



July 14, 2021

Dear President Silva and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the months of May and June, 2021 and to provide a look forward to some of the activities, programs and plans we are working on.

Modified Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda). Just a reminder that I have not included the “regular” Library Services Report in your Board Packet because we aren’t collecting most of those statistics. I have included some numbers, trends, and other interesting activities/services provided to the community during the closure. The Expenditure Reports and Check Registers for March and April are also included.

New Library Board Members: We would like to thank Library Board President Cynthia Silva and Library Board Vice President Dorothy Wismar for their years of service to our Board. Regrettably, the Mayor has not yet had a chance to interview prospective board members and make her nominations to the City Council so we asked if both Cynthia and Dorothy would be available to attend the July meeting until their replacements are sworn in. Unfortunately, neither are available to attend on July 14, so all three remaining board members were contacted prior to the meeting to ensure we will have a quorum present to hold the July meeting. In spite of the August recess for the City Council, I am hopeful the Mayor will have made her nominations and we have new board members by the September Board meeting.

We will need to vote for a new President and Vice President at the July meeting and I would assume that it would not be one, or two, of the new members elected to those positions so an election will be held on July 14.

Main Library Update. All new full time hires have been selected and have begun work as recently as the Tuesday after the July 4th holiday. We are very happy to have added our new Teen/Social Media Librarian Kathleen “Kat” Kong and Librarian Technician Jonathan Christian to our staff. We have also added two part time Library Specialists, Amy Lewis and Elise Hochalter to the staff. All of these new hires will be trained to work at the neighborhood libraries as well as the Main library. Kat’s primary work site will be the Main Library while Jon will be assigned to the Bay Farm Library. Amy and Elise will also be primarily assigned to the Main but will likely have shifts at the neighborhood libraries as well. We currently have part time recruitments open for at least one more Library Specialist and one or two Library Associates. As of July 8 all of our existing part time staff, except Library Aides, have returned to work. We expect our aides to return once the neighborhood libraries reopen.

Re-Opening Plans: Phase 4.0: As you know the Main Library opened for Library Takeout (curbside pickup) in June 2020. In April 2021 the Computer Courtyard opened for limited computer services in the Dewey’s café space, while Library Takeout happened out the front doors. In May 2021 we closed the computer courtyard and opened the Main Library to a limited number of the public for limited library services. We allowed 30 people in for about 15 minutes to pick-up holds, quick browse, reference, or 20 minutes on a computer (we only had 6 computers on the second floor available). June 15 we quietly

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increased occupancy to 60 people and a 1 hour time limit, added a couple more computers and just a handful of chairs at tables for looking at magazines/newspapers. No computers or seating for children. City Hall and other city offices are planning to open to the public on Tuesday, July 6. City policy will be to require masks for all, vaccinated and unvaccinated, in all city buildings. Physical distancing will be highly recommended but will not be strictly enforced. City Hall will be open from 8:00AM to 6:00PM but various offices within the building have their own hours, I'm not sure what those are.

With our new hires beginning and PT staff returning after the 4th of July holiday, July 12 is our next big target date. The week of July 12 we will begin expanding our hours at the Main Library by adding back the morning on Thursdays and a shortened Saturday.

Main First Expansion of Hours

Monday:	Main	2pm-7pm	
Tuesday:	Main	12pm-5pm	
Wednesday:	Main	12pm-5pm	
Thursday:	Main	10am-5pm	+2hrs
Friday:	Main	12pm-5pm	
Saturday:	Main	10am-3pm	+5hrs
Sunday:	Main	Closed	

Our next big target date is August 16th. We expect to have our new hires trained for the neighborhood libraries (ALL four full time staff at the Bay Farm and West End libraries have left city employment due to retirement, relocation or resignation). We will re-open both neighborhood libraries two days a week to start and again, expand the Main Library hours.

