



**MINUTES OF THE
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Joyce McConeghey, President
Sara Strickler, Vice President
Thushan Amarasiriwardena, Board Member
Dimple Kanji, Board Member
Kathleen Kearney, Board Member

Absent: None

Staff: Jane Chisaki, Library Director
Lori Amaya, Recording Secretary

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, AGENDA (Public Comment)

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

An asterisk indicates items so enacted or approved on the Consent Calendar

- *A. Report from the Library Director Highlighting Activities for the Months of September and October, 2022.
- *B. Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board Meeting of September 14, 2022.
- *C. Modified Library Services Report for the Months of August and September, 2022.
- *D. Financial Report Reflecting FY22/23 Expenditures by Fund for September and October, 2022.
- *E. Bills for Ratification for the Months of September and October, 2022.

Director Chisaki reported that the Children's department is back to in person programming. The First Chapter Friday program will continue online. The Library is working on in-house projects, but because of the staffing issue, progress is slow. Director Chisaki shared that there are many vacancies in the Bay Area. San Francisco has 147 vacancies out of a staff of 900. They pay very well and picked up four of Alameda's employees. Full-time Teen Librarian interviews were

completed, and the candidate that was selected has declined the offer due to the salary being too low. The candidate was informed that the salary will be increased almost 12.5% once the bargaining agreement is approved by City Council, but she still declined. References are currently being checked for the next candidate on the list. Three applications have been received for the Senior Librarian position. The recruitment was extended for two weeks and one application was received. The salary for that position will increase with the upcoming bargaining agreement approval, so the position will reopen again at the higher salary and the candidates that previously applied do not have to reapply. Circulation and door counts are slowly increasing which is the trend statewide. Board Member Kanji asked what the pay difference is compared to other cities. The State Library conducted a salary survey with like size libraries and Alameda was approximately 10-12% lower in some positions, and was equal in other positions. Board Member Amarasiriwardena asked if the Library has any goals to reach, or targets to compare against similar cities such as increasing door counts. Director Chisaki responded that it's sometimes like comparing apples to oranges and it depends on how much the jurisdiction spends per capita on their patrons. On average Alameda spends \$67/person as opposed to Berkeley which spends \$97/person. Alameda is in the middle in comparison to other cities. There are no specific goals at this time, but if there was more funding, the Library could do more. Board Member Amarasiriwardena asked how the board can help and Director Chisaki responded that advocacy is a big part of what the Library Board does. Board Member Kearney suggested Board Member Amarasiriwardena review the Library's Strategic Plan as there was discussion about how to reach out to the public and how to bring patron's in. Director Chisaki will provide copies to Board Members Amarasiriwardena and Strickler.

There are no changes to the Draft Minutes of the September 14, 2022 Library Board Meeting.

President McConeghey moved to accept the Consent Calendar. Board Member Kearney seconded the motion, which passed with a 5-0 vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Current and On-Going Library Activities (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki shared the Library's holiday hours for November and December. The board was reminded not to, "reply all" to emails sent to the entire Board.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Friends of the Library (J. Chisaki)

The Friends' book sale returned to the O'Club after 2.5 years. This year the book sale is under new management. They brought in approximately the same amount of money as previous sales. They are planning on doing pop-up sales in the Stafford Room. There is a new lead in the café. The Friends extended an invitation to the Library Board to attend their board meetings. Director Chisaki explained that only two board members can attend because any more than that would

qualify as a quorum and would require to be noticed as a meeting. The meetings are on the 4th Monday of the month at 6:30pm. There is no December meeting. Board Members Strickler and Amarasiriwardena are interested in attending. Board Member Amarasiriwardena asked how the Friends' fundraising works. Director Chisaki explained that the Friends are a non-profit to support the library and they have a variety of fundraising activities. There is a Café, a new bookstore, pop-up book sales, the big book sales at the O'Club, fundraisers at Books, Inc., and the concert series. The Friends provide approximately \$45,000 annually. This year the Library requested \$55,000 because the Alameda Reads has requested funds to publish a book of the writings of their learners. The Friends mission is to support and advocate for the library. The Library is planning a seed and tool library at the Jean Sweeney Open Space Park and the Friends will help fund \$75,000 - \$300,000 for that project.

B. Patron Suggestions/Comments (Speak-Outs) and Library Director's Response

A patron asked for paper towels in the restrooms. Director Chisaki explained that paper towels were removed from the public restrooms and hand dryers were installed. Paper towels were often shoved down the toilets and handfuls of unused paper towels were found in the trash. The Library was spending over \$1,000 per month on paper towels, but after removing them from the restrooms, the cost has gone down to \$300 per month. The hand dryers were a good investment.

LIBRARY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

President McConeghey commented that she is interested in attending the unveiling of the Japantown plaque at the Marketplace. Director Chisaki shared that the installation will be on November 14th or 15th. The unveiling ceremony will be on November 17th at 4:30 and will consist of a short program of speakers, and dancers.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Chisaki informed the board that she will be sending a small holiday gift in the mail.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA GENERAL

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Chisaki, Library Director and
Secretary to the Alameda Free Library Board