

LARKSPUR LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES – LARKSPUR PUBLIC LIBRARY

Minutes of Special Library Board Meeting – April 21, 2005

Roll Call: Trustees Helen Brenlin, Marianne Rafter, Philip Terry

Absent: Trustees William Broughan, Don Graff

Also present: Library Director Frances Gordon-Archer, LLSC Chair Peter E. Martin

Library Board President Helen Brenlin called the special meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Agenda

Board President began the presentation to the Larkspur Chamber of Commerce with a history of the Larkspur Library including the founding of the Friends and the Larkspur Library Endowment Fund and Foundation. Boardmember Rafter described some of the recent programs promoted by the Library and showed a short PPT presentation to inform the business people present about the shortcomings and plans for the future of the Larkspur Library. Boardmember Terry answered a few questions from the audience.

Question from Donna Graff, secretary of the Chamber of Commerce: Would it be possible to have a business reference section in a new library facility for people who have a small business or want to start a business in Larkspur, Kentfield, or Greenbrae? (Answer: One of the Board members recently said that there are three important places in each one's life – one is the home, another is work, and the third can be the library, the center of the cultural and recreational part of someone's life. We will definitely keep the business reference section/kiosk in mind for a new library facility. The businesses and the library work together in promoting the vitality of the city. The plan for the Library is incomplete so this kind of input is important for the Board and Steering Committee's work.)

Question: Where might the Library be located? (Answer: About 15 potential sites have been identified; one is a building over the parking lot with underground parking. Another was in an area on the Niven property that was designated as space for a park. Since Piper Park is just across the street, a library would make more sense on that land rather than another park. This is a key question.)

Boardmembers Terry and Rafter encouraged a business representative to join the Committee to plan for the new library building. The Board is also looking for donors, especially a seed donor. A website for the Steering Committee will be launched soon to keep all informed about the progress and planning.

Question from Donna Graff: Would the library make connections with other sources such as business databases for information? (Answer: Boardmember Terry said the Library is now part of MariNet due to the efforts of the Library Director. This connection has only increased the thirst for knowledge and the books available at other libraries. Databases are already available through that connection as well as delivery of books to a library close to where you live. But the Board and Librarian feel the Library is more than a depository for books. Library Director Gordon said that the success of the mystery teas and the speaker series this year shows the Library is a cultural gathering place for the community. It also shows that there is a thirst for these kinds of gatherings.)

Library Director Gordon said that the Library is more than bricks and mortar, it is a virtual resource accessed 24/7. Joint partnerships with libraries and businesses are happening in other towns and cities. Every week people ask at the library for information about the Chamber of Commerce or about the city services. We will want to have a link to the Chamber's website from the library's website.

Chamber of Commerce President Steve Nichols said that more retail downtown would bring more people into the area, but a library would also increase foot traffic. An Internet café and office technology such as a copier or fax machine would be useful in a new library. Location is primary. Donna Graff said a community meeting space in a new library would also be key. She also said to consider a storefront library at Larkspur Landing.

Donna Graff mentioned that the Chamber of Commerce is currently considering a name change to Redwood Chamber of Commerce; the organization would include Larkspur, Kentfield, and Greenbrae businesses. The link on a website with the library is important.

Question: What happens if a new library building is not built? (Answer: The library would probably remain in the City Hall, but it would be moved out or closed for several years when City Hall is retrofitted. That may mean the loss of staff as well as patrons. A retrofit would change the ambiance of the current library.)

Question: What is the square footage for the current library, other libraries in the county, and the proposed library building? (Answer: The current square footage is 4200; Bel-Tib Library with a similar size population is 10000, and they are in the process of expanding. The proposed Larkspur Library would be between 8000 and 10000 sf.)

Adjournment

Library Board President Brenlin adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Rafter

Recording Secretary for the Library Board and Library Board member