

MINUTES

Library Advisory Commission (LAC)

REGULAR MEETING

June 27, 2019

Community Meeting Room, City Hall
250 Hamilton Avenue

Commissioners Present: Pancho Chang, Doug Hagen, Bob Moss, Amy Murphy,
Brigham Wilson

Commissioner Absent:

Council Liaison : Alison Cormack

Staff Present : Josh Martinez, Gayathri Kanth, Diane Lai

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Moss called the meeting to order at 7:00.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS –

- Chang gave a brief description of his background and why he decided to join the Commission.

BUSINESS

1. Approval of Draft Minutes of Special Meeting on April 25, 2019

- With no correction, the minutes for April 25, 2019, were approved with Murphy motioning approval and Wilson seconding.

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- Wilson was nominated by Murphy for Chair.
- Murphy was nominated by Wilson for Vice Chair.

- The motion was passed unanimously for Wilson to be Chair and Murphy to be Vice Chair.

3. Recommendations to LAC for Technology Budget Allocation

- Lai presented highlights on the report that she submitted for topics pertaining to the upcoming joint City Council meeting with the LAC. Staff's recommendation was that the LAC advocate to the City Council for increased funds to help strengthen the library's technology services and programs.
- From the Needs Assessment done in 2018, Staff had determined that patrons wanted more access to technology and their associated programs. Staff was looking to fill the community's need for technology by using extra funds for updated programs and provide a new Level of Service to patrons.
- Murphy asked about the requested funding amount that Staff was looking for and Lai suggested starting at \$10,000 - \$20,000.
- Wilson suggested that Staff cost out each line item so that the LAC had a better sense of how much funding was needed to be advocated for. Lai articulated that she could do that.
- Chang wanted to know more about relative demands for each class, technology piece, and programs. Lai responded that she would bring that back to the Commission for review at a future time.
- Moss was in support of providing more 3D printers. He wanted Staff to provide information to the Commission on how Staff planned to provide new programs and how the libraries planned to Staff those programs. He suggested that Staff provide a list of upcoming technologies that Staff had researched and were interested in purchasing.
- Hagan wanted to see a chart showing grant funds that were brought in compared to attendees that attended the programs that the grant funded. He suggested that Staff research grants to see if that was a way to fund new initiatives.
- Council Member Cormack questioned why Staff was looking for money when the City was trying to make budget cuts. Lai explained that Chair Wilson had asked what recommendations the library Staff had and the request to boost technologies in the libraries was one of Staff's recommendations.

4. Discussion about Eliminating Library Fines

- Kanth explained that libraries nationwide had started to eliminate library fines to help bring in low-income patrons. The main two reasons to eliminate fines were because collecting the fines was more expensive than what the fines generated

and having fines drove away patrons. Current library fines included a \$.30 charge per day for overdue adult books with a max charge set at \$9.00.

- Staff had planned to implement automatic renewal for books and that too would cut down fines as well.
- If fines were eliminated Staff still planned to send out due date reminders to patrons who had checked out a book. If the material was still not returned, it would be deemed lost and Staff would investigate. If the patron had a history of overdue items, then the patron's account would be locked. Damage fines would stay as well.
- Murphy asked what the process will be if the LAC decides to eliminate fines. Kanth announced that any recommendations would be brought before City Council.
- Moss was in support of dropping late fines but keeping fines for lost or damaged materials. He suggested that a reminder be sent to patrons who were notorious for returning items late stating that their account would be locked if the items were not returned.
- Hagan requested more information on what the Finance Committee's recommendation was. Council Member Cormack stated that Council Member DuBois had suggested that the LAC review late fines and make a recommendation to City Council.
- Hagan was in support of removing late fines.
- Council Member Cormack wanted the Commission to be very clear with their recommendation to Council on why they decided to keep or remove late fines. Kanth added that any recommendation made by the Commission would be reviewed and analyzed with budget Staff.
- Wilson wanted to wait to make a decision when more data was available for the Commission.
- Discussion commenced among the Commissioners on whether to wait to make a decision on eliminating fines when more data was available or to make that decision at the present time.
- A motion was made by Hagan that the LAC recommend banning fines on policy terms and to allow Staff to begin exploring what the potential offsets would be. It was seconded by Moss and passed with a unanimous vote.

5. Memo Proposing Topics for Joint Study Session with City Council

- Kanth suggested that the Commission talk to City Council about the highlights that had taken place in the libraries over the past year and what the priorities were for the following year.
- Discussion commenced between the Commission and Staff on the idea of the library providing passport services.
- Council Member Cormack suggested that Staff provide the report of the library's accomplishments and priorities in the City Council Packet.
- Moss suggested discussing with the City Council the potential of more funding for new technologies and popular programs.
- Hagan suggested highlighting new technologies and the student card program. He also suggested providing some high-level statistic points. He was not ready to bring up the passport service idea to the City Council.
- Council Member Cormack suggested that the Commission provide high-level statistics and review the libraries Strategic Plan to the City Council. Also, to articulate an objective that the Commission and Staff were working toward.
- Chang suggested that the Commission emphasize that all five City libraries were operating on short Staffing levels.
- Wilson suggested that the Commission review the draft Packet what would be sent to City Council at the August 2019 meeting and then have the joint meeting in October 2019.
- Kanth questioned whether the Commission wanted to put together the Packet or if the Commission wanted Staff to do it. Chang suggested that Staff do it.

6. New Headshots for Commissioners

- This item was to take place at the end of the meeting.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- April & May Monthly Report
- Wilson asked the Commission and Staff if there were any urgent questions or issues to report on the monthly report.
- Murphy wanted to see more tracking information in terms of the library's Instagram account.

OTHER REPORTS

Council Liaison's Report

- Council Member Cormack reported that the Finance Committee had voted to put back the Sunday hours at the Children's Library.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND REPORTS

- Kanth attended the ALA Conference and gave an update to the Commission. She noted that the Palo Alto libraries were very advanced in terms of programs provided against surrounding libraries. The theme for the conference was equity and diversity.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING – August 22, 2019

- Wilson stated that topics for the next meeting included the review the draft Packet that was to be sent to City Council for the joint meeting, an update on eliminating fines, passport services, and statistical data on technology programs.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:45 p.m.

