

CALL TO ORDER

Session 24-01, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Kate Finn at 5:37 p.m. on January 16, 2024 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: BOARD MEMBERS ASSELIN-MARTIN, CARSSOW, KUSZMAUL, FINN, BAILY, AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE MCDONOUGH

ABSENT: BOARD MEMBERS FAIR, MCKINNEY (EXCUSED)

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Finn read the supplemental items into the agenda Under Informational Items we have item f. Images, the Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies and item g. 2023 Impact Report from EveryLibrary.com and requested a motion and second to approve the agenda as amended.

CARSSOW/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)

RECONSIDERATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Unapproved Meeting Minutes for December 19, 2023

BAILY/CARSSOW MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 19, 2023 REGULAR MEETING.

There was a brief discussion that page 5, last sentence under item B should reflect next meeting agenda, not March meeting.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Library Director's Report

1. 2022 Statistics
2. 2023 Statistics

Library Director Berry reviewed his report in the packet. He provided input on the following:

- Giving Tree was again very successful \$900 in gift Certificates and 38 books were purchased from the list
- Plant Swap is scheduled for January 20th
- List of Special equipment that the Library has for loan
 - o iPads were pulled from circulation due to technical issues
- Gate Count for all time high did not quite make it but came really close, the all-time high was 128,400
- Number of items checked out reached 157,634 up approximately 20,000 over last 2022
 - o Circulation is not putting added pressure on the staff but what is starting to put some pressure on staff is the available space.

B. Legislative Update

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading of the title and noted the materials provided in the supplemental packet and under informational materials. Legislature was arriving in Juneau and there were several interesting pre-filed bills nothing related to Libraries but several of interest to the members of this Board.

Chair Finn did report that Senator Loki Tobin, from Anchorage was going to take the Alaska Library Network Funding to the Capital Budget that way it could not be vetoed by a Governor. Representative Vance has two bills up one related to child pornography but the wording is now child sexual abuse material which she opined gets a red flag about that as it may be a backdoor to banning books. So it was one to watch.

C. Fundraising Update – Boardmember Kuszmaul

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Boardmember Kuszmaul.

Boardmember Kuszmaul reported that the end of year report from the Homer Foundation was not available yet. She did listen to the last meeting and was looking forward to further on in the agenda to speak about how the Board can be more supportive of fundraising for the Library Endowment Fund.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Discussion of LAB Goals for 2024

LAB Strategic Plan & Goals Approved February 21, 2023

Chair Finn introduced the item by reading the title and deferred to Library Director Berry.

Library Director Berry noted that this was on the December agenda and Boardmember Fair recommended that they amend the title for item #2 under Goals on page 15 of the packet, suggesting that the word, “Implemented”

should be amended to read, “Execute” “Continue” or “Expand” since the Board has completed the implementation of the plan.

Boardmember Kuszmaul suggested that the Board discuss if they are changing that word so they can get a better sense of the Board as a group how they want to relate to planned giving, provide the idea under the Values, Roles and Responsibilities section as it all ties back to the fiscal idea of soliciting donations of money or property for the benefit of the Library and that solicitation is part of the Board’s charter in the city code that sets up the Board, but the Board has a financial responsibility and as an advisory around funds and donations.

Library Director Berry asked if she had any suggestions for the board related to that.

Boardmember Kuszmaul suggested hosting an event, possibility of a joint event with the Friends, Homer Foundation can provide information on the How and Why of making a donation to the Library Endowment Fund. The Homer Friends Board can speak to the why as well. She offered to contact Mike Miller with the Homer Foundation who has stated in the past that he would be willing to participate.

Discussion ensued by the Board on the following points:

- When and where it should be held
- Inviting Mike Miller from the Homer Foundation and get a time period from him.
 - o Get outline of a sample event
- Providing clarification on the difference between the Endowment Fund and the Friends Fundraising efforts.
 - o There is information in the Advisory Board files that the Clerk can forward to the Boardmembers.
 - o Boardmembers supported having an event to provide more information on Fundraising and the Endowment on behalf of the Library
- Add this item to the February agenda
- Time to hold the event possibly in March after Spring Break
 - o In or around the Lifelong Learning Celebration when the community is focused on that event, not during but maybe after the event
 - o Library Director Berry suggested in the Fall when the Friends did not have anything other than the Book sale
 - Big Financial week or so before
 - Visceral tie to both physical manifestation of where and what money goes to and speaks of the institution
- Add Hosting an Informational Event about Giving to the Endowment Fund under Goals
- There is no budget but the Library may have some limited funds
 - o Advertising on Bulletins, webpage for the Library, City website main page
 - o to provide refreshments at an event
 - o Announcement scrolling on the TV behind the desk, a new TV is being purchased so the old which is still good can be used for electronic advertisements
- It may not benefit having one event close to another event since having events close together may cause “compassion fatigue”
- Sustainability of the Library through fundraising, endowment donation, organized list of tasks for a subcommittee

