

**CALL TO ORDER**

Session 24-02, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Kate Finn at 5:34 p.m. on February 20, 2024 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar. The Board conducted a worksession prior to the regular meeting to discussion creating a work plan to meet fundraising responsibilities.

PRESENT: BOARD MEMBERS FINN, MCKINNEY, ASSELIN-MARTIN, FAIR, BAILY, KUSZMAUL AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE MCDONOUGH

ABSENT: BOARD MEMBERS CARSSOW (EXCUSED)

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

Chair Finn read the supplemental items into the agenda STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS Item B. Fundraising Report 2023 Library Endowment Financial Report INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS Item E. Library News from Around the World. A motion and second to approve the agenda as amended was requested.

FAIR/MCKINNEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

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

**RECONSIDERATION**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Unapproved Meeting Minutes for January 16, 2024

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 16, 2024.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

**VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

**STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Library Director's Report  
- January 2024

- 2023 Annual Report with Statistics
- Monthly Statistics 2024
- Monthly Statistics 2023

Library Director Berry reviewed his report in the packet. He provided input on the following:

- New Artistic Library Cards will be released in April
  - o Patrons will be able to purchase a new card for \$5.00.
    - They are designed in conjunction with the designs on the Bookmobile.
      - Designs were created by local artist, Rachel Tussey.
- New Library Chairs Request for Proposals closed, vendor selected and contract awarded.
  - o Chairs should be arriving in 6-8 weeks
- Friends of the Library are still working on putting new benches on the western lot.
  - o Request for Proposals closed today and there were no submissions.
  - o There is word on the street of some interested persons who would like to design the benches so follow-up contact will be made with those persons by the Friends.
- Big read is coming to an end, all favorable comments from all the public
- Usual List of events has been provided
- Numbers included in the Annual Report for 2023, which was provided as a standalone document and in the City Manager's Report this month.
- Heated Sidewalk has broken, not sure what occurred
  - o Building Maintenance is working on a solution
  - o Clarification was provided on how the sidewalk is heated
- Reviewed Statistics
  - o Significant year over year growth
  - o Approximately 25% increase but close to pre-COVID numbers
- Increased Story Time from one to twice per week and the numbers have increased to the point that a third date is being considered.
  - o Need to figure staffing for the third day

Library Director Berry reported on a holistic Statistic Project going back to 1978 on the Homer Public Library that he was working on, noting the interesting history he is finding. This information will be shared as some point with the LAB when it gets finished.

Boardmember Kuszmaul commented on the increase numbers represented by the 2023 Statistics compared to the 2022 statistics and questioned what type of pressure did that put on the staff for the Library and with the usage.

Library Director Berry responded that there currently was none but if it does keep increasing there will be a point in the near future that a review of increasing staff or hours may be warranted. He facilitated discussion on the following topics:

- Consideration of adding another Story Time period
  - o Existing programs are reaching 70 children in attendance at each of the two story times currently held each week
- How aware City Council is on the Library's performance to increase the budget
  - o There are members on the Council that support the Library and there has been no indication of any negativity from Council regarding the Library's annual budget

- Comprehensive Plan suggestions for the draft document and how that will be implemented
  - o Each department will be able to provide comment, recommendations
  - o Each advisory body will be able to provide comments and recommendations
  - o Boardmembers are free to attend the public meetings and comment as a patron of the Library and a resident, but if the LAB wanted to provide comment at these meetings representing the Board, then it was advised that the Board develop their statement so it is on the record and that will be the official statement or recommendation.
- Anecdotal comments made by Board members on what the mood was like thinking in the picture on the annual report.



Boardmember Kuszmaul related personal experience participating in a funding exercise conducted during a recent meeting of the Comp Plan Book Club she attended and the results were that the Library not on the top of the list of funding priorities for those people who were participating in that exercise. She expressed concerns regarding the overall perception of the Library by the community.

B. Monthly Fundraising report – Boardmember Kuszmaul

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading of the title and noted the materials provided in the supplemental packet.

