

Library Advisory Board
MINUTES
January 21, 2021, 4:30-6:00 p.m.
Via Zoom (COVID-19)
Stanislaus County Library, 1500 I Street, Modesto, CA 95354

Present: Board Members –Sue Henderson, Lise Talbott, Joshua Vander Veen; Library Staff Members – Patti Boardrow, Sarah Dentan, JoAnn Henley, 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

Absent: Sheridan Beuving, 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

Timeline – COVID-19 Response Modifications

March 13, 2020	Canceled public programs
March 16	Reduced computer times, eliminated public seating, and restricted volunteer activity
March 20	Closed libraries to the public
March 23	Implemented modified services
April 6	Implemented virtual programming
May 26	Expanded Wi-Fi hours available from the Modesto Library parking lot.
June 22	Resumed acceptance of returned materials and implemented mobile printing.
Oct. 5*	Still closed to public but opened most locations* for computer appointments only
Oct. 13	Stanislaus County moved to the red tier with State of CA tiered system.
Nov. 2	Most library locations were opened for limited walk-in services.
Nov. 17	Stanislaus County returned to purple tier.
Dec. 5	Stanislaus County is subject to regional stay-at-home order.
Dec. 8	Libraries returned to curbside service, with computer appointments still available on a limited basis in most locations.

* Denair, Keyes and Waterford are not currently open for appointments. Denair is not big enough to social distance, Keyes is not busy enough, and Waterford will open after their door has been fixed.

The Modesto Library auditorium, downstairs and separate from any work spaces or public spaces, is being made available for LearningQuest tutor/learner pairs on a very limited basis. They follow the same symptom check guidelines as employees working in buildings.

We will continue to monitor the situation and resume services as the situation improves.

We are maintaining all of the modified programming we have been doing in recent months, including virtual Story Times, Bilingual Story Times, Story Breaks, Trivia events. Grab ‘n Go STEAM kits and Read-to-Me kits are also available. We had our first staff trivia event this morning as a thank you post-holiday party, since our holiday brunch had to be canceled.

Book distribution continues. We have been able to reintroduce book distribution at Juvenile Hall even though we can't go into the building right now. We consistently gathering donations for distributions so we can help provide youth-appropriate and teen-appropriate books to youth in the Juvenile Hall. We are also distributing books through schools.

We just completed a grant through the state of California to do book distribution in concurrence with the school-based feeding sites that are running while schools are closed due to COVID.

New things coming up...

We have a Winter Reading Challenge going on right now, using the app-based platform, Beanstack. We are trying, as a county, to read a certain number of minutes (300,000 total combined hours). You can also sign up from our website. We will be using the same app for Summer Reading, as well. We have a 3-year subscription to Beanstack, courtesy of the State Library. They purchased a state-wide license using some of the CARES Act funding.

No-contact tax preparation will be offered by volunteers (VITA) at Salida, Riverbank and Oakdale. People will have appointments but they will only drop off paperwork and then pick it up when it's finished the following week.

Grants – Sarah has been encouraging staff to write grants. They have been doing a great job even though most do not have much experience with grant writing. They are doing an excellent job!

We have received a couple of grants already through the CA State Library/LSTA (Library Service Technology Act) Grants.

- Read-to-me literacy kits - \$20,000 was received for these. This will be used to build on existing kits. They are similar to Story Time in a bag. Originally these were used for child care centers but now there is a need for these to be used in the home for families. Themed kits with book, literacy info, a toy
- "Uke Got This" Ukelele classes - \$8,000. Classes will be done first via Zoom and eventually in person, based at the Turlock Library. This will provide some Arts Education and it will be a great community building exercise, as well.

American Library Association Grant

- Community Connections Grant – This is a grant through the American Library Association (ALA). We have received 5 Hot Spots for circulating, and 3 years of Internet service to go with those hot spots. The amount of time Hot Spots will check out for is still to be decided. We also received money to be used for online financial education. These are Internet related financial trainings about Internet banking and banking safely, which were developed in conjunction with Chase bank. These classes are not branded; they are financial-institution-brand neutral. We are in the process of writing the lending policies for the hot spots and getting class times set up so you should see these being offered to our customers soon.

All three of these grants were written by first-time grant writers so these folks are commended for their great work.

Facilities

Urgent repairs needed very soon:

- Deteriorating electrical box at Newman Library.
- Dry rot on beam at front of Salida Library that could a hazard if left as is.

These repairs amount to about \$215,000. We are going to get these items fixed. We do have fund balance we can use for these emergency repairs.

Ramp work at rear of Modesto Library is being done in conjunction with the MakerSpace project. Modesto Library roof needs work, but this has not been scheduled. The projects such as painting the exterior of the Modesto Library,

that did not have funding identified, were put on hold for the time being. Friends of the Modesto Library are interested in meeting to discuss projects and see where they can step in to help with funding.

Statistics

Physical circulation of materials had a COVID drop-off. Things slowed down in December as they always do. Modesto Library was closed for a week in December due to asbestos abatement so that also affected circulation. Digital circulation is holding steady. This, however, does not make up for the loss in physical circulation.

VI. Reports from Library Support Groups

Friends of the Library

Patterson FOL - Sue Henderson was able to prepare and mail the yearly membership request from her home since they did not have their Friends meeting.

Modesto FOL – Denise Nordell reported that they are creating a series of articles as we approach the 50th birthday of the Modesto Library building. It was built in 1971. They are planning the Annual Friends of the Modesto Library meeting for March 3. They'll present an annual report. Funding has been severely affected by the pandemic. They had a fundraiser book sale at Barnes & Noble and earned \$2,500 in gift cards. Beard Land Development asked if they could help with funding and a \$5,000 check was written to the FOML. They also provide space for Friends to store books for their used book sales.

