

Helen Hall Library
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 20, 2019
HHL 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, Kathie Nenninger, Mark Lardas and Leslye Mize were in attendance, along with City Librarian Jenny Brewer, Assistant City Librarians Teresa Potter-Reyes and Darla Rance, Parks and Cultural Services Director Chien Wei and Administrative Assistant Julie Orff.

3. Opportunity for Citizens to address the Board

No citizens wished to address the Board.

4. Approval of minutes

The minutes for Board meeting July 16, 2019 were approved as submitted.

5. Council Liaison comments

There were no one present to represent the Council.

6. Chairman's comments

Mr. Frankovich introduced a newly published local author, his son, Tim Frankovich. *Until all Curses are Lifted*, his first novel, was released last week. Tim grew up in the Helen Hall Library and still lives in League City. It was suggested to invite Tim in the future to be invited for the Local Author Program.

7. Unfilled position update

Jenny noted that the library is currently fully staffed, although this afternoon Kelsea received a resignation in the Circulation department.

8. Budget update

The library's budget did not come up for discussion at either the August 12 work session, or the August 13 public hearing. Jenny mentioned that the library's request was fairly modest this year, which she feels was a product of suspending the strategic planning process, and that many priorities have revealed themselves since picking up the Strategic planning process in May. Ms. Nenninger mentioned her previous request about offering media conversation equipment. Jenny noted that it was mentioned in the Strategic Plan.

9. Board Council Presentation update

Jenny reviewed the time, date, and plan for the Board's presentation to Council next week. Tuesday, August 27th at 6:00 pm. She reported that the presentation had been updated with the Board members' new photos, but the content was unchanged since reviewed at the July meeting. Ms. Nenninger is preparing for the presentation.

10. Strategic Plan Update

Jenny directed the Board to the Strategic Plan folders included in their notebooks. She reviewed changes to the timetable made necessary by changes in the Needs Assessment timetable, then explained the gap analysis handout. Board members were asked to review the handouts and return it next meeting with highlights and/or underlining on 2-4 essential goals per business unit, plus notes.

The library was separated into 14 units and each of the Librarians and Assistants were assigned a unit to develop a mission statement, and goals to the Strategic Priorities that were developed last year: Keep Library Promises, Tell Library Stories, Welcome to the World (using our current facility) and Shape the Future (implemented with the needs assessment). The staff met this challenge with earnest. The information included in this packet will be reviewed by the library staff and the Board for further development for the Strategic Plan presentation in October at the Town Hall Meeting. The Strategic Plan will take the library through 2023.

11. Library Staff Reports

a. City Librarian Report:

i. Friends of the Library report:

Friends have not met since last Board meeting. They will resume meeting this Thursday, August 22. The landscaping rocks have been laid and improve the look to the entrance to the library.

ii. Community in Focus update:

Jenny shared the press release for the September Artists, Sherri Gastler, mentioning that Ms. Gastler retired from the Air Force Reserve in 2001 after serving for 27 years as a medic. She then went to massage therapist school in 2004, specializing in Lymphedema. Ms. Gastler worked as a manual lymph drainage therapist for the Lymphedema and Wound Care Institute for nine years until retiring in April 2014 at the age of 66. She painted her first picture in the summer of 2014. She joined the senior center in Friendswood and started taking their painting class in October of 2014 and has been painting ever since. The majority of her paintings are in acrylic, but she has also used emulsifiable oils for some special pieces. She paints all kinds of pictures including flowers, animals, beach scenes, and landscapes. Ms. Gastler's paintings will be on view at the Library from September 3 through September 30. A "Meet the Artist" reception will be held in the Library Board Room on September 12 from 6:00-8:00 pm.

The featured artist from August, Thelma Brown had a reception last week. Press releases were sent per Ms. Nenninger's suggestion. Approximately 20 library patrons attended along with her family and friends. One library patron brought down her son who was working upstairs to meet the artist. He is very interested in art and it was a special moment when the young budding artist could discuss his passion with Ms. Brown.

b. Assistant City Librarians'

i. Public Services

Public Services

London reports that the outreach with YMCA will continue throughout the fall, with the mother and daughter volunteer team presenting story time and other activities. They have acquired purple bags with the library logo in white to use for giveaways at outreach events. London's position was not created last year. With the volunteer hours increasing 143%, Darla mentioned that his position was needed, his work has been an asset to the library.

