

**Helen Hall Library**  
**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**  
Tuesday, March 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 were Jeanne Avandsalehi, Kyrsten Garcia, Mark Lardas, Mary Dugie, David Hoffman, and Roxann Lewis. Also in attendance were 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. The group was joined by Councilman Tom Crews and two citizens.

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

Citizen Peggy Zahler stated her ongoing interest in the library as well as her desire for the Library Board to discuss the CCISD school library policy updates. She stated that she would also like to see Helen Hall Library make a distinction for itself as a public library. It was motioned by Tina Coker to have a statement regarding the role of the public library on the Helen Hall Library website. The motion was seconded by Kyrsten Garcia and voted in favor unanimously.

**4. Approval of Helen Hall Library Board Meeting Minutes for February 2023**

The minutes for the board meeting held on February 21, 2023, were approved.

**5. City Council Comments**

No city council members were initially present for comments. Later, when Councilman Tom Crews was in attendance, he commented that he did the best he could in supporting the library. He also commended the library and offered his continued support.

**6. Chairman's Comments**

Jeanne Avandsalehi mentioned Tommy Frankovich's memorial service the previous night. She also noted that with his absence, the Library Board would be holding officer elections this evening.

**7. Executive Director Comments**

Executive Director was not present to comment. Director of Parks and Cultural Services Chien Wei commented about the upcoming budget season and workshops scheduled for the public to attend. He also stated that in previous years Boards and Commissions would make presentations to City Council, and that this year the Boards and Commissions will be submitting annual reports to City Council electronically.

**8. Board Officer Elections**

Teresa Potter began elections by naming each position and gave a small description of each role.

Mark Lardas volunteered for Chair, was nominated by Roxann Lewis, and seconded by Jeanne Avandsalehi. The Library Board voted in favor unanimously.

Roxann Lewis nominated Jeanne Avandsalehi for Vice Chair. This was seconded by Mark Lardas and Kyrsten Garcia. The Library Board voted in favor unanimously.

Jeanne Avandsalehi and Teresa Potter discussed the role of Secretary before nominations. Mark Lardas nominated Kyrsten Garcia for Secretary, and Jeanne Avandsalehi seconded. After some discussion it was voted on unanimously that Kyrsten Garcia would be Secretary.

Roxann Lewis nominated Mary Dugie for Galveston County Library System Advisory Council Member, Kyrsten Garcia seconded, and the Library Board voted in favor unanimously.

In accordance with the newly elected positions, Mark Lardas directed the remainder of the meeting.

#### **9. Walter Hall House Progress Report**

David Hoffman recently met with the Fire Marshal to inspect the Walter Hall House and discuss safety and infrastructure concerns. David stated that his next step was to begin making phone calls to colleagues in his field of structural engineering to get opinions on repairs. David's main goal is to free up city resources by seeking third parties or volunteer work if it is an economical option. A specific concern noted is a fire staircase on the outside of the building that appears to be a hazard. The Library Board along with Teresa Potter explained the concept of a Library Annex at the Walter Hall House to Councilman Tom Crews.

#### **10. Discussion of Community Standards Review Committee**

Mary Dugie started the conversation by noting a discrepancy between the application for Community Standards Review Committee and the application for the Library Board, which requires the application for the Community Standards Review Committee be notarized. City Librarian Teresa Potter stated that she would seek clarification on the matter and also noted that the library offers complementary notary services. Teresa also stated that she is seeking clarification on the selection of Library Board members to the Community Standards Review Committee. Tina Coker expressed concern about how Library Board members will be selected to the Community Standards Review Committee. The group discussed their general confusion about the Community Standards Review Committee process.

Teresa reiterated her quest for clarification from the City Secretary's Office. Mark Lardas asked for clarification on the makeup of the Community Standards Review Committee. Teresa stated that there would be three Library Board Members, three citizens with a minimum of two years in early childhood education, and a non-voting chairperson, all appointed by the Mayor.

