

Newport Library Board September 17, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Present: Rebecca Cohen, Richard Kilbride, Carol Fisher, Terry Obteshka, Carol Ruggeri (chair), Jeff Ingram (recorder)

1. Call to order at 5:15 pm.

2. Introduction of new staff member note taker:

Cohen introduced staff member Jeff Ingram as the new note taker for the upcoming year.

3. Previous Meeting's minutes:

Kilbride motioned to approve previous meeting's minutes; Fisher seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Librarian's Report (RC)

Statistics:

Library usage increased moderately over the same period last year, while visits and internet usage were down slightly. Cohen attributed this to perhaps fewer summer visitors to Newport this year as well as to the increasing use of the library's wireless service for visitors' laptop computers. Reference counts were up substantially due in part to better staff reporting. Inter/intra library loans continue to increase as does library program attendance by both adults and juveniles.

Newport Reads:

Littlehales provided an informational packet along with agenda

Library Director Search:

The job search closes September 19th. Thus far there have been 12 responses. Bob Gibson will head a committee to sort through applicants and together with reference librarian Sheryl Eldridge, will choose 6 finalists. The library Board will need to appoint a member to join in the selection committee. (See item 6 below)

Stories by the Sea:

There has been very good media coverage, including local and state-wide publications for the event. A storytelling cruise has been added to the program to be held September 18th. For a number of reasons this will be the last festival in this form, although Cohen assures us that storytelling will continue in the Newport area.

Banned Book Week:

Sheryl Eldridge has planned two days of programs. On September 29th, the library will present the film *Fahrenheit 451* in the McEntee meeting room at 7pm. There will also be a reading of a number of banned books in the McEntee on October 1st at 7 pm.

5. Replacing exiting Board member Richard Kilbride:

Board member Richard Kilbride will be leaving the board to fill a vacant position on the Newport City Council. According to the library bylaws, the library director will advertise the vacancy. Fisher asked if prospective members need to be city residents.

Cohen checked policies which state that the members should be a “library card holder” living “in or near Newport.” Cohen will advertise with a closing date of October 15th. The board will conduct interviews in November. Ruggeri asked if the application could be made available online. Obtshka added that city committee applications were on the city website. Cohen added that due to an upcoming vacancy, the Newport Library Foundation will also need to begin this process.

6. Selection of Board representative for director interviews:

6 different interview teams will be created to conduct interviews between October 30 and October 31. One team will consist of one Board member, one Foundation member and Janet Webster (Guinn Library director). Two staff members will also sit on an interview team. The process will consist of a morning orientation, community reception, city council and department head lunch, with the final decision to be made by the City Manager on October 31st. As several board members were absent it was agreed that the decision as to who would represent the board would be made at a later date.

7. Literacy Park Update:

Ruggeri reported that members of the Rotary Club and City Parks and Rec department are interested in constructing a path from the library parking lot through the park to the seating area. Obtshka asked about the condition of the bridge as well as its history. The condition of the bridge will be included in the path plans and Cohen would look into its history. Ruggeri also noted that Rotary will be holding a picnic in the park on September 18th, rain or shine.

8. Library Value Calculator:

Cohen showed an example of a “Library Value Calculator” that originated at a library in Maine, which shows the value added to the public from library services. Sheryl Eldridge and CRSN IT person Wade Guidry were currently working on a similar calculator to add to our website. Ruggeri noted that such a calculator would be a good tool to use in the upcoming library bond vote. Obtshka added that a simplified version might also be useful for a variety of uses including city council budget requests as well as to track other city department’s values to the community.

9. Other business:

Cohen announced that a library board member will need to be assigned to an art jury to approve an art piece to be donated to the library by Wyma Rogers. Fisher volunteered. Cohen will schedule a meeting of the jury in the next few weeks.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.