

LARKSPUR LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES- LARKSPUR PUBLIC LIBRARY
Minutes of Regular Meeting- September 12, 2005

Roll Call: Present: Trustees Helen Brenlin, Bill Broughan, Don Graff,
Marianne Rafter, Phil Terry

Council Liaison: Larry Chu

Staff: Absent: Library Director Frances Gordon

Library Board President Helen Brenlin called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

Public Comment

There were no comments.

Approval of Minutes of August 8, 2005 and August 13, 2005

M/s, Terry-Brenlin, 5-0 to approve the August 8, 2005 minutes as submitted.

M/s, Terry-Rafter, 5-0 to approve the August 13, 2005 minutes
as corrected.

Approval of Warrants for August 2005

It was the consensus of the Board to approve the warrants.

Unfinished Business Items

Discussion of duties and responsibilities of Library Board Trustees and Library
Director

Boardmember Graff stated he thought the Board had discussed this issue at a previous meeting and decided not to take any further action. He suggested they make a formal motion counteracting the previous motion which was to prepare questions and send them to the City Manager. Boardmember Terry stated the Board also decided they would like to keep the ordinances as they currently exist.

M/s, Rafter-Brenlin, 3-2 (Boardmember Broughan and Graff voted no) to hold off on sending the letter to the City Manager and instead wait for a meeting with the City Manager.

Council Liaison Chu stated the debate as to whether the Board was advisory or administrative was raised in May and he was asked to look at the Municipal Code. Boardmember Terry discussed a lawsuit that occurred in Monterey Park that ruled that State laws override local Municipal Codes. Council Liaison Chu stated they need to clarify the distinction between “administrative” and “advisory”. Boardmember Graff stated the Monterey Park cases clearly indicates that the Board must have management responsibilities, however, CalTac indicates that over half of the Library Boards in the State are advisory only. He stated none of the libraries in Marin County were administrative only and there were three that were advisory only. Boardmember Terry stated there were reasons why they were advisory only and it has to do with the way the entity was formed. The question is how this Board wants to manage and they have always delegated the day-to-day operations. The Board needs to be more involved in the budget and the policies that are in place for the expenditure of those funds. They are a Board of Trustees and they should be operating under State Law. They also need to implement better forms of communication with the City Manager and City Council.

Boardmember Graff stated there was a conflict between Ordinance No. 823 and the Job Description for the Library Director and he would like to get it resolved. Council Liaison Chu stated he would prefer to take a top down approach and stated the question that needs to be answered is: “What governing codes affect our Library?” The Board discussed the information published by CalTac. Boardmember Broughan stated he thought the language in the various codes was deliberately vague to allow for flexibility and different forms of the process. Boardmember Graff stated the Education Code was not vague and uses the term “manage”. Boardmember Broughan stated the word “manage” can be interpreted in different ways and there was enough “wiggle room” in the language to have whatever you want. Boardmember Rafter cited CalTac: “California Library Boards in various communities may differ in several important ways and the crucial difference is in each Boards statutory function as mandated by the specific law or ordinance that established each Board and has resulted in differences in authority and responsibility”. She stated Larkspur’s ordinance gives the Board specific duties, including setting policy for certain things and giving advice about the building. Boardmember Broughan stated that was a good point and all the information he has obtained indicates that they are more of a Trustee Board than pure advisory. They need to define their role in the areas of administration and policy. The Job Description for the Library Director should clearly stated that the Director reports to the City Manager on daily administration and works with the Library Board on policy for the Library.

Council Liaison Chu stated they need to present these questions to the City Manager so she can get clarification from the City Attorney. President Brenlin stated they need to meet with the City Manager and City Attorney. Boardmember Graff stated he felt they had more pressing matters at this point in time and he would like to deal with this issue sometime next year. Boardmember Terry stated that would be a problem since the work the Board and the Committees are pursuing would be over since they would not have the right to pursue it. Boardmember Broughan stated it was a matter of semantics and an advisory board was not powerless. Boardmember Terry stated he wanted to restore the power to the Library Board.

M/s, Graff-Broughan, 5-0 to request a meeting with the City Manager and the City Attorney to discuss the apparent conflicts between the State Code of Education reference to Library Board of Trustees and the Larkspur Municipal Code reference to Library Board of Trustees.

Review of Library mission and setting long term goals- review of goals in Stoner Meek

Boardmember Rafter stated the Mission and Vision Statements should be reviewed every year, along with the Long Term Objectives. Boardmember Graff stated these documents would become very important when they begin to submit grant applications. He stated there were two documents on the table and they need to either merge them, pick one, or have everybody go back and write their own. The Board discussed various revisions to the Mission Statement. It was the consensus of the Board to merge the two documents.

