



March 11, 2020

Dear President Silva and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the months of January and February, 2020 and to provide a look forward to some of the projects which will be coming up and a few we were working on.

At our January meeting we had a discussion regarding the Library Services Report and perhaps changing the format and/or the statistics that the Library Board receives. Unfortunately, I have not had time to work on revising the Library Services Report so you will receive the old format and the same selected statistics as in the past.

Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda). The December 2019 and January 2020 Library Services Reports are included in your Board Packet. The Expenditure Reports for January and February are also included.

Main Library Update. The Librarian recruitment for a Full Time position replacing Dawn Boyer is complete. Joy North joined our staff on March 2. Joy brings with her a wealth of experiences, having held positions at UC Berkeley, Northbrook Public Library, Morton Grove Public Library, and the University of Arizona. In addition to collection management, reference, and programming for adults, Joy will also responsible for the bulk of our social media and marketing. Joy will be working mostly at the Main but will also have regular hours at the West End Library.

The Coronavirus or Covid-19 is a cause for concern and the City and the Library are taking steps to ensure the health and safety of both the public and the staff. Months ago, during the “regular” flu season large bottles of hand sanitizer were purchased for all three libraries, including the separate service desks within the Main Library. Staff and the public are encouraged to wash their hands, signs have been posted around the buildings along with other tips to help prevent catching and spreading illness. Some staff have asked if they may wear masks, it was explained to them that the masks help if they are not feeling well but if they wish, they may wear masks. You may see a few around the building. The cleaning service, and our custodian have been asked to completely wipe all tables, chairs, counters, handrails, door handles, push plated, elevator keys, etc. every day. We have a separate staff member who cleans the computer keyboards. Signs are also up in the staff areas asking staff to clean up after themselves, wash their hands, wash their own dishes, and wipe down the counter space, in addition to their own work areas. The City is working on continuity plans should staffing be reduced or the virus emergency ramps up on the Island. If you have trouble locating hand sanitizer, I have a simple recipe I can pass on to you. It’s been shared over 250 times on the Library Facebook page!

A community group is working to establish four historical markers for Alameda’s Japantown. Representatives from the Buena Vista United Methodist Church, the Buddhist Temple of Alameda, and Rhythmix Cultural Center met with Assistant City Manager Gerry Beaudin, Public Works Director Liam Garland, Associate Civil Engineer Laurie Kozisek and myself to hear their proposal. They propose to have four historical markers, each that could serve as a starting point for a walking tour of the former Japantown. I have been asked to be the city liaison for this project. One of the markers will be on the

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front corner of the Main Library, Times Way used to be known as Bank Street lined with homes for the Japanese American families prior to the evacuation to the Internment Centers. There will be more information about this project as it moves forward.

The NorthNet Library Cooperative received a California Library Services Act (CLSA) grant for “Link+ Regional Resource Sharing” and this grant is to help libraries pay for year 1 implementing costs to join Innovative Interface’s Link+ program. Link+ is an add-on to our library online catalog that allows free interlibrary loan service for Alameda Free Library patrons to request books, audiobooks, CDs, DVDs, Blu-rays from a cooperative network of over 70 Link+ member libraries throughout California. Our Library now has Polaris as our Integrated Library System (ILS) which is a product of Innovative Interfaces. We consciously chose not to pay for Link+ while staff worked on our installation, implementation and training of a new ILS for staff. Staff is now comfortable with using the Polaris ILS so we are ready to join Link+ if the funding became available to purchase this add-on product. Timing of this grant is good, we have applied for this grant and if we receive it, 60% of the year 1 implementation costs would be covered and our library could go live on Link+ by the end of October 2020.

The Census is coming!! The Census is important because it will determine the political representation for the area, the funding from the federal government to the state and in turn to the county down to the cities. That number helps shape the programs offered for children in education, recreation, even libraries; it looks at the demographics for providing services. Much is done with those census numbers so it is important to encourage everyone to fill out their census form. Everyone counts regardless of age, ethnicity, or citizenship status. (The citizenship question was NOT included in the Census). Libraries across the country and statewide have been talking about the 2020 Census for several years. This is the first digital Census ever and libraries knew we would have a role. Originally the first day the Census would be open was April 1 but in the last six months, they moved the date up to March 12. Our libraries will have the Census icon on all public computers, at all three libraries, so people can easily access the Census survey, there will be table tents (signs) telling people the icon is there and encouraging them to fill out the survey. We have offered our computer lab to the hard to count populations so they can come in with, perhaps, their trusted individual and complete the Census as a group. We will have a few volunteers who will be available at the Main Library to assist people with completing their Census form. There are only ten questions but the hard part to explain is that everyone who lives at a given address needs to be included on one census form. So if there is an additional dwelling unit (ADU) behind your residence, and it does not have its own mailing address that the US Postal Service recognizes, the people who live there must be counted on the main residence census form. College aged students or adults in assisted living or rehabilitation centers need to be counted as part of their dorm or assisted living residence IF that is where they are residing ON APRIL 1. The Census opens on March 12, paper forms will only be mailed if the online form is not completed. Those paper forms will start being mailed on April 12. If the online and paper form is not filled out then census workers, enumerators, will be knocking on doors from May 1 to the end of July. All counting is completed by the end of July. Alameda Reads will also provide census completion opportunities for their learners. You, too, can volunteer to be trained to help others fill out their census form, just ask me and I’ll get you trained!

