

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

June 15, 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
- _____ Denali Tshibaka, Teen Liaison

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	
Director's Report	Judy Eledge	6:05	
Mission Moment: TBA	TBA	6:20	
Board Comments and Adjourn	Cristy Willer	6:50	

Municipality of Anchorage
 Library Advisory Board Minutes
 Chugiak-Eagle River Library
 Microsoft Teams Virtual & In-Person Meeting: May 18, 2022
 (Subject to approval at the June 15, 2022 LAB Meeting)

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

X = Present, E = Excused, U = Unexcused

Staff Present:

Judy Eledge (Acting Director/Deputy Director), Jacob O. Cole, (Assistant Director), Nancy Clark (Chugiak-Eagle River Branch Manager), Taylor Keister (Library Assistant III), Ariel Murrills (Library Assistant II)

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.

Announcements:

- Cristy Willer acknowledged the absence of LAB member Travis Gularte and noted that Nancy Hemsath has agreed to serve as Secretary. (When asked if anyone had communicated with Travis about his apparently vacated board position, Ms. Eledge said that they had not.)
- There will be a farewell cake reception for Jacob Cole on May 19, 11am-1pm, in the Staff

Lounge at Loussac Library.

- There will be a recognition of recently deceased library supporters Lo Crawford, Wilda Marston, and Arliss Sturgulewski at the Assembly meeting on May 24, 6-7pm.

Approvals:

- Action: The agenda was approved (Debra/Barb).
- Action: The April 2022 minutes were approved (Debra/Barb).

Person(s) to be Heard:

Virtual: Jeff Raun (plus three guests who remained unidentified)

- Mr. Raun commented on the memo to the Mayor that was included in the LAB packet. He feels that his family has been negatively impacted by short staffing and the Sunday closures. He would advocate for a public meeting about the LAB and its responsibilities and he expressed concern about perceived subversion of LAB responsibilities.
- Moses Vakulich requested to be a Person to be Heard during the June 15 meeting.

Director's Report (on file):

- **May 15 Memo to Mayor.**
 - Background: Ms. Willer sent a memo to Mayor Bronson, copying the Anchorage Municipal Assembly and the LAB, requesting more information about three specific issues: unfilled positions, Sunday closure, and the newly appointed library director.
 - Discussion: Ms. Eledge provided a spreadsheet of positions and updates regarding vacancies and hiring. A copy will be further updated and attached to these minutes. She explained delays in hiring due to a convoluted HR process.
 - Discussion: LAB member Debra Bronson and Teen Liaison Denali Tshibaka objected to the memo having been sent without full Board approval and discussion. Although sent by Chair Willer, the memo could be perceived as representing the entire board and not just the Chair. A further objection was made to the memo's paragraph regarding staff response to requests for vacant position information.
 - Discussion: Ms. Eledge explained that the decision to cut Sunday hours was made by the Mayor's Office following budget discussions with previous leadership. If there are no cuts and the positions are filled, the new library director should reassess the situation.
 - Outcomes:
 - LAB members want to approve any memos that represent the board before they are issued.
 - The LAB wants to be informed of policy or practice decisions while they are being considered, rather than learning of decisions after they are made. It takes its "Advisory" responsibilities seriously.

- The LAB will clarify its need for clear and timely communication regarding policy or practice decisions for the new director, in order to fulfill its obligation to advise on such issues.

Mission Moment: Nancy Clark, Chugiak-Eagle River (C-ER) Branch Manager (see report)

- Ms. Clark has been with the APL system 29 years, ten of which have been as the C-ER branch manager.
- Chugiak-Eagle River is a family-oriented community with many military users reflected in patron ages and usage.
- The C-ER branch is the 2nd largest in the APL system, with circulation representing nearly 20% of the system total. Current staff works efficiently to overcome vacancies, compensating for a total of 38% reduction in staff hours per week.

Adjournment:

Action: The formal meeting was adjourned at 6:36 pm in order for members to tour the library. The next meeting will take place June 15, 2022, location to be determined.

Deputy Director's Report

May/June 2022

The municipal libraries are very busy during these months. Our full board report is quite large this month and I hope all of you take the time to read about all the other exciting things happening at our libraries. Many of the programs that have not been in full swing since our closures are in full swing again! Our Summer Reading Programs, at all the libraries, are breaking records of attendance. It is just great to see so many children return to our programs. A big thanks to all our wonderful librarians at all branches for making this happen.

We have received word that two library requests have made it into the legislative budget. One was \$2.5 million for the Downtown Library and the other was a request by Representative Liz Snyder to make upgrades to the Muldoon Library. My understanding is this was a request from several years ago and had not been pursued because this library location is leased and not owned by MOA. We are awaiting Governor's list of vetoes.

I receive a monthly update from Sami Graham on the Downtown Library Committee meetings and this committee is moving rapidly forward. As many of you are aware the mayor has a multi-million-dollar downtown revitalization plan, and we feel the downtown library will fit comfortably in that plan.

