San Mateo County Libraries Joint Powers Authority
Governing Board Meeting
Minutes of February 5, 2025

Board Members Present:
Rick DeGolia, Atherton
Julia Mates, Belmont (Vice Chair)
Frank Kern, Brisbane
Mark Dinan, East Palo Alto
Art Kiesel, Foster City
Deborah Penrose, Half Moon Bay
Reuben Holober, Millbrae
Mary Bier, Pacifica
Rebecca Flynn, Portola Valley
Sara McDowell, San Carlos
Lisa Gauthier, San Mateo County
Dick Brown, Woodside

Staff Present:
Anne-Marie Despain
Carine Risley
Lindsey Freeland
Priscilla Bermudez

I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Vice Chair Mates.

II. Public Comments. Member Penrose commended the library's efforts in supporting the immigrant community and encouraged continued collaboration with city officials to ensure a timely and supportive response if ICE were to enter the community.

III. New Member Welcome and Recognition of Outgoing Members. Vice Chair Mates welcomed new members, followed by introductions. Outgoing member and former Chair Karen Cunningham was recognized for her contributions, with members expressing gratitude for her service. Director Despain presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation for her six years on the Board.

IV. Special Election of the Governing Board Officers. Vice Chair Mates invited nominations from the floor for positions of Governing Board Chair and Vice Chair. Member Penrose nominated Vice Chair Mates for Chair; no other nominations were received. Vice Chair Mates nominated Member DeGolia for Vice Chair; no other nominations were received.

Motion: Approve Vice Chair Mates to serve as Governing Board Chair. Passed (MSP: Penrose/DeGolia). Motion: Approve Member DeGolia to serve as Governing Board Vice Chair. Passed (MSP: Mates/Holober).

V. Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda included the Approval of the November 4, 2024 Minutes, the Financial Audit Report for FY 2023-24, Director's Report and Strategic Plan 2025-2030 Report.

Motion: Approve the Consent Agenda without changes. Passed (MSP: Brown/Penrose).

VI. Bookmobile Purchase Approval. Deputy Director Risley presented the Bookmobile Purchase for approval. Members discussed the proposed hybrid bookmobile, with Member DeGolia supporting the recommendation and suggesting exploring Electric Fish, a San Carlos-based company specializing in high-speed compact charging units. Member Penrose inquired about the vehicle's transition from electric to diesel at 33 mph, noting that most travel would likely be at lower speeds. Member McDowell asked about the vehicle's lifespan, which Deputy Director Risley estimated at 10-20 years, and raised concerns about the cost, questioning prior estimates that diesel would be significantly cheaper than electric. Deputy Director Risley confirmed the costs align with state-wide bookmobile purchases and noted recent price escalations have stabilized. Members also discussed alternative funding sources, vehicle warranties, licensing requirements, and the possibility of purchasing a second vehicle. Chair Mates emphasized the importance of moving forward with the bookmobile to serve key communities while also exploring grants and future expansion. Member McDowell supported aggressively pursuing grant opportunities and requested renderings of proposed projects for future approval.

Motion: Approve the purchase of a new hybrid diesel bookmobile. Passed (MSP: Penrose/DeGolia).

III. FY 2024-2025 Mid-Year Report. Financial Service Manager Freeland provided an overview of the FY 2024-25 Mid-Year Report. By year end, the Library is estimated to realize 108% of projected revenue and spend approximately 90% of budgeted expenditures. The Revenue variance of $3.4M is primarily attributed to secured property taxes and Excess ERAF, which are expected to exceed budgeted amounts. Expenditure savings are estimated at $5.2M, mainly due to salary and benefit savings from staffing vacancies as well as savings in services and supplies and fixed assets resulting from project delays that will carry forward to FY 2025-26. Looking ahead to the FY 2025-26 budget, property tax revenue is expected to grow by 4%, while unsecured property taxes and excess ERAF are expected to remain stable. Staff recommends adopting a strategy of allocating 50% of anticipated excess ERAF for ongoing expenses, aligning with San Mateo County's approach since 2011. The library expects approximately $7 million in excess ERAF next year and has sufficient reserves to manage any unforeseen funding changes.

Member Bier inquired about the rationale behind using ERAF funds for ongoing expenses. Financial Services Manager Freeland explained that the policy, modeled after San Mateo County's practice, would help identify additional revenue, especially for expanding staff. Director Despain added that using 50% of ERAF for ongoing expenses is a conservative approach, with healthy reserves available to adapt if revenue fluctuates. Member Flynn asked about ongoing funding allocation, with Director Despain noting that

staffing needs are the highest priority, and recommendations would be aligned with feedback from the Library JPA and the strategic plan. Vice Chair DeGolia clarified that the new approach would allocate 50% of estimated ERAF for ongoing expenses, with the remaining 50% kept for one-time use. Discussion also touched on the library's financial projections, including a potential recession's impact on property values, with reserves providing a buffer. Financial Services Manager Freeland noted that a 4% increase in property taxes is projected for next year, and the library remains nimble to adjust as needed. Member Keisel asked about treasury functions, which are handled by the County Treasurer. Chair Mates highlighted the importance of managing the library's healthy reserves responsibly to meet community service needs.

Motion: Accept the report and direct staff to move forward with development of the FY 2025-26 Recommended Budget. Passed (MSP: McDowell/Gauthier).

VII. Governing Board Member Announcements. Member McDowell raised community concerns about delays in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program, particularly the long wait for the first book. Deputy Director Risley clarified that the delay is managed by the Dolly Parton Foundation, and staff will address concerns and work with the foundation to improve the process. Member Dinan announced efforts to raise funds for a new library project and encouraged support from those able to contribute. Member Holober suggested briefly highlighting positive news from the Director's report in future meetings. Vice Chair DeGolia praised the partnership with Familias Unidas, noting its success in improving children's reading engagement. Member Brown acknowledged the library's progress in its second language programs and senior services, specifically the successful senior workshops, and inquired about the potential for other libraries to adopt similar programs.

VIII. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:24 a.m.