

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES OF THE POMONA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Via Zoom Conference Call

REGULAR MEETING

June 17, 2020

5:00 P.M.

100. OPENING

- **110. Call to Order**

Chair Hsieh called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

- **120. Pledge of Allegiance**

Trustee Snider led the pledge.

- **130. Roll Call**

Present Trustees:

Lisa Snider (Mayor's Appointee)
Duane Smith (District 1)
Bree Hsieh (District 2)
Tom O. Rodriguez (District 3)
Renee Barbee (District 4)
Megan Gearhart (District 5)

Others Present:

Mark Gluba, Deputy City Manager
Alison Glynn, City Clerk Office Assistant/ Board Secretary
Rosalia Butler, City Clerk

200. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Hsieh asked City Clerk Butler read the public comments received electronically.

Deborah Clifford of the Historical Society of Pomona Valley inquired about the library reopening plans and asked if the Historical Society could have access for continuation of the Mexican Players Collection archiving project. She stressed that work could be done before the library opens to the public with minimal interaction between herself and library staff. She emphasized that HSPV would very much like to continue the work as soon as possible.

Stephanie Campbell mentioned the directive of the Mayor's COVID Education Subcommittee that state that providers of youth services in the city consider great flexibility

in their service hours due to the anticipated staggered in-person class schedule for Pomona Unified School District this fall. She informed the Board that Dr. Terri Gomez of the subcommittee will be reaching out to ascertain what youth services the library will be providing and if they would be willing to help fill the gap by offering the services during hours that are more flexible.

300. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Trustee Barbree mentioned that somebody mentioned to her that the Instagram page was still listing that search for the Poet Laureate was still active. Trustee Gearhart indicated that she would shut down the search pages on social media to clear up any confusion.

400. LIBRARY BOARD OUTREACH

No communications at this time.

500. CONSENT AGENDA

510. Approval of the Board of Library Trustee Meeting Minutes

-January 15, 2020
-February 20, 2020

Trustee Snider indicated that she worked for the Ventura Housing Authority, not the Ojai Housing Authority as stated in the February 20, 2020 meeting minutes.

MOTION WAS MADE BY TRUSTEE BARBEE, SECONDED BY TRUSTEE SMITH, CARRIED BY A VOTE OF THE MEMBERS PRESENT (6-0), TO APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM 510.
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700. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

Friends of the Pomona Public Library

No communications at this time.

Pomona Public Library Foundation

Trustee Smith reported that the Foundation had its very first Summer Academy session with approximately 20 children. The session included a virtual experience in Japan, origami, snow monkeys, vocabulary and other activities. He said that the children really enjoyed the experience and that the online model was a huge success.

Trustee Smith shared that he visited the library for the first time in a while and was happy to report that the plants were thriving. He also reported that the Foundation received no bidders for the circulation area redesign project in the first round, and indicated that Deputy City Manager Gluba could provide more information on that.

Deputy City Manager Gluba reported that he has been in communication with the Public Works and Finance Directors in regards to the contract. He indicated that because no firms on the City's approved list responded it gives them the opportunity to open up the bidding to the public. He acknowledged that the Foundation had obtained bids, but stated that the purchasing code only allows the City to handle the contracts, but that the firms who placed bids through the Library Foundation will now have a chance to bid on the project. He said that despite the two-week delay, he is confident that firms more qualified for this particular project will respond in the next round. He told the Board that he intends to inform staff to include a mandatory job walk for any firm interested in bidding on the project.

Trustee Smith relayed that Denny Mossier of the Library Foundation had shared the names of three firms with Public Works Director Rene Guerrero. He also deemed the delay to be a positive one because the firms selected by the Library Foundation were library classroom specialists who will be better suited for the job.

Chair Hsieh asked an anonymous virtual participant for an introduction and the participant subsequently left the meeting. After some discussion about public meeting laws, City Clerk Butler stated that it was up to the Chair if they wanted to ask someone to leave the meeting. Deputy City Manager Gluba announced that if the Board wanted to hold virtual public meetings, they should be prepared to stop the meeting and reengage if anything inappropriate were to occur with a participant. Chair Hsieh agreed that this would be good standard operating procedure moving forward.