Boardmember Kuszmaul provided a short review of the worksession discussion on the fundraising report. She noted that the Bylaws which were in the packet on page 37 under Article 2, Section 4 it states that the Board solicits donations and money or property for the benefit of the Library. This was the impetus for the creation of the Library Endowment Fund. She believed they could speak further under Pending Business on that issue.



Commissioner Kuszmaul referred to the supplemental packet and provided clarification on the gifts life to date section of the report, the actual balance and the available balance for spending.

A brief discussion ensued on the amounts, expected growth over time and expectations of the endowment fund.

C. Legislative Update

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading of the title and reported that very little has changed since the last month with regard to Library risks or benefits.

Chair Finn reported speaking with Mike Robinson and he expressed optimism regarding funding through one avenue over another. There is one very pro-Library Senator but she is not on the Finance Committee. She provided a list of people on the Senate Finance Committee so it would be wonderful if any Boardmembers have contacts who have contact to lobby for support of Library Funding and or support in general of Libraries.

Ms. Finn provided some comments on the status of the house Bill regarding language amending definitions and terms regarding books and child pornography and the education bill that may impact the library with the number of kids that would not have outside programs to attend such as sports.



D. Memorandum LAB-24-003 from Library Director re: Upcoming Events

Chair Finn introduced the item and invited Library Director Berry to speak to his memorandum.

Library Director Berry reported that March is the month for Lifelong Learners and reported that Friends are seeking nominations for adults and especially youths, stating more nominations the better. He provided clarification on the basic criteria for a nominee to fulfill is persons who have dedicated to learning and sharing with the community, noting that additional information is available on the Friends of the Homer Public Library website.

Boardmembers supported the recommendation that the Friends website should to have a listing of the previous award recipients.

Library Director Berry announced that a Spring Book Sale will be conducted on May 10-11, 2024 and then on May 20<sup>th</sup> there will be a joint worksession with Council, which happens to be the same date as the regular LAB meeting.<sup>1</sup>

**PUBLIC HEARING(S)**

**PENDING BUSINESS**

A. Memorandum LAB-24-001 from Library Director re: Planned Giving Event

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Library Director Berry.

Library Director Berry reviewed Memorandum LAB-24-001 for the Board. He reported that in discussion with the Friends they indicated interest in a joint planned giving event with the Homer Foundation but it needs to be a fun event, have food, and a social component to the event. The Friends definitely prefer a fall event separate from any of their events. Discussion ensued with the following topics covered:

- Homer Foundation provide guidance on estate planning
- Having a local lawyer present would be great to answers to frequently asked questions
- Include some information on How the Library works
- Maybe provide short tours of the Library
- Friends can provide a summary on how they work and the differences between what they do and the LAB
- Boardmembers can provide how and what their responsibilities are and what the Library Endowment Fund is or will be used and why it was established.

Boardmember Kuzmaul suggested that a motion be made supporting that the Board conduct a joint event with the Friends.

KUZMAUL/ASSELIN – MARTIN MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD IN COLLABORATION WITH THE FRIENDS OF THE HOMER LIBRARY HOST A FALL EVENT FOCUSED ON PLANNED GIVING WITH SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS TO THE EVENT.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Regular meeting of the LAB is on Tuesday, May 21, 2024

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Memorandum LAB-24-005 from Deputy City Clerk re: Strategic Plan & Goals Update

Chair Finn introduced the item and noted that this action item is something that the Board does once each year and deferred to the Clerk.

Deputy City Clerk Krause reviewed Memorandum LAB-24-005 for the Board. She noted that spelling corrections will be made in two places under Goals #3 the word “Scholl” will be correctly spelled, “School” and reported that the Board thoroughly addressed some sections it did not address others. Ms. Krause requested the Board’s recommendation under the Section Values, Roles and Responsibilities retaining, amending or removing the statement regarding “hiring a qualified Library Director” stating that Chair Finn explained it was the intent of the Board to have qualified people working in the Library.

