

AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

May 13, 2024; 4:30 p.m.

Board Chairperson Stephanie Postma called the regular meeting of the Austin Public Library Board to order at 4:30 p.m., on Monday, May 13, 2024, at the Austin Public Library.

PRESENT: Melissa Bonorden, Kristi Beckman, Sue Grove, Ted Hinchcliffe, Nitaya Jandragholica, Stephanie Postma, Valerie Sheedy

ALSO PRESENT: City Council Liaison Jeff Austin, Julie Clinefelter, Sara Steinhoff

ABSENT WITH NOTICE: Gema Alvarado-Guerrero, Jwokamer Debock

AGENDA:

Val Sheedy moved to approve the agenda; Melissa Bonorden seconded. Motion carried.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Ted Hinchcliffe, seconded by Kristi Beckman, to approve the April 8, 2024, meeting minutes as presented. Carried.

EXPENSES AND FINANCE REPORTS:

Julie Clinefelter advised the check register listed each invoice paid with several of the checks twice (due to a printing glitch), but advised the checks had all been issued for the correct amounts, which is reflected by the proper balances on the budget report. A motion was made by Valerie Sheedy to approve expenditures and accept the finance reports for April 2024. Sue Grove seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

GIFTS REPORT:

A motion was made by Kristi Beckman to accept all gifts and grant funds received by the library in April 2024. Nitaya Jandragholica seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

SELCO REPORT:

Julie Clinefelter noted SELCO had informed her that although Valerie Sheedy had been appointed as the Mower County representative to the SELCO advisory board, she also had to be formally appointed as the Austin Public Library representative as well in order to fill a dual role. Sue Grove moved to appoint Valerie as the APL representative; Ted Hinchcliffe seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Valerie Sheedy reported she had received information from the advocacy group, which is continuing its efforts within the State legislature. Julie Clinefelter noted SELCO is hiring a Digital Experience Administrator to assist with management and ongoing services with the upcoming ILS data migration and digital tools for patrons.

CITY/COUNTY LIAISON REPORTS:

City Council Liaison Jeff Austin reported the employee engagement process is in full swing with a several upcoming full-day workshops for those in leadership roles to work on improving the City's employment culture. He advised the one-on-one sessions for city leadership with the consulting company have been going well.

County Liaison was not present.

OPERATIONAL REPORT:

Julie Clinefelter provided a written report prior to the board meeting, and discussed the following items:

Strategic Planning:

Clinefelter asked for input and comments from the board on information compiled from the staff in-service day on April 19, and advised the combined information will be used to develop an updated action plan for implementation of the Strategic Goals in the coming months. She noted it may take a few months to circle back to complete the process, with the Summer Reading Program and a number of City employee engagement full-day sessions happening in May and June.

Library Programs:

Julie Clinefelter provided board members with the calendar for the "Read, Renew, Repeat!" Summer Reading program events, and advised that a Summer Program Aide has been hired to assist. She invited board members to attend the kickoff event on June 3, Story Time with Roxi, as well as the Project 25 Wrap-Up

Celebration, which will be held during the 4th Avenue Fest on June 5. A number of board members noted they will be available for those events to support, host and assist as needed. Julie also noted the first Science Saturday hosted at the library on April 27 went very well and had about 50 participants.

On April 30, the Ladies Floral Club held a fundraising event at the library, and Julie reported the group presented a check for \$1,500 for the purchase of new books. She said there was also a Dia del Niño celebration that same evening, which was also well-attended and went well.

Administration:

Director Clinefelter acknowledged the efforts of Technical Services Librarian Emily Soltis in working with SELCO to resolve issues involving the region's inter-library software system over the past several weeks, as work progresses in preparation of migrating the region's data to a new system in the next year.

Sunday Open Hours:

Julie shared the statistics for library visits and use on Sundays, since the start of open Sunday hours on January 7, 2024, and reported her observations of notable benchmarks, such as there only being one meeting room reservation for a Sunday in the last five months. The board reviewed and discussed the information presented, and a motion was made by Nitaya Jandragholica to eliminate Sunday hours going forward due to the low usage and high cost, relative to other services the library provides. Sue Grove seconded the motion. Motion carried. Julie commented the planned suspension of Sunday hours during the summer months – as had also been the previous practice of the library – would provide ample time to get the information out to the public that Sunday hours would not return in September. Ted Hinchcliffe noted there are new alternatives in town for groups seeking meeting space on Sundays, such as the KSMQ community meeting space, which is available seven days a week.

Library Services:

Clinefelter discussed the issues with availability of digital resources, such as eBooks and eAudiobooks, as use of and requests for those items continue to increase. She commented on the complexity of the obstacles to making those items easier to access, including the interests of publishing companies and their complicated relationship with libraries.

Also related to digital equity, Julie noted she has written an article for the Herald that will come out soon that highlights the digital divide and the need for a community response, in light of the May 31 end date for Austin Aspires' grant-funded student hotspot program. Julie advised she is working to revive interest and momentum with the digital equity community group, especially since the federal affordable connectivity program has also ended, noting the issue is a larger conversation than something the library can solve on its own - even partially - with the hotspot lending program. She stated she will keep the board apprised of developments and feedback she receives.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS: None.

BOARD COMMENTS: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Melissa Bonorden moved to adjourn at 5:35 p.m.; Sue Grove seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Steinhoff, Secretary

NEXT BOARD MEETING – Monday, June 10, 2024, 4:30 p.m.