

Library Advisory Board
MINUTES
April 15, 2021, 4:30-6:00 p.m.
Via Zoom (COVID-19)
Stanislaus County Library, 1500 I Street, Modesto, CA 95354

Present: Board Members – District 5 Rep Sue Henderson, District 1 Rep Lise Talbott, District 4 Rep/Chairman Joshua Vander Veen; Library Staff Members – Patti Boardrow, Sarah Dentan, John Fleming, Thomas Kaps, Curtis Lee, Susan Lilly, Bryan Sontag; Library Foundation Representative – President Susan Thomas; Friends of the Library Representatives – Friends of the Modesto Library President Denise Nordell, and Incoming FOML VP Beverly Schlegel; CEO Representative Raul Mendez

Absent: Dorothy Finnegan

I. Call to Order, Welcome & Introductions – Chairman Josh Vander Veen called the meeting to order at approximately 4:30 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes of Meetings held: 2019 - 4/11, 7/11, & 10/17; 2020 - 1/16, 7/16 & 10/15; and 2021 – 1/21
(Note: We did not have a quorum so this has been delayed until all members are present.)

III. Public Comment – None

IV. Correspondence – None

V. Director’s Report – County Librarian Sarah Dentan

Retiring Board Member

Thank you to Sheridan Beuving for his 19 years serving as the At-Large Business Representative to the Library Advisory Board. The Board has been networking to try and fill open positions on the Board. They are looking for someone to help the library in its growth.

District 3 includes part of West Modesto and Salida. Denise Nordell asked for approval to publish something about the vacancy in the Friends of the Library newsletter and that was approved. Joshua Vander Veen suggested that we do a social media post on Facebook so he can share it on Facebook.

Timeline – COVID-19 Response Modifications

March 20, 2020	Closed Libraries to the public
March 23	Implemented modified services
June 22	Resumed acceptance of returned materials; implemented mobile printing
Oct. 5	Opened most locations for computer appointments
Nov. 2	Opened most locations for limited walk-in services
Dec. 8	Libraries returned to curbside service, with computer appointments still available in most locations
March 22, 2021	Most libraries opened for browsing and checkout

How it’s going...

Sarah shared sentiments, from observations by staff, as customers were welcomed back into the library for browsing:

Everyone is so happy we’re open and we have received a lot of positive feedback.

We had customers walking in giving us a celebratory clap and expressing so much gratitude for the library.

We tell parents that they can come in, and hearing their kids scream for joy is just mind blowing!

They are so happy to be able to come in and pick out books themselves. One family brought 47 books up to the desk to check out.

I had a few people well up with tears of joy. Awesome.

Us opening has been a benchmark for a lot of people that we are near the end of the pandemic. It has given them hope, which is something I was not expecting.

Programs

- Virtual book clubs for kids and adults.
- Virtual and live trivia events (Facebook and live Friday night events)
- Return of Cover to Cover, In 'n Out reading club – Earn coupons for hamburger
- March Book Madness
- Act!vated Story Theatre performance
- Spring gardening and vermicomposting with Master Gardeners
- Painting pets and pointillism virtual arts classes
- STEAM Stories Early Childhood Programs: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. Register for programs and pick up supplies at the library.
- Book Club in a Box – When will it resume? Sarah shared that this is a program that relies heavily on volunteers. At this time, we are not able to have volunteers working but we are working toward having volunteers back.
- Online Banking Class (made possible by Capital One and the American Library Association) – This class is intended to help folks who are not familiar with online banking learn safe online banking practices. It covers money management, online banking security, depositing checks from the banking app, paying bills, and setting up alerts. (5 Hot Spots are available for check-out to library cardholders, so they can have high-speed Internet service in their homes) This will be a help to customers who don't have high-speed Internet in their homes.

Grants – We received 3 new grants

- Stay and Play - An Early Childhood Program with story time followed by unstructured or semi-structured play. – Training and implementation
- Virtual Youth Programming – Equipment, funding for virtual learning software and training to help deliver and manage effective youth programming.
- 2021 Día de los Niños program grant (\$1,500 received) Support for celebrating literacy in every language with funding for purchasing books for book giveaway. The Día festivals will not be happening this year, but special Día Story Times will be offered instead, along with book giveaways.

