



SAN ANSELMO PUBLIC LIBRARY

## San Anselmo Library Advisory Board Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2021

The meeting, which was held remotely via Zoom videoconferencing, was called to order by the Board's chair, Doug Holm, at 4:35 p.m.

**In Attendance:** Anya Bosina, Doug Holm, Eli Welber, Judy Anderson, Karen Licavoli, Scott Fletcher, Tina Kroot, Town Librarian Linda Kenton.

**Absent:** None

One member of the public was present.

### January 2021 Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the January 14, 2021, Board meeting were reviewed and approved with minor changes.

### Discussion Items

#### A. Librarian's Report

Town Librarian Linda Kenton provided the following updates on library operations, services and activities.

- **New Curbside Pickup Hours:** Library staff have increased the number of hours patrons can pick up materials they have checked out at the "curbside" spot just outside of the Town Hall chambers. Two more hours have been added to Tuesdays (12 p.m. to 6 p.m.) and Thursday pickup appointments are now available for the first time, from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. The curbside pickup program is now operating Mondays through Fridays and has been very popular with library patrons.
- **Book Drop Now Open 24/7:** The library building's bookdrop slot is now open for returns throughout the week. It had been closed on weekends.
- **Fiscal-Year 2021-22 Budget:** The library's budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year, which begins on July 1, has been set at the same level as 2020-2021. The library intends to fill an open position,

which was created by a staff-member's retirement in December 2019, early in the next fiscal year.

- **Quarantining Returned Materials:** In response to a question from Board Member Eli Welber, Ms. Kenton noted that the library has reduced the length of time it is quarantining returned library materials from 96 hours (four days) to 72 hours (three days). Based on recent research that has shown that the risk of contracting Covid-19 from objects and surfaces is much lower than initially thought, the library is thinking it will gradually reduce quarantines to 24 hours.

## **B. Library Reopening Discussion**

Ms. Kenton also discussed the eventual reopening of the library, which has been closed to the public since mid-March 2020. Library staff are eager to re-open the library building to patrons on a limited basis. The Marinnet consortium of libraries from various jurisdictions in Marin County has recently reconvened a re-opening working group. Staff from some libraries favor re-opening in the near future, while others are more hesitant. The San Anselmo Library is looking at re-opening sometime in mid-April, provided that the state moves from the red business/activity tier (Tier 2—Substantial) to the orange tier (Tier 3—Moderate), which is expected in the coming weeks. (Marin began 2021 in the purple tier (Tier 1—Widespread).

Library staff developed a reopening plan in the summer and fall of 2020 that they are ready to implement. The current thinking is to re-open the building for limited browsing on Wednesdays, which generally has been the least busy day for the curbside pickup program.

## **C. Review of No-Fine Policy's Impact on Circulation of Library Materials**

Ms. Kenton reported that she was unable to quantify the impact of various Marin libraries' no-fine policies on the circulation of library materials throughout the Marinnet system, as had been requested at January's Board meeting. She said that the Marinnet system does not have historical or current data that would enable one to make such an assessment. However, she did opine that, in her view, circulation of physical materials within Marinnet has generally slowed in the last year or so, but likely for numerous reasons, including the Covid-19 pandemic, the long time required for quarantining returned materials, and no-fine policies instituted by several other libraries in the county.

Prior to the pandemic, the San Anselmo and Mill Valley libraries were the only ones in Marin County to charge fines for all overdue items. (The San Anselmo library suspended its fines during the pandemic.) Some libraries completely eliminated fines for all overdue items, while others still levy fines for specific items returned after their due dates, such as new books and best-sellers.

According to Ms. Kenton, the San Anselmo library collected \$23,000 in fines for overdue items in the 2018-19 fiscal year. During the 2019-20 fiscal year, it had expected \$15,000 in fines, but collected only \$6,500, as the pandemic halted the circulation of any materials from March 13 to June 8. For the 2020-21 fiscal year, which will end this coming June, the library does not expect to collect any such fines.

Ms. Kenton informed the Board that the library staff are thinking of asking the Town Council to eliminate all late fees, believing that the library's budget will not suffer significantly without

collecting such fines and that doing so will promote equity and goodwill among all members of the local community. She asked Board members for their opinions on the matter. Some members voiced support for the change. Others expressed concern over the lost revenue and the potential for circulation to be dramatically slowed or materials to never be returned. Ms. Kenton noted that the library would still charge patrons the full replacement cost for any non-returned items and that a patron's card would be blocked for further use until the situation was resolved. The topic will return at the next board meeting for an update.

**D. Board Liaison to Library Tax Oversight Committee**

Board members Judy Anderson has served as the Library Advisory Board's liaison to the town's Library Tax Committee, which meets twice a year to ensure that that the funds raised by a library parcel tax passed in 2010 and renewed in 2015 are spent according to the parameters set in the library parcel tax measure. Her term had expired in April 2020. During the meeting, Ms. Anderson announced that she is willing to continue to serve as the Library Board liaison.

**E. Friends of the Library Report**

Board members Judy Anderson and Eli Welber, who also are members of the Friends of the San Anselmo Library, provided an update on that group's activities.

- Ms. Anderson reported that Town Books, the used bookstore operated by the Friends, is now open on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The store is now open during those hours on Wednesday, Fridays and Saturdays. It is accepting book donations only on Mondays (from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.) and on Fridays (from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.).
- As more people are fully vaccinated against Covid-19, Ms. Anderson and Mr. Welber believe that FOSL members will feel more comfortable volunteering their time working at the store or with fulfilling the store's online sales orders via the Amazon.com web site.

**Board Comments Questions, Requests for Future Agenda Items**

Board members and Ms. Kenton suggested adding the following items to the agenda of the next Board meeting: (1) a status update on the library's reopening plans, and (2) consideration of a proposal to eliminate monetary fines on materials returned after their due dates.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Doug Holm at 6:01 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on **Thursday, May 13, 2021.**

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*Minutes prepared by Doug Holm*