

**Helen Hall Library**  
**Workshop Meeting Minutes**  
Tuesday, May 11, 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**

In attendance from the board were Mark Lardas, Jeanne Avandsalehi, Kyrsten Garcia, Mary Dugie, David Hoffman, and Tina Coker. Also in attendance were City Librarian Teresa Potter, Assistant City Librarians Meredith Layton and Darla Rance, and Administrative Assistant Emily Holodnak.

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

No citizens were present to address the Board.

**4. Discussion of Annual Presentation of Trustees Report to City Council**

City Librarian Teresa Potter opened the discussion by sharing some data that was gathered in preparation for the workshop. The Library Needs Assessment from 2019 was a part of the data collected, and Mary Dugie remarked previously that most of the current City Council was not in an elected position when the Needs Assessment took place. Tina Coker asked if Teresa would explain the needs assessment. Teresa explained that in 2018 the library worked with PGAL, a Texas-based architectural firm, and 720 Design, a Texas-based library design firm, to gather statistics and demographic information to estimate price points for different library expansion options. The report concluded and was presented in 2019 right before the large plumbing issue at the library and before the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the rising inflation experienced since the pandemic, the estimated costs provided by the needs assessment are no longer accurate. Teresa asked the board if they think it would be a good decision to reconnect with PGAL to get updated cost estimations for expansion projects. Teresa mentioned that the board had previously decided the goal for the library should be to have a west side expansion completed by the year 2023, but Teresa reiterated the impact that the plumbing issue and the pandemic have had on the project timeline.

Tina asked about how the Walter Hall House fit into the library's plan for expansion. Teresa explained that the Walter Hall House is a property owned by League City that the library would like to use as a library facility. Mark Lardas stated that the most growth League City is experiencing is on the West side of the city, and that the Walter Hall House does not cater to that population. The distinction between the East and West side of League City in relation to Interstate 45 was reiterated. Teresa emphasized that the library is not seeking an expansion as a solution to issues with roads and traffic, but simply to bring more library services to more people. Teresa explained that with the goal of serving more people, the library is confined to the limited space it currently has. Mark mentioned previous expansion ideas that had been brought up, such as a library facility across the street from the current library. Kyrsten Garcia stated that a part of the needs assessment she agreed with was the library's goal to provide personal, extraordinary service to more citizens. She stated that part of the original needs assessment to achieve this goal was three library facilities spread across the city. Kyrsten also noted that the last large expansion to the library was done in 1988.

Tina asked how many people the library served when it was expanded in the 80s. Jeanne Avandsalehi mentioned that the number was likely outdated due to the rapid population increase League City has experienced. Mark agreed, saying that in the thirty years he has lived in League City the population has tripled or quadrupled. Kyrsten stated that she would like to know the size of the League City population in 1988, when the last library expansion occurred.

Teresa explained to the board that a strategy was to come up with the three priorities the board would like the presentation to achieve, and then categorize important information into those three topics. Teresa then asked the board who had been able to look at the presentation Mary had put together. Mary was able to read off the names of people who had looked at the presentation. Kyrsten asked for clarification on the three priorities for the board presentation, whether the priority is to highlight achievements or advocate for the library. Teresa explained that the role of the board is to explain to the council any changes or recommendations they may have.

Mark stated that the first priority should be to highlight achievements of the library throughout the past year, and the second should be to advocate for the library's need to expand/future direction. The board agreed that these are the two main priorities to focus on. Kyrsten had suggested using certain wording to explain each of the priorities. She also stated that the third priority should be demonstrating the demand for library resources. Teresa recalled a comment that Assistant City Librarian, Meredith Layton, had made earlier in the week. Meredith quoted from a book she had been reading, "we cannot find common ground if we do not have shared space." Meredith felt this quote was a quick and accurate way of saying that you cannot foster community and connection without a place for people to have interactions with each other.

The board began brainstorming ideas and topics they wanted included in achievements. As the brainstorming continued more ideas for different priorities were also listed. These ideas ranged from awards, increased population sizes, offering new materials, going overdue fine-free, etc. Questions began to come up about the population using the library. Meredith explained that the library statistics show that of the total League City population, 30% of residents living on the east side are active borrowers, while 16% of residents living on the west side are active borrowers. The group continued to talk about achievements and demands for space.

Assistant City Librarian Darla Rance created a table to demonstrate the limitations on programming space, and how often programs must be rearranged to accommodate everyone. Teresa further explained that it can be difficult to keep track of the number of accommodations being made, because it has become second nature when trying to utilize library space. Teresa also noted the increasing number of patrons we will be hosting this summer while the Dickinson Public Library is under construction. The board organized all the ideas that had been listed into how they fit into the three priorities previously mentioned.