Statistics

Physical circulation of materials - Circulation continues to be affected drastically by the closure during the pandemic, but jumped up the last ten days of March. From reopening Mar 22 to end of the month there was a very noticeable increase.

Circulation – E-Books – Numbers in E-Book circulation also saw an increase during that last ten days of March. We are in hopes of seeing these things remain popular, even during open times.

Walk-in Traffic was significantly less, of course, but stayed steady during the closure with staff going in and out to deliver holds to customers just outside the front door. This increased at the end of March. People are starting to come back.

Questions?

Where are the koi fish that were in the fish tank in the Modesto Library? They went to the koi pond of the person who takes care of the fish tank. There is a guide on the fish tank with an interactive activity, to identify fish in the tank. Thank you to Friends of the Modesto Library for this new fish tank! It is a special treasure!

The library feels alive again! Changes to the layout have been very helpful in getting people to use the self-checkout kiosks.

VI. Reports from Library Support Groups

Stanislaus Library Foundation

Foundation President Susan Thomas shared that the Foundation is working towards reinstating their September “live” in-person Gala fundraiser September 25, although they do have a Plan B, just in case they can’t. Nancy Econome, author of (her debut novel), *The Classic Grill – A Tale of Greek Gods and Immigrant Heroes*, will be the speaker at this event.

Party at the Library, a thank-you to donors, is planned for August 20. They are working on a way to have that safely at the library. Save the date cards will go out end of April.

Friends of the Library

Patterson FOL - Sue Henderson reported that their Friends group had a Zoom meeting Monday. There was a pretty good response from people sending in their annual donations, resulting from the January mailing.

Modesto FOL – Co-President Denise Nordell shared that FOML is anxious to schedule their used book sale. They are also waiting for Modesto Library funding requests from Chris Moreno so they can help where it is needed. This is the 50th birthday of the Modesto Library building so they would like to celebrate that as much as possible!

VII. Old Business

Project Updates: Turlock, Empire, and Modesto MakerSpace

Turlock Library Remodel and Expansion – Library Operations Manager Bryan Sontag shared a link to the website so we could view the photo collection from when the library closed to the present. Substantial completion is expected by end of May. Landscapers are putting in sprinklers and getting ready to plant. Flooring will go in next week. Painting on inside has been done. They are working on the ceiling, lighting, fire sprinklers, and flooring. Move-in is expected to start in early June. It will take eight weeks or so from that time, to be ready for opening. Soonest possible opening would be early in August but that is still to be determined.

Empire Library - New Building – Library Operations Manager Thomas Kaps reported that the Empire Library is pretty much finished! It should open in May. There will be a celebration in June.

MakerSpace – Library Operations Manager Thomas Kaps shared pictures of the MakerSpace area inside Modesto Library. It is close to completion. It will be set up after the construction phase is finished.

Updating Library Advisory Board By-Laws – Seat for District 3 needs to be filled before we can fill the at-large seats. The Library Advisory Board will be able to appoint members once that happens. Sarah is getting legal counsel to get some clarification.

Library Strategic Planning – A PowerPoint of the final draft was shared by County Librarian Sarah Dentan. This is an interim bridge plan to get us through the next two years.

2021-2023 Five Strategic Goal Areas

1. Demonstrate fiscal responsibility
2. Ensure the library is a welcoming environment that customers want to visit, and where staff want to work
3. Increase community connections and partnerships
4. Provide responsive and creative programs and services
5. Expand the reach of the Library, particularly to key populations

We need to do surveys to make sure we know what the community wants from us.

Next steps in implementing the plan include:

1. Assigning management responsibility for tasks.
2. Sharing of final draft with folks in CEO office.
3. Quarterly check-in matrix that managers will be filling out.
4. Quarterly reporting at Library Advisory Board.

A question was asked about funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and how this will apply to the library. Sarah doesn't have an answer but she just sent an email to our CEO Representative, Raul Mendez, about this. That has already been passed. There's some momentum building about specifying Library funds in the current Infrastructure Bill they are working on, and there's a separate bill called Build America's Libraries that is specifically for libraries. We want to be prepared with our priority projects so we're ready to act when funds become available. Sarah will be working with CEO Representative Raul Mendez, and other folks, throughout this process. Raul spoke about funding coming directly to Stanislaus County (\$107 million or so through Federal Stimulus package) and that some of that could be coming down to the library. Additional funds from other sources should be available specifically for libraries. We are waiting for guidelines to on how funds are to be utilized. Sarah said we need to get a really solid picture of what our needs are so we are prepared for when the funds become available.

