



**South Pasadena Public Library
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES
February 10, 2022**

CONVENE:

President Bianca Richards called the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees of the South Pasadena Public Library to order, virtually via Zoom, on February 10, 2022 at 7:02 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Trustees Present

Kenneth Gross
Annie Chang Long
F.J. Pratt
Bianca Richards

Also Present

Cathy Billings, Library Director
Diana Mahmud, Council Liaison
Sally Kilby, Friends Board Representative
Maida Wong, Public Services Manager
Sean Faye, Administrative Secretary

EXCUSED: Trustee Dean Serwin

PRESENTATIONS:

1. None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

2. None

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

3. Introduction of New Trustees

[Secretary Annie Chang Long arrived at the Library Board of Trustees meeting, via phone, at 7:05 p.m.]

Kenneth Gross has experience serving on boards and managing funds. He serves on the board of a historic downtown Los Angeles building and the Fremont Centre Theatre. He has also served on the board of The Young Shakespeareans, which introduces Shakespeare to inner city youth. He was president of Temple Beth David in Temple City for seven years. Kenneth has enjoyed the Library's programs in the Community Room and looks forward to sharing his time and developing his interests.

F.J. Pratt has lived in South Pasadena for 23 years. His wife taught first grade at Marengo Elementary School. F.J. has recently retired from a 30 year career as a television writer. Since 2015 he has taught classes in the Cinematic Arts Department at the University of Southern California (USC). He has also been the leader of Boy Scout Troop 7 in South Pasadena. F.J. loves this Library and looks forward to the return of Library programs.

4. Review and approve draft minutes of the regular meeting held January 13, 2022

Motion by Library Board Secretary Annie Chang Long, seconded by Library Board President Bianca Richards, to approve the minutes as written for the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees held January 13, 2022.

AYES:	Gross, Long, Pratt, Richards
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Serwin
ABSTAIN:	None

5. Public Services Programming Overview

Public Services Manager Maida Wong discussed the Library programming in place for 2022. Maida Wong has worked at the Library for 34 years. She began in the Children's Department and now oversees both Children's Services and Adult Services as the Public Services Manager.

Programs are just one part of the array of services the Library provides. Staff are also focused on projects and processes that are fundamental to the provision of modern library services. The staff that plan programs also purchase materials and manage collections, staff the reference desk, maintain the website and our social media presence, produce publicity material, process local history collections, apply for grants and much more. Programming has had to be repeatedly adjusted in terms of public health guidelines and staffing resources.

Past successful programs were reexamined to determine whether they are in keeping with the current plan for programming and the amount of time staff have to devote to programs. Examples include the Eclectic Music Festival, events held for Pride month, Ray Bradbury's birthday in August, the Teen Book Club, National Poetry Month, Teen Advisory Board meetings, the Scary Story Contest, and Storytimes. These were balanced with new programs, such as Coffee Tasting, Memory Lab, Free Comic Book Giveaway Day, and the Library Open House. The Library has also partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to host a job fair and the Arts Crawl, and with the South Pasadena School District for the California Young Reader Medal. Staffing resources are devoted not just to conceiving and planning the programs, but to implementing them, including publicity, contracts, insurance and a myriad of other details.

2022 Adult Programming will include Will Eisner Week in March, the Eclectic Music Festival in April, and a Virtual Author visit with Hazel Newlevant for Pride Month in June. The Memory Lab program will take place during the summer. One City, One Story in the fall will involve a multiple month lead-up of events as the community will be engaged to vote for which book they would like to read. Many events and discussions will be planned around the selected title.

Teen programming will include the Teen Book Club and the Teen Advisory Board.

Children's programming will involve in-person Craft Lab, once it is permitted, bookmark contests, Story Times three times a week, and the Summer Reading Program.

There was a discussion about bringing back the Be Kind to Animals program. This has been a very popular program with the community. In the past, the Library has hosted the event in the Community Room and worked with the Animal Commission to publicize the contest and collect the artwork. Staff committed to looking into being involved in Be Kind to Animals this spring. Councilmember Diana Mahmud will discuss this with the City Manager.

[Secretary Annie Chang Long very briefly left the meeting and rejoined via Zoom, at 7:31 p.m.]

6. Board of Trustees Agenda Forecast

Upcoming Discussion Items for the 3/10/22 Trustees meeting include selecting the strategic planning consultant and the nominating committee to select the 2022 Library Board slate of officers.

