



**South Pasadena Public Library
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES
October 14, 2021**

CONVENE:

President Bianca Richards called the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees of the South Pasadena Public Library to order in the Library Conference Room on October 14, 2021 at 6:59 p.m. Some participants attended virtually, via Zoom, as part of the City's in-person/hybrid resumption of in-person public meetings.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Trustees Present
Annie Chang Long
Joseph M. Molina
Bianca Richards
Dean Serwin
David Uwins

Also Present
Cathy Billings, Library Director
Diana Mahmud, Mayor
Sally Kilby, Friends Board President
PJ Lutz, Friends Executive Vice President
Sean Faye, Administrative Secretary

PRESENTATIONS:

1. None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

2. None

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

3. Review and approve draft minutes of the regular meeting held September 9, 2021

Motion by Library Board Vice President David Uwins, seconded by Library Board Secretary Annie Chang Long, to approve the minutes as written for the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees held September 9, 2021.

AYES:	Long, Molina, Richards, Uwins
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Serwin
ABSTAIN:	None

4. Approve South Pasadena Rotary Club request to charge admission and sell books and DVDs at Community Room rental events on 10/27/21 and 10/28/21

Motion by Library Board President Bianca Richards, seconded by Library Board Trustee Joseph M. Molina, to approve the request from the South Pasadena Rotary Club to charge admission and sell books and DVDs at their Community Room rental events on 10/27/21 and 10/28/21.

AYES: Long, Molina, Richards, Uwins
NOES: None
ABSENT: Serwin
ABSTAIN: None

5. Approve Thanksgiving and Winter Holiday Schedule Closures

Motion by Library Board President Bianca Richards, seconded by Library Board Secretary Annie Chang Long, to approve the Library to close at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 24, 2021 for Thanksgiving and the closures on December 25, 27, 29, 30, 2021 and January 1, 2022 for the Winter Holiday.

AYES: Long, Molina, Richards, Uwins
NOES: None
ABSENT: Serwin
ABSTAIN: None

6. Quarterly Budget Update

A final report on the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 budget was reviewed. The Library was over budget by \$41K due to overspending in both full and part-time salaries. Library staff had forecast the need for \$260,000 for part-time salaries for the fiscal year and spent less than that, at \$250,000, however at mid-year the library's part-time budget was adjusted down to \$196,000. Staff raised the issue that these funds would not be adequate with Finance at that time. Library staff are not involved in budgeting for full-time salary expenses so were not able to explain why the Library was overspent in full-time salaries by approximately \$20,000.

The Fiscal Year 2021/2022 year-to-date expenditure summary shows that all accounts are on track for the fiscal year, including part and full-time salaries.

Board members requested an explanation at the next meeting of why the "Retirement" budget is already 68.13% expended so early in the fiscal year.

No funds were budgeted for the Citywide Reading Program. Books are the main cost, along with stipends for the speakers. Expenses were paid by the Friends of the Library and a portion was charged to the Special Department Expense line item.

7. State Library Building Forward Infrastructure Grant

The State Budget allocated nearly \$430M towards infrastructure improvements for library buildings. The grants will be administered in a competitive fashion to assist communities with the greatest financial need. Preliminary applications will be accepted at the end of October. The final guidelines will be developed based on the projects outlined in the preliminary applications. Final applications will be due in December.

It has not yet been announced whether Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds can be used as matching funds.

The Library will submit a preliminary application with the project list in the agenda packet that has been reviewed by the City Manager. One project on the list is the installation of a back-up solar power generation and storage system. Mayor Mahmud noted that the Clean Power Alliance is providing funds for such systems to each of its member agencies, for a single location of their choosing. Back-up power would assist the Library in its role as a Cooling Center and an emergency shelter for the Red Cross.

In addition to funding for the projects themselves, the Library would request funds for a project manager to oversee the infrastructure projects. Replacing the fire alarm system and the low tension/voltage switchboards are two high priority projects that meet the grant's life safety and critical systems requirements. Other priorities under consideration include new exterior lighting, especially for the ADA ramp, and renovating the restrooms for the Community Room. The preliminary estimated cost for these projects is \$1.3M. The City would be responsible for matching dollar for dollar any amount awarded. It is not determined yet if the matching funds need to be available at the time the grant is awarded, or if time is available to draw down the funds. The Library Expansion designated reserve account has \$200K that could potentially be used to match awarded funds.