VIII. New Business

Budget Report – Curtis Lee went over the income statement summary and fund balance summary as of March 31, 2021.

Sales Tax –As of 3/31/21, we're at \$7.62 million of the \$10.5 million budgeted. At mid-year we asked for a \$500,000 increase in the budget due to the strong economy. We are well over where we should be towards the target.

Government Funding – We budgeted \$773,000 for government funding which includes a State Literacy Grant for Learning Quest grant from the state for literacy services, and CRF (Coronavirus Relief Fund) reimbursement monies from Stimulus package to cover primarily salary costs and some other supply costs for items needed for COVID-19. We are on target to receive what we budgeted. Learning Quest funding may come in a little lower than anticipated due to the fact that they haven't provided all of the expected services because of the pandemic.

Revenues from Services - Receipts from fines, passports, copies, print jobs, etc. are at 29% of the adjusted budget amount. It's currently at \$7,000 of the new budgeted amount of \$25,000. We are seeing an uptick in services since passport services have resumed and more fine payments are coming in.

Misc. Revenues from book sales and donations from Friends of the Library, etc. is projected to be \$112,000, as budgeted. Thank you to supporters who have continued to give as expected.

PFF - \$200,000 is a loan from Public Facilities Fees (collected by county for development to support city and county services). This helps to defray the payment for the Turlock loan. This is a transfer so it remains as is.

County General Fund contribution is expected to be \$491,000. This always has the potential to be reduced if county revenues soften.

Salaries and Benefits – We were running about 72.8% on salaries and benefits so that is on target or below, due to vacancies.

Books and materials – We are at 55% of the \$793,000 so this is down quite a bit.

Special Programs – We are at 23.3%. We haven't been doing special programs.

Services and Supplies – Utilities, Supplies, Maintenance - We spent less due to closure (42% of the \$2.2 million that was budgeted amount)

CAP (Cost Allocation Plan) - We budgeted \$2.1 million (this is what we are charged for services provided by other departments– Legal Services, Invoice Processing and other services from other county departments). We are currently at 55% of what was budgeted.

Fixed Assets –\$41,000 was budgeted and \$31,000 has been spent so we are at 75%. This will be adjusted after we go to the Board for a \$30,000 increase

Turlock Loan Payment - \$444,528 was spent for the Turlock Library loan payment.

\$13.2 million in expenditures was budgeted.

Net Income (Loss) was expected to be a loss of \$1.1 million but is currently \$405,000 positive, due to strong sales tax.

Beginning Fund balance as of 7-1-2020 was \$6,053,524 and with the \$405,000 positive budget balance, then ending fund balance as of 3-31-21 is \$6.4 million.

IT News – Library IT Manager John Fleming reported Empire network had to be transferred over to the New Empire Library. Digital signage was added to Empire. Turlock had some hiccups because contractor cut some of the fiber cabling that supplied the networking to the library. They are getting that back up and running. The first installation of wiring and hardware is being done at Turlock for the new infrastructure. Then they will move on to Empire with new infrastructure. Then they will move on to install at remaining libraries. This project has to be done with the infrastructure by September of this year.

Sarah requested installing some outdoor wifi at key locations so the following libraries were selected: Modesto, Salida, Oakdale, Newman, Patterson, and Empire. They have strategically mapped out coverage areas for WiFi on outside of buildings, covering at least the parking lot. WiFi access will be available in the Empire Park and pool area.

Signage on computers is being updated and will be in English and Spanish.

Library Document Stations – Customers who use this station to scan, etc. may soon be able to view the screen there in other languages.

IX. Announcements – None

X. Next meeting date: July 15, 2021, 4:30-6:00 p.m. (*via Zoom*)

XI. Adjournment – Chair

Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the Library Advisory Board after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection at the Modesto Library Reference Desk during normal business hours. Such documents are also available on the Library website at www.stanislauslibrary.org/about_advisory_board.shtml subject to staff's ability to post the documents before the meeting.