

Astoria Library Board Meeting

Astoria Public Library

April 26, 2016

5:30 pm.

Present: Library Board members Kate Summers, David Oser, Susan Stein, and Chris Womack. Staff Library Director Jane Tucker and Community Development Director Kevin Cronin.

Absent: Kimberley Chaput

Call to Order: Chair Kate Summers called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved with the addition of New Business Item 8(a): Remembrance of former Library Board member Ann Marie.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of February 23, 2016 and notes of March 22, 2016 were approved as presented.

Library Revitalization Project – Public Involvement Strategy:

Director Cronin updated the Library Board on Staff's efforts to move forward with renovating or building a new library. He listed the six options currently being considered by City Council and said the floor plans were being developed so that cost estimates could be put together. He wanted the Library Board to advise on a public involvement strategy. An open house was scheduled for May 25, 2016 from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm at the library. Then, at 7:00 pm, a joint Library Board and City Council meeting would be held at City Hall. He suggested a Library Board member and City Councilor stand at each station at the Open House to provide explanations, answer questions, and take feedback.

Chair Summers said pairing a Board member with a Councilor would allow the Board to communicate with Council and provide a unified front as they face the public together.

Director Cronin confirmed the eight stations at the open house would include a check in, a background information station, and a station for each of the six options. Information about the options would not be made available to the public until the open house. Chris Womack was concerned that Board members would not be able to answer questions prior to the open house. David Oser confirmed that the Needs Assessment from the Ruth Metz study was the starting point for this new analysis and suggested Board members refer to the Needs Assessment when talking to people.

Mr. Womack understood each station would have information about square footages and cost estimates. Director Cronin added that schematics for each option would be displayed on a board with a list of pros and cons, cost estimates, and other extraneous information. The displays would be very visual. Director Tucker added that the displays would be in the main part of the library.

Mr. Womack asked how Staff planned to market the open house. Director Cronin said Staff would publish a press release, add the meeting to the City's calendar, make announcements to other City Boards and Commissions, make use of all of City social media platforms, send an email blast to stakeholders, and make announcements to several community organizations. He encouraged Board members to advertise the open house to other community organizations and let Staff know which organizations were contacted. Mr. Oser said he would announce the event to the school board and have the information broadcast throughout the schools. Director Cronin suggested the Board contact Tom Freel as well.

Mr. Womack asked if the new budget item would be tied into the information presented at the open house. Director Cronin stated the proposed budget was approved by the Budget Committee and the new budget item will be a good starting point. Board members can now say City Council is making a commitment to this project. The Board and Staff agreed this will inspire the community to be more committed to the project as well and the new budget item would be a useful tool for future fundraising efforts.

Mr. Womack asked if Staff could give the Library Board some information about the six options at their next meeting, scheduled for the day before the open house. Director Cronin said there would be no surprises and he felt really good about the work that had been done. He believed the information would help the community and City Council make a choice.

Mr. Oser asked how detailed the cost estimates would be. He was concerned that some costs were not being included, like costs incurred by vacating the existing the library building during a renovation. Director Cronin explained the numbers presented at the open house would be basic, but Staff was tracking more detailed cost estimates. At the open house, Staff will display a spreadsheet that shows details of all of the options side by side.

Susan Stein suggested Staff consider any data not included on the spreadsheet. When planning large building projects, something is always missed, and it might be beneficial for Staff to consider the data from a different perspective to make sure the spreadsheet is complete. Director Cronin agreed and said the costs of doing nothing are typically omitted in projects like this.

Director Cronin noted that the goal of the open house is to generate as much public feedback as possible. The comments will be organized for a follow up City Council meeting in June. Staff hopes City Council will narrow the options down to three or four and eventually choose one. No decisions would be made at the joint meeting on May 25th, as the purpose will be to take public comments, share information, and deliberate.

Ms. Stein asked how public comments would be captured at the open house. Director Cronin said Post-It notes and flip charts would be used. He was not sure a survey would provide the feedback Staff needed. The Board and Staff discussed the pros and cons of using sticky dots to gauge input.