Ms. Krause noted that with the adoption of Ordinance 23-49(S) creating the Library Department that ordinance also amended the section regarding appointment of the Library Director stating that they must hold specific credentials, suggesting if the Board did not want to delete it entirely possibly amending the statement to reflect personnel as a whole; under Goals, item #2 No decision was made on the amendment suggested by Boardmember Fair changing the language. Some suggested verbiage was provided but the Board made no decisions at the last meeting. She encouraged the Board to make any additional amendments deemed appropriate.

Chair Finn opened the floor to comments, recommendations or questions from the Board.

A lengthy discussion ensued on the draft document provided in the packet on page 33, under VALUES, ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES, General Administrative and it was finally determined that the following line would be amended as follows:

Advise city government on recruitment, employment, and retention of a qualified library director.

Chair Finn reviewed the document and recommended that the Board consider the amendments that have been made and discussed at the last meeting. She noted that the Board must choose a word in Line 23, Goal #2 on page 34 of the packet.

Boardmembers discussed using the word Continue or Promote. There was a majority consensus in favor of using the word, “Promote.”

Chair Finn read the final statement for Goal 2 into the record: *Promote the Planned Giving Program for the Library.*

Chair Finn read the draft amendment from the last meeting into the record as follows:

Goal #2 a. Invite Homer Foundation to present to the Board on how to solicit donors.

Discussion ensued on including specifics on what the Homer Foundation would be speaking to the Board about versus leaving it very generic by deleting the words, “on how to solicit donors.” The Board can provide details in the invitation to the Homer Foundation on the topic that the Board would like addressed. The Strategic Plan does not need to be specific.

Chair Finn read the final amended line for Goal 2.a. as follows for Goal 2. a: *Invite the Homer Foundation to present to the Board.*

Boardmember Asselin-Martin suggested that they delete the words “In the next year” as they are not really needed and specifically list the new amendments as follows:

2. b. Host a public outreach meeting about giving to the endowment fund; and
2. c. Create a work plan for the Board for ongoing fundraising for the endowment fund.

There was consensus of the Board to make those amendments.

Chair Finn read the amended Goal #3 as follows:

“Expand the Library’s capacity to serve as a Community Hub”

- 3.a. Partner with the Public School System, homeschooling families and Kenai Peninsula College to provide resources for and increase library use with students
3. b. Participate in the City of Homer Comprehensive Plan Process
3. c. Work with Library staff to Support Library Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Discussion ensued on how the Board will partner with the entities shown in 3.a. when it is the Library, this should be reworded to provide more clarification that the Board is supporting the Library’s Strategic Goals.

Library Director Berry suggested that the sentence be re-written to state: Support the Library’s effort to partner with the public school system, homeschooling families and the Kenai Peninsula College to provide resources for, and increase library use by, students.

Chair Finn questioned when the Board would participate in the Comprehensive Plan re-write.

Deputy City Clerk Krause provided some guidance on the process that will likely occur when the public meetings and development of the draft document for the Comprehensive Plan. She explained in response to Boardmembers questions, that it would be difficult to provide content on a document that the format of which is unknown at this time. Stating that the Committee is working on developing the public process for the Comprehensive Plan and that once the public meetings are scheduled the Board was encouraged to attend and comment as a private citizen but not on behalf of the Board. Ms. Krause stated that if the Board wanted to comment on the content they should do that once the opportunity has been presented to them or the draft document has been provided to the advisory bodies for review.

Chair Finn stated that the goal of 3.b. to participate in the Comp Plan process was generic enough and confirmed there was no opposition from the Board. She then inquired if there was any opposition to 3.c. as written and there was none expressed.

Chair Finn opened the floor for any additional amendments to the sections, Duties of the Board & Staff.

There were none offered by the Boardmembers.

FAIR/BAILY MOVED TO ADOPT THE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN AND GOALS AS AMENDED.

There was no further discussion or amendments offered.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Memorandum LAB-24-004 from Deputy City Clerk re: Annual Review of Board Bylaws

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Deputy City Clerk Krause.

Deputy City Clerk Krause reviewed Memorandum LAB-24-004 for the Board. She stated that she found one correction that was needed and there were no additional amendments or changes required.

Chair Finn opened the floor to questions or comments from the Board.

