining document since there are so many details. He agreed that there is textual cleanup to remove contraindications required.

Boardmembers noted that while Library Department was not listed under the main listing Public Library was shown and then Library department was under the subheading 2.48.050

VOTE: YES. CARSSOW, BAILY, KUSZMAUL, FAIR, FINN

Motion carried.

¹ The listing was provided by a Boardmember but they did not use their microphone so the recording could not be transcribed by the Clerk.

11. INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. City Newsletter for August 2023
- B. LAB Annual Calendar 2023

12. COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

13. COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Krause expressed her appreciation for good meeting it was pretty short as she was forewarned that it would be a very long meeting.

Library Director Berry expressed his appreciation for the Board members hard work on the policies over the last year.

14. COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Board Member Carsow complimented the Library Director on the rewrite of the policies and that he did a wonderful job. She then welcomed Deputy City Clerk Krause as the Clerk for the Board.

Boardmember Kuszmaul echoed the sentiments on a job well done to Library Director Berry and expressed appreciation that the City will be collaborating with the Museum as it has been on her mind lately and reading about the Pratt and thinking that there could be more collaboration between the Library and the Pratt as the local repository of archival history and caretakers of our culture.

Boardmember Fair expressed his appreciation on the work done by the Library Director on the Policies and welcomed Deputy City Clerk Krause noting that she has to put up with him twice a month now and as long as she is good with he is good. He then commented on the direction of a Library Department expressing that it was a great idea and he's is happy about that.

Chair Finn noted that there are a lot of connections here and its one of those things where you don't realize how good it is until it's gone. She commented on initially being unhappy with the Library Director taking on IT but it turned out really good and the Library has benefitted as well. But now he will be back and as head of the department which is a step above so it all worked out very well. My greatest quality is not patience but in this particular case I was forced to be patient and it actually ended up being really good, so a thousand thank yous for going to IT and doing what you did there and making this all happen.

She noted that she received a message from Boardmember Asselin Martin and she sent her apologies first day of school and the meeting totally slipped her mind.

Deputy City Clerk Krause added that Ms. Asselin-Martin had sent her an email explaining her absence at the start of the meeting so her absence will be excused.

15. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board Chair Finn adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Tuesday, September 19, 2023 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 and via Zoom Webinar.

Renee Krause

RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II

Approved: Sept 19, 2023