Strategic Plan. Congratulations to the Library Board on overseeing a great Strategic Plan! The Strategic Plan was presented to the City Council at their January 21 meeting by our consultant, Ruth Metz, and myself. It was enthusiastically adopted by the City Council who requested the library ask for more. Ask

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for a fully loaded schedule, and I said more hours means more staffing, at the mid-cycle budget ask. Everyone in attendance came out feeling pretty good. Many thanks to Ruth Metz for shepherding us through this process and to Board Member Kathleen Kearney and Friends of the Library President Karen Butter for attending the City Council meeting in support of our completed plan. Karen also spoke quite eloquently about the importance of libraries and the need for the Council to support our Strategic Plan. The “short form” of the Plan is completed and has just been printed. You will receive a copy at the March Board meeting then we will begin distributing copies as necessary. We have not started working on the staff “field guide” but that’s an in-house product so there is no rush. Although all members of our Planning Team were invited to attend the Council meeting, few attended. At the March Board meeting I will have Certificates of Appreciation for you all to sign that will be mailed to all who participated on our planning team.

To the City Council’s request for the Library to ask for “more” it was clear they would like to see an increase in open hours, particularly the Fridays at the two neighborhood libraries. The Library is preparing a “fully loaded” schedule of open hours to request new staffing and funding for the mid-cycle budget. “Fully loaded” is the Main Library open Sundays 1-5PM, and the other six days open 10AM to 8PM; both the West End Library and the Bay Farm Island Library open six days a weeks from 10AM to 8PM, only closed on Sundays. We are request five full time positions, one Supervising Librarian for the Neighborhood Libraries, two librarians, and two library technicians. There will also be two alternatives offered with fewer hours added, both to include the Fridays at the neighborhood libraries at a minimum. In both alternatives, I’d like to see the Supervising Librarian hired but we could probably manage the rest of the staffing with additional part time staff. One of the Council Members asked if maybe the library (I think she specifically meant the West End Library) could be open on school holidays for children who have nowhere to go because school is not in session and their parent(s) still has to work. So staff and I are looking at doing a one year pilot program called, “Business Not As Usual” and open the West End for limited hours on maybe three holidays during the next fiscal year. If the chosen day is a city holiday, we might be able to staff with part time employees or a full time staff member might be able to switch their holiday and take the a different day that week. We might hire an outside performer or do an in-house craft. There are still a lot of details to work out but at least, staff is willing to take a look at doing this one year pilot and maybe it will catch on and maybe there isn’t really a need. We’ll find out.

Friends of the Library. The officers for the Friends are now installed, Karen Butter will continue as President; Kumar Fanse will continue as Vice President; Josephine Sam is taking over for Bill Gibb.

The Friends hosted some great Black History Month programs in February, including a panel discussion called, “Black Youth: Exploring the Road to Success” and an art docent lecture, “Soul of a Nation: Art in the Era of Black Power”. Unfortunately the panel discussion was on Super Bowl Sunday, who knew a local team would be in the Super Bowl? Oh well, lesson learned. We already have the date for Super Bowl 2021.

The May book sale is quickly approaching. It is scheduled on May 1-2-3, with advance set up on April 29 and 30. This new book sale team is working hard to come up with additional ideas for raising funds for the Library. In addition to increasing prices, being pickier with what is accepted and goes into the sale, they are looking at selling sponsorships of the genre signs on the tables for “advertising” of local businesses or in honor of individuals. If those sponsorships happen, the October sale is the target launch.

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I will be working with the book sale all day on Friday, May 1 but will miss the evening as I have scouts over the weekend but if you are interested in volunteering, the sign-ups will be out shortly.

One of the founding members of the Friends of the Library, Honora Murphy, and her husband Charles just celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary! Congratulations to the Murphys! And sadly, long time Friends of the Library Treasurer, John Quick passed away just days before his 51st wedding anniversary to Kate Quick. John was an active volunteer at Ruby Bridges Elementary School, our own Alameda Reads adult literacy program, was an active member of many civic organizations and will be sorely missed. The Friends made a \$250 donation to the Library in John's memory to purchase children's materials and books on fishing (yes, he was an avid fisherman).

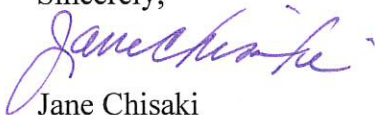
The next Friends Board meeting will be on Monday, March 23, at the Main Library in the Stafford Community Room at 6:30 p.m. These meetings are open to all.

Alameda Reads. Two of our Learners are published in *Change Agent*, an adult education magazine for social justice (which is published semi-annually). Carmen Chu, who is also one of our Library Aides, and Lou Pinkoff will each have their work appear in the March 2020 issue. In January the Library Board asked if you could read their essays, both are included in this Board Packet.

We have another new US Citizen!! A learner who has been working with our program for about 2 years has passed her citizenship test/interview and was sworn in during a ceremony at the beautiful Paramount theater in Oakland. She joined over 1,000 other new citizens representing 96 different countries of origin. She accomplished this goal through hard work and dedication, but was helped along the way by her tutor and by attending our Citizenship class. In other Learner Success stories...One of our non-native speakers reported that she "can really see the difference" in how she interacts with her children's teachers at parent-teacher conferences. Her tutor is very proud of her continued hard work.

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