

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Sebastopol Library Advisory Board

March 27, 2024, 4:30 p.m.

Location: Sebastopol Library 7140 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol 95472

Attendees: Kee Nethery, Mary Shiff, Tong Ginn, Dena Bliss, Helena Whistler, Stephanie Elliot, Jennifer Petersen Hunter, Sue Fujita (Friends of Sebastopol Library) Fred Engbarth (Commissioner), Stephen Zollman (City Council Liaison), Mathew Rose (Branch Manager)

1. Kee Nethery called to the meeting to order at 4:32 pm
2. Consent Items: Agenda was approved and minutes from March 27, 2024, were approved with corrections.
3. Announcements: None.
4. Public Comment on non-agendized items. Public comment is limited to three (3) minutes per topic, unless otherwise noted:
 - a. Kee Nethery commented The LAB has \$500 per year, perhaps this year's funds can be spent on gathering community input or a LAB suggestion box.
 - b. Jennifer Peterson Hunter shared disappointment on the overlap of the All LAB Day and Apple Blossom Parade. An opinion was shared that the All LAB Day wouldn't have been scheduled on the same day as the Butter and Eggs parade, or a Santa Rosa City event. The selection of the event on the same day as the Apple Blossom Parade seems suspicious. The Sebastopol LAB shouldn't have to decide between attending a community-wide event or the All LAB Day
5. Regular Agenda Items:
 - a. Library and computer use for youth in relation to parent wishes.
 - i. Information from ALA and two other library systems was shared. Balancing unlimited access to information with parental wishes on what children view online is difficult. How do parents and grandparents or guardians know the internet is unfiltered and access comes with a library card? Los Angeles Public Library does so with library card application that states "I understand that all library materials, including books, audiovisual items, online resources and access to the internet, are available to all users. I understand I am responsible for my child's use of all library materials and services, include the internet." The Sonoma County

Library does so with an internet access policy posted on its website (<https://sonomalibrary.org/governance/policies/internetaccess>). County of Los Angeles Public Library filters internet access as a default for all users and has a youth internet access application allowing parents to block access for their child(ren).

Discussion of where in the library people use computers. The centralized computer area helps impose social norms with visibility to ensure compliance with library use policies but doesn't allow patrons privacy to access freely what they want. SCL does ensure a safe environment, which could include removing internet access from individuals viewing adult content with children in proximity. SCL also relies on privacy screens. Because SCL does not filter internet access, the library can't pursue some federal discounts or some federally funded grant opportunities, but the compromised value of access for all doesn't yield a whole lot in income stream enhancements. Comments on the value of online gaming as it translates to the modern, decentralized, online workplace were discussed.

Launching a Board Games event for youth has started, with a second event coming up. The library staff (Adriel Ahern) have implemented a cyber-civics component to the Tween Game Lounge. Participants need to answer questions on appropriate internet use when getting snacks.

Cyber civics training is still a hope. Finding an instructor has been a challenge. LAB advised the library to continue to pursue, with Stephanie Elliot's leadership and Dena Bliss's support, a cyber civics training program. Mathew Rose will also work with library staff on creating a finding aid to highlight resources for parents and guardians on safe internet use and parent filter options on smart devices.

- b. Library ad-hoc committee survey questions and gathering community input.
 - i. Stephen Zollman updated the LAB on the timeline of the Ad-hoc committee. The end date is June, so a draft report needs to be filed in May, which means by April the report needs to be nearly ready. This leaves little to no time for a community survey. Instead, members of the ad-hoc committee will be shopping the draft to community leaders such as the Center for the Arts and Senior Center. Suggestions for who else should be included in the

gathering of feedback were welcomed. A question about parking was asked: if that is to be addressed by the EIFD. The EIFD would create a corridor of services, and a safe pedestrian zone. Which means that, yes, parking needs to be considered for this project, but might be “owned” by Caltrans instead of the EIFD.

c. JPA review and suggestions for improvement.

