

**Helen Hall Library**  
**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Library Board Room

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

**2. Roll Call of Members**

Board members Tommy Frankovich, Kathleen Nenninger, Lillian Murphy, and Mark Lardas were in attendance, along with City Librarian Teresa Potter-Reyes, Assistant City Librarian Darla Rance, Assistant City Librarian Meredith Layton and Technical Services Librarian Ashley Leblow. Also taking part in the meeting were Parks and Cultural Services Director Chien Wei, and City Councilmen Larry Millican and John Bowen.

**3. Opportunity for Citizens to address the Board**

No one present wished to address the Board.

**4. Approval of minutes**

The minutes for the Board meeting held on May 18, 2021 were approved as submitted.

**5. City Council comments**

Councilman John Bowen said he thinks the Library and its staff are doing a fine job.

**6. Chairman's comments**

Mr. Frankovich said he appreciates all of the hard work of the Library, the presentation from last month, and all the preparations being made for the Library's future.

**7. Staff Reports**

**a. City Librarian Report** given by Teresa Potter-Reyes

**i. Library Update**

**1. Staffing update**

Part-time Circulation Clerk Rose Singh will start June 23. We will be fully staffed as of June 23!

Library Administration is excited to introduce to the Board of Trustees our Technical Services Librarian Ashley Leblow. Ashley spoke briefly to say that she was happy to be here, although she is not always comfortable speaking in a group setting. Her comfort zone is behind the scenes in Technical Services. Assistant City Librarian Meredith Layton highlighted that when Ashley's not working, she enjoys spending time with her family, baking, and listening to audiobooks.

**2. Budget**

Parks & Cultural Services Director Chien Wei and City Librarian Teresa Potter-Reyes met with City Manager John Baumgartner and Budget Director Angie Steelman to discuss the FY2022 budget and budget requests. The Library received permission to use vacancy savings to fund in FY2021 the additional Children's area shelves included FY2022 requests. The library is excited about the budget and feel that it is clean, detailed and where it needs to be for the upcoming year.

With the new shelves in the Children's area, librarians are looking to replace a small selection of the tall shelves upstairs with some of the shorter shelves from the children's area. This will help improve the atmosphere of the adult section and improve the line of sight. They are reviewing the measurements and numbers of books to ensure that it will improve the overall patron experience.

### **3. Summer**

Summer has been very busy with some impressive numbers! It has been exciting to see and hear the crowds.

Day 1:

Door count: 853, over 300 people came in during the first two hours!

New cards: 39

Checkouts: 2,098

Returns: 1,628

Week 1:

Door count: 3,649

New cards: 159

Checkouts: 7,709

Returns: 5,164

Week 2:

Door count: 3,886

New cards: 138

Checkouts: 7,763

Returns: 5,682

274 adults, 916 children, and 157 teens have registered for our summer reading program through Beanstack!

As a note, the circulation staff continues to clean each return and will continue through the end of the summer.

#### **ii. Friends of Helen Hall Library**

The Friends book sales were incredibly successful! Everything was priced for \$1.00. Approximately 60 new members registered during the sales.

The book sale on May 15 made \$978 and was for Friends members only.

The book sale on May 22 made \$1,999 was open to the public.

Volunteer Coordinator Ashley Y. has her volunteers with writing "Thank You" notes to new Friends members.

Currently, all discards and unwanted donations go to Better World Books and Thrift Books. Baker & Taylor, our primary materials vendor, recently launched a discard service and they will be receiving library discards. All three organizations work to sell library discards and unwanted donations. Then they recycle what they cannot sell.

#### **b. Assistant City Librarian's Staff Reports**

##### **i. Public Services** given by Darla Rance

##### **1. Children's**

The Children's Department has been utilizing the new StoryWalk® program and providing story time programs at various outreach events. There is one currently on along the sidewalk in front of courts next to the library entrance. During the second week in May, Children's had a scavenger hunt in that section of the library.

On May 24th the Library launched a new digital reading tracker, Beanstack. Families were able to preregister for the Summer Reading Challenge. Between May 24 and June 1, we had 443 children, 76 teens and 144 adults registered. The challenge starts June 1st and runs through the end of July! The reading medals and Scholastic books that were funded by the Friends of Helen Hall Library arrived and will be given out as prizes for the reading program.

For the May display, Cody created a display of children's materials honoring Asian - Pacific Islander month.

