

CALL TO ORDER

Session 24-07, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Acting Chair McKinney at 5:30 p.m. on March 18, 2025 at the Cowles Council Chambers in City Hall, located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: BOARDMEMBERS KUSZMAUL, ASSELIN-MARTIN, BAILY, FINN, MCKINNEY, CARSSOW, HAAS & STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE MCDONOUGH

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK APPEL

AGENDA APPROVAL

Acting Chair McKinney read the agenda

HAAS/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 Minutes for February 18, 2025

FINN/KUSZMAUL MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 18th MINUTES

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Designate LAB Member to Report to Council

Board member Haas volunteered to report to City Council for the March 24th Regular meeting.

B. Library Director's Report
February 2025

Library Director Berry covered the following:

- The library layout has been changed
- Renovations to study room 6 have been completed
- The Friends of the Homer Library had a board meeting with a presentation by coordinator Cheryl Illg in which they debated changes to the policies approved by the LAB
- Celebration of Lifelong Learning

B. Fundraising Report

Board member Kuszmaul stated there was nothing new to report.

C. Legislative Report

Board member Finn reported that with the president releasing an executive order to dissolve the IMLA, the state of Alaska was going to lose 1.2 million dollars in funding for libraries. She encouraged the board to present to City Council about the importance of the funding. The Board began a motion for the Library Board to support a resolution. The clerk made a point of order that due to this item being a report or informational type item and was not included in the action agenda, no motion was able to be made at that time. Library Director Berry stated that he would act on his own initiative to draft a resolution and send it to the Mayor and the City Manager.

D. Comprehensive Plan Report

Board member Carssow stated there was nothing new to report.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Revisions to Homer Public Library Policies

Board member Haas led a discussion on case law inclusion in the Library's Policies. The Board agreed to amend some language to include 'guided by the following legal precedent, as of March 2025.'

HAAS/BAILY MOVED THAT AS AMENDED THE ABOVE LANGUAGE IS INCLUDED IN THE LIBRARY'S PROCEDURES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion Carried.

Library Director Berry then moved discussion on to revising the policy regarding damaged or lost items as well as the language in the policy regarding the fish recognizing donors to the Library. The Board were all in agreement with making the minor edits.

KUSZMAUL/FINN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL AS REVISED.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Upcoming Anniversaries

Library Director Berry lead discussion on the Library's upcoming anniversaries; 2026 is the 20th anniversary of the third Library building, 2028 is the 90th anniversary of the existence of the Homer Public Library as well as the 50th anniversary of the Library becoming a City Department. Library Director Berry and Board member Kuszmaul agreed to work together to brainstorm ideas to bring back to a future meeting, with the Board agreeing that the 2028 dual celebration seemed to have more appeal.

B. LAB/FHL Soiree Dates

The board discussed dates for the Soiree, deciding on whether to have the event in the spring or the fall. The Board agreed to suggest an event date of October 5th and September 28th as a backup. Library Director Berry agreed to ask the Friends of the Library about the two dates and provide an update to the Board.

C. Comprehensive Plan Comments

Acting Chair McKinney introduced the topic and deferred to Library Director Berry. Library Director Berry explained the topic and the goal expressed by the City Planner, Ryan Foster, that the Board submit comments regarding the Library in the Comprehensive Plan. The floor opened for discussion. The main points discussed include:

- The inclusion of The South Peninsula Hospital Service Area Board priorities including nuclear medicine program, upgraded pharmacy, and consolidating services into a medical office building. There was discussion whether the inclusion was appropriate due to the proposition being recently defeated in a public vote. There was also discussion as to whether the Board should be including this particular topic in their submitted comments as an advisory body or if they should mainly focus on the Library's exposure in the document. There was also discussion about whether comments made during a Regular meeting count as being on the record if they are not included in writing in the official meeting minutes. After more discussion with the Mayor and opposing opinions a motion was made.

BAILY/FINN MOVED THAT THE LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD RESPOND TO THEIR INVITATION TO PROVIDE COMMENTS ON THE PRESENT VERSION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND OBJECT TO ANY REFERENCE OR SUGGESTION THAT THE PUBLIC SUPPORT FUTURE DECISIONS THAT MAY BE MADE BY THE SOUTH KENAI PENINSULA HOSPITAL SERVICE AREA BOARD, ALL OF WHICH ARE TOTALLY UNKNOWN AT THE PRESENT TIME.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: ROLL CALL

AYES: CARSSOW, FINN, KUSZMAUL, HAAS, BAILY

NAYS: ASSELIN-MARTIN, MCKINNEY

MAJORITY IN FAVOR.