- i. The Role of the LABs as defined in the JPA was read. Discussion of how the LAB provides input included admonition that the LAB has power. The catch, though, is that Library Admin doesn't seek input. There should be some words in the JPA about gathering advice regarding proposals for services of Library Admin. How the Commission and Library Admin receives input (dismissively) was discussed. How the Library provides information to LABs was shared: reading of reports of programs that already took place. Nobody wants to attend meetings where they only get reports of things that have already happened. Discussion of what the process for the Commission and Library Admin to receive input could look like ensued. The question of whether the LAB can be the conduit for branch needs and issues, so staff aren't retaliated against, was asked. The consensus that the Commission doesn't value community input, and Library Admin can't be bothered to ask for input as shared, and to change so LABs are utilized per the JPA requires a shift in power dynamics. Seeing Commission and Library Admin stuck in group think, and dismissive of input is frustrating. The All-LAB meeting is scheduled for April 27; Sebastopol will not be alone in raising these issues. An empowered LAB is the goal. The suggestion was made to look at library leases. For example, one library has a lease with the Library contributing a lot more resources to the library building than the Sebastopol lease. The City Manager is looking to renegotiate the lease, so resource allocation is more equitable. Equity for Library Admin seems to mean diversity, but in the JPA it means resource allocation like collections, staffing, etc. The Library used to provide reports on how much is spent at each library so the equity mentioned in the JPA was transparent – Library Admin needs to be transparent about resource allocation. The question of how the branch can communicate needs and issues to the LAB so the LAB can provide input to the Commission and Library Admin was again asked. No answer was available.

- d. Scheduling pattern of LAB meetings
 - i. The Sebastopol LAB schedule is working at this time. Perhaps all LABs should synchronize their schedules. An excuse employed as to the disconnect of LAB input for the Commission has been that the Commissioners aren't able to attend the LAB meetings, or the decision needs to be made immediately, so the LAB couldn't provide advice. If the LABs strategized scheduling, these excuses could be potentially diffused.
- e. Status of security camera use at the library and permission of the Sebastopol City Council status.
 - i. The security cameras are not on. The Police Chief will be bringing to the City Council the issue of security cameras in the future. The LAB will be made aware of when that happens. Suggestion that the cameras be covered until they are approved, so that no one has the mistaken impression that they are on and active. Stephen Zollman suggested taking that idea to Sebastopol Public Works.

6. Reports:

- a. Commissioner's Report: Commissioner Engbarth discussed the Budget meeting. He is still collecting input regarding the budget. He mentioned JPA review and his disappointment that the library decided against following the JPA. The JPA review is to be done every ten years will start in the eleventh year.
- b. Admin Report: Unfortunately, I am unable to be present today due to the Library Budget Workshop. In March, the library celebrates Women's History Month, International Transgender Day of Visibility, and the birthday of labor leader Cesar Chavez. Popular programs include Tai Chi, Read to a Dog, Spanish Music & Movement, author talks, and more. The Library now has access to TIME Magazine in Libby, and a new eResource for kids PebbleGo. The Library will be closed for Cesar Chavez Day and Easter on March 31 and April 1. We will celebrate National Library Week April 7-13, with National Library Worker's Day being April 9! Report from Barbara Maes, Public Services Division Manager, read by Mathew Rose.
- c. City Liaison Report: Councilmember Zollman reported on the structural deficit (financial analyst report was excellent at the 3/18 meeting) and the need for more revenue (sales tax, hotels). Other options for cost cutting and revenue were shared: a Trader Joes won't bring in very much revenue, pension funding was kept on track over the years. Discussion of

EIFD and Ad-hoc goals and timelines were shared. Disparity of library leases was mentioned.

- d. Sebastopol Regional Library Report: Staff will be marching in the Apple Blossom parade this year. Lunch at the Library is coming, and an opportunity to partner with Analy High School for summer meals is being explored. Mathew Rose asked if there were patron comments that stood out. LAB members asked about cleaning the tables and the bad smell in the library. Mathew reported that janitorial services have been underwhelming, and the issues have been escalated. In the meantime, staff pick up janitorial work. When asked how long the issues have been going on, it was reported that the same janitorial contract has been in place for over 11 years. LAB members appreciated the comments about how the library provides a safe place, and a safe place for unhoused members of our community. A touching comment that makes LAB members proud of their library. LAB members asked to add to the next agenda the topic of a parking lot or street adjacent drive-through book drop. Mathew Rose reported the idea comes up frequently, but always dead ends at the City's drive up services ban. The issue will be added to the next agenda; Mathew will supply the ordinance and pros and cons for the discussion.
 - e. Youth Report: None.
 - f. Friends of the Library Report: The next book sale is to take place in May. Discover Books used to haul away books that the Friends didn't need. Discover Books went out of business. This leaves the issue of large numbers of books that were diverted from the landfill going to the landfill. Paperbacks can be recycled, but Hardbacks can't. Some alternatives were discussed, like getting more recycling bins. Mathew will reach out to the City about getting more recycling bins.
7. Agenda Items for Next Meeting: May 29, 2024, 4:30 pm at Sebastopol Library, 7140 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA 95472
 - a. Drive-through services for book returns in the library parking lot or along High Street.
 - b. Cyber civics training for youth and caretakes.
 - c. Library cleanliness and roles of library staff and contracts.
 8. Additional Public Comment: None
 9. Adjourn: 6:00 pm