



**ALBANY LIBRARY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
DRAFT**

Albany Library, 1247 Marin Avenue
July 27, 2011 7 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER – A. Riffer

Board Members present:

Robert Lieber
Alan Riffer
Linda Yamamoto
Rosalie Gonzales
Leah Flanagan

Alameda County Library Staff Present:

Ronnie Davis, Albany Library Manager
Cindy Chadwick, Deputy County Librarian

City of Albany Staff Present:

Charles Adams, City of Albany Finance Director
Heather Robinson, Parks and Recreation
Penelope Leach, Director of Human Services

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –Minutes from April 27th, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously with changes noted by A. Riffer.

3. INTRODUCTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS OF AGENDA

4. PUBLIC COMMENT – None at this time

5. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

a. Albany Library Report- R. Davis

1. R. Davis distributed a statistical report which showed the highest circulation rates ever for June – July 2011 at 426,516 (3% increase), including a 10% increase in May and a 7% increase in June. The increase in library card registrations from Berkeley, attributed to the North Berkeley closure, has continued.

2. In order to increase efficiency library card registration is now available on in-house computers, which save employee input time. The library is also scheduled to get another self-checkout machine.

3. The Rotary Club and Friends of Albany Library collaborated to resurface the donor tiles on the Marin side of the building.

4. The turnout for their wide array of summer programs has been strong.

5. Solano Stroll is happening on September 11, 2011. They are asking for Board members to volunteer to staff the library booth.

6. Susan Fisher, Alameda County Library Web Services Manager may attend the September meeting in order to demonstrate the e-book interface.

7. The “Discover and Go” passes to local museums should be available by September 2011.

b. Review of Existing Albany Library Ballot Measures – A. Riffer

A. Riffer is concerned that parcel taxes designated for the library may not be being used appropriately. He would like to make sure that monies are being used for their intended purposes.

c. Presentation of New Budget Options- C. Chadwick

C. Chadwick gave a brief recap of the last 4 meetings that she has attended acknowledging that there are still many questions that she (and by extension the County of Alameda) are not able to answer, which make passing any of the proposed budget options problematic. In order to solve these problems the County proposes to overhaul how they create contracts (including budgets) with various cities including Albany. There are not yet specifics on this process but the goal is for greater public input and transparency. They proposed to use in-house County resources to facilitate this process. At the current time they are not sure how long this process will take. The County acknowledges that they cannot explain the rationale behind the budget numbers, such as cost per hour, as they currently exist. The only option she has to present currently is Option #4 (see handout for specifics).

A. Riffer commented that this is a daunting process that could take a year and that a transitional contract may be needed. He would like further discussion of option #4. Aisha Brown, representing Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, commented that Supervisor Carson is committed to creating more transparency with contracts. Several Board members expressed gratitude that this process is moving forward. L. Flanagan expressed gratitude, but also said that she had heard promises like this before. R. Lieber would like to see the budget systems (including the overall budget). C. Chadwick responded that this is public record.

Question from community member: Does that mean that Option #4 should be taken off of the table (pending the contract overhaul)? C. Chadwick: Believes that Option #4 is fair, because the budget is uncertain and revenues are declining. Expects 2011-2012 to be even worse revenue wise and predicts further layoffs. A. Riffer: May need to have an interim contract in place this year, while the new system is developed. He feels that option #4 keeps the staffing at slightly higher levels than it currently exists.

L. Flanagan: Does C. Chadwick have a feeling on what the vision of the current changes to the county budgets is? C. Chadwick responded that the goal is to get all the libraries more self service tools in order to reduce clerical demands on staff, which explains clerical staffing cuts. They also want to increase collaboration between libraries and community outreach. A. Riffer asked if it would be possible to keep clerical positions at existing levels until new clerical machines have improved efficiencies. He noted that it seems risky to make reductions before productivity increases have been realized.

R. Lieber: Asks if the Board wants to recommend Option #4 to the City Council with some language that if the County doesn't meet the staffing requirements the City of Albany will get a refund for unfilled positions (credits). Wants assurances that the City will get what it pays for.

Comment from community member: Circulation may continue to increase despite clerical cuts, which will increase the workload.

Comment from community member: Suggests posting options online for interested community members. Is also concerned with language of the new contract.

R. Lieber: Does C. Adams have suggestions for guaranteed contract language? C. Adams responded that it would be great to include this type of language and that it is void from the current contract. A. Riffer: How can we know the timing of the new contracting systems? Is concerned that the process continues to move forward.

R. Lieber: Motion to recommend Option #4 with guaranteed service language of 12.5 FTE, for approval to the Albany City Council. R. Gonzalez seconds this motion. This motion is passed unanimously.

d. Albany Library Services Consulting Report

Should the Library Board recommend to the City Council to engage a survey firm to gauge interest in additional library taxes (revenue enhancers)?

R. Lieber: Does not think this needs to be done by the library alone. Suggest that the library may be able to piggy back on another a general City survey.

L. Flanagan: Hopes that if a survey is conducted that the information gathered is specific in terms of how much money people are willing to give.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Alameda County Library Budget Presentation was attended by A. Riffer and R. Lieber

Per P. Leach over 50 people attended the first “Bike about Town” event presented by the Recreation Department
“Shop Local Week” will be starting September 19th, 2011

The new Community Services Activity Guide comes out on August 5, 2011.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

E-book interface. How does it work?

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Board packet is available for public inspection at the Albany Library. The agenda can be found on our web page at www.albanymca.org. Please note that if you provide your name and address when speaking before the Board it will become part of the official public record, which will be posted on the Internet.