Adult Services

A new page, Alexandria, will start on August 21. A new book display was set up in the back of Non-Fiction with the book titles facing out. The page's have called it "Walking the Dewey". The Adult Summer Reading program had 69 participants.

Children's Services

The Children's Summer Reading program included 912 participants. The numbers represent a 860% increase from last year. Braille books are going to be located near the Children's desk for those who may need them. Staff recommendations will be included in a new Children's Services Blog starting in September.

Teen Services

Sheldon has purchased a button maker for future programs and is planning a teen ComicCon for May 2020. There were 149 participants in the Teen Summer Reading program turning in 384 reading logs.

Volunteer Coordinator

The Volunteer Bazaar held on Saturday, August 10, was a success with 289 participants. Approximately 25 organizations took place.

ii. Access Services

Circulation Services

Access Services Supervisors held a get together on July 23 for team building and an opportunity to show their appreciation for the members of Access Services. Circulation Clerk Katie Broussard has been diligently adding all of the addresses from our completed library card applications to a zip code log. In June and July, there were 702 new cards given to League City residents and 331 new cards given to residents of other near-by cities. Circulation Clerk Emory Dunn is working on a viewer's advisory blog for patrons. She is creating a guide based on genre's and niche interests. At the request of HR, Circulation Supervisor Kelsea Meza assembled a new employee check list for new hires to complete in NeoGov; Supervisors approved the check list and it will be in effect when the next employee is hired. A new Page, Angela Ortiz, starts work tomorrow, August 21.

Technical Services

Technical Services Clerk Ann Titsworth processed 70 materials orders in the month of July – the highest number of firm orders ever placed for as long as that data point has been recorded. With those orders processed, collection development staff have successfully spent out their budgets and we look forward to devoting the remainder of the fiscal year to getting the rest of our new materials out to the shelves and into customers' hands. More interlibrary loans request were filled for our customers than any other time this fiscal year; authority processing was at its highest of this fiscal year; orders submitted, as mentioned above, were at their highest of all time; and cataloging for July 2019 exceeded the previous year's July output. July saw the wrap-up of Technical Services' participation in the Behind the Scenes tours developed by Kelsea Meza. In June, Technical Services Librarian, Meredith Layton and in July, Technical Services Clerk, Kathryn Rose presented on the "life cycle of a library book" and Technical Services' often invisible role in Library Services.

Access Services

Some cosmetic repairs were completed: corner guards were added to all corners in the library; the library theater was repainted and looks fabulous; and a corner of the Technical Services workroom was repainted. Library staff are busy closing out contracts, purchase orders, and accounts. The Staff Summer Reading program, with prizes generously donated by the Friends of Helen Hall Library had 22 participants who read a total of 163 books.

a. Statistical Report

Jenny reviewed the statistical report and shared two articles she encountered during Supervisors' ongoing search for explanations and solutions regarding circulation patterns in print, audio, eBooks, and DVDs. She read a series of quotes from "Libraries Must Draw the Line on E-books" (Feldman, *Library Journal*, 7/12/2019) and "The Great Race to Rule Streaming TV" (Weiner, *NYT* 7/10/2019):

i. From Library Journal:

1. A year ago, Macmillan placed a four-month embargo on new-release titles from its Tor imprint—part of what the publisher characterized as a "test." In a

series of recent meetings, Macmillan representatives told librarians that the test has validated its belief that library e-book lending depresses consumer e-book sales and author payouts. Speculation is that Macmillan will soon announce new digital terms and pricing for libraries that will include some version of an embargo on new-release titles across more of Macmillan's imprints.

2. In another recent setback, Hachette Book Group and Simon & Schuster became the first of the Big Five publishers to meter digital audio purchases in libraries. Like e-books, digital audio licenses from these two publishers will now expire after 24 months.
3. Meanwhile, as the format becomes more popular, Amazon is growing more aggressive in its tactics. Its Audible subscription service is pursuing exclusive contracts that deny libraries access to some of the most highly desirable digital audio content, including from major authors such as Margaret Atwood and Michael Lewis. And adding another unwelcome twist to the digital audio story, following an exclusive deal with an unnamed "important strategic partner," Blackstone Publishing last month imposed a 90-day embargo on new-release audio titles in libraries.

ii. From NYT:

