REGULAR Meeting
BELVEDERE-TIBURON LIBRARY AGENCY
Belvedere-Tiburon Library, Tiburon, California
February 24, 2025

AS APPROVED ON MARCH 11, 2025

Roll Call, Present: Chair Anthony Hooker, Vice Chair Emily Poplawski, Pamela Goldman, Roxanne Richards, Katherine Sutton, Kenneth Weil

Members Absent: Treasurer Jeff Slavitz

Also Present: Crystal Duran, Lucy Churton, Kristin Johnson

CALL TO ORDER: **Chair Hooker called the meeting to order at 6:16 pm**

OPEN Forum:

Chair Hooker announced that the order of the meeting would be changed. Comments on either session shall be made at the beginning of the meeting. He asked that comments be limited to 3 minutes.

Chair Hooker opened the floor to comments or questions from the public.

Steve Silberstein of Cliff Road, Belvedere, referred to the staff survey by consultant Dr. Reggie Thomas' which included responses regarding library culture. Mr. Silberstein said that, although the consultant has come in to the Library to do trainings to improve things and reported that there has been some improvement, Mr. Silberstein doesn't believe there has been improvement. He clarified that, a few weeks ago, one of the "most popular" employees (with the community) was fired. He encouraged the Board to solicit an independent attorney to represent them and to arrange mediation to attempt a resolution of the recent firing. Previous communications gave the employee a choice to resign or be fired, which Mr. Silberstein feels should have been a negotiation. He would like to see a resolution of the conflict without the expense of a lawsuit.

Violet Marshall of Belvedere seconded Mr. Silberstein's comments, and said that she feels and would like the Agency to consider that this is not only a problem between Mr. Petrovic and the Library Director, but also an "underground toxic environment for the staff. She believes that there is no crime here, and asks that Agency Board take into consideration understanding fully what took place, and and undergo a complete evaluation of the situation.

Siobhan Castiglia, a Library worker of 30 years, currently working at the Sausalito Library, said that she worked at this Library for five happy years under Director Debbie Mazzolini. She added that a venue for programs has long been desired, and progress has been now been stifled. Ms. Castiglia believes that Belvedere Tiburon was the best events Library in Marin, and is no longer in that category.

Mo Newman of Tiburon has been a patron and supporter of the Library for 50 years, and fought hard for the new library in all of the Capital Campaign meetings. The first thing she noticed after COVID and the new opening was that almost all of the old employees disappeared. In addition, Director Debbie Mazzolini was always out in the Library greeting everyone.

Jeanette Carr of Belvedere, longtime supporter, and founder of the Library Art Committee and the Gently Used Art Auction, said that she was very disappointed that the Agency has come to the point of hiring lawyers to solve problems. She feels that the Agency and the supporting community should be able to resolve this problem internally.

Rick Grossman, of Tiburon said that Mr. Petrovic had recruited him to present a Library program on litigation. He is a lawyer and a critic of our current civil justice system. He echoes the sentiment that the Library doesn't need more lawyers. He added that the current situation is headed to litigation, and, speaking as a lawyer, the only winners in a litigation will be the lawyers. He recommended appointing a neutral monitor to assure adherence of all parties to the written guidelines and expectations and to report on a periodic basis to satisfy the Agency that all parties are working in a positive and constructive manner to serve the public, and to return to a positive environment and programming. Mr. Grossman would be happy to donate his time to see to that outcome.

Dr. Angelo Capozzi, Tiburon resident of 55 years, expressed agreement with Mr. Grossman.

Joe Sillo of Kentfield said that he came to the Agency meeting to express three things: Congratulations to the Library Staff for creating a good venue for programs and a wonderful Maker Space with Librarians Ivan Silva and Birgitta Danielson. He was so impressed with the space and the librarians that he visits the Maker Space Regularly, and decided to purchase and donate a twin nozzle 3-D Printer to the Library for the Maker Space. He added that no other library or space in Marin-Sonoma has that capability, and that this presents an opportunity for the Library

William Rothman, 52-year resident of Cliff Road, Belvedere, noted the Library Expansion wasn't just a library, that the role of librarians had changed, and that Libraries are now community centers. Mr. Rothman feels that Mr. Petrovic was significantly responsible for the recent excellent programming, and for small group use of the new meeting rooms. Mr. Rothman added that, if the Agency were to go into a litigation those facts were juxtaposed, at the outset the Agency would have trouble. He urged the Agency not to carry through with the firing, and to retain the asset of Mr. Petrovic, rather than position on the opposite side of a litigation.