Library staff will consult with the Fire Department to obtain more information about when and how the Community Room would be activated as an American Red Cross shelter. Staff will also confirm that the building meets seismic regulations.

[Library Board Trustee Dean Serwin arrived at the Library Board of Trustees meeting at 7:33 p.m.]

The Board was asked to offer suggestions for project ideas. There was support for a solar powered exterior charging station. The Library's central location to the community and access to the Library Park, which could accommodate many people in different configurations, should be emphasized in the grant application.

8. SPMC Proposed Revisions

A meeting with the City Attorney about the South Pasadena Municipal Code (SPMC) is scheduled. The discussion will include the definition and the authority for "library grounds", the authority for artwork displays on the building and how that relates to the Public Art Commission's authority, and spending donated funds.

Trustee Dean Serwin recommended incorporating all of the language related to accepting money and administering donated funds from the State Code into the SPMC, section 2.78(f). Vice President David Uwins asked for the word "bequest" to be included.

The City Attorney has indicated there may be support for the argument that the whole of the Library Park is "library grounds". Any changes made to the Code of Conduct related to the exterior Library rules of behavior will need to define what areas of the exterior are subject to the rules.

All agreed that the word "government" in SPMC section 2.78(b), should be changed to "governance." Mayor Mahmud questioned whether it was appropriate or desirable for the trustees to "ratify" purchases and acquisitions in section 2.78(d), suggesting that would be burdensome for the board and staff. The Library already has a Collection Development policy that is under the jurisdiction of the Board. Trustee Serwin suggested Section 2.78(d) be changed to the following, "May purchase and acquire books, journals, publications, and other personal property, consistent with reviewed and adopted budgets." Trustees agreed with that change.

This will be a Discussion Item at the 11/18/21 Trustees meeting.

9. Library Administrative Policy Manual Code of Conduct

[Library Board Secretary Annie Chang Long experienced a technical issue with Zoom and left the Trustees meeting at 8:05 p.m.]

Questions remain about the Library Park's boundaries and extending the Library Code of Conduct into the Library Park. A meeting was held with the City Manager, City Attorney, Library Director Cathy Billings, Community Services Director Sheila Pautsch, Police Chief Brian Solinsky, and Police Corporal Randy Wise. The Library Park District Neighborhood Watch have also met about this issue.

There are concerns about establishing a unique policy for the Library Park, separate from the other parks in South Pasadena. Rules must be consistent and enforced equitably.

Exterior Rules policies from other libraries are under review. Research into the Library Park's origins are underway. There needs to be a distinction between Library Park and "library grounds." It is undetermined if there is an outline around the Library considered to be "library grounds" within the Park so that a Code of Conduct could be imposed on that interior footprint of the Park, rather than the Park in its entirety.

[Library Board Secretary Annie Chang Long returned to the Trustees meeting at 8:14 p.m.]

It may be easier to establish a precedent for the spaces immediately adjacent to the Library where the Library offers services.

Draft edits to the Code of Conduct will be presented as a Discussion Item at the 11/18/21 Trustees meeting.

10. Library Operations Update

Digital Services Librarian Cynthia Mitchem is working with the digital resources vendors associated with the State Library's use of ARPA funds for job skills training tools. Publicity about the resources is forthcoming. *Pressreader.com* is live and online. Cynthia also created an advertisement in Mandarin and English for the newspaper section to announce *Pressreader.com*.

One City One Story is going well. The Community Garden event on 10/10/21 was well attended. The Native Plant virtual event on 10/13/21 with Barbara Eisenstein had more than 30 people attend. Two book discussions are scheduled. All 23 copies of the book have been checked out. A simultaneous user license for the e-audio book was purchased to accommodate the demand.

The power pack charging station purchased by the Friends Technology Fund has arrived. The power packs have multiple ports to charge a variety of devices. They are only to be used within the Library. Patrons will use their library card to check them out at the Service Desk, and may possibly leave their driver's licenses. The power packs will have a security strip attached and be catalogued.

Request for Community Room rentals are increasing. The Library, Community Services and the City Attorney created a waiver for renters to acknowledge the County Public Health rules. Library staff will consult with the City Attorney about editing the waiver to include recommendations for social distancing at events that include children.

The practice of checking out Community Room keys to renters is ending. Staffing for rental events will be discussed with the City Manager, Human Resources, the Finance Director, and Community Services.