1. According to a February report by the research firm Ampere Analysis, after years of growth, the S.V.O.D. market is "showing signs of reaching saturation," with the number of subscriptions per household staying Illustration by Giacomo Gambineri firm at about three from late 2017 through late 2018. You can get an anecdotal sense of the ceiling for this market by asking yourself, How many different companies am I willing to pay \$6 to \$15 a month for TV before I max out?
2. The success of a given streaming show isn't determined by how many people watch it but by how many subscriptions it helps to generate or maintain. The programming goal of an S.V.O.D., then, is an overall atmosphere of plenitude, a constantly updating slate of would-be "tentpole shows," buttressed with enough theoretically watchable other stuff that viewers don't flee once "Stranger Things" is over. As one producer put it to me, the mission at a streaming service like Netflix is "to basically create channel surfing within Netflix" — to entice us into a walled garden where the plantings are so copious we never think of leaving.
3. It's fair to wonder how far any TV-maker can spread itself before its output suffers. For all the talk of epochal change around streaming television, the emphasis on sheer volume at Netflix and other platforms has already created a dispiriting new phenomenon reminiscent of old ones — like entering a Blockbuster in 1994 and navigating aisle after aisle of VHS tapes, half of which seem to be "Jurassic Park," and straining to find one you actually want to rent; or flicking through 150 cable channels in 2004 and wondering if anything decent is on now that "Sex and the City" is over.
4. Benchmark example of "The Sopranos": When HBO broadcast that series, beginning in 1999, it boasted a roster of not just top-tier actors, writers and directors but also of cinematographers, casting directors, location scouts and so on. This was possible because its creator, David Chase, enjoyed his pick of talent in an industry that had done a pretty good job till that point of squandering it on far less ambitious shows (if not outright junk). Twenty years later, it's harder to picture that kind of concentration of talent in a single project, because the proliferation of shows has splintered and scattered those writers, actors and scouts — leading the medium from its early-aughts "golden age" to what some critics have called the era of "good-enough" TV.

Jenny and the Board discussed how these articles may relate to the Helen Hall library. Our downloadable media circulation is up. How will the publisher's decision to limit ebook buying to libraries effect our services? How does the entertainment industry effect our services?

Currently, our DVD circulation is not increasing while the collection at the Deer Park library is up 50%. Possible reasons may include the over saturation of poor media offerings and patrons are looking for more sustainable entertainment, or is electronic streaming killing the interest of DVDs with its saturation in the market? It is very evident that our DVD collection is not browsable with our current spacing issues. Considerations, relating to the old Blockbuster look, have been discussed with the DVD faces out instead of spines and resorted by genre or interest. New releases can be displayed in a separate shelf including all releases from the past year as holds reserve the newer releases for some time.

Jenny mentioned that library supervisors are being made more aware and accountable for their relative statistics. Highlights of the data included electronic movies (downloadable) were way up, reference numbers look good and the volunteer hours have increased. Mr. Wei noted that the music CD numbers were low, and Teresa stated that they are buying fewer CD's based on this. Ms. Nenninger commented on the number of programs offered and the number of patrons attending. Space, location, lack of a computer room parking and time are all a factor. The staff is pleased that the number of programs is increasing at a higher rate than the attendance of some events have decreased. Librarians are challenged to look at what are possible disruptions to our statistics and how we can relate and understand our numbers and how it impacts our service. It is a challenge to provide more context with statistics in the future.

b. Calendar of Events

Jenny pointed out the return of "Managing your Money" on 8/27, and the continuation on Marketing and Publishing on 9/12. Marketing and Publishing has had an uncertain future since the departure of key staff and supporters, but has survived into another season, which is encouraging. The History Club is on the calendar for August 29 although Ms. Nenninger feels that it would not restart until September. Darla mentioned the Teen Manga Workshop with Ain from Communications on September 11. Jenny felt the attendance to the back to back Writers Club (where a writing prompt is shared) and the Writers Night (where individuals work in progress is discussed) was positive and encouraging. The computer club begins again in September.

12. Board Comments

The library is a busy place! More space, a program room, and a computer room are needed. Look into what the patrons like and focus on increasing those programs attendance. Advertisements and communication are needed to make sure the public is aware of what the library has to offer. Ms. Nenninger received another library "Top Fan" award on Facebook.

13. Review of follow-up items generated during meeting

The calendar will be corrected.

14. The next scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting is Tuesday, September 17 at 6:30 pm

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 pm.