



July 10, 2019

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 2019, and to provide a look forward to some of the projects which will be coming up and a few we were working on.

Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda). The April and May 2019 Library Services Reports are included in your Board Packet. The Expenditure Reports for May and June are also included.

Main Library Update. Good News! First round interviews were held on June 10 for Supervising Librarian, Adult Services (Cossette's former position). There was a very large applicant pool which was reduced to about 28 well qualified candidates and then the painful process of winnowing that group down to ten for actual interviews. This process was a blind assessment as no names and addresses were provided to me, I had to make selections based on work experience and the three supplemental questions. Ten people were invited and eight candidates accepted the invitation for interview with the outside panel. No one failed the interview and the top five received some very high scores! On June 12 Library staff interviewed the top four candidates. It was a very talented pool of candidates and the decision was very, very difficult. After thinking about it over the weekend a tentative offer was extended to Sierra Campagna from the Contra Costa Library. Sierra comes to us with a wealth of experience having been a Community Branch Supervisor for the last few years at Orinda, Moraga, Lafayette, and Walnut Creek. She has subbed at Dublin and other branches in the Contra Costa system. Sierra will supervise the Adult Services division as well as the two neighborhood libraries and she will be the regular Sunday supervisor. Her start date is July 22. We are very excited to welcome her to our staff!

The Information Technology Systems Analyst interviews will take place on July 9. Again, a very talented applicant pool. The initial interview panel will have our City IT Manager, an IT specialist from Alameda Municipal Power and the Library Technical Services Supervising Librarian, Marlon Romero. We hope to have that spot filled by the end July.

We have had complaints about the library parking lot, many people cannot find a space, even before we are open. The new business owners were informed that this is the Library's parking lot and I also spoke with the Executive Director of the Downtown Business Association. The City has installed "Library Parking Only" signs with the additional language, "vehicles will be towed at owner's expense." The signs are installed at the three entrances to the parking lot and already the "regulars" have moved their vehicles out of the lot. There are fewer qualms when the police are called to ticket offending vehicles.

Panic buttons have been installed at the three service desks in the Main Library; circulation, children's and reference. These are connected to our Bay Alarm system and will call 9-1-1 more quickly than picking up a phone and calling. We hope to install at the two neighborhood libraries but those are covered by the City's Protection One alarm contract so we have to negotiate with them for installation.

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The Boys & Girls Department has launched a new program, "Mother Goose on the Loose" on Thursdays. This is a highly structured, nursery rhyme based story time for children ages 6 months to 2 years. This program is being offered as an alternative to one of the two Preschool Story Times that have previously been offered on Thursdays.

In May, the part time School Resource Services liaison visited 11 different schools and promoted the library and summer reading to over 3,500 students. Imagine how many students a full time School Resource Services liaison would be able to reach!

Strategic Plan. By the time you receive this Board Letter the Consultant Agreement with Ruth Metz should be fully executed and we will be ready to go. Once the draft was approved she very kindly FedEx'd her signature pages to us so I could also sign and get it across the street to the City Attorney's Office before I leave on vacation. We don't want to get too far ahead of ourselves but we will discuss "our people" for the strategic plan team at the meeting. No dates for final decisions will be made until Ruth can join us for the discussion.

Fine Elimination. We are inching toward implementation. Library staff teams for Administrative Issues (policies & procedures) and for Marketing (press releases, programs to inform, and possible giveaways) have been working hard on the details of implementation. In the meantime, Alameda County, Pleasanton, and Livermore will go fine free on July 1. Our Library will hold a final "Food for Fines" event this August to help clear some of the fines and provide non-perishable food items to the Alameda Food Bank. We expect to have all affected accounts cleared by the beginning of September and ready for the launch date. An off-agenda report will be provided to the City Council so they can make this feel-good announcement at their second council meeting in September. I am a little sad that the City's Master Fee Schedule which is approved by the City Council each year had our fines eliminated and a sharp-eyed blogger noticed that and wrote briefly about it on her blog stealing the Council's thunder, all positive comments.

