



City of Oregon City

Meeting Minutes

Library Board

625 Center Street
Oregon City, OR 97045
503-657-0891

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Online via Zoom

5:30 PM

1. Call to Order:

Cynthia Andrews called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Members Present: Cynthia Andrews, Heidi Blackwell, Nick Dierckman, Larry Osborne, Elizabeth Zinter, Kari Linder

Staff Present: Greg Williams, Library Director, and Denise Butcher, Library Operations Manager.

2. Approval of Minutes:

Nick Dierckman made a motion to approve the minutes from April 14, 2021. Larry Osborne seconded the motion. Cynthia Andrews, Heidi Blackwell, Nick Dierckman, Larry Osborne, and Elizabeth Zinter voted aye. The motion carried.

3. Library Director's Report:

Greg Williams highlighted the monthly statistics included in the report, noting that he had started including statistics pertaining to electronic resources, starting with Kanopy, a video streaming service.

Nick Dierckman asked if Kanopy was meeting Greg's expectation. Greg expressed general satisfaction with the product and noted that as it was a pay per stream service and as patron streaming was variable, it presented some budgeting challenges. Greg and Denise Butcher estimated the pre-pandemic cost per month of the service to be between \$300 and \$400 per month, and had risen to the \$500 to \$600 per month range during the pandemic and was now in the \$400 to \$500 per month range. Greg noted he felt the average cost per stream was reasonable. Greg noted that Kanopy analytics indicated that the Great Courses were among the most frequently accessed titles and knowing this allowed for future evaluation of physical collection materials and potential programming opportunities.

Greg expressed satisfaction with the way the "borrowed to loaned" ratio was trending.

Greg relayed that the Vale Muggia, Oregon City's Behavioral Health Specialist who works out of the Police Department, presented at the May Library staff meeting. Vale presented on trauma informed care for people and people in crisis at the staff meeting and there was hope that Vale would facilitate future staff trainings.

Heidi Blackwell asked for more details about the library's relationship with Vale. Greg shared that the long-term objective was to facilitate more cooperation between Father's Heart, Library and Police to better coordinate support for people experiencing difficult times and the people that interact with them.

Elizabeth Zinter voiced support for the use of trauma informed approach and suggested looking at the library set up from a trauma informed lens.

Cynthia Andrews asked for examples of practical takeaways from the session. Greg reflected on the results of a large study of cumulative trauma and life experiences. Denise shared the importance of consistent application of rules, how to recognize the limits of library resources, and how to refer patrons to other resources.

Nick Dierckman suggested trauma informed approaches as the subject of a future adult learning program.

Greg shared plans for the reconfiguration of the children's area. These included moving the children's service desk to face the entrance to the children's area in order to provide a more welcoming and responsive experience. Greg acknowledged that shelves may also need to be moved.

Heidi asked if the reconfiguration would necessitate removing the play kitchen and the computers. Greg stated that the computers would need to be reconfigured to accommodate spacing for long term service. Greg stated that the kitchen area caused safety concerns stemming from lack of spacing, communal toys, and the tendency of toys to end up in young patrons' mouths.

Heidi pointed out that the kitchen play area was the only indoor communal play space in Oregon City and anticipated community pushback to its removal. Greg agreed and shared that a scheduled playtime after storytime where toys would be available in the community room and toys could be sanitized was being considered.

Elizabeth pointed out that there was a recent study finding very low instances of child to child transmission of COVID.

Greg agreed and shared that another factor in this evaluation was that some of the previous toys led to more disruptive behaviors than others and he hoped that the reintroduction of play opportunities could be done in a manner that ensured a safer and more pleasant library experience for everybody.

Greg shared that based on new information and guidance from the Center for Disease Control, Oregon Health Authority, and Oregon State Library, the quarantining of library materials had been discontinued. Staff were still expected to wear gloves when handling materials and patrons picking up holds were still offered the opportunity to use hand sanitizer.

Larry Osborne stated that these findings were similar to the Spanish Flu of 1918, where library books were not found to be a significant spreader of disease.

Greg shared that on April 19, holds moved from appointment-based to drop in self-service. Patron occupancy was capped at four due to guidance from Oregon State Library and the need to also account for a staff member to provide assistance. Greg stated that people counters were functioning well and patron feedback had been positive.

Heidi shared a lack of clarity about whether children could enter in this new model and Greg said that communication would be made clearer.

Greg highlighted the teen summer book box subscription in which teen participants would receive a customized book box containing two to three staff selected books based on information the teen provided. A creative kit and surprise items would also be included.

