City of Alameda • California

May 11, 2011

Dear President Hartigan and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the month of April, and to look forward to some of the projects which will be coming up.

Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda). The March Activity Report is included in your Board Packet.

A random check in April of the computer workstations at the Main Library found all Internet workstations operational. It was a good technology day! However one print station on the first floor was out of service awaiting delivery of a new printer cartridge.

Executive Assistant Marsha Merrick is still out of the office recovering from shoulder surgery. I hope to see Marsha next week if everything checks out with her doctor; she may be at the May Board meeting. However, if there are issues with this Board Packet, please let me know.

Main Library Update. The solar panel project is very close to completion. Power integration day went smoothly. On April 25 we closed all three libraries until 2:00 p.m. while the power connections were made. Staff worked hard to shut things down prior to the Easter holiday and a few staff members came in Easter night to check in returned materials and unplug every computer workstation, printer, copy machine, etc. At 5:30 a.m. on switchover day staff came in to shut down the servers, open shades, get book trucks up to the 2nd floor before the elevator was shut down, and organize the book return room. The Friends chose to continue their book sorting in the dark room, staff brought in their personal electric camp lanterns so the Friends could continue to work in the sorting room. Power was restored around 12:30 p.m. and it took a little more than an hour to bring all library systems back up and to inform the neighborhood libraries they could log on to the system. The new phone system had a little hiccup with the public paging system, and the elevator had a minor issue which was remedied before the doors were opened. The solar build is now complete and we are waiting for the inspection process. During the week of May 2 we hope to have the inspector from Community Development and during the week of May 9 we hope to have the inspector from Alameda Municipal Power. Once both inspections are complete they will "flip the switch" and we will go live. The Energy Kiosk has been ordered and we expect it to be installed by Alameda Municipal Power. The Library is counting on electric savings for part of the budget reductions.

Neighborhood Libraries Improvement Project (NLIP). The Artist Receptions at both neighborhood libraries on April 16 went very well. A modest but appreciative crowd heard Supervising Librarian Arta Benzie-Youssef talk about the renovation project and the glass art installed over their heads. Kana Tanaka seems happy with the dedication and the public response to her work. Then the party moved across town to the West End Library where an overflow crowd nibbled on cheese and crackers as they admired the wood/plaster piece by Debey Zito and Terry Schmitt and the painting by Owen Smith. Again, Arta described the renovation project and the art selection process. Zito and Schmitt had invited their family, friends, and customers to the reception

Alameda Free Library
1550 Oak Street
Alameda, California 94502-2932
510.747.7777 • Fax 510.865.1230 • TDD 510.522.7538

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and it was a wonderful crowd in attendance. Library Foundation President Luzanne Engh commented that she felt the "vibe" in the room was jovial, comfortable, and appreciative. Although crowded, it was a good group of people. Many people commented that they thought Alameda did the restoration of the West End Library "right." There were a few comparisons to some neighboring libraries that are restoring/renovating historic buildings and the people had very different opinions of what could/should be reused or saved. Final archival paperwork and invoices should be received from the artists by the end of May.

The Library Board inquired what the remaining balance from Measure O fund will be at the close of the project. It was unclear from the last budget summary that was in the April Board Packet. The answer is that about $306,999 is the estimated remaining Measure O funds. It is anticipated that the Public Works Department will go to the City Council at either the May 17 or June 7 meeting to accept the work of Resource & Design (furniture) and Sausal Corporation (contractor). All those invoices are received. To my knowledge, all IT invoices have been received and paid; the only outstanding invoices are related to the public art.

California State Budget Reductions to Public Libraries. No new news regarding the State Budget, the Governor's May Revised Budget is scheduled to be announced on May 16. Library Legislative Day is rescheduled for May 18; hopefully the Library Lobbyists will have studied the announced budget and will have the message crafted for the library supporters.

I have included a little information about the Federal reductions to the Institute of Museum and Library Services budget. Specifics of what the $28M reduction funded are still unknown.

City Budget. The news is not good. The Library met with the City Budget Team and learned that the required reduction for the Library is much larger than originally stated. There is debt service for an old bond that was refinanced a few years back and now payments are due. At this time the library is expected to absorb the entire debt payment in addition to the 5% and 10% reduction. The City Council has not yet been informed of the "new" target reduction numbers for the library so the Library Board cannot talk in specifics but at the May meeting the Board needs to discuss additional reduction options that the Library Staff are proposing. Library staff is now looking at specifics within the library, reductions to the material budget, cutting subscriptions to specialty periodicals, talking to vendors (i.e. cleaning service) regarding a reduction in fees for reduced service. Staff has identified a few special library services for which the Library Board might consider instituting a fee. While the power was down for the solar project an optional "you won't be paid to attend" budget brain-storming meeting was held and about half the staff, both full and part time attended. Staff brainstormed the services and tasks that the public does not see when they walk into the library that may have to be discontinued if the full impact of the budget reduction is to cut all part time staff. Approximate dollar savings are put on each of these services/activities to add to the "menu" of budget options for the City Council.

The budget reductions for all libraries are bad, especially with the uncertainty of the State and Federal funding. The City of San Jose is proposing to reduce their 19 branch libraries from five open days to three open days. The JPA in Santa Clara County voted last week to charge $80 for a non-resident card effective July 1, 2011. Only residents of the JPA area will get "free" cards although anyone can use materials in any facility.

