

**Escondido Public Library Board of Trustees
Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 12, 2017, 2:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: President Guiles called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

Members Present: Trustees Ron Guiles, Mirek Gorny, Elmer Cameron, Mayra Salazar, and Gary Knight

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Joanna Axelrod, Deputy City Librarian; Misty Breymeyer, Division Coordinator.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

MINUTES

Motion by Trustee Cameron, seconded by Trustee Gorny, to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2017 and August 15, 2017 meetings as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

CURRENT BUSINESS

1. Review and approve revised Collection Development Policy

Deputy City Librarian Axelrod gave a brief background on the purpose of having an established Collection Development Policy, and how it is put into use. The document was last approved in 2012 and the Trustees are currently tasked with approving the revisions as follows: expansion and clarification of the Pioneer Room's collections, and the removal of the Mission, Vision, and Values statements which are already listed on the Library's website and in other documents.

Trustee Knight asked if this policy included information on gifts. Deputy City Librarian Axelrod responded that the Library has a separate Deed of Gift form which patrons must fill out prior to our acceptance of materials for the collections. This form states the City's ownership and ability to dispose items as appropriate.

Motion by Trustee Knight, seconded by Trustee Gorny, to approve the Collection Development Policy changes as presented. Motion carried unanimously

3. Discuss the Trustees role related to the California Education Code §18910

President Guiles opened the Trustee discussion on the topic of the California Education Code §18910.

Trustee Knight stated he is under the assumption that no matter the position the Board decides to take on this topic, the ultimate determination of who has final authority over the management of the library relies on a court ruling. This isn't an issue with library management. The Library is managed just fine. This is financial and due to the unfunded CalPERS liability. The Library is a temporary fix because the amount in pensions will continue to grow. The City will still need to look at other financial options. Trustee Knight recommended citizens work with the City to create citizen workgroups to explore solutions to this issue City-wide, and suggested looking at what other cities have done. Police and Fire in San Marcos and Vista have been outsourced and service levels have not gone down. If that were done in Escondido, 42% of the budget would be saved. Trustee Knight suggested to the group that if they want to have an impact, educate themselves on the PERS issue and go to Council with ideas from a practical standpoint.

Trustee Cameron stated that there are a lot of questions that have yet to be answered. One of which is that if the Board were to run the Library, where does the money come from? His understanding is the Board would have the ability to levy a tax to help run the library. To what degree would the public be appreciative of a newly constituted Board levying a tax when they are already paying taxes that go toward the Library? Personally he is interested in a new library just as community support indicates the need for one. This action would take a bond election; the impact of taxes being levied may or may not influence the public negatively, he suspected it would.

Trustee Salazar expressed her opinion on the need to collect more information on any legal responsibility to even see if the Board could proceed. In the meantime, she would like to request the City reach out to the County of San Diego Library system. Supervisor Gaspar's office said the County will not reach out to the City. The City of Escondido must reach out and request a proposal. She also agreed with Trustee Cameron that everyone wants a new library and added there is also a need for more available parking.

Trustee Gorny seconded previous statements and agreed City staff should explore all available options. He feels the Board serves in an advisory capacity and that they have made their position clear to the City Council. He suggested they continue to work with the public since everyone wants a new library facility. He hoped the discussion would turn to talking about that subject rather than this current topic.

President Guiles reiterated that everyone on the Board wants to do what is best for the Library. It may not be possible to manage the Library until the legality of this topic is explored; a resolution is needed before Trustees can move forward in a specific direction. Dependent on a ruling, and a decision about where funding would come from, he would be willing to go in either direction. More information is needed to understand if the Trustees should proceed as an advisory or management Board.

Motion by Trustee Salazar, seconded by Trustee Gorny, to have a special meeting on Wednesday, September 27, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. to discuss and draft a letter asking the City to approach the County of San Diego for a counter-proposal to manage the Escondido Public Library. Motion carried unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Laura Hunter, Escondido, provided a packet of information concerning the Jackson County Library management report. She thanked the Trustees for the stance they took in their previous letter. Through her research on Library Systems and Services (LS&S), evidence shows they will decimate the Library; the Trustees are all the public has between the patrons and this contractor. She referenced the City Attorney's letter stating it was a fear tactic and urged Board members to continue being the defenders of the Library.

Liz White, Escondido, highlighted how the Jackson County report shows that LS&S failed to maintain minimum service and staffing levels. She questioned potential operational stoppage issues. The proposed agreement does not specify detailed numbers like staffing levels and educational and experience requirements. She asked who will be responsible for measuring performance and operational plans, and suggested to include that information in the contract. She anticipated LS&S will raise their fees charged to the City to cover maintaining or increasing service levels.