Tina again expressed her concern for Library Board Members who would not be interested in sitting on the Community Standards Review Committee. Kyrsten Garcia asked if Tina wanted to take a poll of who is interested, to which she agreed. When asked which Library Board members would like to be considered for the Community Standards Review Committee, Jeanne Avandsalehi, Kyrsten Garcia, and Mary Dugie raised their hands. Teresa stated that the Community Standards Review Committee is set to draft the questions that will appear on the Request for Reconsideration forms.

## **11. Discussion of Annual Board of Trustees Report to City Council**

City Librarian Teresa Potter reiterated that the presentation given by Boards and Commissions would be submitted electronically this year as opposed to previous years when it was done in person. Teresa believes that this is a great chance for the Library Board to redesign the annual report given to City Council. Teresa presented the Library Board with the 2022 Impact Report asking the Board if they would like to present something similar.

Teresa stated that she would like to have a draft ready for the Library Board to review at the June meeting with the goal of the final product approved at the July meeting. Tina Coker shared her idea about a Library Board portrait to be on display and used in the presentation. Kyrsten Garcia asked what precipitated the change from an in-person presentation to it being submitted to City Council electronically. Teresa stated that she believed it was for efficiency. The Library Board commented on Teresa's positive take on the change. The Library Board asked about several forms of digital content, and Teresa mentioned thoughtfulness when creating graphics. David Hoffman asked about how citizens will be able to see the presentations, and Teresa did not have a clear answer to give from City Council.

Mark Lardas asked about what the focus of the presentation is, to which Teresa answered, the Library Board acts as our voice and representative to City Council about what the library is doing and the impact the library has on the community. Mark voiced his concern about submitting a collection of facts, without a story or addressing community impact. Mark continued to express his desire for a solid focus point and presentation structure for City Council. David complimented the Impact Report and stated he believes it does show the community impact in a very consumable way.

Kyrsten recapped what everyone was wanting in the report and stated that she would need time to come up with ideas for the presentation. Kyrsten encouraged everyone to focus on their personal use of the library and the value that individual use brings to the community and suggested everyone bring back ideas for the presentation to the next meeting in April.

Councilman Tom Crews spent a little bit of time explaining the turn-around process for reading these presentations. Mary Dugie asked that the PowerPoint presentation from 2022 be sent out to the Library Board as a starting point. She also mentioned a program called Nearpod that she has used for distance learning. She explained that the content was designed in a more engaging way for the viewer.

## **12. Staff Reports**

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

#### **i. Library Update**

Teresa began the update by noting that all Summer Positions had been posted and that interviews are being conducted in the coming weeks. As of right now, the library is fully staffed, but there is one employee out on medical leave, a Children's Services pages is retiring at the end of the month, and a part-time Circulation clerk is leaving in April. Teresa is hopeful that the library will be fully staffed by the April Library Board Meeting.

Teresa stated that Budget Kick-Off starts on March 22, and asked the Library Board if they had any wish list items they would like to see incorporated into the budget. Jeanne Avandsalehi

stated that she has had a few patrons inquire about coffee or a café while they were perusing the Friends of Helen Hall Library Bookstore. Teresa mentioned the ongoing pursuit of vending machines for the library. Chien Wei stated that perhaps a coffee machine could be incorporated into the discussion once the City's vending machine contract has been sorted out.

Mary Dugie mentioned that the Austin Public Library System allows laptops and tablets to be checked out for in-library use and wondered if there would be a way to make that available to the citizens of League City for take-home checkout.

Kyrsten Garcia stated the same idea was on her wish list. Kyrsten stated that her number one wish list item is a west side library location. Kyrsten would also like to see seasonal play items in the Children's Section. Also on Kyrsten's list were a "Redbox" type of location in the community for books, lockers to pick up holds, ask-a-librarian resource feature, continued additions to the Library of Things (ex. sewing machines, bicycle repair kits, etc.), a seed library, and a library bookmobile. Teresa mentioned upcoming Cookbook Club program happening this summer. Teresa also noted that she has investigated used trollies as a refurbished bookmobile.