Julia Shumelda, 25-year Tiburon resident, said that she was disheartened, discouraged, and demotivated by the recent events. She was disappointed to read about a culture of fear, a toxic culture within the Library. She feels that Mr. Petrovic brought light, humanity, passion, and spark to the Library.

Adam Gavzer of Belvedere said that he has been a master of ceremonies and otherwise engaged in the fundraising for the Library, and more recently involved in the Belvedere Homemade Film Festival, which is partnering with the Library in hosting the film workshops. He said that Ivan Silva and Mr. Petrovic jumped in to the film project with supportive energy. He feels that whatever Mr. Petrovic did, there are [internal] ways to deal with issues via sensitivity training and learning to be respectful in a work environment.

Marty Winter, Tiburon resident since 1989, said that he and his wife Barbara have been enthusiastic supporters of Library since 1991, when the planning for first 1997 building began. He added that the Library has always been the heart, soul, light, and source of pride in this community. He said that the programs have always been good, but Mr. Petrovic brought them to the next level. He said that Director Debbie Mazzolini was a great leader, and [under her] people were encouraged to thrive. He asked Director Duran and the Agency to bring Mr. Petrovic back. He suggested that the Agency re-educate Director Duran or replace her, and that they bring back Mr. Petrovic.

Diane Green of Tiburon, past president and member of the Library Art Committee for 18 years, said that she works closely with staff, and is taken aback by tonight's public comments and by the tone of those comments. She said that Mr. Petrovic had not proven trustworthy in that team capacity. She added that, although she hesitates to speak badly of anyone, she noted that staff morale has improved since Mr. Petrovic has been away from the Library.

Vikki Fong of Tiburon said that she has been supporting the Library since it was in the post office building. She is a retired librarian, and has served as Agency Chair and on the State Board of Library Services. She expressed agreement with Mr. Silberstein and encouraged the Agency Trustees to recognize Mr. Petrovic as an asset to the Library. She feels it's more important for the Agency Board to serve the public than it is for them to serve some internal rules in the Library. She entreated the Agency Trustees to serve their community.

Chair Hooker closed the public comment at 6:53 pm.

STAFF BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Chair's Report

Chair Hooker reported that the Library is moving forward and adding to its programs and collections. Also, looking back, we are finding things we need to improve on, including compensation and benefits.

2. Library Director's Report

Director Duran reported that the Green Takeover project continues to be a success, with volunteers working beside staff. The group has been adding more items to the Library of Things collection, including cake decorating tools, an energy meter, garden tools, a GoPro camera kit, a portable photo scanner, and a bird-watching kit. Selections were based on community input.

Library programs are going well, with six librarians (not just one person) involved in the planning and implementation of library programs. New programs include the Library Rainy Day Café, which is adding puzzle working to the activities, supported by Corner Books.

Usage data at a glance, from January 2024 vs January 2025, shows that the Library sponsored 77 programs this year vs 43 last year, with attendance increasing from 926 to 1408, and meeting room reservations, an incredible resource, increasing from 301 to 447. Information Desk inquiries also increased, from 1,192 to 1,940. Materials Borrowed decreased slightly from 18,661 to 18,354, and Visitors decreased from 12,910 to 9,577.

Project Refresh Phase I, a response to the Strategic Plan community input, continues, with public access computers and copiers moved into the old digital classroom, and shelving moved in the east Nave to allow a relaxing space with chairs, side tables, and a couch near the foyer, between the 2 main service desks.

Additional seating will also be added in the Gallery space. Assistant Director Joey Della Santina coordinated furniture ordering and delivery and facilitated and executed the rearrangement.

The Library's 8-page newsletter, In the Stacks will be mailed to all of the 94920 area and emailed this week. The newsletter highlights programs and services and includes a staff feature and a 2-page Foundation spread.

