

Helen Hall Library
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 21, 2023
Helen Hall Library Board Room

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call of Members

Board member Jeanne Avandsalehi noted that all names were recorded on the attendance sheet. In attendance from the Board was Jeanne Avandsalehi, Kyrsten Garcia, Mark Lardas, Mary Dugie, David Hoffman, and Roxann Lewis. Also in attendance were Executive Director Sarah Osborne, Director of Parks and Cultural Services Chien Wei, City Librarian Teresa Potter, Assistant City Librarians Meredith Layton and Darla Rance, and Administrative Assistant Emily Holodnak. Two citizens also attended.

3. Opportunity for Citizens to address the Board

Citizen Peggy Zahler stated her ongoing interest in the library. As a previous board trustee and board chair, she urged the board to reach out to her if anyone has questions.

4. Approval of Helen Hall Library Board Meeting Minutes for November 2022

The minutes for the board meeting held on November 15, 2022, were approved as submitted.

5. Approval of Helen Hall Library Special Board Meeting Minutes for January 2023

The minutes for the special board meeting held on January 23, 2023, were approved with the correction of changing Kyrsten Garcia's title from "Mrs." to "Ms." Roxann Lewis made the motion to make the change, Mark Lardas seconded the correction, and all members voted in favor of the correction.

6. City Council Comments

No city council members were present for comments.

7. Chairman's Comments

Jeanne Avandsalehi informed the board that Tommy Frankovich is still recovering in the hospital and asked for the board to have patience since it is her first time leading a meeting.

8. Executive Director Comments

Executive Director had no comments.

9. Board Officer Elections

Jeanne Avandsalehi proposed to postpone elections until Tommy Frankovich has recovered and is able to attend the board meeting. Mark Lardas motioned that the election be postponed one month, and then decide at that time. Roxann Lewis seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of postponing the election for one month.

10. Walter Hall House Progress Report

Teresa Potter updated the board stating that the Walter Hall House has been lowered on the priority list for both the library and for Facilities. Sarah Osborne stated that the library has been occupied with other issues, and that the Walter Hall House is on hold.

11. Discussion of Revised Materials Challenge Procedures

Teresa Potter led off by saying that the new revisions to the ordinance read at the February 14 city council meeting were scheduled to be posted February 22, 2023. Teresa also asked for questions from the board that may be directed to Sarah Osborne, Chien Wei, or the City Attorney's office. Teresa stated that the second reading of the ordinance is scheduled for February 28, 2023. Mary Dugie shared that she will likely have more questions after the ordinance is posted. Kyrsten Garcia stated the importance of having library board members apply to the new committee to fill designated elected positions. Jeanne Avandsalehi clarified that appointments to the committee will not be made until after the second reading of the ordinance. The library board of trustees asked Teresa to email a copy of the new ordinance to the board once it is posted. Kyrsten noted her disappointment in city council not taking recommendations from the Library Board.

12. Staff Reports

a. City Librarian Report given by City Librarian, Teresa Potter

i. Library Update

Teresa's first update was that the library is now a "Library of Things" since we have added board games, puzzles, and coloring books to our collection in January. So far, items from the collection have circulated 58 times.

Teresa followed up by updating the board about the library's new online subscription to Value Line Investments. After offering the subscription in print for years, the library is now happy to offer it to patrons online. Continuing, Teresa stated that after evaluating patron behavior with magazines, Consumer Reports will now be offered online. Teresa explained that the rising cost of online magazines and the scarcity of print magazines requires the library to strategize about cost.

Teresa informed the board that our part-time Children Services Page, Carol, will be retiring and that her position will soon be posted on League City's website. She also noted that summer positions will be posted soon and encouraged board members to share that information.

Teresa stated that the budget season is quickly approaching, and staff is beginning to talk about wish list items. The city completed a compensation study in 2022 and the goal for library staff is to diversify entry level staff positions and introduce an advancement course for those in the positions. Teresa also shared with the board that the library is hoping to create an entire outreach kit. Finally, Teresa mentioned the desire for holds retrieval lockers to be placed in the city for patron convenience. Teresa prompted the board to create their own wish lists of things they would like to see incorporated in the library budget.

Teresa mentioned the library's recognition with the 2022 Achievement of Excellence Award from the Texas Municipal Library Directors Association. Teresa also gave acknowledgement to Santa Fe Public Library in Galveston County for being awarded.

Teresa updated the board that the utility billing registration process for new residents will soon have an option for patrons to sign up for library cards.

Teresa stated that the ability to reserve the library theater and boardroom will be uniform with other reservations across the city with the implementation of RecTrac and the reservation process will be streamlined on the city's website.

Teresa continued updating the board of the library's collaboration with the League City Parks and Recreation department, by sharing that staff will have swimming pool passes as reading challenge prizes. There will also be a Library Card Day at the pool, where citizens with a library card can get free entry to the city pool.