The summer assistants, Lova and Jenny began their training May 24th. They have been a great help.

The artwork was installed behind the children's reference desk and along the back wall of the children's department just in time for summer.

## **2. Teen Services**

Hannah Stewart started as our Teen Summer Assistant at the end of May.

In addition to the regular Teen Summer Reading prizes, we received many prize donations! Thank you for your support: Friends of the Helen Hall Library, McDonald's (102 Hwy 3 South location), Scoop Craft Creamery, Bay Area Raceway, Empire Central Comics, Texas Renaissance Festival, Break Free Escape Room.

The Summer Reading Kick-Off with Angie Thomas had 21 in-person and virtual attendees. The teens enjoyed hearing the author's advice, seeing her dog, and getting signed up for the Summer Reading Program.

There are 130 teens participating in the Teen Summer Reading Program after the first week and that number continues to climb!

## **3. Adult Services**

Presented at the Antiques Roundtable on "Birds Eye View Paintings" with a focus on our very own League City painting. Ziba Cyrus is the facilitator.

Local History Librarian Caris Brown participated in the League City "Lunch & Learn" Facebook Live session in order to promote the June 7<sup>th</sup> History Club meeting, Tales of Juneteenth, as well as other Adult Summer programs. The Tales of Juneteenth program had 40 attendees!

Caris worked with a local family, in particular the matriarch Eugenia Gormley, to arrange the loan of family paintings and photographs that highlight her mother's involvement in the WWII WACs in order to create an interesting display for Memorial Day.

Voice actor/narrator Pearl Hewitt, the mother of our Circulation Clerk Bobby Hewitt, will present and host three sessions on August 19, November 4, and December 9. Each program will be different, but all revolving around narrating and audiobooks. The August 19<sup>th</sup> program will be on how to narrate and create audiobooks; November 4<sup>th</sup> program will deal with listening to audiobooks; and the December session will concentrate on storytelling.

#### **4. Volunteer Services**

Ashley created a new brochure for information on her program.

The volunteer numbers are the highest they've been since October 2020 with 247 completed volunteer hours. 27 volunteer applications were received and processed in May, along with the onboarding of 12 new volunteers. Ashley is working very closely with volunteers to discover their skills and passions and how they can best benefit the Library. A new volunteer conducted 3D mapping of the building's interior so that people can take a virtual tour of the building. Mr. Lardas commented that a 3D view "seems duller" than being here in person but it is an interesting option to view the library from home. Assistant City Librarian Darla Rance said she appreciated that the Library is seen as exciting.

The Senior Book Buddies program and its volunteers visited 5 local senior living facilities and established a new partnership with Orchard Park at Victory Lakes, who will be taking a field trip to the library in June to get its residents more acquainted with Helen Hall Library.

Ashley and a couple of new volunteers worked closely with the Teen Librarian to develop a new program, Dice & Dimensions, a tabletop role playing game. The program is run by a volunteer and teens. City Librarian Teresa Potter-Reyes commented that teens are literally running through the front doors to attend this program. Assistant City Librarian Darla Rance said it was exciting to have the teens involved in planning and presenting programming.

A new relationship with the Galveston Bay Area Bar Association was established through a volunteer and has planned a Know Your Rights, 6-week series, program for Fall. Topics will include dealing with HOAs, accidents, wills, probate, and more.

#### **ii. Access Services given by Meredith Layton**

Assistant City Librarian for Access Services Meredith Layton mentioned that the last full inventory of the physical collections was conducted in 2015. She has been investigating new equipment options and reaching out to approximately twenty different libraries that have similar collection sizes and/or have similarly sized populations to get a handle on common and best practices.

In an effort to decrease holds ratios and get high-demand books in customers' hands more quickly, Meredith has been analyzing circulation trends and the potential costs and savings of book leasing with the Baker & Taylor vendor. The library will proceed with a pilot program with leasing.

Just in time for summer, Library staff recently held the first-ever design challenge to update the look of our online catalog. Four designs were put to a vote by all library staff. The

winner was Sheldon Stevens, Teen Librarian. The Board was encouraged to check out the online catalog and see Sheldon's designs.

The Interlibrary Loan Reimbursement Grant from the Texas State Library & Archives Commission was approved by council on Tuesday, June 8. This grant supports ILL lending by helping reimburse our costs, such as for postage, courier fees and staff time.

