

Municipality of Anchorage
 Library Advisory Board Agenda
 Microsoft Teams Virtual & In-Person Meeting
 Loussac Library

August 17, 2022, 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Attendance

- _____ Vacant
- _____ Debra Bronson
- _____ Dennis Dupras
- _____ Nancy Hemsath, Secretary
- _____ Barbara Jacobs, Vice-Chair
- _____ Alice Qannik Glenn
- _____ Vacant
- _____ Doug Weimann
- _____ Cristy A. Willer, Chair
- _____ Teen Liaison (vacant)

X = Present, E = Excused, U = Unexcused, PH = Phone

Agenda

Topic	Leader	Time	Action
Call to Order	Cristy Willer	5:30	
Land Acknowledgement	Cristy Willer	5:30	
Roll Call and Check-In (current reading)	Cristy Willer	5:35	
Approval of Agenda and Minutes	Cristy Willer	5:45	
Persons to be Heard	TBA	5:50	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy Director’s Report • New Library Director recruitment/ hiring process • Municipal Budget process 	Judy Eledge	6:05	
• ALA United for Libraries “Short Takes”	Cristy Willer	6:20	
Mission Moment: TBA	TBA	6:25	
Board Comments and Adjourn	Cristy Willer	6:50	

**Municipality of Anchorage
Library Advisory Board Minutes
Microsoft Teams Virtual & In-Person Meeting: June 15, 2022
Loussac Library
(Subject to approval at the August 17, 2022 LAB Meeting)**

Attendance	
--	Vacant
E	Debra Bronson
X	Dennis Dupras
X	Nancy Hemsath, Secretary
X	Barbara Jacobs, Vice-Chair
X	Alice Qannik Glenn
--	Vacant
X	Doug Weimann
X	Cristy A. Willer, Chair
X	Denali Tshibaka, Teen Liaison

X = Present, E = Excused, U = Unexcused, PH = Phone

Staff Present:

Judy Eledge (Acting Director/Deputy Director)

Guests Present:

Niki Tshibaka, Municipality of Anchorage; Adrienne Canino, Titesus Epsilon, Arika Mercer

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Cristy Willer at 5:34 pm.

Land Acknowledgment:

Cristy Willer acknowledged that the Board meets on the traditional lands of the Dena'ina Athabascan people.

Approvals:

- **Action:** Per a request from Denali Tshibaka, Ms Willer will add a debrief of the special assembly work session in lieu of the Mission Moment. Per his request, Moses Vakulich is added as a Person to be Heard. The revised agenda was approved (Barb/Dennis).
- **Action:** Revisions to the May minutes were recommended by email from Debra Bronson. Ms Willer read the suggested amendments into the record. The revised May 2022 minutes were approved (Barb/Dennis).

Person(s) to be Heard:

Although he had asked to be added to the June 15 agenda, Moses Vakulich was not present at the meeting.

Director's Report (written report on file), highlights:

- Two legislative requests from the library were included in the budget. However, the wish list request for Muldoon cannot be fulfilled since the building is leased, not owned.
- The committee for the downtown library continues to move forward.
- Open positions: Ms Eledge provided a historical review of open positions and noted that since the hiring freeze in July 2021, most have been approved. Of the 23 open positions upon her arrival, 18 are in process or have been hired; and of the four remaining, one in Technical Services was approved June 15.
- Loussac Sunday closure: Given staffing and patron usage levels, the decision to close Loussac Library on Sunday was believed to be a better use of resources.
- Ms. Eledge highlighted additional items, including repairs to the HVAC piping adjacent to the Beluga Room that will take at least one month. In addition, a safety security report is in the works and will be presented to the LAB in August.
- Questions from board members regarding staffing and hiring were fielded by Ms. Eledge and Mr. Tshibaka, Chief Human Resources Officer for the Municipality.
 - The spate of vacancies is evident across the entire municipality, not just the library.
 - As of April, half of the library positions had been vacant for a number of years since before the partial hiring freeze instituted by Mayor Bronson after he took office (APD, AFD, seasonal employees were exempt). All departments had to submit memoranda to justify hiring to fill vacancies. All but three of the previous vacancies were re-posted with justification.
 - Ms. Eledge and Mr. Tshibaka outlined the hiring process for library positions, which differs for union-represented and non-rep positions. In many cases job descriptions had to be updated, then added to a centralized spreadsheet of requisitions. Each requisition must have three approvals – Ms. Eledge, then Mr. Tshibaka, then Municipal Manager Amy Demboski – after which the opening and position description are posted by HR. Union candidates are considered first for AMA positions. Some interviews are conducted by managers; however, Ms. Eledge conducts the interviews for Librarian II and III, and non-rep positions.
 - In response to a suggestion that relying on part-time positions may be inhibiting qualified people from applying, Ms. Eledge commented that the librarian pool appears to comprise retired librarians who prefer part-time hours. The library can offer flexibility through part-time positions.