Agenda

Technology possibilities in current building

Boardmember Rafter stated the MariNet connection with on-line e-books and audio books allows patrons to download them into their computers or Ipods. She would like the Library Director to look into buying two audio players that the Library could loan to patrons. Boardmember Terry suggested the Library offer a class and make patrons aware of this technology. He did not want to ask staff to provide the service. Boardmember Broughan liked Boardmember Terry's suggestion of offering a class. Boardmember Graff asked what type of information is provided by the Library relative to MariNet's services. He stated the County puts out a brochure. Boardmember Terry stated MariNet is widening their scope of services provided and Larkspur needs to educate their patrons. He asked if MariNet provided any outreach services. Boardmember Rafter stated only to the Library Directors and Library staff.

M/s, Terry-Graff , 5-0 to ask the Library Director to consider putting together a class with the concept of the audio players being there so patrons can learn how to do it in the Library.

Boardmember Broughan stated they should broaden this idea to other types of technology. He would like a Boardmember to serve as a technical liaison to help the Library Director move forward with this idea. Boardmember Terry stated he saw this as more of a managerial, than a technical, interchange. Boardmember Graff stated one of the Boardmember should have a conversation with the Library Director about this matter.

Council Liaison Chu stated they could separate out the various components- the physical infrastructure component, the wiring, etc., and the broader component of MariNet and the media. Boardmember Terry stated the Library provided a “product”- educational information, classes, brochures, and a “service” – somebody sits down with a patron to provide assistance. Boardmember Broughan stated many of the products were already available and it was a matter of communicating this to patrons. They also need to promote the value of MariNet. Boardmember Graff suggested the Friends of the Library help with promotion of the Library. Boardmember Terry stated they do need to start thinking about a marketing strategy.

M/s, Terry-Rafter, 5-0 that one of the Boardmembers speak to the Library Director to discuss the area of technology and getting the word out to patrons.

Boardmembers Broughan and Graff volunteered to speak to the Library Director.

Energy efficiency project for Larkspur City Hall complex- lighting, etc.

Council Liaison Chu stated the Larkspur Council Chambers has been chosen as a Showcase Energy Efficiency Demonstration Project. The project will include changes in lighting and the installation of fans. The City Council also approved some of the energy efficiency recommendations of the consultant. The consultant will work with City staff since the work must be done within the context of future City Hall renovations. The Library Board and Heritage Preservation Committee would be consulted before any changes are proposed to the Library. Boardmember Terry discussed how changes in humidity or lighting could effect the books. Boardmember Terry asked if any of the changes would be subject to ADA requirements. Council Liaison Chu stated “probably not”. Boardmember Terry stated he was glad the Library Board would be “in the loop”.

Ad-hoc committee with school district

Council Liaison Chu discussed the committee that was initiated by the Tamalpais High School District and includes officials from the City of Larkspur, the Tamalpais High School District, and the Larkspur School District. They will discuss the possibility of expanded and shared facilities. Boardmember Graff asked why representatives from Bacich School were not included. Council Liaison Chu stated he did not see the Kentfield School District getting involved in a collaborative project in Larkspur. Boardmember Graff stated it would be a shortcoming not to include the Kentfield School District since many children in Larkspur children attend school in that district. Council Liaison Chu stated he would keep that in mind.

Library Director's Report- WiFi access in current library; MARINet activities; other

The Board discussed the Library Director's report. Boardmember Terry had questions about the City network and Webpage. Council Liaison Chu stated there was little flexibility in the Webpage since the administrators use a template for every page. Boardmember Terry stated the Board would like to find a way to use it.

Boardmember Broughan discussed the report and commented on the success of the community programs that are being offered.

Boardmember Rafter had questions about some of the senior services and stated she would like the Board to be better informed prior to events. President Brenlin agreed and stated they need to be able to respond to questions. Boardmember Terry suggested the report include a section called "Upcoming Events".

Open- Round Table Discussion

There were no comments.

Library Board Member's Oral Reports and Comments- current Friend's events, October presentation of chair and plaque for Dr. Silverman

President Brenlin stated the Friends had two upcoming events scheduled for September 22nd and October 6th. Boardmember Terry urged everyone to get involved in the Friends.

Boardmember Rafter discussed the October presentation for Dr. Silverman. The chair was completed and the plaque was coming this week. The Friends have offered to pay for the plaque.

Adjournment

Library Board President Brenlin adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni DeFrancis
Recording Secretary