The Maker Space activity has been a highlight for the Library, and Joe Sillo was lovely to share has works with Librarians Ivan Silva and Birgitta Danielson. The printer that Mr. Sillo donated is the prime of 3-D printing. The Maker Space equipment and activities continue to grow based on community input. Another recent donation of equipment was laser cutter by Mill Valley Resident Teri Symonds. Patrons from outside the community are using and supporting the library.

Chair Hooker asked how patrons are made aware when something new is added to Library collections or equipment. Director Duran said that the volunteers and staff adding the items will be ambassadors, disseminating the new information with interactive displays, in person introduction, open houses to promote the materials, and a planned separate sustainability newsletter.

Trustee Richards asked how staff are monitoring the materials expense for new Maker Space activities. Director Duran said that Librarian Ivan Silva is tracking Maker Space materials purchases, and has developed a fee schedule for materials usage. The fee schedule is posted on the Library website and in the Maker Space. The desired objective is that the activities be cost neutral. Librarian Silva buys materials in bulk, and patrons have the option of using their own materials or paying the fee for Library-provided materials.

Trustee Richards asked Director Duran explain how library programming has been changed with the 6 staff members currently responsible and how this is different from past staffing.   Director Duran said that, before her tenure, the programming was led by volunteer committees. Current practice is for the staff to experience the process procuring and leading programs, as program leadership is standard for most professional Librarians. Currently, the staff are taking the reins and actively managing programs. With the Green Takeover, a balance between volunteer and staff will be developed with collaborative participation in program development, leadership, and delivery.   Maker Space activities, speaking engagements, and other programs are staff led. Trustee Richards asked if there is a specific programming department. Director Duran said that programming is currently structured by function, with responsibilities carried out as appropriate by Children's, Teen's, Adult Services, Information Desk, Maker Space, and Technology.   Trustee Richards asked if there is leadership in each of those functional areas.   Director Duran said that each Department Head takes on the leadership for programs in their area.

3. Belvedere Tiburon Library Foundation Report

Foundation Director Lucy Churton reported that she had just sent a letter to Joe Sillo, thanking him for his donation of the 3-D printer in the Maker Space. She said that Librarian Ivan Silva is largely responsible for this. This is the second time that Ivan has so inspired a patron to donate to the Maker Space. She wants to make sure that the Library thanks these donors in special way.

Some annual fund donations are still coming in. The Foundation has had a very successful campaign and is grateful that the community has been so incredibly supportive. The Foundation goals, accomplishments, and financials will be published in an Annual Report, scheduled to be published in September.

The Teddy Bear Tea was held on February 8th and was very successful. This was a 25th Anniversary celebration, so it was made extra special, featuring a slide show of the past 25 years of the Tea. The event was sold out, with 300 guests, and included incredible food, photos with the bear, story time with Children's Librarian Alicia Bell, and a bear craft workshop. Director Churton offered special thanks to Celeste Ibraeva, Michelle Thomsen, Jessica Etchevers and Mickey Hubbell.

The Foundation is busy planning 2 more events:

1. A select Donor Celebration at the Library in April.
2. A Legacy Celebration in October to commemorate The Library's 30th Anniversary! To mark this special occasion, the Foundation will be hosting a Legacy Party at the Library. This event will honor all those who have helped shape our library into what it is today, reflecting on our beginnings and celebrating how far we've come.

Task members are in the process of selecting colors for the pour in place surfacing for the Children's outside patio. The pour will be scheduled in the next week or two.

The Foundation has created a Volunteer Task Force to organize community members who have registered on the Foundation's website. The project will launch in the fall. Trustee Poplawski Emily asked why the launch will not be until fall. Director Churton said that this project requires planning, the help of 5 people, and a software application to support the work, so it will take some time to get ready. Trustees Richards and Sutton are on the Task Force.

In the Library Art Gallery, the annual high school show is currently up. This show celebrates 21 local high school artists from Marin Academy, Redwood High School, San Domenico School, Tamalpais High School, and the Art School of San Francisco Bay. This show is beautiful and represents the imagination of young artists in our community. Four pieces have already been sold. The high school show will run through March 12th.

The next show in Library Art Gallery will be "Artists' Narratives: Their History and Identity," which will run from March 2nd through May 7th. The Call for Entry for this show invited artists to submit works that reveal themselves. Artworks representing the artists themselves, either something from a photograph, or a childhood memory, mythology, spiritual imagery or even an identification with an animal will be featured.

