



May 11, 2022

Dear President Bales and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the months of March and April, 2022 and to provide a look forward to some of the activities, programs, future plans and contingency plans we are working on.

The Library Board will continue to meet virtually for a while longer. The Alameda City Council continues to have Zoom Council meetings, they approve the teleconferencing of meetings every 30 days. As our City Council goes, so the Boards and Commissions will follow. There is hope that their meeting will go to a “hybrid” meeting format as the technology is put in place in the City Council Chambers. That is estimated to take about 6 weeks. I don’t think that would matter much to the Library Board, I do think once the City Council goes to a hybrid format, the Library Board will be allowed to meet in person, if that is the desire of this body.

Modified Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda). 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 in this packet. A reminder that with the new accounting software the reports look a little different.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). The City’s transition to the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software from Tyler Munis continues. The Finance Department has hired a new Controller, Ross McCarthy, who is very sharp and will hopefully help us with this transition. The new Finance Director, Margaret O’Brien, began work in early April and will hopefully see us through the Budget adoption in June. Finance has been without a Director since December when the new ERP launched.

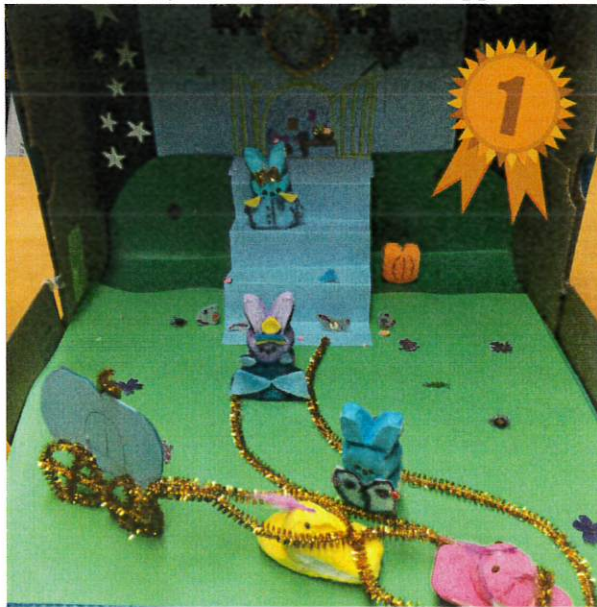
City Manager / Assistant City Manager. City Manager Eric Levitt separated from the City of Alameda on May 2, Assistant City Manager Gerry Beaudin became Interim City Manager on May 3. He will be Interim City Manager through the May 17 City Council meeting. Beyond that date, I am not 100% sure who will be appointed Interim City Manager. If the City Council does not award a contract and appoint an outside person to be our Interim CM, then the City’s succession plan is for the Public Works Director to be appointed. (CM → ACM → Public Works Director → Police Chief → Fire Chief).

Budget. In spite of all the changes at the top of the City’s Executive Management team, the former City Manager listened to all the budget requests from the Departments, made recommendations to move forward to the City Council for consideration. Two budget work sessions are scheduled, May 10 and May 12, for the City Council to look at the recommended budget, ask questions and make their desired adjustments. Interim City Manager Beaudin will lead the budget work sessions. Hopefully there won’t be too many questions to be answered and adjustments to be made. The Budget Adoption City Council meeting is scheduled for June 21. The Finance Director will oversee the Budget Adoption item. The Library didn’t have too many asks for the next budget cycle. Mostly cost of living increases and we did

request one new full time librarian position. Apparently other city departments also asked for new positions and the library position was not deemed “vital”. 14 of 25 positions city-wide are recommended in the new budget, the library will ask for the position again at mid-cycle.

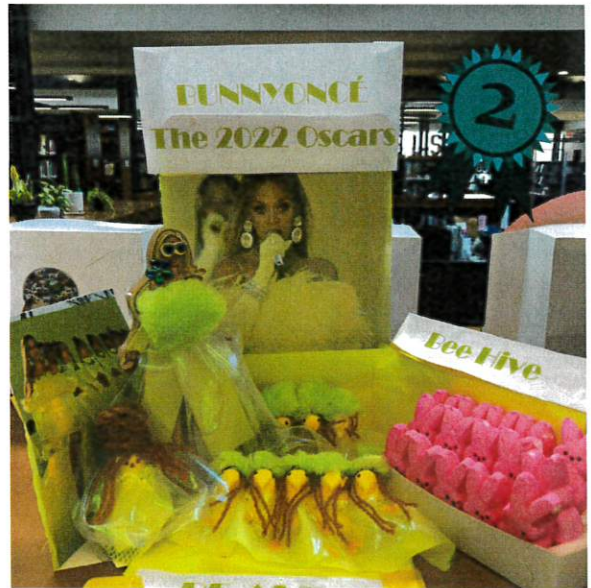
Main Library Update. Staff had a constant battle with library customers over the proper wearing of their face coverings. It was a huge relief for the staff when face coverings were no longer mandatory but are strongly encouraged. Most staff continue to wear their face coverings, particularly on the public floor. In personal offices and in some staff areas they go maskless because we do know the vaccination status of all our staff members. We were pleased to announce that in-person children’s programs resumed on April 4. All previously created online programs will remain on the library’s YouTube channel for repeated viewing and occasionally, something new might be added. The in-person story times were met with moderate to large audiences. The children’s staff instituted a ticketing system for some of the story times to manage the size of the audience to allow for some social distancing since children are still unvaccinated. Teen programs had always been in-person because attendance was always manageable. Adult programs are beginning to offer hybrid programs and an occasional in-person program. Many of their programs are still on Zoom.