### **1. Circulation Services**

New page Kelly Hendricks, former Teen Advisory Board Member, started on Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup>.

New part-time clerk Rose Singh starts on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. She has volunteered for the library in the past.

The summer program, Your Library: Behind the Scenes, had 20 attendees on the tour.

Circulation Supervisor wanted to share how grateful she is to all the sections who participated in the Behind the Scenes program. She also would like to recognize the Circulation staff, especially Elizabeth, Isaak, Dom, Alyssa, Christian, and Lindsay for handling the very busy, short-staffed first week of summer programming. With the numbers that were checked out and check in they have been extremely busy.

### **2. Technical Services**

Meagan Staples joined the Library as a new Technical Services Clerk. Meagan comes from a college library environment where she was working extensively in Interlibrary Loan Services. The Library is very excited to have her.

## **b. Statistical Reports**

Comparisons of May 2021 to May 2020 are a muddy process.

For 2020, the library began offering curbside service on May 4<sup>th</sup> and opened its doors to the public on May 18<sup>th</sup>. All summer programs in summer of 2020 were online or virtual.

The library is excited about current numbers and are looking forward to continuing the upward trends. May 2020 virtual statistics was also reported a little differently than currently, so it is not an accurate comparison to 2021.

## **c. Outreach**

Library staff continues to collaborate with other city departments. Events coordinated with other city departments or services provided to other city departments will be counted as Outreach. Library supervisors couldn't justify using the numbers as library programming numbers, but if Library staff contributes, the events or services will be counted as outreach numbers. The library is still reaching the community and making an impact.

## **d. Calendar of Events**

The Library has a jam-packed summer of fun with a full calendar!

The Library is excited about hosting the Craft Pavilion at the Fireworks Extravaganza on July 3, from 4pm to 10pm at the Chester L. Davis Sportsplex. 5 crafts have been planned for

approximately 1,500 children. Library staff will also be helping at the Citizen Appreciation Day on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Also confirmed for fall is a series of pop-up story times at Fire Stations 2 and 6 and the EMS 1 station. The Library is excited to reach the public in different ways hosting unique events at different city facilities.

The Library will also lend a helping hand at Parks and Recreation events, including: Harvest Fest: October 16; Family Campout: November 6; and Breakfast with Santa: December 11. The Library will be working with Human Resources in attending the City's Wellness Fair on August 19.

The Library has a banner across Main St. hoping to attract citizens and increase awareness.

## **8. Board Comments**

Kathleen Nenninger commented that she enjoyed the Texas Library Association's newsletter coverage of Helen Hall Library and the History Club. She believes all the things being done with the Club will continue to bring people in and it will continue to grow. She commented that people have been approaching her and asking questions regarding the History Club offerings.

Councilman Millican mentioned the recent Houston Chronicle article and complimented Teresa Potter-Reyes on the article and what she said. He commented on how busy the parking lot is as of late and it has been a very noticeable difference, especially considering this past year.

Kathie Nenninger articulated that the presentation from last month was very nice and wondered where we move forward from here. She would like guidance or a written report from library staff and what staff recommend. Teresa Potter-Reyes said the next steps are conversations with Kenny Walsh, Recreation Superintendent, and Chien Wei to discuss what a shared recreation and library space would look like. Mrs. Nenninger said she had been approached by two other council members about the presentation from last month's meeting and was able to share the presentations from the meeting with them when they were released. Assistant City Librarian Darla Rance thanked Kathie for sharing the information with Council.

Councilman Millican, regarding programming in other City facilities, asked how the library plans on promoting the programs to the community. City Librarian Teresa Potter-Reyes said we would continue to utilize the City Manager's Update, as well as work with Communications on additional marketing ideas and opportunities. She commented that the Fire Department and EMS staff are excited, and she asked them to help get the word out to citizens and that as other city employees they can help be advocates. Mr. Millican commented that he thought it was a great opportunity since each fire station has a meeting space. Mrs. Nenninger mentioned that it puts a library event in the citizen's back yard. City Librarian Teresa Potter-Reyes commented that using spaces like the fire stations helps acquaint citizens with their local fire station and helps create connections between the public and city services.

Parks and Cultural Services Director Chien Wei commented that in a recent 4B meeting that there was discussion of a push amongst City Council for a joint facility so that they could be considering that future as they discuss current and future projects.

## **9. Review of follow-up items generated during meeting**

No follow-up items.

**10. Adjournment**  
7:00 pm