The following sponsors and donors helped make TBT a success and a low-cost event for us**:**

2025 Teddy Bear Tea Valued Sponsors:

NorCal Plastic Surgery
Carson Wealth
The Tiburon Peninsula Foundation

2025 Teddy Bear Tea Generous Donors:

PAAM ARTS
The Caviar Co.
Five Mountains Tea
Skin Spirit
Crown and Crumpet
Tiburon Wine
Rebounderz
Safeway
Diana's of Tiburon
Starbucks
Trader Joe's

Director Duran thanked Director Churton for her hard work, and added that Director Churton's Foundation position is volunteer and equates to a full-time job.

Chair Hooker commended the work of the Foundation's Corner Books volunteers, including volunteer and store manager Heather Lobdell, and added that Corner Books has 43 volunteers, quite a number.

Financial Statements, January, 2025

Clerk Johnson reported that, with 58% of the fiscal year passed, revenues are at 58%, right on par. All expected taxes were received in December-January-February. For the Bond Debt Service (funded by the Parcel Tax), one interest payment in March remains for this fiscal year. Three additional scheduled payments of principal and interest remain, with payoff in September, 2026.

Total Expenditures are at 61% of budget, compared to 55% of budget at this time last year. Many large expenses such as Property, Liability, and Workers Comp insurance, Digital Subscriptions including MARINet consortium costs, and CalPERS Unfunded Pension annual payment, are made early in the year. While the percentage increase from the prior year indicates a faster rate of spending year-to-date, projection analysis indicates a fiscal-year-end on par with budget in Expenditures.

Areas of Expenditure increase include personnel, due to full staffing (savings in prior several years were achieved due to not being fully staffed up after the grand opening), increases in programming, increased utilities costs with the new building, and insurance rates increases both in property/liability and in health, and extraordinary legal costs. Water costs have been high, even after a refund from a leak and repair. Trustee Richards asked that research be done to determine inside versus outside water usage. Chair Hooker said that the extraordinary legal costs should be moved to use of reserves. Clerk Johnson will check with the auditors regarding that move.

Total cash is about $2.7 million, with $1.9 million in operating reserve. Most cash revenue is received in December/January and April/May, with operational draw-down between those inflows. The low point of cash this fiscal year in Mid-December was higher than expected in total at $1.86 million, with $0.43 million in operating reserve (12.7% of operating budget), and $0.55 million in insurance and building reserves (15.9% of operating budget).

Expenditures on new furniture and on the I'lee Hooker garden project this fiscal year are reported on page 4-4 as uses of reserves. $50,000 of remaining Expansion funds were set aside for these purposes.

Director Duran said that MARINet currently has a surplus, and the MARINet Board, of which she is a member, is doing more work to analyze and determine how funds are spent. A large portion is eBooks. The Marin County Free Library brings in a lot of revenue for that, and benefits other libraries. MARINet has its own board, staff, and director, and is overseen by the Marin County Library Director. There is also an Executive Committee, and joint decisions are made there regarding personnel and budget. Approval is made by the full board with collective oversight.

Vice Chair Poplawski asked whether enterprise contracts were simply paid or negotiated. Director Duran said that contracts are negotiated and reviewed every two years.

Trustees requested future financial statements in larger print.

4. **Committee Reports**

There were no committee reports.

CONSENT CALENDAR

6/7. Motion to approve the Minutes of January 27 and January 31, 2025 and the Warrants for the Month of January, 2025. Made by, Trustee Weil, seconded by Trustee Sutton.

Ayes: All present in favor
Absent: Treasurer Jeff Slavitz.
Noes: None
Motion Passed.

TRUSTEE CONSIDERATIONS:

8. Presentation by Dr. Reggie Thomas of PeakePotential

Chair Hooker introduced Dr. Reggie Thomas of PeakePotential, and asked if members of the public had seen Dr. Thomas' report. Director Duran said, no, that the public comments tonight had been based on minutes from the November Agency meeting. Chair Hooker asked Dr. Thomas to note items related to the prior public comment.

Dr. Thomas said that he would forward a PowerPoint presentation on tonight's presentation to the Agency.