Motion carried.

- Library should be mentioned in Youth and Early Childhood Section
- Discussion of a Facilities Plan, integrating the Library into the cityscape
- Better integration of the Library into the Transportation Plan
- Establish and include the Library into the Accessibility Strategy as a Community Hub
- Make the Library a focus in the City Owned Facilities section

More discussion ensued. Board member Carssow made a motion.

CARSSOW/ASSELIN-MARTIN MOVED TO CHANGE THE LIBRARY FROM THE QUALITY OF LIFE SECTION TO THE CITY OWNED FACILITY SECTION.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

D. Review of LAB Bylaws and Strategic Plan

Library Director Berry provided a brief explanation of the topic. He stated Staff is not recommending any changes to either the Bylaws or the Strategic Plan at this time. The Board agreed and closed the floor for discussion.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. City Manager's Report
- B. 2025 LAB Calendar
- C. Memo- IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services
Refer to Supplemental Packet

Acting Chair Mckinney noted the informational materials. There was more discussion on the IMLA, which was mentioned in the Legislative report. The Board spoke about funding and the need to take action as the recently released executive order not only affects Libraries, but Museums too. The Board was encouraged to write letters to Don Young, who is a known Library supporter and had worked to get endorsements across Congress in the past. Mayor Lord asked that the language in the provided Memo get cleaned up so it could be included in the packet for City Council.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Library Director Berry stated he had no comment.

Deputy City Clerk Appel said she had already forwarded the PDF to Library Director Berry to use for his memo

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBERS (if Present)

Mayor Lord expressed her intention of attending the meeting- trying to find better ways to help with the communication between City Council and the Advisory Bodies as well as understanding that the culture of every Board and Commission is different. She stated an idea by Council, brought up during a Strategic Planning Session, was to hold a joint meeting with all the Boards and Commissions to provide regular training on Open Meetings Act, Robert's Rules, answer Parliamentary questions, and to open up conversation between all Advisory Bodies and the City Council.

COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Student Representative McDonough thanked Board Member Finn for the snacks.

Board Member Asselin-Martin thanked the Board for all the work to get the case law, comp plan, IMLS information, and legislative update completed.

Board Member Carssow stated she thought it was a good meeting. She said it was great that the Board wasn't unanimous on a vote and she thought there were really good discussions around the table with differing opinions.

Board Member Finn thanked the Board, saying it was a fun meeting. She stated it was her last meeting and thanked the Board for the last couple of years; saying she would be paying attention to the Board. She also encouraged to put letters in to the editor with intentions for the Library and receiving the IMLS because it matters.

Board Member Kuszmaul acknowledged Board Member Finn and her service on the Board. She stated the Legislative updates that Board Member Finn has provided and helped keep in the forefront. She expressed that she hoped someone else would take on that task because it's meaningful and makes what the Board does seem that much more real. She also stated that this was the perfect meeting for Mayor Lord to attend and she appreciates this group talking through everything.

Board Member Haas said he thought the way Board Member Finn handled the book challenges when she was Chair was fantastic. He said she has done extraordinarily well in everything she does over all these years. He acknowledged Mayor Lord, saying that having her as Mayor was a blessing to the town. He acknowledged Library Director Berry saying the Board was lucky to have him as the Library Director. Board Member Haas also stated he is glad that there's healthy discussions and that the Board doesn't always agree.

Board Member Baily thanked Board Member Finn for her service to the Board. He stated her leadership through the book challenge was amazing, very valuable, and a tremendous service to the community. He thanked Mayor Lord for attending, saying he wished she would be present more often and that she added greatly to the debate. He also reminded the Board to get tickets to the Friends of the Library function, recognizing the Lifetime Learners of 2025.

Acting Chair McKinney thanked the Mayor for attending the meeting. He acknowledged Board Member Finn, stating that her leadership through the book challenge was an inspiration to the Board and very appreciated. He thanked the rest of the Board and said it was a good meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Acting Chair McKinney adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Tuesday, April 17, 2025 at 5:30 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.

ASHLEY APPEL, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: _____