

Library Advisory Board  
MINUTES  
July 16, 2020, 4:30-5:30 p.m.  
Via Zoom (COVID-19 Pandemic)  
1500 I Street, Modesto, CA 95354

Present: Board Members –Dorothy Finnegan, Sue Henderson, Lise Talbott, Joshua Vander Veen; Library Staff Members – Patti Boardrow, Sarah Dentan, John Fleming, Thomas Kaps, Curtis Lee, Susan Lilly, Bryan Sontag; Library Foundation Representative – Jane Manley, Pat Portwood, Susan Thomas; Friends of the Library Representatives – Friends of the Modesto Library President Denise Nordell; CEO Representative Kelly Covello

Absent: Sheridan Beuving

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

II. Approval of Minutes of Meetings held 2019: 4/11, 7/11, & 10/17, and 2020: 1/16

Sue Henderson made a motion to approve all minutes presented, and Lise Talbott seconded the motion. The four members present, Lise Talbott, Dorothy Finnegan, Sue Henderson and Josh Vander Veen all approved. *(Note: Upon reviewing the notes, we found we did not have a quorum so this motion will be revisited when all members are present.)*

III. Public Comment – None

IV. Correspondence – None

V. Report from County Librarian Sarah Dentan

COVID-19 Modifications – The Library canceled all public programs on March 13, based on recommendations from public health. On March 16 we reduced computer times and eliminated public seating. We also restricted volunteer activity. On March 20 all Stanislaus County Libraries were closed to the public. Staff worked quickly and adeptly to come up with ways they could offer services differently, and on March 23 modified services were implemented. Modified, reduced service hours began at that time, as well. The staff was fantastic and put forth great effort to keep things working in a new and different way.

A no-contact holds pick-up service was started. Money was reallocated to bolster the e-book budget and provide additional digital resources, and the Library received a grant from the California State Library for digital resources. We expanded home delivery service to homebound residents to include people who may not normally be homebound but are home due to restrictions during the pandemic. Because the Library is not allowing volunteers at this time, home delivery service work is being done completely by staff. We have continued our book distribution to schools and housing authority sites, but we've also expanded that effort. Materials have been dropped off to the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) since we cannot go into the building, due to the COVID pandemic. We implemented a digital services library card which customers fill out online; within a few days the customer will have a barcode to access services. Our libraries are also being used as cooling centers in some communities. During heat emergencies only, select locations are open for people to get respite from the heat.

April 6 we implemented virtual programming, including a variety of Story Times and special programs, over our social media platforms. Trivia events and escape rooms are being held virtually, as well as book discussions. Grab-n-go STEM kits for kids are being distributed to the community. Summer Reading is continuing as a Do-at-home reading program. May 26, Wi-Fi became available from the Modesto Library parking lot, beyond the current modified service hours (Wi-Fi is available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week.) On June 22 we began accepting checked-out materials again. We have been adjusting due dates but many customers wanted to get books back to

us. At the same time, we also began offering mobile printing again. People can send things from their devices and come to pick them up from the front of the library.

Safety measures were put into place for staff. Safety of our staff and community are of utmost importance. Social distancing is being accomplished in a number of ways, but one of the most impactful ways is limiting the number of staff in each location and area at any given time. We are encouraging telework. We are also separating work areas in our buildings so some people have been reassigned to other spaces. We are all paying attention to our surroundings, following State guidelines including wearing face coverings in all public areas, washing hands regularly, and staying home if we're feeling unwell. We are doing a lot of trainings on safety and we have up posters with safety reminders. Also, everyone, including employees, vendors, partners, etc., must do a self-assessment before entering the building. We are quarantining materials as they are returned. We have been using 3 days as the amount of time to hold books before handling. It has been confirmed by CDC and IMLS (Institute for Museum and Library Services) that this is an adequate amount of time for regular books and CDs. On regular books, on soft paper, the virus is not detectable in one day. Testing is still being done on other items such as magazines with shiny paper. [Note: testing recently has shown the virus persists on stacked books for up to 6 days; in response to this new information, we are now quarantining materials for 6 days.]