Stanislaus Library Foundation – Susan Thomas is the new Foundation President. The Foundation held “Party at Your House” in November. It was a Zoom event to thank the donors and it went very well. They are moving ahead to have the in-person Annual Fall Gala on Sept. 25, 2021 and Party at the Library on August 20, 2021 in Modesto or Turlock.

VII. Old Business

Updates: Turlock, Empire, and Modesto MakerSpace projects

Turlock Library Remodel and Expansion – Bryan Sontag reported that they are on track for substantial completion in March 2021. Windows are going in and then siding will be done next. Concrete will then be poured. Landscaping will be last. On the inside they are putting up insulation and then dry wall will be after that. Bathrooms and painting will be last, before move-in can begin.

MakerSpace – Thomas Kaps shared that the MakerSpace project is going well. Demolition is expected to be completed by tomorrow, Jan. 22, 2021, for the back ramp portion. The ramp should be done in two to three weeks. Holes have been drilled for data and plumbing and water. They are working on putting up the metal studs for walls on the inside. It's moving along.

Empire Library - New Building – Thomas gave an update on the progress being made at the new Empire Library. Carpet is in, walls are up and it's painted! Furniture should be in soon and they plan to start moving in by the end of February or early March. It's going to be beautiful! Thomas will try to get some video to be uploaded to the website.

Communication to the public - Next week Sarah Dentan will be presenting Tuesday night at the Turlock City Council in conjunction with Turlock Friends about progress at the Turlock Library. Patty Hill Thomas will be making a presentation about the progress on the new Empire Library on Wednesday night to the Empire Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) and Sarah will be there as we communicate this exciting news.

Updating Library Advisory Board By-Laws - Josh Vander Veen reported that this committee has not been in communication so they will need to take a look at how the committee can meet during this time of online meetings.

Library Strategic Planning - The current plan runs 2017-2021, through the end of this fiscal year. Community members and staff worked closely with a consultant to create that plan. They identified four strategic “goal areas” and suggested objectives. COVID put a halt to activities that would be important and necessary to properly create a new Strategic Plan. Having a strategic plan can help you make decisions when things are complicated or difficult. After considering options, Sarah has decided it would be best to do an Interim Strategic Plan. We have been building off community input we received during the planning from the last plan. Working with a group of staff members to hone that plan to work for the next two years. We will go back out to the community for input ahead of the start for the next plan that will be in place starting 2023.

2017-2021 Goal Areas

- Expand the reach of the Library, particularly to key populations
- Provide responsive creative programs and services
- Ensure the library is a welcoming environment that customers want to visit, and where staff want to work
- Increase community connections and partnerships

We are hanging on to all of these areas. We are also adding another area.

2021-2023 Goal Area we are adding

- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility*

*This is not because we haven’t done that in the past. The strategic plan is a document that helps us in decision making while working within a very limited budget. This is to publicly state our commitment to fiscal responsibility and put a statement behind what we are already doing.

Where are we now? How will we know if we are successful? We need to break this down within each objective to make sure we are creating intentionality and a shared vision.

We are developing system-wide objectives for each goal area, not just with management, but also front-line staff. Objectives need to align with, for example, children starting kindergarten ready to learn.

- Existing objectives (aspirations)
- County GOS’ success measures
- Partnership and collaborative commitments, e.g. Cradle to Career

What’s next?

- Developing system-wide action items
- Developing Branch/work unit action items
- Bringing the Interim Plan to the Library Advisory Board
- Keeping the Interim Plan in focus

VIII. New Business

Budget Report – Curtis Lee went over the income statement and fund balance summary as of December 31, 2020, at halfway point for 2020/21 fiscal year.

Sales Tax –We budgeted 9.9 million for FY 20/21 sales tax, our biggest revenue source. This was based on the 2019/20 estimate from our sales tax consultant, HDL. We are at 42% of our sales tax target at the 4-month point of sales tax collections (July to Oct.) so this is higher than anticipated. We asked CEO to bump that projection up to \$10.5 million.

Government Funding – We budgeted \$748,000 for government funding which includes a State Literacy Grant for Learning Quest (\$360,000) and CVR (Coronavirus Relief Fund) reimbursement.

Revenues from Services - Receipts from fines, passports, copies, print jobs, etc. ended up very low 2% of budget due to closure. It's currently at \$5,000 since we've been closed. We've asked the CEO office for a \$225,000 decrease in our revenue in this area in anticipation of remaining closed for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Revenues from book sales and donations from Friends of the Library, etc. is projected to be \$112,000, as budgeted.

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 49% on salaries and benefits so that is on target.

Books and materials – We are at 35% of the \$793,000 so this is down quite a bit.

Special Programs – We haven't been doing our big events due to the closure.

Services and Supplies - We spent less due to closure (27% of the \$2.2 million that was budgeted amount)

CAP (Cost Allocation Plan) - We expected to spend \$2.1 million (this is what we are charged for services provided by other departments). We are currently at 32% of what was budgeted. We have about \$100,000 in savings at this time compared to this time last year.

Fixed Assets –\$35,000 was budgeted and \$25,000 has been spent on the Oakdale fence.

\$13.2 million in expenditures was budgeted.

IX. Announcements –

IT news from Sarah Dentan in John Fleming's absence – E-rate funding, available to schools and libraries, is making it possible for the library to get some new wiring, switches, etc. at all of our locations at a really deep discount. John Fleming has been working hard on getting this project set up. Once this has been completed, we will be able to offer expanded Wifi to cover parking lots. At the new Empire library the WiFi will cover a large part of the park area, as well.

X. Next meeting date: Apr. 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.