Mary asked logistical questions about how frequently local bookmobiles had been used and what the maintenance would be like. Teresa mentioned Friendswood Public Library's ongoing issues with their bookmobile and agreed to find out more information for Mary.

Tina Coker asked if the library had fundraising capabilities, and Teresa informed her that is what the Friends of Helen Hall Library do. A gala type of event was also discussed, and Teresa mentioned that seems close on the horizon.

The final wish list item came from Mary, requesting feminine hygiene products to be available in the bathroom.

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

The Friends of Helen Hall Library elected new officers for this year. Raynette Tingle is the President. Kathie Nenninger is the secretary. Janel Salmen is the treasurer. The Friends meeting is this Thursday, at 5:00 p.m.

## **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 service do you think is our most hidden treasure? As in, an amazing service that not enough people know about.
- b. Is there anything we used to do that you wish we did again?
- c. Do you have a unique story to share about a patron interaction from the last several weeks?
- 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. The ability to ask for research assistance. The library has skilled reference librarians who can be very helpful!
- b. Curbside service!
- c. Talking to patrons; Darla told an older woman about an author, Louise Penny, and she came back later to tell Darla she wasn't getting any housework done (in a joking/sarcastic way).
- d. Ard Law Workshop – about 30 people.

**1. Adult Services**

Adult Services Librarian Joanne Turner's Answers:

- a. How stimulating a one-on-one reference subject question can be. It is a great feeling to help patrons who are not sure where to begin looking for something.
- b. Quarterly staff meetings to introduce new employees.
- c. Helping an elderly man access online materials to help him teach a teenager to repair an automobile.
- d. Wine and Jazz has been huge and brought lots of people from different areas to League City. Furthermore, about 90% of attendees go on to attend another library program.

Electronic Services Librarian Amelia Chau's Answers:

- a. Mobile Printing – Patrons are able to print documents from their smartphone or laptop. Patrons like it because it is more convenient than logging onto a computer.
- b. Having a variety of craft programs hosted at the library (ex. in person sewing) would be great.
- c. Participants in the database Fold3 class were happy to be able to find historic family military records.
- d. Adult Crafts-to-Go is a great program every month and sees a high turnout. The library usually provides twenty crafts that are all gone in one day.

**2. Children's Services**

Children's Services Librarian Kate Guynn's Answers:

- a. Our databases have a wealth of information! LearningExpress Library is a great tool for all ages. In a world where there is so much free, inaccurate information, the library offers free accurate information.
- b. No input.
- c. A patron came in to pick up her ILL about a German painter. Kate was able to tell the patron about the library's free biography database and write down the steps for the patron to be able to access the information at home.
- d. For the second year in a row, Children's Services provided an interactive Black History Month display. It positively impacts our community when people are represented and feel like they are seen.

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

- a. NoveList! Patrons are excited when you show them how to find similar books!
- b. Monthly staff meetings.
- c. A patron told me they were excited to see me in person! She told me that she watches our TikToks every night to relax and fall asleep.
- d. Letters to Santa! The library received 134 letters we were then able to mail out. In December 2020 the library only had 28 letters to mail.

Children's Librarian Sarah Hultman's Answers:

- a. Curbside is a great service! Unfortunately, the library has stopped advertising it.
- b. Placing importance on the quality of programs over the quantity of programs.
- c. A patron recently asked if the kid's coloring books could really be checked out, and was thrilled to learn that, yes, they can, and that it is an on-going community art project.
- d. Pop-Up Storytime had 73 attendees! It is great to see city employees working together.

### **3. Teen Services**

Teen Services Librarian Sheldon Steven's Answers:

- a. Sheldon asked the teens, and they said Libby/Overdrive, especially being able to see samples of the e-reading materials before checking them out. The teens wanted to highlight Beanstack for tracking reading. The teens expressed that the new video games are a hidden treasure but recognize this is still a new addition to the collection. (Note: Currently, all video games are checked out). The teens also said that there was a lack of awareness about the Teen Reading Lists.
- b. The teens felt that the old city website was easier to navigate. They also requested the return of 2-ply toilet paper.
- c. A regular patron returned after not coming to the library for a while. He needed financial help for a driver's license, and we were able to provide him information for United Way and printed directions there.
- d. The Anti-Valentine's Bash was a huge hit with 29 attendees, the teens love to be against love.