We have developed an exposure plan, in case of a confirmed exposure in one of our facilities.

Library staff has been very active supporting the countywide COVID-19 response. All County employees are considered disaster workers and Library staff have been assigned to the Salida Testing Center, contact tracing, and other emergency response sites. Library IT was instrumental in working to get the contact tracing center set up in Salida Library. Our staff is very well suited for these roles, given their customer service orientation and focus on detail, along with their awareness of issues related to privacy and confidentiality.

## VI. Reports from Library Support Groups

### Friends of the Library

Modesto FOL – Denise Nordell – Friends of the Modesto Library had their virtual meeting in June. Denise reported that despite the COVID-19, FOML approved a budget and will be contributing what may be the highest amount in one year, so far, to support the library. \$16,500 will be going to the Modesto Library for displays in Children's area, continuing support to the Juvenile Justice Center book club, kids and adult programming, furniture for the Children's area and display cabinets for the inside. Fundraisers, except Barnes and Noble, may be able to be rescheduled. Used book sale will be planned for October instead of May. They are still publishing their newsletter, communicating with members and encouraging membership.

Denise Nordell asked if anyone at the library was involved with Congressman Harder's Summer Reading Program and book giveaway, in conjunction with food distribution. Sarah Dentan said that although the library has not been directly involved with Harder's book program, the Library has been out at various school sites providing books to children as they come out to get their lunches. The Library's Youth Services Outreach (YSO) team has a complete list of the sites where they are doing this work so we can find out from them through Annie Snell, which school sites they are visiting to check for any potential overlap. Denise said FOML has about 400 giveaway books to distribute but want to make sure they weren't duplicating efforts.

Turlock FOL – Pat Portwood – It has been exciting to watch the dream of a new library become a reality! With the library closed down, Friends of the Turlock Library are working on their Facebook presence and newsletter to appeal to people and try to get people involved and donating. The fundraising committee has raised \$175,000 so far for the new library. They are working with Sarah Dentan and the library, looking for ways to augment a base within the interior of the new library. They approved a corner library learning tree in the Children's section of the library and masonry work in the courtyard. They are doing naming of areas to recognize donors. They will be featured in 209 Aug/Sept issue in an article called *The Tale of Two Libraries* that will parallel stories of the old and the new libraries.

That will be the kick-off for their launch of the big campaign for raising money to make this library a beacon of light in the county.

Stanislaus Library Foundation – Susan Thomas – The Foundation had to cancel the annual party at the library, as well as their largest fundraiser, the Gala. They are doing a summer mail campaign in place of the Gala and have raised about \$10,000 so far. Pat Portwood added that the letter they sent out is offering a fund-a-need option, so people can support something specific for the new library.

Patterson FOL - Sue Henderson – The Friends of the Patterson Library group is disappointed they couldn't do the April book sale, as they already had fliers ready and books sorted, etc. Their next sale would normally be the third week in October and that is still up in the air. The preparation cannot be done until social distancing is not necessary.

## VII. Old Business

Committee to revise Library Advisory Board By-Laws - Josh Vander Veen – The committee, which includes Sheridan Beuving, Dorothy Finnegan and Joshua Vander Veen, was formed at the last LAB meeting. COVID hit shortly after, so they haven't been able to accomplish much on the By-Laws yet.

## VIII. New Business

Reappointment of Board Members – Sue Henderson and Lise Talbott were asked if they were willing to serve again as they were terming out. They both agreed and we are very glad they will continue with their service to the library.

Preparations for Reopening – Sarah Dentan - Opening again will happen in late stage 3 but we do not know when that will be. Much of the research on risk analysis was done in academic libraries and public libraries are much different than academic libraries. The state defines what can happen, and when. We are prepared to open once we can. Sarah is keeping in close communication with other libraries, particularly in our area. No other libraries in Northern California are open. We will do a 2-phase approach to opening. Phase 1 we will open to the public but maintain the current modified hours. We will reduce the capacity for each building to allow for social distancing. We will require face coverings for people in the library in keeping with the state's guidelines. We have hand sanitizer, hand sanitizer dispensers, and wipes that will be available to customers. In phase 2 we will add back Saturdays and evenings, for the libraries normally open at those times. We want to mitigate risks every step of the way.