Branch Limited Reopening

Monday:	West End	12 pm - 7 pm	+7hrs
Tuesday:	Bay Farm	12 pm - 7 pm	+7hrs
Wednesday:	West End	10 am - 5 pm	+7hrs
Thursday:	Bay Farm	10 am - 5 pm	+7hrs

Main Second Expansion of Hours [All of Main Library hours restored except Sundays]

Monday:	Main	12pm-8pm	+3hrs
Tuesday:	Main	12pm-8pm	+3hrs
Wednesday:	Main	10am-8pm	+5hrs
Thursday:	Main	10am-5pm	
Friday:	Main	10am-5pm	+2hrs
Saturday:	Main	10am-5pm	+2hrs
Sunday	:	Main	Closed

By September 7, the day after Labor Day, all hours at all three libraries will be fully restored to pre-Covid-19 operations, including the Sundays at the Main Library. Staff is already planning on resuming in-person programs after September 7 and the computer lab will reopen, hours to be decided.

Staff recommends discontinuing Library Takeout, demand has dropped off since we now allow people into the building and they can pick up their own holds. Staff also recommends discontinuing the Grab

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Bags. Reservations for the public meeting rooms (Stafford Room and Family Study Room) will not be taken until after January 1, 2022.

Budget. We have a budget!! Not extravagant by any means but the budget was adopted at the June 15 City Council meeting. The City has been moving towards a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software system. Finance and Human Resources modules were the first to be implemented but there has been a slight delay, so we open the budget year with parallel finance systems. We hope to get staff on the timecard tracking software in the near future.

Access Key Card Project. All Library Staff have been issued their building access cards for the Main Library. All employees were given the draft policy and have returned their signed acknowledgement page to receive their key. We will see if the first to arrive employees get the building un-alarmed before the rest of the staff arrive, otherwise my phone will be ringing with alarm activations every day! Internal doors, particularly if they are from the public side to the staff side, have the card readers and as the batteries die in the push-button keypads, use of the card will be required. No decisions have been made on what official text will be printed on the cards but they are functional. Time will tell how the transition goes.

LED Lighting Project. The installation of the new LED lights are nearly complete. The Main Library is much brighter now and we are very pleased with the result. The installers have been extremely courteous and they communicate well with staff. We are working out payment now that the fiscal year has ended. The next time you are in the Main Library, you will notice how much more you can see in our new brightness, especially in the Stafford Room.

Electrifying the West End Library. The West End Library is finally getting the air conditioner we requested several years ago in order to make it a possible cooling/clean air center. In the process of planning the installation of the new AC unit, Public Works recommended replacing the furnace and the water heater and converting from gas to electric. The City, as part of the City's Climate Action and Resiliency Plan, is encouraging new construction or renovations to eliminate gas appliances and reliance on fossil fuels. We will be using the West End Library project as an example to the community on how to electrify their own homes. Staff are already working with the City's Sustainability and Resilience Manager on producing a poster and two educational workshops (after in-person programs commence) for the community. This is a win-win for the library and the city.

American Red Cross Blood Drives. The Library's next quarterly Red Cross Blood Drive is July 13. With the Main Library's limited opening for the public, our plan is to close the door between the café and library to separate the two activities. Blood drive donors will continue to enter from the rear, wait their turn in the café space and be called into the Stafford room. The general public will enter the library for library use from the front doors. Blood drive donors will have access to the first floor restrooms, Library Users will have access to the second floor restrooms. It is one week before our blood drive and all reservations are filled, our Red Cross liaison says at this time, the need for blood is great.

National Park Service Japanese American Containment Site Grant Project. This project continues on its slow, yet steady path forward. We have three major goals ...1. Collect the photos, documents, interviews, etc. Identify as much as we can, digitalize all we want to include in this project and make it all of the highest quality. 2. Schedule and DO the interviews that we want to do. Nearly all are now

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vaccinated and our interview subjects are not getting younger. Do the eldest first and the third & fourth generations last. 3. Get our encyclopedia article subjects settled, select writers, and get them written. This is the last part of this grant project. This project team meets on the first Tuesday of each month.