Mr. Womack believed the last open house was confusing to some people. Director Cronin explained that everyone comes in to the open houses with a different set of information and assumptions. Even within the Project Advisory Committee, it was clear that everyone had a different agenda. Looking at the existing building and the opportunity for a new building should level the playing field. Mr. Oser believed it would be helpful to share the monetary benefits of the library. Staff explained that the information presented would be high level so that Staff could determine catalysts for change.

The Board and Staff discussed the public's misconceptions about the library project. People do not seem to understand the pros and cons associated with using the basement or parking lot and tearing down the Merwyn. So, the City must present factual information to refute or support any policy decisions City Council makes. Director Cronin suggested the Board have a station on library services because many people are unaware of what the library offers. Demonstrating the community's need for library services will help people understand why the library project is necessary. The Board agreed the information should be displayed graphically.

Director Cronin noted Ted Osborne created a scale model that he would like to display at the open house. Ms. Stein suggested all of the library's current code violations be displayed as well. The Board and Staff briefly discussed the code violations and how they impacted library use and maintenance. Director Tucker advised Board members to refer to the Ruth Metz study as the Needs Assessment because the document more accurately reflects the information.

Drew Herzig suggested a list of needs be displayed at the station on background information. Then, at the station for each option, list the needs that the option fulfills. Director Cronin confirmed the stations would include this information.

The Board and Staff discussed live streaming or video recording the open house for people who are unable to attend.

Director Cronin excused himself from the meeting.

Board Reports:

Item 5(a): Reports of Community Presentations

Chair Summers said she and other Board members attended the Libraries ROCC fundraiser, which had good attendance and seemed to be successful. She also spoke to the Library Director at Clatsop Community College about the City's open library director position.

Library Director's Report:

Director Tucker reported on the Libraries ROCC fundraiser, which raised just over \$4,800. She noted some positive interactions with people who participated in the silent auction and made donations. Seaside did a lot of work on the event and they took pictures that can be used in brochures for future fundraisers. The Board and Staff discussed the little free libraries that were made for the event. The little libraries were all very different and it would be ideal to find someone to make them going forward. The Libraries ROCC program is now only about \$5,000 short of its fundraising goal.

Laura Meeker's last day is on Thursday, April 28th. The part-time position will be posted soon and Director Tucker wanted to hire someone by May 31st.

Director Tucker said Meghann Lynch represented the library at the Oregon Library Association meeting. She said The FY2016-2017 budget passed with funding for a new roof on the library, which will cost \$280,000. Construction will begin late spring or early summer of 2017. The library's budget for the next fiscal year will be \$801,000 and the Capital Improvement Fund was approved with \$750,000 reserved for the library building project.

Director Tucker gave Board members copies of hiring materials for the library director position. She described the application process and noted that applications are due May 10th. She listed the various associations, state agencies, and groups that were notified of the position. Board members shared their opinions about the job description and agreed the City would receive a large number of applicants. It is possible the position will not be filled before Director Tucker's last day. City Manager Estes will decide if the hiring process will include an open forum, but he has confirmed that the Library Board would be involved. Director Tucker believed the quality of applicants would be good and she has received positive feedback about brochure that advertises the position.

Update on ALFA Activities:

Director Tucker reported that ALFA funded a bike mobile library, which is on display. The library is taking suggestions for a new paint color.

New Business:

Item 8(a): Remembrance of former Library Board member Ann Marie

The Board and Staff shared their memories of Ann Marie and her involvement with the library over the years.

Item 8(b): Consideration to cancel the May 24th meeting

The Board and Staff discussed the possibility of canceling their May 24th meeting because the open house and joint Library Board/City Council meeting was scheduled for May 25th. The Board agreed to meet on May 24th to discuss the open house and joint meeting.

Director Tucker confirmed her last day would be May 31st, the same day as the emergency preparedness event at Liberty Theatre, where she would work at the Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT) table.

Old Business:

Item 9(a): Library Board Role in Renovation

Public Comments: There were none.

Items for Next Meeting's Agenda: The May 25th open house and joint Library Board/City Council meeting. Director Tucker reminded the Board to review the Needs Assessment prior to the next meeting.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Tucker, Director, Astoria Public Library