Statistical comparisons from September 2019 to September 2021 were presented, with some adjustments for the change in the Library's open hours. There are now 23% fewer people per hour, which could be explained by the Library's increased outreach about digital resources. E-readership has doubled. E-book checkouts have doubled. Kanopy streaming services increased by nearly the same amount. It should be noted that attendees for outdoor programs, such as Storytime, are not included in the gate count. Unvaccinated tweens do not seem to be using the library to the extent they were pre-pandemic. Capacity is still limited in the Children's Room.

Adult circulation has decreased by 31%. Children's circulation saw a 10% increase. Overall circulation is only down by 8% from September 2019. Adult books are down 19%, audio books are down 74%, music is down 33%, and Adult DVDs are down 40%. There were increases in Children's books, but decreases in Children's audio books, music and DVDs.

Auto-renewals are a larger portion of checkouts than they were in 2019. There was a 262% increase in holds since 2019.

HR is reviewing applications for the vacant Library Aide position. Substitute Librarian interviews are scheduled for 10/19/21. The Weekend-In-Charge Part-Time Librarian position was posted last week. The requisition for the Clerk vacancy is forthcoming. The eliminated Full-Time position will be reviewed in the next budget cycle.

At this time, the Library does not have enough staff to expand its hours. More staff time is being dedicated to pandemic-related activities or to new services that were launched during the pandemic. Pulling and processing holds is a time consuming process, as is setting up for outdoor programming. Enforcing mask regulations and monitoring capacity in the Children's Room also requires a lot of staff time. The current recruitments will help the Library resume its normal hours. Feedback from the public about the Library's current hours has been generally positive, with occasional inquiries about when we will be open in the mornings again. The PT budget expenses are about \$10K/month when we are fully staffed; we are currently underspent.

COMMUNICATIONS:

11. Board President (Bianca Richards): President Bianca Richards assisted with the Friends Book Sale on 9/25/21. President Richards has enjoyed observing the outdoor programs in the Library Park and thanked the Library staff.

South Pasadena Poet Laureate Ron Koertge will read a poem he wrote for One City One Story at the Arts Crawl on 10/16/21. Ron Koertge will also moderate a spoken word event with the South Pasadena Drama Club in the City Hall courtyard.

12. Board Members: Trustee Dean Serwin is excited to be making headway in so many areas. He thanked Library Director Billings for providing the Library's statistical information and Trustee Joseph Molina for keeping the Board focused on its mission to keep this library available and fundamentally used.

Trustee Joseph Molina thanked Library staff and thought great progress is being made on the policy revisions.

Secretary Annie Chang Long thanked Library Director Billings for her leadership.

Vice President David Uwins expressed gratitude to Library staff. He added this library seems to be much more active than other libraries he has visited.

13. Council Liaison (Mayor Diana Mahmud): Mayor Diana Mahmud was excited by the results from the community input that was solicited for City Council's development of a Strategic Plan. 88% of respondents rated Library services and events as excellent or good. Credit is due to the Library staff, the Trustees, and the support of the Friends.

14. Friends of the Library Representative (Friends Board Executive Vice President PJ Lutz): The first two concerts of the Restoration Concert Series have sold out.

There has been some discussion of fundraising for a permanent stage into the Community Room for Restoration Concerts.

The two \$1 book sales have been successful. The Friends Holiday Book Sale is scheduled for 12/3/21 & 12/4/21.

The Friends Bookstore has raised over \$11K since re-opening in June.

Policies and bylaws will be reviewed for updates.

An unpaid intern has been assisting the Friends with their social media and is rebuilding their website.

The 21st Century Committee for the Library (21CCL) will meet on 11/1/21 to formalize their structure to prepare for potential fundraising.

15. Trustee Liaison to Friends (David Uwins): Vice President David Uwins said a representative from Jericho Road would attend the next Friends meeting to offer counsel on expanding their programs and meeting their goals as a nonprofit.

Giving Tuesday will be on 11/30/21. The Friends have received generous donations in the past during Giving Tuesday.

16. Library Director (Cathy Billings): The Friends have raised adequate funds to purchase the laptop/tablet lending kiosk.

City Council underwent an 8-hour Strategic Planning discussion. This shared vision will benefit all City departments.

NEW BUSINESS:

NEXT MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees will be on Thursday, November 18, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Ray Bradbury Conference Room and by video conference via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT: President Bianca Richards adjourned the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees on October 14, 2021 at 8:32 p.m.

Minutes approved BRP as written.

Minutes approved _____ as corrected.

Bianca Richards, President
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President

11/19/2021
Date