The annual Peeps Diorama Contest happened in April. People could pick up a diorama kit from the Main Library or use their own supplies to create their dioramas. About 25 entries were received, a combination of dioramas dropped off at the Main Library or pictures of a diorama at home. Pictures of all the entries were on the library web page to allow everyone to vote for their favorites. The PEEPlE's Choice award goes to



Peeperella: The Clock Strikes Midnight by Helen and Leto S.

and the runner up is Bunnyonce - The 2022 Oscars by Stephania P. Fun was had by all!



Staff Development Day was held on March 31. In addition to division reports, training was offered on dealing with homelessness in the library, location of emergency equipment & what to do, as well as some team building exercises. Supervising Librarian Marlon Romero took the lead with the other

supervisors to organize this staff day. From all reports, it was a huge success and it's good to know, I no longer have to take on the whole day but have a lot of excellent supervisors to help carry the day!

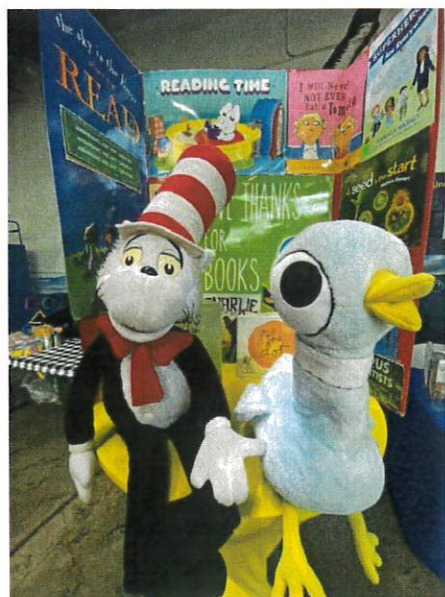


It is poetry month so staff created a “Poet-Tree” at the information desk at the Main Library. The public was invited to write a short poem on a leaf shaped piece a paper and add it to the tree. Our tree is filling out nicely!

Alameda Poet Laureate Kimi Sugioka also presented her poetry and answered questions during a Zoom session hosted by our Adult Services.

Completely separate from our library programs, Poet Laureate Kimi Sugioka organized and presented an afternoon of poetry and celebration at Alameda's Chochenyo Park. She had invited Native American poets included two other Poet Laureates who drove from as far away as Lake County, to celebrate the Native Peoples here in Alameda. It was a beautiful, sunny, well attended event.

Senior Librarian Rosemary VanLare and School Resource Services Liaison Andie Cultrera participated in the Coast Guard's celebration in the Month of the Military Child and it far exceeded our expectations! Andie provided a wonderful craft and invited children to create dandelions, the symbol of the military child. The prize wheel (giving away bookmarks, pencils, buttons, etc.) was an effective draw to our area, as well as the great reading display board Andie set up with Pigeon and the Cat in the Hat. They issued four new library cards and reactivated one expired account. They interacted with about 75 people. Of the library services, materials and programs they promoted, people were most interested in in-person storytimes and the e-resources. Some were surprised to learn that they could obtain an Alameda Free Library card even if they already had an Oakland Library card. The Library's participation in this event was very much appreciated by the Coast Guard and the Library will be invited to future events.



Access Key Card Project. Although the City has a new vendor, the Library is still waiting for the access card readers that are not working properly to be replaced. The city does not appear to be in any hurry to move this project forward so the library staff is just making do with what we have and have reverted back to the pushbutton locks on those doors with malfunctioning card readers.

Electrifying the West End Library. Done, done, done. The West End Library looks great. They have also painted the window frames and refinished the Santa Clara side door. The Electrification hybrid program was held in mid-March. A follow up program was held at the Main Library and a third will be held at the Main Library soon. The City is thrilled with the completed project as an example to the community that even older structures can be electrified. Rebates from Alameda Municipal Power are still available for residents interested in doing a similar project for their homes.