Dr. Thomas said that things are improving at the Library. He went on to outline the process of his engagement at the Library: As a Management Consultant, he started with an organizational assessment, which he likened to an annual physical, and followed up with remedies prescribed. He said that the medicine is working, and that this is the first time in his career when his original assessment and report have been made public.

Dr. Thomas started with a review of organizational documents, one-on-one interviews of the Library Staff, followed by Staff focus groups. He then tabulated the various narratives by the Staff describing the Library culture and their experience with it. He qualified that these initial narratives should be considered simply positive and negative comments from staff, and not indictments. He said that, normally, these types of studies do not go public, and he feels that the initial report was weaponized by the public comment tonight. The original analysis is actually meant to reveal themes for the Staff to work together toward growth and improvement. Dr. Thomas worked with staff and came up with apropos recommendations, based on the themes of low morale, communication issues, unresolved conflict. Key issues of concern in the staff focus groups were communication, silo mentality, management efficiency, and empathy.

From this evidence-based analysis, Dr. Thomas recommended the following actions:

1. Core Values Discernment Session
2. Leadership Skills Development Training
3. Work to create a Feedback-Rich Environment
4. Establish a Recognition Program
5. Strengthen Employee Engagement
6. Organize Team Building Activities
7. Establish a Meaningful Meeting system

Significant progress and improvements have been made with and by the Library Staff in the last seven months. Every organization has dysfunction, and the Belvedere Tiburon Library is no different than other organizations experiencing change. Dr. Thomas said he was hired to flesh out the dysfunctions at the Library.

Dr. Thomas noted the progress made, including improved morale, reduced toxicity and dysfunction, and enhanced teamwork and collaboration. He feels that the Library culture is shifting, and says he has received positive feedback from individually coached Staff members. He feels, that the Agency, Director, and Staff commitments to improve will result in even further cultural enhancement.

Dr. Thomas recently held two sessions with Library Staff to develop Core Values (which were not included in the Library's Strategic Plan). Staff came up with a consensus of 5 core values of inclusion, creativity, growth, integrity, and respect. The Core Values were defined and will guide the behavior of the Library as an organization. Agency Trustees will collaborate to add 2 more values. Dr. Thomas is working with the management team to define how each value translates into operational action.

Dr. Thomas said Staff have received 6 months of professional development training, and they have expressed that they love coming together to learn and to foster growth in their careers. The Staff Management Team has also met for several separate sessions focused on leadership training. Dr. Thomas is working with Director Duran to create a more formalized and updated annual performance review process, a staff recognition program, and a meaningful meeting system (meaning neither too few nor too many meetings, and more structure and participation by all staff in meeting leadership).

Dr. Thomas is positive and optimistic, and committed to help the Staff work through additional development and organization.

Trustee Richards thanked Dr. Thomas for his work and Director Duran for recognizing the need for his help, and for setting the goal of focusing internally on staff after the external Strategic Plan work. She said that she looks forward to the Agency adding 2 additional values, and to better understanding what the organizational structure of the staff is. Director Duran will provide an organizational chart for the next Agency meeting.

Chair Hooker added that it is helpful to have Dr. Thomas' broader perspective from outside the Library. The Library was previously smaller, and grew with the construction project and a change in director, and a change in philosophy with the Strategic Plan. The Library has expanded greatly from what it was in the past, with a broad expanse of additional collection items and additional spaces. The Agency, Management, and Staff need to adapt to manage the changes for the future in a way it still values the Library's history and all who have contributed to its growth. Dr. Thomas agreed, and said that in his experience, he has seen that this juxtaposition of respecting history and the past while adopting new approaches can be very painful.

Dr. Thomas added that the first report of any organizational assessment is never pretty, but it articulates hearsay into a framework for improvement. The challenge for management is to focus on the recommendations made, and the subsequent progress and improvements.

Trustee Poplawski added, in support of Director Duran, that good leaders provide transparency, and that a leader who wants to take the organizational flaws public so that plans and changes can be discussed as a starting point is exceptional. Sometimes it is productive for the executive strategy leader to do some the work, but the leader's priority is to anchor the strategy. The Agency wants Director Duran to take the Library to its next level according to the Strategic Plan vision. Public comment tonight indicated that the community wants more program events. The Agency and Director Duran should use the questions and feedback to take the opportunity to showcase what is planned and in the works for programming. Trustee Poplawski would like to know more about the "culture of fear" mentioned by some of the public commenters.