Debrief: Special Assembly Work Session of June 3

- Chairs of the three library boards were invited on short notice to answer questions from Assembly members at a special work session on June 3: Cristy Willer, LAB; Mary Rasmussen, Friends of the Library; Kim Hayes, Anchorage Library Foundation. Municipal Ombudsman Darrell Hess was also in attendance.
- The work session was recorded and has been posted. Ms. Willer read a short statement to Assembly Members highlighting the municipal code delineating the role of the Library Advisory Board and her own personal requests for information (statement attached).
- Mr. Weimann expressed concern that he was not represented in the statement made nor does he want to be tied to any political position.
- In response to comments made at the work session, Ms. Eledge countered that she had informed LAB at its last meeting of vacancies and that she was not involved in the decision to close on Sundays, nor has she removed any books from the shelves. She felt targeted and hurt by comments made in the special session.
- One of the guests asked Ms. Eledge what was requested of her by the Mayor upon taking the position, and she responded that she was asked to manage the library. When asked about her goals, Ms. Eledge described her goal to make the library a place where all are welcome and all sides are represented.

Board Comments

Mr. Dupras commented that a lot of political animosity had been directed toward the public library. As a LAB member, he wants people to be able to safely access the library. He does not believe in censorship but feels that some books may need to be moved to more appropriate venues. He feels that Ms. Eledge has become a target but all need to remember that she is an employee.

Adjournment:

Action: The meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm (Barb/Dennis). The next meeting will take place August 17, 2022 at Loussac Library.

Deputy Director Of Operations Update

- The past two months have brought many changes to the municipal libraries. We were sad to see people leave but happy to see many new faces. Currently, there are 2 part-time and 2 full-time positions open, and we are evaluating each position left to ensure a more efficient run library.
- The library has hired former Assistant Director Virginia McClure as a consultant. Ms. McClure has many years of experience with Anchorage Public Library and brings a wealth of knowledge and history to the library system.
- Jamie White, branch manager at the Gerrish (Girdwood) Library, gave her notice as of 8/4/22. She and her family are moving to Washington state. I have appointed Ambler Stephenson as Acting. Ambler lives in Girdwood and has been at the library for many years.
- We are currently working on the 1st round for the 2023 budget which was due August 5, 2022.
- Work on the Downtown Library continues. We are in the process of getting a code and historical analysis on the building.
- As many of you are already aware, Robert Hudson will not be our new library director. We have a wonderful staff, and I have no doubt the library will continue to run smoothly until a new director is found. HR has already posted the opening.

Education & Skills for Life

Recent Accomplishments

- Mountain View's two Teen Life Skills workshops, and Comics Workshop with Lee Post were well attended.
- Meneka Thiru (Adult Services) & Ziona Brownlow (Community Resourced) coordinated with AKPIRG to do presentations at the library around various financial literacy topics this summer. They continued the series and Mountain View, Muldoon, and Loussac with sessions about debt and payday loans and utilities.
- Meneka Thiru (Adult Services) supported Misty Rose Nesvick (Communications) in coordinating the Books Get Our Vote practice election being held at Loussac, Mountain View, Muldoon, and Girdwood. We had a total of 48 participants in the primary and 50 in the general.
 - On the last day of voting, one patron called in because they had heard about the election on Facebook but were unable to enter the library for medical reasons and requested to participate using curbside pick-up. Meneka was able to accommodate the request and the patron's whole family expressed gratitude and excitement about having the opportunity to participate. Results of the election will be posted in August.
- Summer Discovery continued to be fantastic. Numbers are well above 2021 participation levels and nearing or surpassing 2019 pre-COVID numbers.
 - In July 303 people registered for Summer Discovery which means a total of 3,626 people registered over the summer.
 - 740 turned in a completed Summer Discovery log. So far the summer finisher total is 1,202 people! That is 29% up from 2021 and 7% up from 2019.