Chair Hsieh indicated that she was happy with the positive movement of the circulation area redesign project and that she looks forward to hearing more at the next meeting.

Trustee Smith mentioned that the Summer Academy Sessions would be available for public viewing once they had been edited to protect the personal information of the underage participants. Chair Hsieh commended the Foundation for their great work on the sessions.

John Clifford asked if the Board or Library Foundation intended to address the public comment by Stephanie Campbell.

Chair Hsieh suggested continuing with the other items and addressing Ms. Campbell's comment afterwards.

SOPPL (Support Our Pomona Public Library)

John Clifford of SOPPL asked if there would be accommodations for SOPPL to have access to the library to work on the plantings in the atrium and the planters outside the children's room to ensure that the library looks nice upon reopening.

Deputy City Manager

Chair Hsieh asked if Deputy City Manager Gluba wanted to hold all questions until the end or throughout. He indicated that he intended the dialogue to be back and forth and welcomed any questions the Board may have during his update.

Deputy City Manager Gluba explained that an employee of Public Works had been watering the plants in the atrium while the library was closed, but that he was open to discussion about members of SOPPL accessing the outdoor planters as long as they comply with COVID-related County health measures.

He shared that the City was making accommodations to allow the mural artist to install the mural in the children's room while the library remains closed. He explained that he had been in contact with Anita Gutiérrez, the Development Services Director, and that they should be able to start installation by the end of June.

John Clifford asked if the Historical Society would be able to access the library to work on the Mexican Players Collection project as addressed in public comment earlier. Deputy City Manager Gluba said that while some accommodation might be possible, the absence of library staff could make undertaking that project a little more difficult than the planting or mural projects.

Chair Hsieh asked John Clifford to reach out to Deputy City Manager Gluba to discuss the planter project. Deputy City Manager Gluba indicated that he would be happy to discuss the details with Mr. Clifford and indicated that he would address the concerns of the Historical Society later in his update.

He shared an update on the Library Manager position and some of the details of the position creation and interview process. He explained that one candidate stood out in the initial first round interview process and showed great interest in the library and the community.

He pointed out the unique nature of the position and said that high-level positions of this nature were a rarity in the library world, especially with the lack of resources afforded to libraries in recent years. He acknowledged that the Pomona Public Library employees were impacted greatly during the last recession. He explained that the current employees are all retiree annuitants and hourly employees who do an excellent job of running the library despite the budget shortfalls.

Deputy City Manager Gluba explained that because of savings in other areas of the library, they were able to get authorization to restore a partially benefitted library (PBL) position. He indicated that he reached back out to the candidate to see if she would be interested in

the 30-hour benefitted position. She said that she was interested in the position and the city extended an offer. He relayed that she had been watching Council meetings, following the budget and political discussions, and maintaining regular communications with the City. Despite her knowledge of the current budget situation and its possible impact on the library, he shared that she is still excited about the position and has a projected start date of July 6, 2020.

Chair Hsieh asked a virtual participant to introduce themselves to the Board. Deputy City Manager Gluba recognized the participant as Mike Suarez, former Library Board member.

Deputy City Manager Gluba said the new Library Manager, Anita Torres, has a Master's degree in Library and Information Science and has recently been working as a reference librarian providing COVID information virtually through Burbank Public Library. He said that he will look forward to introducing her at the next meeting and that she would be taking over as Board Secretary for subsequent meetings. He thanked Alison Glynn and Rosalia Butler for handling the Secretary duties over the past year and thanked library staff Martha Ramos and Estela Davila for stepping up into acting positions in the absence of a library manager.

He informed John Clifford that due to the library manager's July 6, 2020 start date, they would have library staff in the building to help accommodate the Historical Society in regards to accessing the library for the Mexican Players Collection project.

Deputy City Manager Gluba once again expressed his excitement in the hiring of new library manager Anita Torres and stated that he thinks she will be the exact person the library needs to help transition library hours into a more sustainable model in the future.