Trustee Goldman asked about the next steps and implementations of Dr. Thomas' recommendations, and the process going forward. Director Duran reiterated that Dr. Thomas' recommendations have been laid out, and the plan will, hopefully, include more of

Dr. Thomas' assistance with the process. Director Duran will present a recommendation for a continuance of Dr. Thomas' contract at the next Agency meeting. She emphasized that this continuance would be an investment in Staff, which the Library hasn't focused on so much in the past.

Director Duran added that, during Dr. Thomas' January training, she approved a light service model to keep the Library open while staff receive development. There are still a lot of action items to continue to invest in and develop staff. The trainings have been a welcome and critical component for developing staff teamwork. Director Duran hopes to to plan staff training in a way that minimizes service disruption. In addition to the onsite trainings, staff have been encouraged to and are attending and participating in offsite conferences.

Dr. Thomas commented on the individual Staff coaching for six of the Library Staff members. He said that this is the highest level of professional development and can be life changing. He has targeted areas for growth in each Staff, and they each now have a learning growth plan; all of them are learning and implementing their plans. One of the staff, a first-time manager, has been learning to coach his own group of staff, including how to support them, plan, and communicate updates. He has implemented a number of procedures and communications, and the group is working more effectively, with good relationship building.

Trustee Richards asked when the coaching can be complete, and what is sustainable in this realm. Dr. Thomas said that there is a point in every coaching relationship where the maximum individualized benefit gone has been achieved. He added, that while it is up to the Agency and Director Duran, he is open to continuing to work with Library Staff.

Trustee Richards said that she felt the Library would be missing out if the coaching was cut off too early. Chair Hooker said it was a matter of when the timing is right when Staff are ready take over and continue to advance on their own with what they have learned He feels that timing would be at the point where Senior Management has acquired the skill set to replace Mr. Thomas. Dr. Thomas agreed, that the point is to have Management Staff up at a basic skill level, so we they manage other Staff, lead meetings, and support Director Duran in the leadership function.

Director Duran added that, as part of the Professional Development Plan, the Library needs to hire a Human Resources specialist who can play that role more effectively. She has pursued the prospect of sharing a Human Resources professional with the Town of Tiburon. Trustee Weil asked what progress has been made in that pursuit. Director Duran said that she participated in an interview panel for Human Resources candidates last week at the Town of Tiburon. The Town will already be sharing the position's time with Mill Valley, and the Library will scale, the use of the position's time as needed. The Library does not need a full time Human Resources position.

9. Discussion and consideration of Compensation Policy

Director Duran said that this is the second presentation of the Compensation Policy, originally discussed by the Agency in November. At that time there was a general consensus to approve, and the Library's counsel has since reviewed the Policy and added transparency. Director Duran is asking for approval tonight, to provide guidelines for merit increases, cost of living increases etc.

Trustee Richards asked whether individual performance awards are separate from cost of living (COLA) increases. Director Duran said that steps are performance awards, and the update of the entire pay schedule for COLA (based on financial circumstances and Board approval each year) incorporates the cost of living factor. In the prior fiscal year, the pay scale was adjusted to conform to the local market in May, and a COLA increase was incorporated on July first. Most of the staff received step and COLA increases last year. Y-Rated (6 staff outside the approved salary ranges) were separately defined and scheduled, and received neither a step (merit) increase nor a cost of living adjustment. These factors altogether created a distinction of market changes versus performance versus cost of living.

Director Duran reiterated that, while the Step progression is defined and awarded based on merit, the Agency has the discretion to make COLA adjustments to the schedule. This is stated in the compensation policy, and related to the budget planning process. The Finance Committee would review and approve this during the spring budget process, and the Agency would get a first look for approval in May each year, with final approval in June. Trustee Richards said that she felt that a May review would be too late for the Agency to give input on the COLA issue within the budget. Director Duran said that the COLA can be reviewed at any time, and if there is a situation such as serious inflation, a mid-year review and update could always be achieved. The policy provides a framework and makes the process transparent for staff.