- Loussac Youth Services hosted 32 programs for 1,263 people. Highlights include:
 - 9 storytimes
 - Frankentoys where elementary children and teens turned old toys into new creations
 - Weekly Summer Discovery events including a magic show and comic making workshop
 - Teen Life Skills continue to be extremely popular events, this month focused on personal finance and bike repair.
- Nicole Levinson (Adult Services) hosted the third program of the Growing Together Series in partnership with MOA Solid Waste Services at Loussac, Mountain View, and Girdwood for a combined attendance of 68.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Muldoon is looking forward to offering Northstar Digital's online computer literacy tutorials starting in the fall. Currently they are planning a mix of classes and independent study opportunities for Seniors.
- Meneka Thiru is coordinating with Alaska Legal Services Corporation and AKPIRG to collaborate on a Fair Housing presentation in October.
- In August Loussac Youth Services will plan fall storytimes, now that they have a more complete staff, they are hoping to return to a higher level of programs offered.
- Nicole Levinson is coordinating with University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Services and the Anchorage Museum for the next in the Growing Together series
- HealthRhythms Drumming at Mountain View program explores mindfulness/stress reduction through rhythm.

Limiting Factors/Concerns (None at this time)

Bridge to Information and Resources

Recent Accomplishments

- The Gerrish (Girdwood) Library performed outreach at the Forest Fair on July 1st. Attendees learned about library services, registered for library cards, signed up for Summer Discovery, and had fun painting rocks.
- Mountain View hosted 11 adult English Language Learning Students from the Anchorage Literacy Program for a library tour, and Alaska History storytelling with Linda Benson.
- Kristie Nelsen (Adult Services) updated the website news article on digital magazines to include coverage of Hoopla and reposted the article to the home page. Also made several updates to the website re: digital resources we no longer subscribe to (Mango, Foundation Directory, Morningstar, etc)
- Samantha Blanquart did outreach at Clare House with family storytime and library flyers and information.
- Adult Services displays included Disability Pride, Books Get Our Vote, Gardening, TV Dinner, Sharks, New Alaskana, Parodies & Satire, Dance, and Friends 4eva.
- APL selectors selected and Nate ordered 2147 new items from Baker & Taylor, Brodart, and Midwest.
- Nancy Clark, Chugiak-Eagle River manager, gave an interview for the Emporia State University MLIS program course on disaster preparedness. Her presentation was specifically about earthquakes and libraries, and it is the fourth year she has been asked to speak on this topic. In addition, a case study about the effects of the 2018 earthquake on the Chugiak-Eagle River Library was included in the American Library Association publication, The Disaster Planning Handbook for Libraries by Mary Grace Flaherty, 2021.
- Meneka Thiru continued to attend outreach events including the Bear Paw Teddy Bear Picnic, a social hour at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center to promote Libby and Hoopla, and the **Alaska Coalition of BIPOC Educators** Backpack Jam.