Budget. The City's FY19-20 and FY20-21 budgets go for City Council adoption on June 18. The Library's funding is relatively stable and the City Manager is recommending increasing staffing by making our PT School Resource Services person a full time Librarian doing the same thing but expanding the program. This recommendation is for the FY19-20. In FY20-21 he is recommending adding a fulltime Library Technician to work in our Computer Lab, more classes, more web page support and assistance with social media would be the primary duties of this new position. We expect to purchase a new library van but I don't know which year that will happen. Councilmember Jim Oddie requested additional funding for collections so an additional \$25,000 in each of the fiscal years is also in the recommended budget. Looking good. Will be able to report adoption (or not) at the July Board meeting.

Friends of the Library. Hooray! The Friends of the Library have book sale storage in a dry, secure, city building!! June 5 book sale chairperson Peg Rosen and I inspected the newly cleared out space at Alameda Point. We have the keys in hand and the alarm code for the building. Peg was worrying that it might not be large enough as it was difficult to envision with all the stuff such as office dividers, desks, boxes of surplus odds & ends. Once cleared for the Friends use it became clear that the space is indeed more than adequate. Peg and I taped the floor to show the path needed for entry by city staff though the boxes of books. The Friends will begin moving in the week of June 10. They still have access to the

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donated space from Michaan's Auctions in addition to the city space. They have stopped paying for off-site storage. It took some time but we have adequate, dry, secure, free, storage space for the Friends book sale!

The Friends are hosting their annual Volunteer Appreciation Event on Thursday, July 25 at Dragon Rouge restaurant. This has been a very successful event, good food, good company, and short speeches. Volunteers from the Book sale, Café, Concert, Library welcome desk, and our Headstart classroom readers are all invited to attend. City Council and Library volunteer coordinators are also invited. You should receive an Evite invitation for the event, I believe Karen Roemer is their representative. Hope to see you all there!

The Alameda County Health Inspector came to inspect Dewey's Friends Café and found the hot water did not come up to temperature in a timely manner. There still has been no resolution to the hot water question to date. Hopefully the Health Inspector does not return before a permanent solution is put in place.

I will be on vacation on June 24 so Circulation Coordinator Kevin Tam will attend the June 24 Friend's meeting in my absence.

The next Friends Board meeting will be on Monday, July 22, at the Main Library in the Family Study Room at 6:30 p.m. These meetings are open to all.

Alameda Reads. Hooray! The Veteran's Building has had mold abatement completed and the air has been tested and deemed "clean". All city and veterans assets that were within the safe containments were all sanitized and able to be salvaged, which includes sofas, toys, artwork, pool table, computers TV's and more. With the exception of a few rooms on the first floor, the facility is deemed safe to open with ADA access. ARPD and Alameda Reads are cleared to move back in. Many thanks to City Maintenance Supervisor Ricardo Delatorre for coordinating the abatement & clean up with the outside contractor and keeping everyone in the information loop until this project was completed.

Learner success stories are so fun to share with you. One of Alameda Reads' English Language learners, who's long-term goal is to become a teacher, has been invited to teach a Korean game for Multi-Cultural Night at Wood Middle School. Another learner completed her BS in Nursing. As her tutor put it: "At the same time, she juggled being a wife, mother, and working nurse. (She already had her RN license.)" And finally, a tutor reports that his learner (one of our rare native-speakers) has made a breakthrough in her use of technology. He had been working with her for years and she had always struggled with using her smart phone and was very fearful about the computer. Suddenly, she has "taken off" and is using many apps on her phone and is "Googling like crazy." It's these small things in life that make Alameda Reads so amazing!

Program Assistant Berenice Sanchez has moved on to an exciting new chapter in her career as of May 31st. She will be doing translation/interpreter work for a company here in Alameda and even though we will miss her terribly, we wish her great success. She has left large shoes to fill, but Barb has interviewed a wonderful tutor, Lenore "Red" Lustig, who has agreed to accept the part time position. Her passion for literacy, positive attitude and excellent administrative background make her a wonderful fit. Lenore will begin on July 1.

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I will be on vacation from June 18 and be returning to the office on July 8. If you have questions or concerns please contact Lori and she can direct your inquiry to the proper supervisor, Eva is in/out going to the American Library Association annual conference, Marlon is on vacation to return on June 25 and Kevin is around to assist in all phases.

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