Heidi asked if there was a way for teens to provide feedback about the book boxes. Greg shared that a general library program feedback form was being developed, and that he anticipated the form would include both standardized questions (applicable to all library programs), as well as customized questions for specific programs/audiences.

Greg related that Youth Services Staff had discussed the No Place for Hate program with school district counselors as part of outreach efforts. The general response was positive and educators who may not have had time to incorporate it in this session were looking forward to incorporating in future lesson plans. Heidi shared that part of that presentation had also included advertisement of the Summer Reading Program and resources for parents and educational staff.

4. Public Comments: none

5. Discussion Items:

Cynthia Andrews relayed that David Goldberg would report back at the next meeting on the Outreach feedback provided by Board Members.

Budget Review

Greg Williams reported that the Budget Committee met May 3 and May 6 and voted to approve the budget as submitted. The City Commission would vote on the budget next and under Oregon Budget Law, could change some items without further input from the Budget Committee.

Greg thanked Denise Butcher for her assistance in reviewing past budgets with him.

Greg reflected on the importance of finding an appropriate balance between maintaining a reserve and using available funds to provide services. Greg explained that if library spending was less than library revenue, the difference would accrue to the Library Fund's balance.

Greg reported that as part of this year's budget process, the Library and the Finance Department had established specific guidelines for a target Library fund balance. The target fund balance will consist of seven months' worth of operating costs, one year of debt service payment, and 10% of annual operating expenses. For the upcoming biennium, that target totaled approximately two million dollars. Greg also anticipated that some of the Library's fund balance might also be earmarked for future capital expenses. Greg stressed the importance of using any fund balance for one-time expenses and not relying on one-time dollars to fund ongoing operating expenses.

Larry Osborne pointed out that having excess money was a good problem to have.

Cynthia Andrews agreed and expressed appreciation for having guidelines for the fund balance.

Nick Dierckman proposed paying down the bond in a few years to decrease expenditures and using the funds to increase outreach efforts and other services in order to keep down the reserve.

Greg noted that the Full Time Equivalent comparison would show two additional positions compared to the last biennium budget. One of these was a Library Technology Specialist, which was a mid-biennium add (at .8 FTE) that occurred this fiscal year. The position was created out of a reorganization of existing personnel budget to address the increased need for technology services both during the pandemic and beyond.

The other new position in the budget request is a library safety officer position. This position was designated to assist in helping ensure all visitors can safely and successfully use the library. Greg reflected on the need for this position and voiced his strong desire to maintain a safe and welcoming environment. Greg mentioned a similar position being used by Multnomah County Library, where a library employee can act as a designated point person to better manage and address elevated behavior situations.

Greg shared that the library's primary revenue source is Library District tax receipts, and that the City historically has contributed to the Library out of the general fund. Greg reported that this year there were questions from the budget committee about the specifics of what expenses the contribution was used for. Greg stated that typically this contribution has been used to offset bond payments and to demonstrate the City's ongoing commitment to supporting the library.

Greg did not know if there would be more questions at the June 2 budget meeting. Greg noted that there were also questions about the request for purchase of a subscription software package intended to document patron behavior. The estimated cost of the software was approximately \$2000 per year. The intended purpose for this software was better record keeping of behavior issues, especially in cases where exclusion might be warranted.

Larry asked who the vendor for the system was. Greg responded the vendor under consideration was called Quipu and the software was called PITS (Patron Incident Tracking System).

Nick thought the software would pair well with the new safety officer position. Greg agreed and mentioned that the system could also assist in information sharing between groups serving patrons, while providing additional tools to ensure adherence to privacy standards and other information disclosure rules (such as HIPAA).

6. Communications:

Library Foundation

Cynthia Andrews reported no new updates as the Library Foundation would not meet until May 22.

Library District Advisory Committee (LDAC)

Nick Dierckman reported that there was a meeting scheduled in June, and that nothing else had happened since the last report.

Friends of the Library

Larry Osborne stated that the financials were good, rent went up two percent but was covered by the income, and income on per hour basis had increased compared to pre-COVID. Larry reported that donations of books and CDs are up and Friends were preparing to open Tuesdays and possibly Saturdays in the near future. The store front was going to be used as a film set on June 20.

Larry mentioned that approximately 300 books per month were being donated to the Women's Club Little Library and asked for more details about the little library.

Greg Williams stated that he did not know anything about this. Denise Butcher stated that Linda regularly supplied books to any little libraries that request them, but did not know anything specific about the Women's Club's Little Library.

7. Future Agenda Items:

Cynthia Andrews relayed David Goldberg's wish to continue discussing outreach opportunities at the June 9 meeting.

8. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 PM.