Roy Garrett, Escondido, said lawyers will be earning quite a bit as they litigate should the Council not back down on this, and suggested everyone get in the same canoe and row in the same direction on this topic. If Board members announce they would be willing to take over management, it would show a cohesiveness with the rest of the community. He appreciated the City Attorney's letter, but interprets the topic differently than what was stated in his letter. In reading the Monterrey Park case and the letter, one would see significant differences between the two. The Board is on solid ground if they would like to manage the Library and are willing to say they will do so.

Jon Schwab, Escondido, has lived in Escondido for more than 17-years. While reading a history of the Brooklyn Bridge, he read how the author was able write the book due to the obscure resources available within his local library. He looked at the LS&S proposal which made a point of getting rid of low circulating items. These low circulating items are important for research. Libraries are not in the business of making money, it is a ludicrous way to save money. His suggestions come from over 30-years' experience working with large corporations and as an entrepreneur. He suggested using Continuous Process Improvement to create a strategy to reduce expenses and staffing.

Richard Powers, Escondido, stated Andrew Carnegie is spinning in his grave.

Christine Jackson, Escondido, a resident of Escondido for 20 years, gave her appreciation for Board giving their time to be the steering committee for the Library. It shows their love for the Library and that they will do the right thing.

Chris Nava, Escondido, thanked the Board for standing firm against outsourcing, and for their letter to Council. She referenced the City Attorney's letter as being created to intimidate. She asked the Board to consider their role as stewards of the library and reminded them they have the support and gratitude of the community.

Meryl Berke, Escondido, stated that she was just a patron prior to learning about the push for outsourcing. Since then she became familiar with Escondido Indivisible, learned more about current Library services, and she feels Escondido has a great library. She brought up the Jackson County report to the City Manager, to which he replied that was old news and not all Escondido residents signed petitions or use the library. She continued that she uses different libraries in the area and those she spoke with were astounded at the news, and replied they would not volunteer for such a situation.

Barbara Letson, Escondido, looked into the Shasta Library system and said it works there because all the civic organizations and citizens are for it. That is not the case in Escondido.

Susan Southwell, Escondido, said she brings her granddaughter to the Library frequently and just became aware of this situation. The Board's mission shows there is a strong ability to advise the Council. She liked the recommendation of approaching the County of San Diego. Nobody seems to be in of favor of LS&S; the Council grabbed the reigns from the Board on this decision. This is a beautiful Library and the City should maintain ownership of its collections. She is against outsourcing the Library.

Olga Diaz, Escondido, says she is able to advise people about how to manage difficult situations as she is frequently having to fight the hard fight. The one thing she ends up saying the most at the end of these fights is "I told you so". She encouraged each of the Board members to find their voice and assert themselves not only for this Library but for all libraries LS&S will go after. Every time Roy Garrett sued the City he won, pick your horse. Leadership is not easy. The Library deserves champions.

Mary Gaines, Escondido, as a criminal lawyer, she keeps listening to people say we need to take time, but in her opinion there is no time. She recommended a temporary injunction pending a lawsuit against the Council to buy time to investigate this further. She felt LS&S had already been promised the contract, and offered her services to put in any time needed within her capacity to help. The pension issue is true; it will be the Library today, but tomorrow it will be something else. Previous Council decisions have not helped the community; they hired a new Deputy City Manager. Make the City Manager and City Attorney outsource their PERS as they are overpaid.

Virginia Abushanab, Escondido, stated she read the letter from the City Attorney and he is playing for the other team. He tells you to restrain, but there is nothing against you making a resolution today to obey the law which is a stance that would allow the attorneys to move forward. She stated her confidence that this subject will go to a vote soon.

M. Greg Dean, Escondido, said he didn't realize there were representatives of LS&S in the room, and he addresses his comments to them. He lived in Southern Oregon and the libraries there are in bad shape due to outsourcing to LS&S and they are not alone. LS&S has a record but it isn't a good record. He continued that a Hawaiian library system ended their contract with LS&S as a result of their collection development practices. Following a legal case with Baker & Taylor, the Hawaii legislature passed a law banning the selection of library materials by a private company.

OTHER REPORTS:

Deputy City Librarian Axelrod informed the Board of upcoming programs and activities.

The Library was nominated by a community member to win an ice cream social for the community. Penguin Random House selected our Library to receive their Summer Scoop giveaway of \$500. Staff are hoping to work with a local vendor who supported us during our summer reading challenge to provide the ice cream.

The RFID/AMH project construction will be starting within the week. The project should finish and new equipment be installed and operational by the end of the calendar year.

Next Meeting: September 27, 2017 (Special Meeting)

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Trustee Cameron, seconded by Trustee knight, to adjourn the meeting at 3:09 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.



Ron Guiles, President, Library Board of Trustees/M. Breymeyer, Division Coordinator