

Helen Hall Library
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 18, 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 were Board members Mark Lardas, Jeanne Avandsalehi, Mary Dugie, David Hoffman, and Byram Lass. Also in attendance were Parks and Cultural Services Director Chien Wei, 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

Citizen Peggy Zahler brought her concern about City Council no longer reporting Library Happenings at City Council Meetings. Teresa informed Peggy that the library was directed by the City Secretary's office to create slides of Library Happenings to be played on a slide show prior to the meeting. Peggy then went on to encourage the Library Board to report Library Happenings during the three-minute allotment for citizens to speak.

Laura Teatsworth mentioned her involvement with the League City HOA Alliance and stated that she could send out Library Happenings to all HOA Board members who would in turn send it out to their residents on Facebook.

4. Approval of Helen Hall Library Board Special Meeting Minutes for June 2023

The minutes for the board workshop held on June 20, 2023, were approved. The motion was made by Mary Dugie and seconded by Jeanne Avandsalehi. All board members voted in favor.

5. City Council Comments

No city council members were present for comments.

6. Chairman's Comments

Mark Lardas stated that he was asked by Mayor Nick Long and a member of City Council to apply for the Community Standards Review Committee. Mark applied and was sworn into the committee on Friday, July 14.

7. Director Comments

Parks and Cultural Services Director, Chien Wei, gave an update on city budget proceedings. The library portion is scheduled for July 31st.

8. Introduction of New Trustee

Teresa introduced Byram Lass as the new member to the Library Board of Trustees. Byram spoke about his background as an engineer and his work with NASA. Byram also expressed his interest in the data that the library collects and how it can be used.

9. Walter Hall House Progress Report

City Librarian, Teresa Potter, gave an overview about the library's goal to annex some services to the Walter Hall House in the interest of programming space. Due to the amount of work the building needs, hosting programs there has been delayed. The library has created a book in memory of Hurricane Harvey and hopes to have the release party at Walter Hall House, but the use of the space has not yet been approved. Adult Programming staff from the library recently went on a tour of the Walter Hall House to see improvements and is planning to host some fall programs there pending approval to use the space. The Board expressed interest in having another regularly scheduled board meeting at the Walter Hall House.

10. Discussion of Annual Board of Trustees Report to City Council

Teresa explained that previously a presentation would be given by all boards and commissions at a City Council meeting, but this year City Council will receive the presentations/reports to review. Teresa mentioned that the report would be submitted to the City Manager, John Baumgartner, for approval, and that City Council may receive all reports at one meeting in November. The Library Board viewed the final draft of the Annual Board of Trustees Report. Byram Lass mentioned the possibility of adding previous years data to the report to show trends overtime.

11. Approval of Annual Board of Trustees Report to City Council

Mark Lardas proposed to approve the final draft of the Annual Board of Trustees Report, while reserving the right to modify the presentation with the additional data if the deadline is moved back. Mary Dugie motioned for approval under Mark's conditions, and Jeanne Avandsalehi seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor.

12. Staff Reports

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

i. General Library Update

Teresa reminded the Board that the library's budget session with City Council is scheduled for Monday, July 31st at 6:00 P.M. at the Civic Center. Teresa stated that the budget was accepted as presented, including the staff reclassification request.

Teresa updated the Board about the 135 Utility Billing library e-card sign ups since it was launched in May.

The library will be launching a new Seed Library this Friday, July 21st. The goal of the seed library is to be run by purchased seeds as well as seeds donated from the community. The Seed Library is starting with herb and vegetable seeds but will hopefully expand in the coming seasons.

Teresa addressed the slight changes to the programming schedule, focusing on a shorter span of months at a time to increase programming flexibility.

Teresa also informed the Board of the library's new virtual newsletter!

ii. Friends of Helen Hall Library

In partnership with the Rotary Club of League City and the Galveston County Food Bank 675 books have been distributed to children and 97 books have been distributed to adults! League City's communications department will be at the book distribution in August to feature the new service.

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. Identify a really great June statistic to highlight.
- b. Share a unique interaction you had or witnessed.
- c. What household object do you think you would be turned into if you were in Beauty and the Beast?

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

Assistant City Librarian Darla Rance's Answers:

- a. Darla is impressed by the 554 attendees for Teen Programs in June!
- b. Darla read books for story time in Newport Park, and a couple of kids "interrupted" story time to tell Darla stories about riding their bikes. She loved it!
- c. Bookshelf!

1. Adult Services

Adult Services Librarian Joanne Turner's Answers:

- a. Joanne is proud of how much Wine & Jazz grows each time they do a program.
- b. Joanne got to help a long-time patron who rarely engages how to use mobile printing.
- c. Joanne chose a character from the movie, the bookstore clerk!

Local History Librarian Caris Brown's Answers:

- a. Caris is impressed by adult and teen services for answering 2,304 reference questions in June!
- b. Caris was able to help a family print flyers for their lost dog. She felt happy to help them in their time of need.
- c. Caris thinks she would be a beautifully decorated candle stick.

Electronic Services Librarian Amelia Chau's Answers:

- a. The Wine & Jazz program had 178 attendees on June 9th!
- b. Amelia was able to help a patron copy photo albums from her computer onto a flash drive during a one-on-one session.
- c. Amelia believes she would be a lamp.

2. Children's Services

Children's Services Librarian Kate Guynn's Answers:

- a. Books and Babies! The program has consistently pulled a large crowd (173 for June), so Children's has added a second story time for July. Feedback says this works better with nap time!
- b. Kate is very proud of her team for working together when a performer no showed. Children's staff turned a not great moment into an opportunity for a community art project done by the kids!
- c. Kate believes she would be a teapot like Mrs. Potts; loving and caring but not afraid to defend the castle.