Chair Hooker called for a motion to approve the Compensation Policy.

Motion to approve the Compensation Policy as presented made by Trustee Goldman, seconded by Trustee Richards.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Anthony Hooker, Vice Chair Emily Poplawski, Trustee Pamela Goldman, Trustee Roxanne Richards, Trustee Katherine Sutton, Trustee Kenneth Weil.

Absent: Treasurer Jeff Slavitz

Noes: None

Motion passed.

10. Discussion and consideration of Art and Exhibits Policy

Art Committee leader Diane Green said that, in her work with Library Staff, she has been observing improvements in Staff morale.

Ms. Green said that she is the Arts Exhibition Chair of the Library Art Committee and is responsible for Art Talk Programs. She has been on the Library Art Committee for 25 years.

Ms. Green gave an historical perspective Art Programs as managed in the pre-Expansion Library building. The exhibits were hung in the old Founders' Room, a multi-purpose room for Library Programs. If a Program was in progress, it was impossible for visitors to view the Art Exhibit. Also, the jury/review process did not really exist at that time, due to one local artist at a time being featured for each exhibit. When artists applied, Committee members only had one piece of the artist's work to review. The art shown at that time was considered family friendly with mostly landscapes presented. A good turnout at an Art Opening at that time was about 35 people. The new Gallery now attracts about 135 guests at each Art Opening.

The application process has transformed from a local application to a competitive juried review online. The Committee is using Art Call software, and artists from all over the Bay Area can submit their works. The artists the Committee is able to feature now are outstanding. The Committee is currently selecting artwork by a consensual process with the guardrails of the Library as a family destination. The Committee is vigilant regarding audience appropriateness. Brenda Bottum and Diane Green personally vet the art and collaborate with Director Duran, if necessary. The actual jury process is blind by the Committee. The team looks for aesthetic appeal, technical proficiency, and for themes previously determined by a Steering Committee. They also curate the shows to create a balance between artistic expressions, show cohesion, and showing as many artists as possible.

The mission of the Library Art Committee is: "We build community around art." Hospitality is a core value, and the Committee aims to be gracious and welcoming to all constituencies. The Gallery reputation is growing to be known for its hospitality and professionalism. The Committee has prioritized engaging viewers respectfully, while challenging them at the same time. Some of the art is beautiful and pleasing, while some is statement and issue oriented. This all serves an educational purpose and a purpose of reaching throughout the Bay Area to give opportunity to extremely good artists who couldn't afford to live here, but can connect with local patrons through their shows here.

Ms. Green said that the Art Policy up for Agency approval has been reviewed by counsel, and is written so that the creative leeway of the Committee is protected. The Committee is aware of the responsibility not to trigger issues, and understands the need for guidelines. In the 2-1/2 years since the new Library's Grand Opening, the Committee has solicited, sponsored, and curated 15 shows with 600 artworks, and has not received a single complaint about any of the works.

Director Duran added that the Policy illustrates current practices, creates a framework to empower decisions, and is backed by Library Administration and Agency Board. Staff reviewed other library advertising and public exhibit spaces, and Library counsel has reviewed the policy. She thanked Ms. Green and Ms. Bottum Diane and Brenda for their work.

Trustee Richards asked about liability insurance for the Art Shows. Director Duran said that the Library includes a rider in it's Property and Liability Policy for the art on site.

Chair Hooker called for a motion to approve the Art Policy.

Motion to approve the Art Policy as presented made by Trustee Richards, seconded by Trustee Sutton.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Anthony Hooker, Vice Chair Emily Poplawski, Trustee Pamela Goldman, Trustee Roxanne Richards, Trustee Katherine Sutton, Trustee Kenneth Weil.

Absent: Treasurer Jeff Slavitz

Noes: None

Motion passed.

11. Schedule of 2025 Meeting Dates

Chair Hooker announced a Closed session would begin at 9:00 pm.

CLOSED SESSION

RETURN from CLOSED SESSION at 9:40pm

REPORT from CLOSED SESSION: Chair Hooker announced that no action was taken during the CLOSED SESSION and there was nothing to report.

Chair Hooker adjourned the meeting at 9:42 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. Johnson, Clerk of the Belvedere-Tiburon Library Agency Board