- Meneka Thiru received feedback from a patron at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center: they have been using the library for 20 years and used to come in quite regularly to take home a stack of books. More recently, they have had macular degeneration and because of this they have made the transition to Libby – they love it because they are able to adjust the size of the text and the brightness of the screen to be able to continue to enjoy reading books. They are a big Libby fan and want to tell more people what a wonderful resource it is!
- Kristie Nelsen has been doing lots of reference work - in person, phone calls, emails, chat, and even a mailed letter. One gentleman started with a question to AskALibrarian on July 1 about mileage to Valdez and has replied 7 times this month with questions on everything from baby carriers to the Declaration of Independence, to contact information for a credit card company.
- Andrew Allard has been busy with reference work: emails, phone calls, Personal Reading Request, and 2 mail requests for library card displays; one from Baldwin County Library Cooperative in AL, and Fairfield Lane Library in OH. They both are creating library card displays by collecting cards from around the country and world.
- In an effort to reacquaint folks with the artwork left to Anchorage Public Library by Mr. Z.J. Loussac himself, Adult Services has been giving away free prints to patrons who participate in a self-guided tour of the Sydney Laurence and Eustace Ziegler paintings in the Galleria. These prints, a variety of Sydney Laurence's paintings and watercolors, were once sold in the Friends of the Library Gift Shop when it was housed on the 2nd floor of Loussac Library. The Friends of the Library have generously agreed to donate these prints to this campaign. This has been quite popular, and Adult Services staff have handed out approximately 150 prints.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- This fall Samantha Blanquart will resume doing outreach at Head Starts and Title I preschools.
- Meneka Thiru, Misty Rose Nesvick, Samantha Blanquart, and Jim Curran are working on a plan to get mobile library materials out to the community while we are waiting for the van to arrive.
- TS is working to process materials for the new Mobile Library, items may be used before the van arrives.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- Ziona Brownlow, APL's remaining CRC staff, was able go to Muldoon on Wednesdays and hold a well-attended Connect: Muldoon event. However, Muldoon has been alerted that the program will be moved under the auspice of AHD. Muldoon is not sure at this time if CRC services will continue at this location.
- Now that the Community Resource Center has only one staff member (Ziona Brownlow), she is not available as often as our community members need assistance. The community need is urgent in East Anchorage currently, so she has had cancel outreach hours at Loussac to keep up with the demand. While she was out, Adult Services staff fielded issues with varying degrees of success from a senior citizen whose primary language was Spanish in need of emergency housing assistance, a woman in tears needing help getting an ID, a woman who was unable to access her bank account because she did not have a smartphone, and a man who needed help filling out an assistance application.

Building Community

Recent Accomplishments

- Community partners, The Listening Post has returned to Mountain View on Friday afternoons.
- Mountain View Youth Services Librarian, Keelin Baughman did outreach at the Fairview Neighborhood Block Party (250 attendees), in addition to her regular outreach at Fairview Books and Bikes.

- Mountain View Library with support from Meneka Thiru (AS) participated in the Back-to-School Jam backpack giveaway hosted by the Anchorage Coalition of Black Educators and the Mountain View Boys & Girls Club. 1,800 backpacks were handed out to neighborhood students. Readers to the Rescue donated 96 backpacks.
- Sue Sommers, Chugiak-Eagle River Youth Services Librarian, hosted a table at the Bear Paw Festival Teddy Bear Picnic, reaching out to 355 people about APL's programs and services.
- 260 people contributed to an interactive ocean display at Loussac Youth Services this month. 403 people completed a scavenger hunt. 31 people voted in the interactive display in the Teen Underground. The interactive displays and scavenger hunts have become a highlight of people's library experience and many people make a beeline to them.
- 16 families came into Loussac Library to get their "Welcome Baby" bag welcoming a new infant into our community with a book, baby toy, and early literacy information!
- Nicole Levinson continues to update a marker board with a question or response opportunity for patrons each month. July's prompt was "Where reading takes you," which received 65 responses.
- Kristie Nelsen built a website booklist for the James Webb telescope for social media and another to recognize the passing of Lael Morgan.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Nancy Clark, Chugiak-Eagle River manager, has lined up at least 10 authors so far for the Alaskan Authors Signing Event to be held on Sept 17 at the Eagle River Town Center. This event is meant to bring local authors and readers together, promoting literacy for people of all ages.
- The August interactive displays at Loussac will be a poll for patrons to tell us what type of program they prefer for Fall.
- Kristie Nelsen registered as a partner with National Voter Registration Day and is looking at a possible tabling program on the day (September 20).
- Meneka Thiru is continuing to work with the Anchorage Museum, Tent City Press, and branches to coordinate zine making programming in October.