- This is a lot for one person to take on
- Creating a subcommittee of two or three to work on the issue
- Objective was to raise \$100,000 at the start of the endowment fund and they are halfway there
 - This will create an interest revenue that can be drawn from for smaller projects or purchases.
 - Approximately \$3000 per year interest earned on \$100,000
 - Talking points are provided to bring up with donors by Boardmembers
 - Prospect list to approach people and businesses
 - This has not been done by any Boardmember
 - There is no literature or handouts
 - Spoke about a budget to get or create tools
 - Library has a limited budget that could be used for some items
 - Bookmarks
 - Thank you cards
 - Spoke about a comparison sheet giving to the Friends and the Endowment Fund
- Determine the best time sooner rather than later was in debate later in April or in the Fall before people depart for the winter
 - PFD time period
 - First year was they had a match challenge
- Location on the website where public can find the endowment information
- Combination event for the public and Advisory Body and if the Friends would like to participate

FINN/ASSELLIN-MARTIN MOVED TO REQUEST CITY COUNCIL APPROVE CREATING A SUBCOMMITTEE TO ADDRESS BUILDING THE LIBRARY ENDOWMENT FUND

Discussion ensued on the process to having a committee with members of the public and more than two or three members of the Board

- Requires permission by Council, recording is required, Clerk to take minutes, Noticing the meetings
- Boardmembers may have conflict of interest since they sit on the Homer Foundation Board
- Can schedule worksessions prior to regular meetings to discuss endowment fundraising
- Question if the Friends would want to participate
- Worksessions of the Board can be scheduled the hour prior to the regular meetings
- Part of the LAB Members responsibilities
 - Getting members to participate and take responsibility to perform the actions needed
- Quorums are needed for worksessions

VOTE: YES. ASSELIN-MARTIN, KUSZMAUL.

VOTE. NO. BAILY, CARSSOW, FINN

Motion failed.

Further discussion ensued on having a worksession before a regular meeting, obtaining a quorum of the Board in order to conduct the worksession on the endowment fund fundraising efforts, commitment from the Board to participate and perform the work needed since the Board cannot direct the Staff Liaison or the Clerk to do

the work and if during the discussion a member declares a conflict of interest as long as a quorum is maintained that member can step away from the conversation and that the Board cannot take action during a worksession it would need to be an item on the regular meeting agenda where the Board can bring forward recommendations for the Board to vote on if needed.

CARSSOW/FINN MOVED THE LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEET IN A WORKSESSION PRIOR TO THE REGULAR MEETING IN FEBRUARY AT 4:30 P.M. TO SET AN AGENDA AND WORK PLAN FOR MEETING ITS FUNDRAISING RESPONSIBILITIES.

Clarification that this will be a one-time worksession to establish how the Board will work on meeting the responsibilities and the Board needs to take the time to hash that out.

VOTE. YES. BAILY, ASSELIN-MARTIN, KUSZMAUL, CARSSOW, FINN.

Motion carried.

Deputy City Clerk Krause will forward endowment fund files and links to the Boardmembers.

Discussion and review continued on the Strategic Plan addressing the following:

- Recommendation to amend item b. under #2 Goals
 - o Add Host a public outreach meeting about Giving to the Endowment Fund
 - o Add Create a work plan for ongoing fundraising for the Endowment Fund

A brief discussion ensued on Homer Foundation coming to speak to the Board separate from an event and that might be a good idea since there are new boardmembers but would typically happen at the April meeting since there may be newly appointed members.

- Recommendation to Amend Goal #2 item a.
 - o Add Invite Homer Foundation to present to the Board on how to solicit donors

Boardmember Asselin-Martin argued that the Strategic Plan did not have to reflect dates as it can be generalized in the actions of the Board not necessarily pinpointing specifics.

Chair Finn requested clarification on the survey that is being worked on and questioned if it should be added to the strategic plan under the goals.

Boardmember Asselin –Martin clarified that the survey was related to the Library’s Strategic Plan not the Board’s but under Goals, item 3 suggested adding Support Homer Public Library Strategic Plan for 2020 – 2025

The Clerk will make the amendments to the Strategic Plan and bring back the draft at the February meeting for approval by the Board.

Library Director Berry clarified that the vote of the Board can be done at the next meeting in response to a question regarding that action from Chair Finn.

Library Director Berry proceeded to review the Strategic Plan from Goals topic for the Board noting the following:

- Confirmed that the current operating budget they have \$44,000 for books, \$10,000 for Periodicals, \$16500 for Audio/Visual Materials and \$10,000 for databases. He clarified that graphic novels would be included in books. He believed that it was adequate.

Boardmember Carsow expressed being a bit confused stating that this Strategic Plan was for 2023 and the Board is supposed to be updating this for 2024, so she questioned have they achieved the goals outlined in the 2023 Strategic Plan and if achieved should it be eliminated or updated.

Chair Finn noted the items listed under Goal 1 are ongoing and did not appear that they would change.

Library Director Berry clarified that they will talk about the library physical plant upkeep which will come from the capital budget that takes in the replacement siding, entrance gate and the remodel/renovation of the teen room/meeting room. He then reminded the Board about Boardmember Fair's recommendation to amend item number 2 under Goals.