Denise Nordell asked about the status of the library pages and other part-time workers. Some of the part-time staff are working for the Emergency Operations Center. All of the positions created by the COVID-19 testing, etc., have been made available to part-time workers. Library staff have been informed of the opportunities. Even when we reopen, we will have to limit the number of employees, as well as customers. We'll need to closely track who is in the building at any given time to keep the number of people in the building down.

We are evaluating other ways to keep people engaged, even while we're not open. We are planning as though we will be in this situation for a while.

Circulation stats are down by 90% from last year. In March 2020 our physical materials (books, DVDs) Circulation was 85,700, in April it was 13,431, and in May it went down to 11,533. E-Material (Hoopla, Cloud Library) check-outs have increased. We are now sharing e-book collections with a consortium, so many more items are available. Many people don't know they can still check things out from the library. We need to figure out how to reach those people and get them using our resources. People do not need to place a hold from the computer. They can call us, let us know what they want, and we will get a stack of books or materials ready for them! We are getting things ready to promote that. We are circulating more electronic resources than physical resources.

Budget Report – Curtis Lee reviewed the income and expenditures for 2019/2020. May Actuals for sales tax revenue for the current year is \$8.3 million, which is 78% of legal budget. June is still being finalized so that could not be

included. Expenditures should be down from anticipated, as well, at around 89% of what was budgeted. The Meyer Park fence next to Oakdale Library was not completed in 2019/2020 so that \$25,000 expense will be moved to the 2020/2021 budget. Expenditures were very high compared to the prior year due to work being done on Empire and Turlock Library building projects. Fund balance is estimated to be \$3.9 million at year-end in June.

Sarah Dentan agreed that things are better than anticipated but we're looking to develop a sustainable budget. We want to use our resources effectively. We are not back to normal and it will be a while before we are.

General Overview of Turlock, Empire and Makerspace Projects – Bryan Sontag reported that the library is working on a webpage that will show construction photos and time lapse footage of the Turlock Library. In mid-March, the Turlock Library was closed in preparation for the remodel. Then the pandemic hit and construction was delayed a little. The Roebbelen Contracting, Inc. firm has kept everything on target despite the initial delay. Bryan shared renderings of the new Turlock Library and construction photos to show the progress. The pad will be poured the week of July 28. The webpage should be up in the next couple weeks.

Thomas Kaps announced that the Empire Library building project is happening now! They have broken ground. He showed renderings of Empire Library and reported that people from the public have expressed their excitement about the new library after seeing signs that the new Empire Library is now under construction. Community members also noticed the chain link fence went up around the construction site and that created even more excitement! Thomas showed renderings of what the new library will look like. There will be a community room near the children's area that opens to a covered outdoor patio that will be used for library programs and community events. There will be spaces for teens, children and adults.

Thomas talked about the status of the MakerSpace project that will be created inside the Modesto Library. It will be completely enclosed so that people can talk in the room without disrupting other customers in the library. He showed a drawing of the layout. It's currently out to bid. Invitations were made to contractors and subcontractors, some of whom have come in to inspect the property. The proper bid will be accepted and the project will be awarded to the contractor. Then they will be given a notice to proceed.

Strategic Planning – Sarah Dentan - The plan currently in place runs until 2021. Planning is always important, especially in difficult times. Sarah Dentan will have more information at the next LAB meeting. She will be asking everybody on the Library Advisory Board and all of the library support organizations to help get community input. It will look different than usual since we cannot do focus groups at this time. This will be placed on the next agenda for further discussion.

IX. Announcements – None

X. Next meeting date: Oct. 15, 2020, 4:30-5:30 p.m. *(via Zoom unless otherwise announced)*

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](http://www.stanislauslibrary.org/about_advisory_board.shtml) subject to staff's ability to post the documents before the meeting.