



San Mateo  
Public Library

**CITY OF SAN MATEO  
LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**January 9, 2016**

**Meeting Minutes**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Susan Monroe, President of the Library Board of Trustees, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Library Board members present were Susan Monroe, Elizabeth De Winter, Megan Myers, Dr. Albert Acena, and Don Hill. In attendance were City Librarian Ben Ocón, Deputy City Librarian Elliot Warren, and Alan Smith, Library Commissioner at the Contra Costa County Library and trainer with the California Public Library Advocates.

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Board Effectiveness Training

Alan Smith began the training with an overview of best practices for effective Library Boards. Board members discussed their expectations for the session and identified five interests: improve overall effectiveness; gain a better understanding of how to make a difference in the community; learn skills on how to get the word out to the community about library services; increase library usage through their efforts; and develop a better understanding of the roles of the board, library management and library staff.

Mr. Smith provided an overview of the history of Library Boards in California, describing the range of different types of library systems (e.g. county, municipal, special districts, school) and library boards (e.g. advisory, administrative). Mr. Smith advised that advocacy on behalf of library services is a key role of library trustees and provided insight on how to best communicate the value of libraries with political entities such as local and state elected officials. The board also discussed the differences between the operational responsibilities of library management and the advisory role of the board. Mr. Smith discussed some examples of effective board advisement that helps libraries improve services. He reinforced the idea that effective advisement necessitates ample information provided by library management; and the board discussed examples of such information that is regularly provided (e.g. presentations to the board).

Mr. Smith engaged the board in an exercise designed to help the board identify strengths of current practices and opportunities in relation to current challenges. The participants divided into two groups and brainstormed the following ideas:

Current Strengths:

- A wide range of knowledge and talent potential among board members whose collective experience is very diverse
- Library resources and staff together showcase the library and provide the foundation for good advocacy by the board
- Library management is readily available to support efforts
- Board members are passionate about library services and bring lots of ideas

Opportunities and Challenges:

- Clarify the board's role, particularly in regards to planning and the budget
- Expand awareness of library services to non-users of the library
- More timely information about finances to better connect with planning
- Board members have to balance interests and priorities
- Identification of what the board can champion and bring to the attention of the City Council and other elected officials

Mr. Smith engaged the board in discussing key goals. The team developed eight ideas, then voted on which they believed were the most important as a way of prioritizing. Each board member was permitted to vote for three ideas. All of the ideas are listed below, along with the number of votes each idea received:

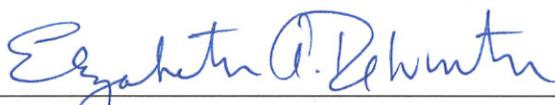
- Expand programs to non-users, especially young adults (e.g. age range of 20-30 something demographic) as well as other underserved residents (3)
- Goal setting for board (3)
- Be more proactive in collaborating with library management in planning process (2)
- Develop a process for effective communication with City Council (2)
- Provide advisement on the upcoming technology lending service (2)
- Provide advisement on budget and trust accounts (1)
- Provide advisement on 2016 fund-a-need ideas (1)
- Promote services to new immigrants (1)

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.

**Next Meeting:** The Library Board will next meet on **January 25, 2016**, at the new starting time of **6:00 p.m.** in the **Cedar Room, Main Library.**

Submitted by:

  
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Elizabeth De Winter, Secretary

Date: 1/21/2016