Japantown Historical Markers. This project has significant overlap with the JA History project.. This is the final logo that will be on all four of the Historical markers.



Tonarigumi

Alameda's Historic Japantown Neighborhood

Tonarigumi, next door or close neighbor in Japanese, describes the cohesive bond in Alameda's Japanese American community that remained steadfast despite racism and wartime hysteria, and the erasure of its historic Japantown. The logo design expresses a welcoming neighborhood in Alameda, that is no longer visible, yet the strength and resiliency of community is symbolized through the bamboo leaves, and the fluidity of Japanese culture and shared history is reflected in the undercurrents of the water, and still present today.

The next meeting is on July 14 where we will set a firm timeline to have content ready for editing, layout for fabrication, and plans for installation. The goal is to have the four markers mounted by the end of August so the Fall Art Walk produced by Rhythmix Cultural Works can happen on September 17. Rhythmix has walked our site and also the church, temple, and Marketplace to decide where their artwalk performances will be held. At the Library will be in front of the building, the book bike will be filled with materials about Japanese Americans, the Internment, and any other significant materials we can offer. We don't really expect people to check out anything that evening but they will be aware the library has these materials available. This project team meets the second Wednesday of each month with smaller group meetings as needed.

Friends of the Library. The Friends have been busy. They continue to offer amazing programming to the community both locally and far afield. Since the beginning of 2021 they have hosted almost 1,500 people to their virtual programs (in only three programs!). They are planning on continuing to do some

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virtual programs or create a hybrid of sorts. Much still under discussion but they have decent talks scheduled through October 2021.

The book sales are the major topic of discussion. Without a book sale lead they are not accepting book donations. The fall October book sale at the O'Club is canceled because we don't have a lead or enough volunteers to staff the sale. There has been discussion to possibly rent a store front and open a used book store but again, there aren't enough volunteers available to staff regular hours in a store. The Café will not be opening until November at the earliest but I may push that back, depending on how the virus is trending, city requirements and individual packaging of foods. We are not allowing food in the library so we are not opening the café because to eat, you need to remove your mask. They want to consider converting the book sorting room into a book store but I'm not sure if that is a viable solution. I have many questions and concerns if that is the direction they decide to go. So, much up for discussion at this point.

The Friends have taken over the maintenance and re-stocking of the Little Libraries hosted by the library and Alameda Recreation and Parks. They have already repaired the structures where necessary and will swing by the library to pick up material to stock them. This is a great relief to both the library and ARPD. We really appreciate the Friends taking this on.

The Live @ the Library Concert series hopes to return in January with a three concert series, maybe to become a winter/spring series rather than return to the fall and the busy holiday season. Friends member Eileen Savel is on the job to secure high quality musicians and we will see if January/February/March or February/March/April works out better. More news as it comes.

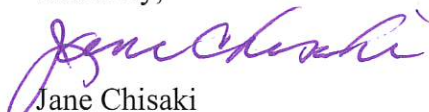
The next Friends Board meeting will be on Monday, July 26 and August 23 via Zoom at 6:30 p.m.

Alameda Reads. The Alameda Reads has been busy busy busy. Although they are not having in-person trainings, or learner/tutor sessions, they have been offering virtual book clubs, mailing materials to existing pairs and continuing to work with the State Library to obtain funding for the coming year.

They have also had to deal with homeless encampments outside their building (Veteran's Building on Central and Walnut). The City has helped to clear out the area but it is a constant issue. Some of the building issues themselves have been corrected during the closure so their space inside is better as well. Their Internet access has been slow at best so Library IT Systems Analyst Matt Hagedorn is working with them to establish a new, better, faster, reliable Internet connection.

If you have any questions about the items to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you would like to discuss these or any other items, please email me at jchisaki@alamedaca.gov or if it is not urgent, please leave me a message at 747-7747.

Sincerely,



Jane Chisaki
Library Director