Limiting Factors/Concerns (None at this time.)

Internal Goals and Strategies

Recent Accomplishments

- Tammi Mohr joined the Mountain View team filling the Library Assistant III/AMEA 9 position.
- Kyle Travis joined the Chugiak-Eagle River team from Muldoon as our new Library Assistant III.
- Two youth services positions were filled at Loussac Library.
 - Lisa Bricker was promoted internally from the Patron Services department to be a Youth Services Librarian II. Lisa has years of experience at Loussac and at libraries on the East Coast.
 - Suzanne Metcalfe joined us as a part-time Youth Services Librarian I. Suzanne is a retired Anchorage School District librarian with experience in elementary, middle, and high schools.
- Adult Services On-Call Part Time Associate Librarian Laura Boone left the library on July 16. We wish her well on her next adventure!
- Adult Services welcomed two new staff members
 - Juniper Dobson is our new Part Time Professional Librarian I
 - Amanda Andros is our new On-call Part Time Associate Librarian
- Sarah Preskitt was promoted from the Alaska Collection Librarian position to Adult Services Coordinator. She has worked many years in adult services and is an ideal fit for the position.

- Sandy Knipmeyer and Andrew Allard finished the 800# grant final report and sent it on to the city for signatures before sending it to the State Library.
- Celia Hartz updated the technology ticketing system for the library so now an email goes out to affected staff to know if a system or machine is not working. This helps all staff stay in the loop to issues and stops creating multiple tickets for issues.
- Number of invoices paid and processed by Technical Services (Rommel and Stacy): 223
- Number of items weeded; re-instated; donations processed; other general cataloging/call number changes completed by Chad, Elliot, and Rommel: 829
- E-books are now being ordered by Taylor in CMS, thanks to Sarah in Adult Services for covering.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Sarah Preskitt has been working with Brendan Farrell (Facilities), Celia Hartz (Automation), and Rick Henderson (Facilities) to move the public service desks on the 2nd and 3rd floors to create a safer environment for staff and patrons and allow for better sightlines.
- RFP process started for book vendor contract. Stacy, and Nate working on this project.
- 1 open Range 8 position in Technical Services has been advertised, interviews will start soon
- The final full-time staffing vacancy (Library Assistant II) at Chugiak-Eagle River has been posted for applications and closes on August 1. They still have a part-time Library Assistant I position that has been vacant since June 2021.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- Chugiak-Eagle River is the only location not offering curbside service at this time. Because of the logistics of adding another workflow to an already-busy location, they cannot accommodate this service without all Chugiak-Eagle River vacancies being filled. They hope to be able to offer this service by the time the snow flies for their less-mobile and senior patrons.
- Youth Services at Loussac continues to have one unfilled librarian position.
- One Adult Services staff member has been out on unexpected extended leave with an unknown return date. This has created some staffing shortages, but onboarding two new staff members has helped the situation. We do not yet know when this employee will be able to return.
- Adult Services has three unfilled positions for a total of 2.1 FTE.
- CMS has 2 out of 8 positions vacant.
- Muldoon's position for a new LA II opened 7/27 and closes 8/3. They hope to have a new staff member by the first week in September.

Library Board Updates

Recent Accomplishments

- No Board Meetings in July

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Friends of The Library- Educator Book Sale on August 14 (free/suggested donation items for teachers)

Limiting Factors/Concerns (None at this time)

Photos/Social Media

Image: Instagram post from Summer Discovery presenter Lee Post

Text: The class today [@anchoragelibrary](#) was a roaring success with all the credit going to the incredible library staff and the hoards of kids and their adults who showed up for an hour of fun.

At five minutes to 3:00 it was just one or two kids, then dozens and dozens rolled in, filling the room. Staff kept adding tables. We did an on-the fly AV change (thank you bag of dongles and cables) and, without missing a beat, we were able to kept the energy high and drawings coming. Everyone was drawing from little siblings to grandparents and they were delighted by what they were able to create with a few light prompts.

Every time I go to the library, I'm reminded of what a treasure it is, filled with caring staff and a community that wants to learn. Support the library and their ability to be an open and welcoming oasis however you can!