American Red Cross Blood Drives. The Library's next quarterly Red Cross Blood Drive is Tuesday, May 10. The Blood Drive donors will enter and exit through the front doors with the rest of our public. We are almost fully booked for the Blood Drive. There are currently four tables with a couple of chairs each in the "waiting room" because that space is actually Dewey's Café. On a sunny day, folks can also wait outside in the patio, maybe they will buy a snack from the café while they wait. The blood drive almost has all the reservations filled so we expect a good turnout. There is still a great need for blood.

Hot Spot Lending Pilot Program. Hooray! The Library's Mobile Hot Spot Lending Pilot program had a soft launch on Tuesday, April 12. Thirty hot spots are available for check out from the Main Library. Each hot spot is packaged with a charger and instructions for how to activate & use the hot spot. One hot spot should be able to support up to 8 devices. 3 week loan, with no renewals; One Mobile Hotspot per library card; If the hotspot is long overdue it will be suspended and unusable; Replacement costs if damaged/unreturned: Hotspot #30, Hotspot case \$15, charging cables \$5



California State Park Vehicle Park Pass Program. In partnership with the First Partner's Office and the California State Library, State Parks is providing free vehicle day-use entry to over 200 participating state park units operated by State Parks to library-card holders. The California State Library Parks Pass is valid for entry of one passenger vehicle with capacity of nine people or less or one highway licensed motorcycle. The Library currently has six park passes ready to go that may be checked out for three weeks. Two passes each for the Main Library; West End Library; and Bay Farm Island Library. The passes from one neighborhood library may not be placed on hold for pickup at a different location. Passes check out on a 3 week loan, with no renewals. Library customers must ask for the pass they have on hold at the checkout desks. Staff will encourage patrons to return the passes at the front desk. One pass per customer at a time. There are no fees for lost/unreturned passes. If they are long overdue in missing status the pass number will be reported to the State Parks so they can decommission use of the lost pass. No limits on number of times the pass is checked out.

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As reports of the success, or not, of this program the CA State Parks system may issue additional park passes to the public libraries.

National Park Service Japanese American Containment Site Grant Project. Our project is coming alive with new entries in the Densho Repository. This is a work in progress and, so far, the collection contains three interviews. In the coming months we will be adding more interviews and another collection that will contain photos and documents. Check us out!

<https://ddr.densho.org/ddr-ajah-1/>

Japantown Historical Markers. Another project that is inching along. At this point it is editing content and getting permissions to use the photographs. We expect to send all content to the fabricator in the next few weeks. Also the City Attorney's office still has to secure the easement with the owner of the Marketplace property for the marker that will go at that location.

Friends of the Library. The opening of Dewey's Friends Café has been slow to re-attract customers. We suspect that people are not aware that the café has re-opened or that it even exists back there! We did have some issues with the volunteers not wearing their face coverings when staff asked them to wear them but that is no longer an issue. Dewey's is open Monday-Friday from noon to 4:00PM. The Café will also be open during the Friends Pop-up Book Sales in the Stafford Room.

The Friends have named their book store! Books for Friends, or BFF for short. They have purchased, assembled and mounted shelving in the room, purchased a credit card processor and are training their staff. The store will be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday from noon to 4:00PM. They will have a Mother's Day themed pop-up sale in the Stafford Community Room on May 7 from noon to 4:00PM. They have put a hold on accepting book donations because they have over 300 boxes to work through. They received several large donations and cannot keep up without more volunteers to assist with the sorting and pricing of materials. They have requested several maintenance issues and permissions from the City about using the warehouse at Alameda Point. I'm working my way through their list and hope that we don't push so hard that we lose the privilege of using that space. There are plans to hold a "big" book sale, they have named the "mega sale" at the O Club at Alameda Point on October 21-23, 2022, former library board member Cindy Silva is the lead for the mega sale.

The Live @ the Library Concert series has no dates to announce. Concerts will likely happen in the fall. I think the organizers are waiting for all occupancy limitations to be lifted.

The next Friends Board meeting will be on Monday, May 23, 2022 via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. The Friends have decided to continue the Zoom format for their Board meetings for now. If you would like to attend their virtual meeting, you may contact Friends Secretary David Beall at bealld@alamedafriends.com and he will send you the zoom link for the meeting.

Alameda Reads. Alameda Reads continues to resume their services. The pandemic had been very disruptive to the Alameda Reads program. They are back on track to train a few new tutors and we are seeing a lot more tutor/learner pairs using the library study rooms, conversation groups are now booking the family study room and a lot more normalization seems to be in the offing.

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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