Alameda Japanese American Internee Experience. Supervising Librarian David Hall was successful in securing a California Civil Liberties Public Education Program Grant to document the Alameda Japanese American Internee experience. It is also a way to extend the Digital Storytelling program in the library. The total grant award is $19,550 and will include creating a documentary film interviewing Alameda Japanese Americans; distributing copies of the DVD to schools, other libraries and organizations; creating curriculum materials relating to the topic; and uploading to the Digital Storytelling web page for viewing. Library Technician Claire Coustier and Videographer Jeanne Copperwaite will also be participating in this grant project. The grant period begins immediately and ends in June 2012.

Donald E. Bruzzone. Monetary gifts in memory of a Mr. Donald E. Bruzzone have been coming in to the Main Library; to date a total of $665.00 has been received. Mr. Bruzzone was a member of the Library Board in the early to mid- 1960's. He served at least two (one year) terms as Library Board President and served on the Board for a total of ten years (quote from a newspaper clipping). Since this is a significant donation in his memory, I wanted to bring it to your attention. A copy of Mr. Bruzzone's obituary is included in the Board Packet.

Library Foundation. The Library Foundation did not have any new business to discuss so they did not have a meeting in April.

The next Foundation meeting will be on Monday, May 16 in the Family Study Room at 7:00 p.m.

Friends of the Library. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is May 6-7-8 at the O Club. The preview sale is Friday, doors open at 7:00 p.m., price of admission? Friends membership or $5.00. The Friends also invite all Alameda teachers in for a special Teachers Sale from 3:30-5:00 p.m. on Friday before the doors open to the crowds. Over the years more and more teachers are taking advantage of the great opportunity to stock up for their classroom libraries. Using Linda Valler and the communication network available through our School Resource Services has been key to informing the teachers of the book sale.

It time for Friday Night Flights at Angela's Bistro and Bar! May 20, 27, and June 3 will the dates for this great fundraising event for the Friends of the Library. The Friends and Foundation will be staffing an information table at the Meals On Wheels fundraising event on July 17 held at the Rock Wall Winery.

The next Friends meeting will be on Monday, May 16 in Stafford Room B at 7:30 p.m.

Alameda Reads. New Literacy Director Sue Mark is hard at work. The Alameda Reads Newsletter has returned and Sue is already planning new workshops and activities for the Learners in the program. Sue has been reviewing and evaluting materials in the program collection, is personally meeting with all the tutors in order to meet each learner/tutor pair, and she has already brought in a guest speaker for the book club. She worked with outgoing Literacy Director Jordona Elderts in teaching the most recent Tutor Training and has worked with Jordona in Learner assessment & the pairing the Learner with an appropriate Tutor. Jordona's last day will be May 13, it is hard to say goodbye after eight years but Jordona will stay involved as an instructor for the new learner class and she will be one of our volunteer tutors! Stay tuned for more great things from our literacy program!

New City Manager. At a special meeting of the City Council prior to the regular May 3 meeting, the City Council approved the proposed contract for City Manager to Mr. John Russo. The job was officially offered to Mr. Russo, who was in attendance with his family, and he accepted. Mr. Russo is expected to begin work in Alameda on June 13 however he is meeting with various city staff prior to his start date to learn more about the community and department priorities.

Draft Art Donation Policy. The Art Display Committee is not ready to bring the second draft of the Art Donation Policy forward.

Activities and Events.

May 2	Intermediate Book Club. 3:30 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room
May 3	Comics Crafts. 3:30 p.m. West End Library
May 3	Digital Photo Collage for Tweens. 3:30 p.m. Main Library, Computer Lab
May 3	Paws to Read. 3:45 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room (also May 10, 17, 24, 31)
May 4	Comics Crafts. 3:30 p.m. Bay Farm Island Library
May 4	Student Art Exhibit Reception. 6:00 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room
May 5	Armchair Travel: Traveling with Grandkids. 7:00 p.m. West End Library
May 6-8	Friends of the Library Used Book Sale. Times vary, O Club, Alameda Point
May 7	Free Comic Book Day. All day, while the supplies last. All libraries.
May 7	Comics Crafts. 2:00 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room
May 7	Worm Composting Workshop. 2:00 p.m. Main Library, Patio Garden
May 8	Self-Paced Computer Classes. 1:00 p.m. Main Library, Computer Lab (also May 15, 22, 29)
May 8	Teen Book Group. 2:00 p.m. Main Library
May 9	Advanced Book Club. 3:30 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room
May 9	Alameda Library Book Club. 6:30 p.m. Main Library, Family Study Room
May 10	Caterpillar Puppets. 3:30 p.m. West End Library
May 10	Alameda Great Books Club. 6:00 p.m. Main Library, Family Study Room
May 10	Caterpillar Puppets. 7:00 p.m. Bay Farm Island Library

May 14	Spanish Sing-Along. 10:30 a.m. West End Library
May 14	Family Game Day. 2:00 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room
May 16	Beginning Book Club. 3:30 p.m. Main Library Felker Programming Room
May 16	Library Foundation Meeting. 7:00 p.m. Main Library, Family Study Room
May 16	Friends of the Library Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room B
May 21	Digital Camera Basics. 6:00 p.m. Main Library, Computer Lab (also May 31)
May 25	"Laughing for the Health of It!" 7:00 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room
May 30	All libraries closed in observance of Memorial Day

If you have any questions about the items to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you would like to discuss these or any other items, please email me at jchisaki@ci.alameda.ca.us or give me a call at 747-7747. I look forward to seeing you on Wednesday evening.

Sincerely,

Jane Chisaki

Jane Chisaki
Library Director