Chair Finn questioned if the agenda could have a line to welcome new Boardmembers, she opined that it was not appropriate in her mind to leave it all the way to the end of the meeting under Informational items. She felt that the new Boardmembers should be before the agenda approval even.

A brief discussion ensued with the Clerk providing clarification that the agenda follows the Council adopted format but that the Chair is always welcomed to recognize new members at the beginning of the meeting and new members can have a spot under New Business. She related that when she first started working as a Clerk she would provide a welcome memorandum for new members along with the documents but as time went on and different perspectives weighed in, processes changed. It was determined that newly appointed members will be recognized at the start of the meeting and then an item will be on the agenda under new business which will allow for formal recognition and the new member can provide some information about themselves to the Board.

FAIR/KUSZMAUL MOVE TO FORWARD TO THE MARCH MEETING FOR FINAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL THE LAB BYLAWS AS AMENDED.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

- B. Memorandum LAB-24-002 from Library Director re: Review of Library Fees and Policies

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Library Director Berry.

Library Director Berry reviewed Memorandum LAB-24-002 for the Board. He noted the actions of the Board last year with increasing the copy fees and that the interlibrary loan photocopying fees were overlooked and everything should be consistent. Staff is requesting only this corrective amendment.

Chair Finn requested a motion and second after hearing no comments or questions from the Board put forward.

KUSZMAUL/BAILY MOVED TO RECOMMEND INCREASING THE FEES FOR INTERLIBRARY LOAN PRINTING FROM \$0.15 PER PAGE TO \$0.25 PER PAGE TO MAKE COPY FEES CONSISTENT.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

#### **INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

##### A. Library Legislative & News Articles from Around the Country

Chair Finn commented on the value that the Russians placed on libraries as well as the destruction that is being done by Russia on libraries in the Ukraine.

##### B. City of Homer Monthly Newsletter

- February 2024 Newsletter

##### C. LAB Annual Calendar

Chair Finn commented on the term expirations and solicited intent from Boardmembers Asselin-Martin, McKinney and Baily to submit their applications for reappointment. She then stated that she will not be serving as Chair and that the Board will need to elect another Boardmember to serve when elections are conducted at the April meeting and noted that they will have a worksession for training in April as well.

Library Director Berry provided clarification on the status of the budget, noting that there will be in May and June a mid-cycle budget adjustments before City Council for approval. Deputy City Clerk Krause questioned if the Board has ever requested funding to address items such as publishing a notice to promote the Library Endowment Fund. She provided some information on how the Parks Art Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission and former Public Arts Committee received funding each budget cycle.



There was a brief discussion on the actual process to get that included in the budget and or Library Director taking the costs from his budget. Boardmember Kuzmaul expressed that it would be beneficial to have a small budget to produce materials, pay for postage, etc.

D. City Manager's Reports to Council

- CM Report to City Council for January 22, 2024
- CM Report to City Council for February 12, 2024

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE** (3 minute time limit)

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

**COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBERS** (if Present)

**COMMENTS OF THE BOARD**

Boardmember Asselin-Martin commented that the Homer Imagination Library housed by Sprout participated in the Winter Carnival Parade and they passed out over 300 books to children in the audience along the parade route.

Boardmember Kuzmaul encouraged Boardmembers McKinney and Asselin Martin to request reappointment as they have contributed so much and thanked Boardmember Fair for his service on the Board and believed he has been a great asset.

Boardmember Fair commented that when he was recruited by Chair Finn, the only members that were on the Board then and now is Boardmember Kuzmaul and Chair Finn.

Chair Finn congratulated the Friends on their success this past month on the Big Read, it was remarkable and noted that she attended their recent meeting and was able to see the process first hand and how much intention that is put into it, is really impressive. Ms. Finn commented on the collaboration between the Homer Library and the Police Department with Parenting in the Digital Age which is really an excellent service to the community and expressed comments on the work done at the Story Walk Trail, outreach to the community provided by the Library on various programs and services so it is not stretch to consider the Library a hub of the community.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board Chair Finn adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Tuesday, March 19, 2024 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: March 19, 2024