

## DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Sebastopol Library Advisory Board

July 26, 2023, 4:30 p.m.

Location: Sebastopol Library 7140 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol 95472

Attendees: Kee Nethery, Walt Frazer, Mary Shiff, Tong Ginn, Dena Bliss, Helena Whistler, Stephanie Elliot, Jennifer Hunter-Peterson, Una Hall, Isabella Ruder-Zilber, Fred Engbarth (Commissioner), Sue Fujita (Friends of Sebastopol Library), Stephen Zollman (City Council Liaison), Barbara Maes (Library Administration), Mathew Rose (Branch Manager)

1. Kee Nethery called to the meeting to order at 4:30 pm
2. Introductions were made.
3. Agenda was approved.
4. Minutes from May, 2023, were approved with one correction to the FOSL report.
5. Announcements: None.
6. Public Comment on non-agendized items. Public comment is limited to three (3) minutes per topic, unless otherwise noted: None.
7. Discussion Items:
  - a. Security Cameras at the Sebastopol Library
    - i. Discussion of security cameras: Questions from previous meetings have yet to be answered fully. Reply to questions: still looking at costs and when staff develops a budget and plan, the LAB will be informed. Too early in the process to accept questions. Policies that discuss camera use can be changed to accommodate camera use. LAB asked how they can be the library advisory board, and not the library-advisory-after-the-fact? Members repeated the need for more information. Community values of privacy and confidentiality were shared. The request for someone from the library with policy knowledge regarding cameras to come to the LAB to answer questions was delayed until such time as the budget and plan are further along. Frustration that there is only an ambiguous plan and details are in short supply. LAB will continue to seek details and seek to be allowed to comment. Discussion on who the audience of LAB feedback should be: City Council, Library Commission, or Library Administration. Suggestions of addressing City Council through Council Liaison were made, as well as keeping all three entities aware of the role of the Advisory Board. Suggestion that

there is better uses of funds than surveillance. Chair Nethery will collect questions from LAB members and direct them to Library Administration.

b. Statement on Treatment of the Sebastopol Branch Manager

- i. Draft statement was shared. Discussion of how some members are aware of issues, and some not. Those not aware of the issues are stuck without a path for learning of the details due to professional ethics, confidentiality protections, and Brown Act protections. Without knowing details, voting on a statement would not be appropriate. Intent of getting statement into personnel file so any future reviewer would have the LABs defense on hand was imparted. The impact of the treatment of the Branch Manager was shared; didn't just impact Mathew Rose, but also all the staff, the library patrons, the community. The policy of secrecy and sidelining of the LAB doesn't support good communication nor does it respect the community or LAB. Chair Nethery shared what he knows of the facts of the issue: That Library Administration accused Mr. Rose of forcing his personal opinions on surveillance cameras into the LAB, and steered the LAB to his opinion. LAB members shared this is not the case. Walt Frazer shared his knowledge of the timeline, starting with the events of April 7: Shared that the accusations include the cameras, but also that the Sebastopol City Council wrote a letter about staffing at its local library. Mr. Rose was put on leave for advocating for the library. The discipline is a gross overreaction and harmed the library. There was an interim, but there was still harm. No due process for 6 weeks. Accusations are either bogus or insufficient for just cause. Then 2 more weeks of leave, this time unpaid. A long list of improvements was issued with the threat of more discipline if not compliant. Commissioner Engbarth suggested that the LAB focus on the process, not the person. Better to speak to process and impact on the library. LAB discussed the need Library administration to hear how admin's adverse actions could affect the tax measure. Lots of ill feelings in the community. LAB called a special meeting to take place August 9, 2023, at 4:30 pm at the Sebastopol Library.

c. By-law updates

- i. Elections and annual bylaw review changed mentions of August to September.

d. Patron Comments

- i. Lots of comments to review – so many positive comments. The importance of social services day was shared.

8. Reports:

- a. Commissioner's Report: No commission meeting in August. Shared that a survey for a potential tax measure was completed, and results will be shared at a future commission meeting.
- b. Admin Report: Hiring for 0.5 FTE to work at Juvenile Hall was shared. Summer Interns will share presentation at next Commission meeting. Bibliobus is being scheduled for stops instead of going places without a schedule. A new format for Library News was shared. Drag Story Hours took place in June, and a defense of hosting them was shared. More Drag Story hours are not currently being planned. Complaint from patron in Sebastopol about Sebastopol not hosting Drag Story Hour.
- c. City Liaison Report: Councilmember Zollman reported on the structural deficit and the need for more revenue. City Council is investigating sales tax initiative for November. Survey conducted. Survey results will be shared at August 1 City Council meeting. Idea of increasing tax for public safety was shared. Definition of public safety was discussed: is that police and fire only, or does it include library, health action committee, other services? Library is de facto social services in the City, and is part of the public safety network. A library expansion ad hoc committee will give recommendations in 1 year to the City Council on how to enhance the library building and staffing to meet the needs of the community. Pass feedback to one of the ad hoc committee members present: Kee Nethery, Sue Fujita, Fred Engbarth, Mathew Rose, Stephen Zollman
- d. Youth Report: Summer. Isabella Ruder-Zilber is contemplating a survey for Credo, but wording of survey is complicated by the geographically diverse student body.
- e. Sebastopol Regional Library Report: Sebastopol Library Report was shared. Mr. Rose pleaded with anyone reading the report that while the numbers of participants at programs is impressive, it is more impressive to know the people and stories behind the numbers. The community building going on through the programs is more impressive than raw numbers.
- f. Friends of the Library Report: The quilt raffle fundraiser was taken to the Farmers' Market on July 23. The next book sale starts on September 20, 2023, and will have lots of great kids books.

9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting: August 9, 2023, 4:30 pm at Sebastopol Library, 7140 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA 95472

a. Statement on Treatment of the Sebastopol Branch Manager

10. Agenda Items for Next Meeting: September 27, 2023, 4:30 pm at Sebastopol Library, 7140 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA 95472

a. Elections

b. Cameras

11. Additional Public Comment: None

12. Adjourn: 5:58 pm