Chien Wei asked Teresa to share an email received from a patron praising Local History Librarian Caris Brown and the fantastic service she provides to patrons.

ii. Friends of Helen Hall Library

The Friends of Helen Hall Library monthly meeting will be held on February 23, 2023. The Friends will elect their officers, discuss changing their logo, and choose a date to host their annual book sale.

b. Assistant City Librarians' Staff Reports

This month Teresa proposed several questions to staff and had Darla and Meredith read aloud their answers.

Questions:

- a. What's your dream program to offer at the library?
- b. How can the City of League City be a better reflection of its residents?
- c. How can the library be a better reflection of League City?
- d. Identify a great statistic for your section and use it to tell a story about impact in the community.

i. Public Services given by Assistant City Librarian, Darla Rance

Assistant City Librarian Darla Rance's Answers:

- a. Darla would like to have a festival that incorporates her students from her ESL class.

1. Adult Services

Adult Services Librarian Joanne Turner's Answers:

- a. A biannual or quarterly "Popular Author's Hour" with nationally known authors and to cohost with neighboring libraries to offset the cost.
- b. Joanne said that as a city employee she can only offer the building blocks that the city values. Some of those are customer focused service, value driven organization, along with integrity wherever she is.

- c. Along with different city departments attend various League City's HMO, organizations, or maybe even churches, and title it "Ask Us Anything".
- d. Wine and Jazz had 72 or more people, Sewing and Sipping had 7, and the Oyster Shell Art had 17.

Electronic Services Librarian Amelia Chau's Answers:

- a. Amelia would like an exercise class for adults, such as Zumba Gold, where seniors can listen to music and dance.
- b. Amelia says sharing information through various news channels and with other city departments.
- c. Provide library database resources. There are many different databases for everyone.
- d. A new computer class program "Vision Board and Vibes" was one of the "New Year, New You...It's Time, Texas" program series at Helen Hall Library. It was an after-hours program held on January 28, 2023, from 6:30-8 p.m. Refreshments and wine were served. It was nice to provide a different version of our computer classes.

2. Children's Services

Children's Services Librarian Kate Guynn's Answers:

- a. Kate would like bigger library-wide programs for Diwali, Chinese New Year, Kwanzaa, and Black History Month. Kate would also like to hold a LibraryCon and a book festival.
- b. To have more city-wide multicultural events to represent our community.
- c. Offering citizenship classes for the large number of immigrants we have in our community. That would pair with the English classes that we already offer. It's a way to strengthen the community and create library advocates and lifelong learners.
- d. It would be easy to look at our amazing numbers for the weekday morning, early literacy programs, but weekend programs are the hidden gems. Family Build It (26) and Music and Movement (30) are each held one Saturday a month.

Senior Assistant Children's Librarian Cody Kiser's Answers:

- a. Cody would like to do a large scale, community wide Halloween event, such as Halloween in the Park. She would like to include a pumpkin patch, costume contest, local food trucks, and bobbing for apples.
- b. Cody wants the city to consider that it is seeing an increase in the number of young adult residents, and that there is a lack of programming aimed at drawing that demographic.
- c. Cody believes the public library is a center/space for community. However, the public often looks at the library as only a place for small children and their parents.
- d. Cody would like to highlight Toddler Time and the relationships forged among visitors and staff.

Children's Librarian Sarah Hultman's Answers:

- a. Sarah would like an annual library festival or fair with local craftsmen and artists, a book sale hosted by the Friends of Helen Hall Library, and food trucks.

- b. Sarah thinks it is important to listen to patrons, because that is how we find out what they want.
- c. Sarah thinks it's important to listen and evaluate.
- d. Sarah also wants to brag a little about hosting a total of 403 people for three Toddler Time dates.

3. Teen Services

Teen Services Librarian Sheldon Steven's Answers:

- a. Sheldon would like an Adulting Series for teens that teaches them how to sew a button, change a tire, write a check, etc.
- b. Sheldon believes that the City of League City can be better by listening to what all groups of people are saying and having a conversation about how their goals can be accomplished. The city also needs to work alongside residents to achieve a better, more accurate, solution together.
- c. By continuing to offer books that feature diverse characters that citizens can see themselves in and programming that is inviting/inclusive for everyone. However, we also must continue our conversations with all types of community members to know that we are on the right track.
- d. Smart Cookie Trivia Night was created by the Teen Advisory Board and Sheldon. They wanted a cookie social, but they also liked her trivia night suggestion. They merged the ideas to offer a fun event where they could bring in cookies while also enjoying trivia about cookies. There were 32 attendees for this event, which is a great statistic since many special Friday events for teens have 25-30 attendees.