There will be a Discussion Item at the 4/14/22 Trustees meeting regarding the renewal of the Library Parcel Tax and its terms. Staff will prepare a report with recommendations and seek direction from the Board. The Board's recommendation will be presented to the City Council. Trustees play an educational role to inform the public about the Library. Trustees and staff are not allowed to conduct any advocacy. The Parcel Tax has come up for renewal every five or so years. This year staff intend to propose that the tax be renewed in perpetuity, unless repealed by the voters.

Adopting the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan is expected to take place at the 7/14/22 Trustees meeting.

7. Parcel Tax Renewal Campaign Committee

During the 2015/2016 renewal of the Parcel Tax, the City Attorney at that time had warned of a potential conflict of interest if more than two Trustees served on the Parcel Tax committee. Two Trustees did serve on that committee, although the preference had been for none to serve. The current City Attorney is reviewing this recommendation.

The City Clerk provided guidance from the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC). A Trustee can serve as the principal officer of the committee and sign FPPC forms, unless the municipality states otherwise. It was not advisable for a Trustee to be in a position to sign checks. The City Clerk is awaiting a reply from the Secretary of State regarding whether a Trustee can author a position statement for the ballot.

Trustees are allowed to volunteer without serving on the committee. This will be a Discussion Item at the 3/10/22 Trustees meeting.

8. City Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is available on the City's website. There is a movement to change the annual work plan and annual reporting cycle from calendar year to fiscal year.

Parts of the strategic plan that relate most closely to the library were reviewed. The only part of the strategic plan that specifically mentions the library is Task 1.e., which is to renew the parcel tax. President Richards noted that Task 3.d., related to emergency preparedness, is closely connected to the library given that the building is a central resource for the community and is contracted to be used as a Red Cross shelter. It was noted that Task 4.e., related to the City's Capital Improvement Program, involves the Library, and that the library building would be part of the City's forthcoming assessment of facilities.

Task 6.c. is related to updating policies. One of the Library Board's main responsibilities is to set Library administrative policies. Many policies are out of date. The review and update of policies will remain on the Board's work plan.

Task 6.b. involves centralizing grants and contracts management. This will be a benefit to the Library. The City's Grants Analyst will centralize the process and procedures for grant applications. Library staff seek out opportunities for grants in coordination with the grants analyst in the Management Services department.

Task 6.f. is to review all boards and commissions. There will be a special study session with the City Council on 2/23/22 to discuss City Boards and Commissions. There aren't any expected changes for the Library Board of Trustees.

The City's IT Master Plan should include the Library's IT needs, such as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) to manage the Library's collection and prevent theft. This relates to task 6.d. which is to improve technology.

The Board was encouraged to review the City Strategic Plan to become familiar with the City Council's priorities for the next five years.

9. Adopt Urban Libraries Council Statement on Race and Social Equity

Public Libraries are very focused on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and are reviewing their collections, programs and policies through this lens to make sure that services are open and equal for all. The South Pasadena Public Library eliminated overdue fines to make access to its services more equitable.

Library Director Billings requested the South Pasadena Public Library sign on to the Urban Libraries Council Statement on Race and Social Equity. Signing on can demonstrate the Library's efforts towards becoming more inclusive. The County of Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles Public Library, Santa Monica Public Library, Pasadena Public Library, and hundreds of other libraries across the country have signed on to this statement.

The Library has launched its own Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) webpage to provide resources to the public and inform them of the Library's efforts. The current wording of the Library's DEI statement can be revisited at a future meeting. Public Services Manager Maida Wong is working on a grant to the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Foundation for the funding to conduct an analysis of the Library's collection to identify any gaps in representation.

Motion by Library Board Trustee Kenneth Gross, seconded by Library Board Secretary Annie Chang Long, to approve the South Pasadena Public Library to sign on to the Urban Libraries Council Statement on Race and Social Equity.

AYES:	Gross, Long, Pratt, Richards
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Serwin
ABSTAIN:	None

10. Volunteer Recognition Event

Every year the Board of Trustees host an event to honor the Library's many volunteers. The assignment of duties for the Board will be a Discussion Item at the 3/10/22 Trustees meeting.