Children's Librarian Sarah Hultman's Answers:

- a. Sarah is proud of the Children's Gardening program led by Ziba at Hometown Heroes. In June, 257 patrons attended!
- b. Sarah had two parents come and tell her how much they love the positive and silly TikToks!
- c. Sarah believes she would be a very cozy couch with blankets!

3. Teen Services

Teen Services Librarian Sheldon Steven's Answers:

- a. Sheldon is proud of a very successful Teen Takeover! The teens created 25 Facebook posts and 26 Instagram posts reaching a total of 22,191 people!
- b. Teen Services Summer Assistant, Kai, was able to use sign language to help a deaf patron.
- c. Sheldon thinks she would be a teacup.

4. Volunteer Services

Volunteer Coordinator Jeremy Brewer's Answers:

- a. June has had the highest number of volunteer hours this year at 606 hours!
- b. Jeremy saw two teens who knew each other from school leave their volunteer shift as friends!
- c. Jeremy's daughter answered: "Definitely a giant stuffed teddy bear that would walk around and randomly serenade people."

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

Assistant City Librarian Meredith Layton's Answers:

- a. Meredith is excited to see that the cumulative circulation of print materials is 7% higher this year than last. That is a 9% increase for children's books and a 3% increase for teen and adult books.
- b. Meredith is excited to be doing "Listeners' Advisory" as part of the new recommendation service AV Club!
- c. Meredith believes she'd be a kitchen cabinet, rolling pin, or baking sheet. Something useful, but not overly exciting.

1. Technical Services

Technical Services Librarian Ashley Leblow's Answers:

- a. June had 180 purchase suggestions; the most since the statistic began being recorded in 2020!

- b. Isaak was able to teach people at the Hurricane Preparedness fair how to preserve books and paper from water damage. He was also able to encourage the family members of an autistic child to bring them to library programs, we're inclusive!
- c. Ashley believes she would be a compartmentalized storage shelf due to her love of organization. Isaak would be a thimble because he is clumsy but likes to sew. Kat thinks she would be a Rubick's cube because she is an enigma.

2. Circulation Services

Circulation Services Supervisor Kelsea Meza's Answers:

- a. Kelsea said that the door count for June was 20,371 people, the highest it's been since June 2019. Circulation has also registered 791 new cards! That is the most library cards in a month since the statistic started being tracked almost 10 years ago!
- b. Kelsea had to show compassion to a patron who was upset about books on display.
- c. Kelsea would like to be the teapot, but thinks she is more likely to be the wardrobe.

3. Administration

Administrative Assistant Emily Holodnak's Answers:

- a. Emily is proud to have done 55 utility billing e-cards in June.
- b. The Auxiliary Club gave Emily a Patriotic Cockade/badge as a thank you for help booking the room and Abraham Lincoln's favorite Almond cake recipe.
- c. Emily said she took a quiz and got chair but thought that was boring, and admitted she is most likely a To-Do list.

c. Statistical Reports

Teresa pointed out some of the new items in circulation that are doing well in the Library of Things. Meredith mentioned that many of the statistics gathered by the library are ones required by the state.

Chien asked about some of Friendswood's statistics and Meredith and Teresa told them their theory about how they may combine outreach visits and the use of outside reservations with programming statistics while we count all three statistics separately.

Mark Lardas asked how many patrons that sign up through Utility Billing have come in to get their physical card. Teresa told him that the library is tracking that data, but that it is too soon to tell whether the library will need to expand the time frame e-cards are good for. Byram mentioned the possibility of sending a follow up email to patrons who have registered for an e-card but had not yet picked up a physical library card. Meredith explained to Mary Dugie and the Board how patrons can obtain an e-card.

d. Calendar of Events

Teresa stated that our adjustment of schedules will allow for various programs during the months library staff takes "programming breaks." In August, Orbit will be coming for story time and an Astros parade.

Teresa also mentioned the QR code to sign up for the newsletter and encouraged Board members to sign up.

Byram Lass asked about the data collected on age ranges for attendees to programs, and Teresa stated that specific patron data is not collected but the timing of certain programs is kept in mind to target specific audiences.

10. Board Comments

Mary Dugie suggested some improvements for the staff updates. She said that she would like the Board to start coming up with questions to ask the staff or have staff members come in and talk about what their week looks like or projects they were working on. She used Kate G.'s Family Place Presentation as an example. Mary also encouraged Byram to ask for a library tour.

Mary also asked about seeing a finance report for the library and making it part of the agenda for each meeting. Mary also recommended making the Friends of Helen Hall Library report separate from the City Librarian report in the future. Teresa suggested having a member of the Friends come to the meeting to give a status update. Mary also mentioned an agenda section for previously announced initiatives.

David Hoffman disagreed with Mary and said that he did like the stories, because it represents the emotional interactions in the library. David also mentioned how he would like to see the data represent the need for more space in a more cohesive way.

Byram Lass agreed with Mary about having staff members come in to talk about their jobs. Byram also asked about a meeting that took place in 2019 about library expansion and stated that his position is that he is for more library space if he can see the need for more library space. Mary Dugie agreed with him, and stated part of the Board presentation was a recommendation for the City Manager to explore options for funding library expansion. Byram also stated that he would like to see the mission statement and objectives of the library, which Teresa stated she would send to him.

11. Review of follow-up items generated during meeting

Teresa stated she would fix both QR code links and would also get confirmation about the due date for the Annual Board of Trustees Report.

12. Adjournment

7:30 p.m.