

ALBANY LIBRARY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES – May 19, 2015

Albany Library, 1247 Marin Avenue, 7 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Gonzales

Board Members Present:

Rosalie Gonzales

Marge Atkinson

Sarah Levin

Cynthia Hegedus

Alameda County Library Staff Present:

Brian Edwards, Albany Library Manager

Cindy Chadwick, Deputy County Librarian

Darshan Chattha, Financial Services Officer

City of Albany Staff Present:

Ronnie Davis, Staff Liaison

2. INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS – Gonzales asked new Board members to introduce themselves and give some background on their interest in the libraries. Hegedus noted that she is a public librarian with Oakland Public Library and a community resident. Atkinson said that she served on the Albany City Council for 8 years and is interested in seeing library issues from another perspective. Levin is a school librarian at a private high school in San Francisco. She attended a library advocacy event in Washington D.C. and wants to be involved in more local advocacy.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 17, 2015 – Gonzales asked for the approval of the March minutes. Gonzales asked for clarification about the Albany Library Trust Fund. Edwards explained that materials bought using trust funds do not “float” for a year. The minutes were approved unanimously (Atkinson/Hegedus).

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS – One member of the public commented that he was disappointed that the Board did not have the purview to address issues about the nature of the Library collection.

5. REPORT FROM THE STAFF LIAISON – Davis reported the City Council approved the National Library Week Proclamation and the 2015/2016 Albany Library Board Work Plan at the April 6 City Council meeting. Edwards was introduced to the City Council at that meeting and spoke briefly about the community support for the library and the high proportion of Albany residents that have library cards.

6. ALAMEDA COUNTY LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION (ACLAC) APPOINTMENT -

Davis said that the Library Board needed to elect an alternate to ACLAC. Due to travel plans, Riffer would not be able to attend the Special Meeting scheduled for May 20. Hegedus was elected unanimously to serve as alternate for the term of two years (Gonzales/Levin).

7. ALBANY LIBRARY REPORT -

Edwards referenced the Alameda County Library Statistical Report, July 2013 – June 2014, which is available through the Alameda County Library website (www.aclibrary.org). He presented a PowerPoint that showed facts such as 80% of Albany residents have library cards and the high use of other city’s residents that use the Albany Library. Board members asked about eBooks.

8. CITY OF ALBANY CONTRACT WITH ALAMEDA COUNTY LIBRARY -

Staff Reports: Davis presented the report from Albany Finance Director Tina Mckenney that showed the special taxes collected by the City would cover the costs of the contract with Alameda County Library with a balance at the end of the two year budget period. Chadwick introduced Chattha who noted that the current contract budget for a total of 41 Albany Library hours included a 5% increase in cost since the budget had not been increased for several years. Chattha explained the Albany property tax is low compared to other cities in the County system. The County Library's available fund balance makes up the difference between the Albany Library revenues and expenses.

Board concerns: Board members asked how materials were distributed to Albany. Chattha answered that Albany receives a percentage of the total \$4 million materials budget based on a formula that considered property tax revenues, population and circulation. Albany also has \$100,000 in the Albany Library Trust Fund that can only be used for Albany Library equipment and materials.

Public Comments: Several members of the public spoke and asked for further clarification about the direct costs for materials and technical support. Others asked for clarification of the cost of the base hours in comparison to the additional purchased hours. Several members of the public suggested that the Board not approve the contract until these issues were clarified.

Board Discussion and Vote. Board members reiterated some of the public concerns about funding issues. Chattha said that communities with larger property tax bases had different costs for supplemental hours. He promised to provide the Board at a future meeting with the formula that determines this cost. It was moved by Gonzales, seconded by Hegedus and approved unanimously to recommend the contract to the City Council. Davis will write a Staff Report and request that this be considered at a June City Council meeting.

9. UPDATE ON ALAMEDA COUNTY LIBRARY COLLECTION MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES -

Staff Report: Chadwick said the County Library was looking at procedures for the de-selection of library materials – what happens to library materials after they are discarded from a library collection. She distributed a fact sheet Discover Books via the Alameda County Library Foundation and described a new procedure that would involve a partnership with Discover Books, a national company housed in Livermore, CA whose mission is to “divert books from landfills.....” Chadwick emphasized that discarded items would always be offered to the Friends of the Library and the County Jails services first. The County Board of Supervisors has asked for public input on this proposal. The matter will be discussed at the special ACLAC meeting on May 20.

Public Comments: Members of the public questioned why items of value were discarded from Alameda County Library collections. They asked for accountability and accurate records of how many items had been discarded. One community member involved with the Friends of the Albany Library reiterated that Friends groups should get the first look at discards and that discarded children's books sell well at book sales.

Board concerns: Atkinson was concerned that ACLAC have an advisory role in the weeding process.

Staff comments: Chadwick mentioned the “Floating Collection” experiment of the past 5 years which resulted in a disproportionate number of items needed to be discarded from a single branch was being phased out in the next 6-8 months. She said this should help with the predictability of branch collections. The County Library is trying to rebuild trust in the management of library collections. Chadwick said that she would report on the following at future meetings: Strategic Plan, Fiscal Study, Materials Handling consultant report.

10. RECORDING OF ALBANY LIBRARY BOARD MEETINGS

Staff Report: Davis reported that the current meeting was not being recorded due to staff working at the Albany High School concert that was happening at the same time in Memorial Park. Davis said that only three City meetings were video-recorded and broadcast and three others audio-taped. City staff time is limited.

According to City Council policy, a Board or Commission could request two meetings a year be cablecast.

Board discussion: Board members said they would like the City to audio-record Library Board meetings when possible.

11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Board members requested an update from Chattha on the fiscal study that shows a breakdown of direct costs, as well as some comparison of the costs of supplemental library hours with other branches that buy hours –

Fremont, Union City and Dublin. Gonzales also asked for an update on the consultant report on materials handling. The Board would like an update on the Library's Strategic Plan. Future meetings will include a report from Edwards on suggestions for the Young Bequest.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.