Deputy City Manager Gluba explained that Human Resources told him that if any retiree annuitant elected to receive unemployment during the shutdown that they would not be eligible for rehire for one year. He warned that due to the temporary nature of the positions, that the directive could have caused major issues in regards to library staffing because many of the retiree annuitants hold key roles in library operations. He shared that the only annuitant that filed for unemployment was Technical Services Supervisor, Deborah Acosta, who unfortunately would not be able to return once the library reopens. He mentioned that although challenging, this could be an opportunity to switch to pre-catalogued materials. He explained that instead of buying blank books and cataloguing them from scratch, this system would save significant time and money.

He shared that the previous library manager projected that the library needed to invest around \$100,000 to acquire pre-catalogued materials. He illustrated the previous library budget shortfalls over the years and shared that the current budget situation estimates a budget shortfall of \$12 million dollars this fiscal year and next fiscal year. He also revealed that all departments had been asked to submit 5%, 10% and 15% budget cut proposals. He disclosed that he submitted his proposals, but that they were based on amounts that were going to be an enhancement to services and explained that the library was still whole based on recent library operations models. He informed the Board that losing the Technical

Services Manager and other factors will afford the library the opportunity to look at library staffing options, buy some pre-catalogued materials, and possibly increase the library materials budget in the future. He reiterated that although they had trying financial times ahead, there was no plan to close the library. He indicated that the city policy makers understand that they need to provide library services to the public. He explained that the city is currently in negotiations with labor groups and that if they could not reach an agreement, there could be personnel cuts across many departments. He suggested that the Board keep a close eye on the budgetary discussions. He explained that the library already had a low fund budget and that he could make cuts while keeping the current hours and working with the support groups like the Friends of the Pomona Public Library and the Library Foundation to ensure that the public does not see any identifiable service reductions. He cautioned that any proposals for expansion of services and hours would be unlikely to occur over the next couple of years.

Trustee Smith shared that despite the reduction in the current library budget, it still amounted to a few thousand dollars more than the previous year. He conveyed that he personally would not be satisfied with the budget until it supported 44 or 45 hours of operation, but that he considered this budget to be pretty good considering the certain situation. He also mentioned that Deputy City Manager Gluba informed him that the incoming library manager had some ideas to move the library forward that would not cost anything and that he was excited to hear those ideas and how that the Library Board, the Foundation and the other organizations could support her. He emphasized that he hopes that the library will not have to cut 15% of its budget.

Deputy City Manager Gluba made it known that he has been advocating for the library throughout the budgetary process and mentioned that the library budget was already meeting the savings goals of the city and that the budget as it is already represents the 15% savings. He conveyed that he was confident that the new library manager would work with the Board and other organizations to create innovative services for the library.

Chair Hsieh emphasized the need to weather the storm and stay strong over the next couple of years.

Deputy City Manager Gluba shared that there has been significant hourly savings with the library not operational. Trustee Snider asked how these savings were affecting the library budget moving forward. Deputy City Manager explained that the City Council had agreed to pay staff during the first part of the pandemic and that staff had worked for a couple of weeks cleaning and cataloging after the library had closed. Trustee Snider asked if they should spend the materials budget balance before the next fiscal year budget begins. Deputy City Manager Gluba explained that because of the deficit caused by COVID, that those funds were absorbed back into the general fund balance. He explained that every dollar saved today helps to sustain potential operations for the next fiscal year.

Deputy City Manager Gluba shared that there was no concrete date for reopening as of yet. He reiterated that the City needs to save money this fiscal year and it wouldn't be possible to have library staff come back to work for curbside pickup and other services that some

other libraries were implementing. He said that some personal protection measures needed to be installed to ensure that social distancing and safety measures are put in place before opening. He said that he was able to save money on the installation of those measures by purchasing the materials and by putting off installation a couple of more weeks.

Trustee Clifford mentioned that during his recent visit to the library he was under the impression that the personal protective installation was already taking place.

Deputy City Manager Gluba communicated that there were several factors to consider when planning the reopening, including onboarding and training a new library manager and getting her integrated with current staff, PPE installation and cleaning and organizing the library. He emphasized that because the library manager is not available until July 6, he anticipates that the library could begin reopening in late July or early August, but that it would be dependent on County directives. Trustee Smith reiterated that there had not been a county or state directive that authorizes libraries and museums to open and that they could not move forward with reopening until those restrictions had been lifted. Deputy City Manager explained that political pressure can shape the reopening process and that he has a hard time justifying keeping City Hall closed when haircuts were allowed. Chair Hsieh explained that libraries face a unique challenge in the reopening process because people tend to spend more time inside the library and that increases exposure. Deputy City Manager thanked Chair Hsieh for the feedback and indicated that he would be discussing this when formulating protective policies with the new library manager.