The board then began to discuss how the ideas, listed under each priority, would be presented in the Nearpod presentation created by Marie. Kyrsten stated that she thinks it would be best for achievements to just be stated plainly without having an interactive component. Mark agreed and reiterated the point to the board. There was debate over which achievements should be listed and in how much detail they should be explained, in a way that would still convey the meaning behind the

achievement to City Council. Kyrsten suggested arranging the slides in a more compelling way, and Mary suggested creating a separate link that would go more in depth about achievements for those who were interested. Administrative Assistant, Emily Holodnak, had the idea to share Meredith's Impact Report, because it was a short way to share a lot of information about achievements. The board continued to organize the ideas that had been listed.

Mary and Kyrsten mentioned that they will be speaking during the citizen comment portion of the council meeting when the city council receives the board's presentation. Tina suggested talking points for each member of the board, and while everyone agreed, it was stated that those decisions could be made later. The board began discussing the interactive components of the presentation and which styles of activities they preferred. Design and colorways for the presentation were discussed regarding the new Helen Hall Library logo. Mary stated that the presentation was done in Google Slides, so it could be used with the rest of the board. Kyrsten reiterated her desire to reorganize the slides, pinpoint specific statistics and achievements to highlight, and emphasize the goal of personal service to patrons by using the common ground/shared space analogy. Kyrsten also mentioned that she had several edits to make the presentation more cohesive.

Teresa showed a map from the needs assessment showing where future expansions could be placed to serve League City's population size. Tina asked about library size recommendations from the American Library Association. Teresa explained that there are national and state standards for library size, but that League City is well below both of those standards. Teresa shared that the needs assessment was mostly based on state standards and comparison to benchmark libraries that serve a similar population size. Tina stated that we should observe the national standard, and believes Texas is falling behind in certain areas. Mary mentioned keeping the audience in mind, referring to the city council, and what they would be most interested in.

Kyrsten asked about what the goal for the workshop is and what further needs to be done to reach that goal. Teresa stated that she was happy with the progress the board had made. Mary stated that she thinks a good goal for ending the workshop would be everyone agreeing on the format for the presentation, identifying the achievements and priorities the board wants discussed, and wording the new goal and the future direction statements. Mary suggested the goal be an updated needs assessment with current prices and costs.

Teresa expressed her desire for the company that provided the needs assessment to take all the data they previously gathered and provide updated pricing and costs. Teresa said she did not have an estimate on how much a reexamination would cost. Kyrsten said that she liked the board's original recommendation for a West Side expansion but reworded the statement to include an updated needs assessment with current prices and costs. Teresa mentioned her hesitation about tasking the appropriate staff to find funding for these projects. A discussion about state grants funding construction started, and the board was told that the bill for that is currently being voted on in the Texas Legislature. Teresa began working on the presentation and edited several items.

Mary suggested keeping things tied to a time frame, such as the next budget cycle. Kyrsten made several points about interpreting the data that the city council will be given, so they know what the board is trying to communicate. Mary and Kyrsten continued to talk about what information they wanted on which slide. Kyrsten and David Hoffman suggested using one of the maps provided by the

needs assessment overlapping to show the current population of active users along with the future plans for library service locations. The board discussed issues of convenience made worse by traffic problems that occur at specific points in the city. Kyrsten mentioned that residents on the west side of League City have expressed feeling isolated from the city. Meredith mentioned the comfort people find in the neighborhood library, and how the library in League City may feel like more of a destination to other residents.

The board confirmed that the presentation does not go to city council until August, but Teresa clarified she wanted the Board to have the final rough draft presented at the June meeting so final edits could be made to the presentation and that the final draft would be reviewed in July. Mark suggested giving the board until the next meeting to come up with more feedback and critiques. Mary agreed with Mark but suggested going through the presentation one more time. Mary continued by walking the board through the presentation a final time. Teresa mentioned the importance of demonstrating the way the library uses the funds allocated by the city.

Teresa stated that there was not much said about community feedback, and Mary suggested using data points to support the recommendation. Teresa explained that some of the data the library collects can demonstrate the community feedback. Kyrsten made some formatting suggestions for how to put the information on the presentation. Teresa said that she would be sending questions to the board to answer before the next board meeting.

**5. Board Comments**

No comments were made.

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

No follow up items were given.

**7. Adjournment**

7:51 p.m.