Thursday, April 7, 2022 was selected as the date to host a mid-morning tea. South Pasadena historian Rick Thomas will be asked to speak about the Busch Gardens and Solar Motor Company historical collections the Library purchased from him.

11. Library Operations Update

There was a follow-up to a question posed at the 1/13/22 Trustees meeting regarding why FICA-Medicare was reported as being 74% expended so early in the fiscal year. The Finance Department realized a mistake had been made in the budget. This line item will be increased as part of the mid-year budget review. The amount spent has been on track.

Offers have been made to two people to fill vacant Library Aide positions. They are in the process of getting background checks. Another Aide has resigned due to a family health issue, and a candidate will be pulled from the Aide eligibility list to fill that position. Clerk interviews, which are a promotional opportunity, will take place next week. As soon as those promotions are processed, another Aide recruitment will need to be opened to fill the vacancies created by the promotions. Offers have been made to two candidates for the Weekend-In-Charge Librarian position. Four new Substitute Librarians have started training this month.

Starting in March, Community Services will use the Community Room for Senior Yoga and Tai-Chi three mornings a week.

In-person programming is suspended until the end of February. Take and Make craft kits have been given away every Thursday this month. The bookmark design contest is underway.

In-person Story Times will resume outdoors in March. The Community Room will serve as a back-up space for inclement weather.

The Eclectic Music Festival is scheduled for 4/30/22. The line-up for the Carnegie Stage is being developed. It will be held outdoors in front the Community Room. The USC Kazan Taiko drumming group is available and the South Pasadena High School (SPHS) jazz band has been contacted to take the second shift. The Other Mother Brother Band, a modern bluegrass group, may be the headliner.

Though we tried, we did not get a SPHS intern to assist in digitizing old photographs discovered by the School District. The Memory Lab intern may work on the project.

Local History Librarian Olivia Radbill received a grant for \$12,201 for Memory Lab. This will provide equipment for the public to digitize their analog memories, such as audio cassettes, VHS cassettes, slides, and photos. A staff report will be brought to the 3/2/22 City Council meeting to authorize the acceptance of the award and the execution of the agreement.

The funds for the Building Forward Infrastructure grant will be split into two rounds. The Library will not be ready to apply for the first round (applications due March 21) and would plan to apply for the second round, which would take place in one year. At that point it will be known what matching funds the City will be able to provide.

12. Appointment of a Committee to Participate in Strategic Planning Consultant Selection

President Bianca Richards and Secretary Annie Chang Long will serve on the ad hoc committee to participate in the Strategic Planning consultant selection.

COMMUNICATIONS:

13. Board President (Bianca Richards): President Bianca Richards welcomed the new Trustees to the Board.

14. Board Members: Secretary Annie Chang Long also welcomed the new Trustees.

Trustee Kenneth Gross looks forward to getting more involved the Library Board of Trustees.

Trustee F.J. Pratt is also looking forward to getting acquainted with the Board and see where he can contribute.

15. Council Liaison (Councilmember Diana Mahmud): Councilmember Mahmud was pleased that the Library took the initiative to post the DEI statement on the City’s website. A resolution was passed last week that acknowledged and apologized for the City’s history as a Sundown Town. Affirmative action was pledged to address DEI issues.

Staffing is a perennial issue that is affecting regions across the country. Councilmember Mahmud offered her support.

It was suggested that service hours be offered to SPHS students to assist the digitization project for the School District.

Councilmember Mahmud welcomed the new Trustees to the Board.

16. Friends of the Library Representative (Friends Communications Sally Kilby): Friends Representative Sally Kilby welcomed the new Trustees and expressed gratitude to have Councilmember Mahmud remain as the Board’s Council Liaison.

17. Trustee Liaison to Friends: A Trustee Liaison to the Friends will be designated once the Board officers are elected at the 3/10/22 Trustees meeting. Trustee Dean Serwin had attended the last Friends meeting. Meeting times are likely to change to accommodate Friends Board members’ work schedules.

18. Library Director (Cathy Billings): Director Billings also welcomed the new Trustees and made herself available to any questions they may have.

NEW BUSINESS:

NEXT MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees will be on Thursday, March 10, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT: President Bianca Richards adjourned the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees on February 10, 2022 at 8:32 p.m.

Minutes approved DS as written.

~~Minutes approved~~ _____ as corrected.

DEAN SERWIN

President

3/10/2022

Date