Trustee Snider suggested looking at the best practices of other libraries like Rancho Cucamonga and implementing similar policies for reopening. She asked about the possibility of a soft opening, curbside pickup services, and limiting the amount of time that people can spend in the library.

Deputy City Manager explained that Pomona does not have the hard cost of full time library employees like some other surrounding libraries. He pointed out that because other libraries are required to pay their full-time employees, they are able to offer services like curbside pickup. He shared that to do curbside pickup he would have to restore a lot of hard costs of bringing employees back on to provide those services, and with historically low citizen participation, he doesn't see anything that would warrant taking on those costs with the current budget deficit.

Trustee Smith said he spoke with a librarian at Rancho Cucamonga Public Library and she stated that they are only using six employees to service two libraries. He also shared that the San Bernardino County libraries allowed curbside pickup several weeks before libraries in Los Angeles County, and therefore had a head start in navigating all of the legal and protective measures involved in offering these kind of limited services. Deputy City Manager Gluba expressed his frustration with being on the edge of Los Angeles County and being asked to mimic services offered by nearby cities that sit in other counties. He explained that because Los Angeles County has been more affected by COVID, they have been more cautious and restrictive in the reopening process.

Trustee Snider asked if the RB Digital service was still available. Trustee Smith said that because of its limitations the Library Foundation decided not to renew the service until the new library manager came aboard. He explained that they had discussed upgrading to a different service and that because of budget constraints they did not want to renew the service until they had input from the new library manager. He expressed regret that there would be a few weeks lapse in service, but explained that they did not want to pay \$5,000 or \$6,000 of Foundation funds if they were planning to switch services in the near future. Deputy City Manager Gluba mentioned that the incoming library manager had some ideas for better options than RB Digital. He shared that the Friends of Pomona Public Library were disappointed because they were going to use the service for the summer reading program. He indicated that they still wanted to go through with the program, but that it would not be tied to the Pomona Public Library because of potential legal issues.

Deputy City Manager asked the Board what items they wanted to see on the July agenda.

Chair Hsieh asked if they could address the public comment by Stephanie Campbell. She asked if anyone would want to contact her from the Foundation. Deputy City Manager stressed that with an already constrained budget the library could not bring on any additional services or hours, but suggested talking to the Library Foundation to see what kind of accommodations could be made to the Homework Club. Chair Hsieh suggested starting there and then putting it on the agenda once they have seen the schedule for PUSD and the new library manager in place. Deputy City Manager Gluba emphasized that he is open to hourly changes, but that changes like that do not come without their challenges. Chair Hsieh asked that he connect Ms. Campbell with Trustee Smith from the Foundation.

Chair Hsieh asked the Board what they would like to see on the July agenda. Trustee Smith said he would like to hear an update from the Poet Laureate subcommittee on the status of the program. He suggested talking with the new library manager on Policy issues and Trustee Rodriguez agreed that they wait to discuss that item after she is in place. Deputy City Manager Gluba suggested tabling the item until the August meeting. Trustee Smith emphasized that the Chair could add items to the agenda later if needed.

Chair Hsieh suggested adding all of the old subcommittee agenda items and indicated that they could skip an item if there was nothing to discuss.

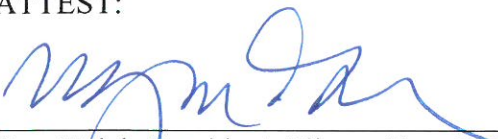
Trustee Smith added that he would like to see Chair Hsieh meet with the new library manager to see if she had suggestions for discussion and to see what ways they could support her. Deputy City Manager said he could facilitate that after her July 6 start date.

800. Adjournment to Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. in the Library Public Conference Room.

Chair Hsieh motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m.


Alison Glynn, Board Secretary

ATTEST:


Bree Hsieh, President, Library Board of Trustees