### **4. Volunteer Services**

Volunteer Coordinator Jeremy Brewer's Answers:

- a. The ability to request that new books be purchased for the library collection.
- b. Not enough history with the library to comment.
- c. A few weeks ago, the mother of a volunteer emailed to express thanks for creating such a positive and welcoming environment for her daughter.
- d. In February, 22 students and 6 adults came to volunteer for a special service day from League City Intermediate school.

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

Assistant City Librarian Meredith Layton's Answers:

- a. Meredith believes our most valuable service is hidden in plain sight, the collection! Specifically, the organization and purposeful design to create surreptitious discovery!

- b. Years ago, there was a vinyl record collection, and with the way music has been circulating (85% higher than last year), vinyl may be ready to make a comeback!
- c. Ability to provide device/technology support for a Kanopy streaming video user.
- d. Collection expenditures are on track for the budget year and cataloging productivity is strong. Print collection circulation continues to do well. The Library of Things collection has circulated 113 times in two months – which is impressive for new material types and new collections.

### **1. Technical Services**

Technical Services Librarian Ashley Leblow and Staff's Answers:

- a. Purchase suggestions! Many of the request forms come from the same patrons, and Ashley is not sure if other patrons realize this option.
- b. N/A.
- c. While cataloging kits, Ashley needed to ask Kate G. a question about some of the items. When Ashley was walking to Kate's office a patron asked for help on the self-checkout. At the time Ashley was carrying a stuffed dog and 2 fake medication bottles. I put the dog and the bottles down on the circ desk to help and Ashley was surprised that the patron didn't even seem phased that a library employee was carrying around a stuffed dog.
- d. All the video games were ordered on January 25 and cataloged and ready to be circulated by February 10. Ashley believes this is a phenomenal turnaround and believes patrons appreciated the new addition.

### **2. Circulation Services**

Circulation Services Supervisor Kelsea Meza's Answers:

- a. Book Box!
- b. No. Things are usually stopped for a reason.
- c. While Kelsea was on maternity leave, Circulation Clerk, Kate N. was able to share fantasy title recommendations to one of Kelsea's regular patrons.
- d. Notary Public! Circulation Clerk Elizabeth becoming a notary has really made a difference in the community. Like with computer usage and programs, the notary service that we offer is another tally mark on the side of "why libraries matter besides just books" and "who need the library 'cause everyone has the internet now." WRONG. People need these free services!

### **3. Administrative Services**

Administrative Assistant Emily Holodnak's Answers:

- a. Personalized Book Lists and Book Box! Kelsea, Meredith, Darla, and Sheldon really take a lot of time and effort to find books people will like.

### **c. Statistical Reports**

Teresa gave special mention to the Spring Break statistics Meredith included in the monthly statistics report. The library saw 3,693 visitors which is the highest foot traffic of any week in FY2023. Volunteers did 78 hours of service work. 84% of active borrowers have something currently checked out from the library.

**d. Calendar of Events**

Teresa mentioned that the March Madness Reading Challenge and Battle of the Books are coming to a close in the next 10 days.

**10. Board Comments**

Tina Coker stated that she was going to explore the possibility of helping Boy and Girl Scouts get a library badge.

**11. Review of follow-up items generated during meeting**

Mark Lardas wants the Library Board to think about the City Council presentation. He also asked for a continued updates on the Walter Hall House. Teresa stated that she would seek clarification on the process of applying to the Community Standards Review Committee. Teresa is also going to send the Library Board the previous City Council presentation from 2022. Library staff will seek guidance from the City Attorney's Office about a statement on the library website about the role of the public library.

**12. Adjournment**

8:07 p.m.