



ALBANY LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Albany Library, 1247 Marin Avenue
June 2, 2009 7 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER – 7:08pm

Board Members present:

Leah Flanagan
Karen Leeburg
Robert Lieber
Alan Riffer
Sarah Whitmer
Linda Yamamoto

Members Absent:

Rosalie Gonzales

Alameda County Library Staff Present:

Ronnie Davis, Albany Library Manager

City of Albany Staff Present:

Robin Mariona

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

Motion:

Motion to approve March 25, 2009 minutes made by Member Lieber and seconded by Member Riffer. Motion carried all in favor.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

4. PRESENTATION: Reminder from Fern Tiger Associated to encourage Commissions/Committee Members to promote participation in the Voices to Vision neighborhood gatherings, mid-May through the end of June. Fern Tiger associate Steve Fish reported that there had been a great response to the community gatherings and asked the Members to encourage their Albany friends and neighbors to participate by handing out informational postcards. Member Riffer stated that it may be helpful to do a survey after the meetings were over, to determine why community members did not attend meetings, to put the all the information gathered in proper context.

5. ALAMEDA COUNTY LIBRARY CONTRACT with the CITY OF ALBANY, 2009/2010

A. Contract Timetable – Manager Davis stated that a copy of the staff report and contract were included in the packet and the contract would begin July 1st, with an option to renegotiate or terminate with a 30-day notice.

B. City Of Albany – Library Tax Projections and Budget History – Director Adams was not in attendance, but the information was as reported by him at the March meeting and staff report.

C. Alameda County Library – Contract Costs – Manager Davis brought back some answers to questions regarding the contract costs from the March meeting. She stated that savings in personnel would be achieved through unfilled positions, salary and cost of living freezes. The savings would be returned to the Library general fund. She clarified the difference between direct costs and system wide support. Direct costs were: salaries, supplies, county wide indirect costs, materials, phones and utilities, janitorial and professional services. System wide support included: in house expenses such as administration, information technology and extension services. In both cases the costs were spread among the branches.

6. INFORMATION ITEM: Friends of the Albany Library – C. O’Keefe, President, FAL. Caryl O’Keefe presented a slide show to the members. She stated that the Friends were a 501 C3 non-profit corporation and the purpose was to benefit the Albany Library mainly in the form of money. The Friends developed a proposal each year and provided materials. The most recent yearly amount provided was \$42,000. Mary Hartung had provided inspiration as a role model from the formation of the Friends.

The Friends had approximately 50,000 items donated yearly including books, CDs, audio books, photo albums, diaries and DVDs. The members sorted, recycled, discarded, priced, packed, stored, displayed and advertised all the donations received. Since it’s inception, The Friends had tripled their revenue by reaching out to new markets and using online pricing tools. They also generated revenue through their book sales that took place 6 times a year.

Manager Davis stated that the Friends were an extraordinary support group. Friends’ member Alan Riffer stated that the organization provided most of the funds for family programs and 20% of materials costs. The Friends used 10% of their funds for insurance, supplies, advertising and payment of school children to help at book sales.

Manager Davis stated that she would be sure that the Library Board members were included in any Friends communication and mailings.

7. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEM: Alameda County Library Floating Collections –R. Davis: Manager Davis briefly explained the floating collection concept set to begin on July 1st, and referred the Members to a fact sheet. Floating collections were a cost saving method for libraries, which allowed materials requested by patrons to reside in the requesting library, rather than returning the materials to the library of origin. This method saved on shipping costs, packing and workloads of staff. It also allowed materials to be on the shelves, rather than in transit.

Manager Davis stated that studies were being made to evaluate how well the system worked. Member Lieber asked if the floating library system could be used by staff to periodically call back materials that were important to Albany, should they be requested elsewhere. Manager Davis stated that the system was set up to serve the system, but Albany generally had more materials coming in than going out, and as a result the Albany Library could end up with a larger collection. Staff would need to be proactive with regard to collection management issues. She stated that the floating collection had strong advantages and some challenges, but felt positive about the County’s evaluation tools and the benefit to users.

Caryl O’Keefe asked the Board to formulate important evaluation questions and management tools for the County to judge how well the system was working over time, as the floating collection method was put in place. Manager Davis stated that every branch was concerned about their collections and staff would monitor the collection to preserve the community interest.

Member Riffer stated that tracking the originating library was important and questioned if the floating library system would call the 501 C3 status of the Friends into question. He further stated the Friends wanted to monitor materials that were important to Albany, supported intact collection series especially for children and wanted established criteria for evaluation of the new system to monitor against expectations.

Manager Davis stated that she would communicate the Members concerns. She further stated that the library system had evaluative tools in place and other libraries that had already implemented the system were satisfied. Member Riffer stated that the Board wanted to know more about the evaluation process. Manager Davis stated that she would ask Alameda County Collection Manager, Linda Harris, to report to the Board in January. Member Riffer asked for an update in July on what information was being captured by the evaluative software to be sure that all important informational history be preserved.

Chair Flanagan asked what the Friends biggest concern was. Member Riffer stated that transparency, communication and sharing between the administrators and the branch throughout the process, was important. Manager Davis stated that the decision to implement the floating library had been made and sharing items, even series collections, could be a strength and benefit. Chair Flanagan asked Manager Davis if she was comfortable with communication between other Branch managers. Manager Davis stated that she was.

Chair Flanagan stated that the Board would invite a County representative to attend the September meeting, for more information on the evaluative software. Member Riffer stated that he would prefer July, but could wait until September.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

A. Report from Alameda County Library Advisory Commission – R. Lieber. Member Lieber stated that the meeting would be held on June 3. Member Lieber asked if an alternate member could be sent in the future. Chair Flanagan stated that if there was a serious issue, an alternate could be sent.

B. Albany Library Report – R. Davis. Manager Davis stated that the Library staff had presented and participated in: poetry, Paws to Read, adult and children reading games, Green Albany, family concerts, pre school story time, computer instruction, and had passes for the Asian Art and Discovery Museums. She complimented her dedicated staff.

C. Legislative Report – R. Davis. Manager Davis stated that libraries were waiting to see if the state would try to transfer funds from the libraries for other purposes, and the County would notify her if problems arose. Member Riffer asked how the state could appropriate library funds. Manager Davis stated that the state could borrow up to 8% of the libraries special district funding for other purposes.

D. 2009 Calendar – R. Davis. Manager Davis stated that she would cancel the July meeting that was scheduled and reinstate it if necessary. She further stated that she would send an email with sign up sheets for the Solano Stroll library table.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

8. ADJOURNMENT: 9:14pm