4. Volunteer Services

Volunteer Coordinator Jeremy Brewer's Answers:

- a. Jeremy would like a collaborative referral system for volunteer opportunities across the city and other nonprofits. This would make our Volunteer Program not only about serving Helen Hall Library but referring people to other opportunities within the community.
- b. Take steps in event planning and marketing to better acknowledge and cater to the large demographic of nongeographic residents who still primarily use League city for eating, shopping, libraries, and parks.
- c. Jeremy already feels the library does an excellent job of representing and reflecting the demographic and populace that is regularly engaging with the library. His only suggestion is perhaps more programs and literature being highlighted regularly/featured that represents the ethnic diversity of the community.
- d. The Volunteer Program currently empowers the community service efforts of over 90 students from 17 area schools. These schools are made up of intermediate, high school, private, public, and college preparatory schools. Schools from Dickinson, Friendswood, League City, Houston, and Galveston are represented.

ii. **Access Services** given by Assistant City Librarian, Meredith Layton

Assistant City Librarian Meredith Layton's Answers:

- a. Meredith mentioned that many of her dream programs and services have been made a reality since working at Helen Hall Library such as working at a Family Place Library, circulating nontraditional items, reading initiatives for everyone at all times of year. Meredith stated she would like to see more nontraditional collections such as a seed exchange or seed library, service points in more places throughout the city, a Five-Minute Book Club for busy people, a "Nailed It" bad art night for adults, and an "I Hated This Book" book display.
- b. Meredith started by differentiating the city as the government and the city as the community. It should be our focus to eliminate the barriers which may unintentionally exclude or render invisible or otherwise make people feel unwelcome. We must continually elicit feedback, to listen, and to respond.
- d. First, new member registration is continuing to show impressive increases – 28% from this time last year. Meredith thinks this demonstrates that folks are seeing the personal value of the library and are interested in utilizing the services. Second, circulation in the adult music collection – that's music on CD – has increased 77% from this time last year. She doesn't know what can be drawn from that but is excited for what it might mean for music lovers in League City!

1. Technical Services

Technical Services Librarian Ashley Leblow and Staff's Answers:

- a. A type of graphic or pamphlet that provides information and transparency about the life cycle of books. Technical Services believes this could clear up procedural confusion.
- b. With the number of new homes being built and going up for sale, it can be cumbersome trying to look up each item of individual information that is helpful to new residents besides what can be found in the "New Residents" section of the website. It would be nice to have a guide or link to a page emailed to new residents with information and QR codes on how to and where to. This can include things like how to get a library card, how to get an alarm permit, what does my pet need, where can I get my car registration changed, etc.
- c. Putting together a libguide, pamphlet, and/or graphic of the way the different departments work. This could include, how decisions are made in collection development, the steps we take with each item in tech, etc.
- d. Since our statistics do not vary much in the Technical Services Department this was something we believe impacts the community. The library is starting to lend things like video games, puzzles, board games, and more. Because these are all items that we've never had before, the technical services team has had to adapt and learn new cataloging methods along with thinking about our organizational scheme and how we can make searching the catalog easier for searching and browsing.

2. Administrative Services

Administrative Assistant Emily Holodnak's Answers:

- a. Emily would like to have comprehensive financial courses and birdwatching.

- b. Allowing representation of the diversity we have in the community, like the library does.
- c. Continuing to serve the patrons and public through programs, outreach, and day to day operations.
- d. Emily wanted to highlight 33 private reservations were booked in January, showing the public need for communal meeting spaces.

c. Statistical Reports

Teresa mentioned the statistics from the county were not available, so the report given was more of a quarterly report for the first part of FY2023. Teresa stated that we are fortunate to not have some of the problems other libraries have, but we are still faced with our own obstacles. Meredith put together a reading list of popular titles and authors.

d. Calendar of Events

Teresa mentioned a new program at the library, Board Games, being hosted by League City Communications employee Ain McWilliams. Ain has also helped the library to develop the board game collection. Teresa also informed the board of the March Madness reading challenge the library will be hosting through Beanstack. Meredith has popular titles pitted against each other for each “bracket.”

10. Board Comments

Jeanne Avandsalehi asked about budget money set aside for advertising programs in local newspapers. Teresa stated that we do not have a budget set aside, but that we do send events to local community guides for them to advertise. Sarah Osborne mentioned the cost of paper advertisement as well as declining readership, stating it may not be the most cost-effective way to advertise library programs. Sarah Osborne spoke of digital community platforms for advertising including some of the difficulties that these programs can cause.

Meredith mentioned discussions staff has had on nontraditional promotions such as coasters, dog waste bags, etc.

11. Review of follow-up items generated during meeting

The voting for elected positions is being postponed one month. The board meeting minutes from January will be corrected. The council agenda and supporting documents will be sent to the board of trustees when the files are available.

12. Adjournment

7:15 p.m.