

MINUTES
Rohnert Park – Cotati Regional Library LAB Meeting
February 21, 2023 @ 5:00pm
Held at the Rohnert Park – Cotati Regional Library

VOTING BOARD MEMBERS – PRESENT

Loreen Atallah – Chair (2025)

Catherine Crotty – Vice Chair (2024)

Faith Adam (2025)

Lisa Neuson (2024)

*Vacant (prev. Simone Tan)

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS - PRESENT

Barbara Mackenzie (RP Library Commissioner)

Susan Adams (RP City Council Liaison)

Kay Rivers (Cotati City Council Liaison)

Jennifer Ryder (RP-C Branch Manager)

Barbara Maes (SCL District Manager)

1. CONVENING & INTRODUCTIONS

Loreen started the meeting at 5:05pm.

SPECIAL REPORT: Presentation by SCL Fund Developer Craig Palmer

Craig could not make the meeting to discuss the April 20 Volunteer Leadership Recognition Day event. After some discussion, meeting participants understood that only LAB and Friends of the Library board members were invited. Kay Rivers noted that the time of the event is inconvenient for members who work during the day, and recommended future events be held outside of office hours.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PRIOR MEETING

2.1 APPROVAL FOR DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Faith moved to approve the minutes from December 20. Catherine seconded.

3. REPORTS & UPDATES

3.1 LIBRARY COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Barbara Mackenzie shared that the Library Commission is very happy to welcome Erika Thibault as the new Library director. Erika has been working as the Interim Director since last summer. The library is currently recruiting for the Deputy Director position.

The library continues to do well financially. There are surpluses in both the Measure Y and property tax funds. Measure Y is a 10-year measure. It expires in 2026. Planning for renewal of the tax measure should be in the works soon. The commissioners will be planning for renewal of that tax measure. The Commission will be working on the budget for fiscal year 2023-24 over the next few months.

Barbara noted that the courtyard plaza area behind the library is underused. She suggested finding ways to use the plaza space during the summer as well as looking into some additional funding in the next budget to improve the space and seating.

The City of Rohnert Park has a new City Manager, Marcela Piedra. She has city management experience, and she has a lot of enthusiasm for supporting libraries. Barbara Mackenzie took her on a tour of the library with Vice Mayor Susan Adams.

Barbara setup a speaking engagement for Director Thibault at the Rohnert Park Chamber of Commerce Noontimes event on April 5.

The Sonoma County Commission meetings will be held at the Rohnert Park – Cotati Library in the Flores room starting on March 1st. This will be the first-time meeting in person since COVID-19 and prior meetings were held at Library Headquarters, not in a Library. The commission expects a large crowd to attend this meeting.

Rachel Parker was not present at this LAB meeting.

3.2 LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Barbara Maes confirmed that Erika is the new Library Director. All the library departments are working on their budget plans, and the system is actively recruiting for a new deputy director. They will be doing a budget presentation for the commission soon. She is really excited to be back from maternity leave.

3.3 BRANCH MANAGER'S REPORT

Jen Ryder shared that there has been a lot of traffic in the library on Sundays, between 150-180 people per day. The RP-C library will be hosting commission meetings starting on March 1. Librarians have been hosting many popular programs over the last couple months, with more lined up over March and April.

The children's librarians received a \$4000 grant to implement 2 6-week Stay & Play sessions. They are finishing the education requirements, and will have the first program on March 15th.

3.4 YOUTH MEMBER'S REPORT

No report since Glenn could not attend today.

3.5 FRIENDS OF THE ROHNERT PARK – COTATI REGIONAL LIBRARY REPORT

Faith Adam spoke for the Friends of the Library. The Friends want to join the LAB and table at the Rohnert Park Farmer's Market again. There are about 193 members in the FOL, and 68 volunteers. Some volunteers just participate in the bi-annual book sales. The next FOL Book Sale will be April 26-29. They have invited all of the volunteers to order t-shirts. There is a sign up for a size and examples in the FOL sorting room.

3.6 CITY COUNCIL LIAISONS' REPORTS

Kay Rivers introduced herself as the Cotati City Council Representative. She wants a library in Cotati. The Rohnert Park – Cotati Regional Library is out of walking distance for residents of Cotati. Kay also offered to volunteer the April book sale during the setup time.

Susan Adams reported on behalf of Rohnert Park. She confirmed that there is a new City Manager, Marcela Piedra. Marcela is taking over from another great city manager. She is very community oriented and committed to sponsoring programs in Rohnert Park. The LAB briefly discussed the newly acquired city-owned property across the street from the library.

3.7 LAB CHAIR REPORT

No new information at this last meeting. Loreen reported that the LAB is working to get the Bibliobus for the Cotati Farmer's Market over the summer. She said the LAB is looking for new organic opportunities.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

5. OLD BUSINESS

5.1 Bylaws Change Conversations

- How it would help recruiting LAB members – one consideration

- Members discussed filling open seats on the LAB. Caryl Sherman met with Barbara Mackenzie to discuss this issue. The Rohnert Park – Cotati LAB terms had been 4 years; recently the terms were limited to two years to ease the length of commitment. Each LAB in each community has their own rules. The Rohnert Park LAB noted that having a quorum at meetings has been an issue. And, Cotati representation is important. The LAB did some recruiting at the Farmer's Market last year in Rohnert Park. They hope to do more this year at the Cotati and RP Farmer's Market. We will continue this conversation at a later meeting.

- At the April meeting, the LAB will consider aligning the term dates with the election dates. One of the action items will be moving the election dates from October to June. The LAB will also consider an action item to change the bylaws so that if they miss an election, they can hold the election at the next meeting when there's a quorum.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Caryl had wanted to discuss contributing books to Rohnert Park's new interim housing units at Labath Landing. This would be coordinated through Project Homekey. The Rohnert Park – Cotati Friends of the library had already discussed contributing to this effort. Vice Mayor Adams suggested that the LAB table this discussion, since Labath Landing is not ready to receive a lending library.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1 LAB Book Recommendations shelf - Caryl had requested that the Rohnert Park librarians make a shelf available for LAB members to display their favorite books, just like the staff favorites shelf. Jen Ryder will discuss it with the librarians.

7.2 LumaCON at Petaluma - Some LAB members had expressed interest in the Rohnert Park – Cotati Library holding an event similar to the Petaluma Library’s LumaCON. Jen spoke with Diana Spaulding, the manager at the Petaluma Library. LumaCON is generally a county-wide event that the entire library system sponsors, and participants come from all over the county. It would be a great deal of work and perhaps redundant to replicate this event. Instead, the library could consider holding complimentary events leading up to LumaCON such as comic drawing classes or cosplay design and 3D printing workshops.

7.3 Seed library – Jen shared that the library has had difficulty in acquiring seeds for the seed library. LAB members discussed holding programs with native plants or teaching people how to harvest seeds. Jen will continue looking for ways to replenish the seed library.

Catherine – Rohnert Park has many great events.

A LAB member stated they wish SCL had more access to book collections online. The Sacramento library has better data access.

8. ADVISORY BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS

None discussed.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Loreen adjourned the meeting at 6:06pm.