Library Director Berry noted that they achieved the Big Fish donor in December of \$2500.

Chair Finn recalled that they did outreach on Goal 3, item a., over at the REC Room and provided a brief explanation on the outcome of that outreach, noting that the REC Room participants stated that they felt like they were guinea pigs as numerous organizations had the same idea to reach out and include them.

Library Director Berry reported other groups that have reached out to the library.

Boardmember Kuszmaul recommended removing the existing items under Goal number three and amend it to read, "Providing Community Input on the Library portion of the City's Comprehensive Plan."

Deputy City Clerk Krause in response to questions from the Board explained that there will be separate events surrounding the Comprehensive Plan Rewrite that will allow the community to provide input and the draft plan will be presented to each of the advisory bodies for review and comment on their section. She informed the Board that it does not limit the Board in developing a response if they want and participate on behalf of the Board at the public meetings. It would, of course, be preferred to provide the input as a body when the draft is presented by Staff/Consultant. Ms. Krause expressed caution on the Board hosting their own Public Hearing on the Draft Comprehensive Plan or even prior to that, unless they are requested to do that. She explained the status of the Steering Committee and that final members are being appointed and the Consultant Agnew::Beck will be hosting a number of public meetings and opportunities to get the community input on the plan as it develops.

Discussion by the Board on crafting the language for the plan, making it more generic and not so specific, ensued as follows:

- Amend Goal 3 to state: "Increase and Improve Library Service to All" with further discussion on the title to edit it to read, "Expand the Library's Capacity to Serve as a Community Hub"

- Add item, “Partner with the Public School System; homeschooling families and Kenai Peninsula College to provide resources for and increase library use for students”
 - Add item, “Participate in City of Homer Comprehensive Plan process”
 - Add item, “Work with Library Staff to support Library Strategic Plan 2020-2025”
 - Leave Goal Number four, “Actively Recruit for Boardmembers” acknowledging that while they currently have a full Board, it is good to have on the strategic plan.
- A. Homer Public Library Strategic Plan Review & Update
Memorandum from Library Director as backup.
Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Library Director Berry noted that in December the Board did a review, it is in the minutes and he has stated that he will start a drafting, very rough one, for the next round but he has no details yet. Board volunteers will be providing a draft survey for review in March.

Boardmember Carssow and Asselin-Martin commented that they will probably use google docs and will need assistance from staff getting it uploaded to the website.

Library Director Berry provided responses to Boardmember Carssow questions on the creation of the service area and the gate count in the statistics report.

NEW BUSINESS

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Items of Interest – News from Around the Country Related to Libraries

Boardmember Kuzmaul reviewed the articles she provided noting that a book banning evolved into trying to have the Library dissolved; some state libraries were cutting their ties with the American Library Association over book challenges and a tweet made by the ALA president in 2022 that she identified herself as a Lesbian Marxist and have withdrawn their support from ALA; research around Gen Z and Millennials and how they use the library; the State of Illinois passed a law designed to deter book bans; Bomb threats across the country and then a letter from former President Obama regarding libraries.

- B. Proposed Legislation from Around the Country
- C. LAB Annual Calendar

The Board held a brief discussion on attendance at the next Council meeting on January 22nd to provide the report, Boardmember Carssow agreed to provide the report, Chair Finn agreed to provide the report in February, Boardmember Kuzmaul stated that she will tentatively sign on for the March report and Boardmember Asselin-Martin stated she would do the report for April.

- D. City of Homer Newsletter January 2024

- E. Ordinance 24-06 An Ordinance from the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the FY24 Capital Budget by Appropriating \$25,000 from the Homer Accelerated Roads & Trails (HART) Trails Fund to Contract Engineering Services for Preliminary Design of Non-Motorized Trails & Trailhead Connecting City of Homer Diamond Creek Property to the Proposed Highway Underpass. Davis. Adopted January 8, 2024 Effective January 9, 2024.

Chair Finn commented on the pictures she provided from her recent travels to India on the Tibetan Library and noted the differences, how the religious texts were shelved and the beautiful artwork within the structure.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBERS (if Present)

COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Boardmember Asselin-Martin expressed her appreciation for the Chair bringing the legislative items to the board and then reminded the Board that there were a number of important items up on the legislative agenda the results would be very detrimental to education and child care. She encouraged the Board to rekindle being active and letting your representative policymakers know that things like schools need to be funded fully and all things so that students can come to the library and keep families in the State, as families were leaving. She further stated that they needed to be loud and it was their opportunity to be loud to keep families in the state.

Chair Finn noted the list of prefiled bills available online to review the content.

Boardmember McDonough looked forward to assisting with the survey.

Boardmembers Carsow and Kuszmaul had no additional comments.

Chair Finn expressed her pleasure at the Library being a department, long time coming and it was excellent. She then stated that she loved having the newsletter in their packet as it catches her up on all the city news. She thanked everyone for coming tonight.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board Chair Finn adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. A worksession is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.



RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II

Approved: _____ February 20, 2024