Open Positions

For the past couple of weeks, we have been involved in hiring many of open positions. Some of these positions have been vacant since 2021. This report is not completely done but I will give a brief-summary of the open positions and send the completed one when done. (Please note these numbers are ones I have in my records, and this could change slightly when complete report is done). Please remember there has been a hiring freeze since July 2021. Some of the jobs were pre-pandemic and we have slowly begun returning to our previous numbers. I have investigated all open positions and have sent justification on ones I felt we absolutely had to have. When I began in September 2021 there were 19 vacancies. Since my arrival we have had an additional 4 vacancies (22 total). As of today, we have either hired or in the process of hiring 18 of those positions. Director and Assistant Director are included in this number but are being done by the mayor's office. Currently there are 4 vacancies that have not been approved for hire. The library has always had a large vacancy rate because of so many part-time positions. As far as our vacancy rate being higher than normal, I received this from HR regarding our vacancies.

The library's decline in head count is not an anomaly when viewed in the context of the MOA-wide decline in head count.

During this time-period, MOA-wide Accession Rate trended downward while the Separation Rate trended upward, thus precipitating the head count decline. Bottom line....the library is mirroring the trends we see MOA-wide."

Closing on Sundays at Loussac

When I was hired as Director of Library, I was informed that the Library Leadership had decided to close on Sundays for their required 5% budget cut instead of cutting personnel. This was brought forward by Shanna Allen and Jacob Cole and was favored by the rest of Leadership. So, closing on Sundays was presented as the 5% budget cut required from the mayor's office. The mayor at the time, preferred to keep the library open on Sundays and

watch closely the positions needed and only approving those absolutely needed. This was discussed with leadership and ALL Boards involved with the library on numerous occasions.

During the 2nd round of budget cuts, we again stated we wanted to close on Sundays and save any position. Sundays are also hard to cover since many employees do not want to work on Sundays especially, department managers who regularly work M-F 8-5. In early May I was told by two managers at Loussac, Youth Services Manager Elizabeth Nicolai and Adult Services Manager, Stacia McGourty, they would not be able to cover Sundays after May 15th. We also had two long time part-time people who worked Sundays resign. In checking our patron numbers, we are still not where we were pre-pandemic. Another consideration was per union contracts anyone working on Sundays had to be paid for 8 hours and we were open only 4. We strongly felt we could better use our resources if we closed on Sundays enabling those people to work during open hours. Loussac was the only library open on Sundays. Another consideration was pre-pandemic we had several churches renting the library on Sundays. It is our hope that we once again begin having churches return, which is a great revenue stream.

Other Tidbits

- We have finally come to an agreement on contract with the owner of our **current café** since the old agreement had expired. You might notice some slight changes in hours and the atrium to meet the new contract requirements, but we think they are good changes and help our renter be successful after a couple of years with closures.
- We had a recent flood on our second floor and the **Beluga Room** will be closed until repairs are made. The repairs are adjacent to the Beluga room so we must close it until completed. Speaking of rentals, Rick Henderson has been busy learning the new calendar program, that once learned will make rentals much easier.
- We are doing our staff and **board meetings in the 4th floor staff meeting room** so we can clean the board room. The furniture had not been cleaned in years and we had our cleaning staff remove the glass tops and give the beautiful mahogany wood a deep clean. We also had the chairs cleaned and are in the process of having it all put back. We hope all of you will enjoy once you see it.
- **The Senior Golden Days** are taking a break for the summer. Instead, we are going to attend and promote the Senior Center events. The first one is their Garden Day on June 22. Please go to their website to find out more. We so appreciate Meneka Thiru and Teresa Churchel for helping make this a huge success.
- Many of you may not be aware but in the bottom cabinets of the **Ann Stevens room there are teacup sets**, many which have been donated by estates. I have two wonderful ladies who have offered to volunteer their time to help us catalogue the sets. They are busy taking pictures for our records. Our goal is to have a beautiful notebook in the Ann Stevens room for people to view the many sets and see where they originated

Please know all of you have an open invitation to visit any of our libraries and we would love to have you visit. Many of the staff members you may not know, or ever hear from, will be glad to answer any questions, just as I am. This way you will see what is happening in these wonderful libraries versus just hearing it from others. I hope all of you have a wonderful summer and enjoy this great sunshine.

Education & Skills for Life

Recent Accomplishments

- Meneka Thiru (Adult Services) worked with Somos Amigos to host the fourth Café Entre Amigos event, which provides Spanish language practice for speakers and learners of Spanish language. 20 people attended.
- Nicole Levinson (Adult Services) has brought back gardening programming this year, including gardening to-go kits.
- Kristie Nelsen (Adult Services) has received training provided by Northstar Digital Literacy and has started to set up the curriculum and get staff accounts set up.
- Adult Services staff and branch managers will receive this training to facilitate digital literacy courses for patrons, with the support of program partners.
- In May APL had 2,221 people register for Summer Discovery! That is the highest participation we have seen in years.
 - 2021– 1,469 people signed up in May
 - 2020 – pandemic year/libraries closed, no in-person Summer Discovery available
 - 2019 –1,832 people signed up in May.
 - Staff and patrons also completed an extra 17,394 minutes for our 150,000 Readers to the Rescue goal!
- Reading Rendezvous returned after a two-year hiatus as one of our biggest events ever.
 - 128.5 hours of community service from 47 volunteers
 - 3,000 people in attendance
 - 1,242 people signed up for Summer Discovery! (a new single-day record)
 - 4 hours of entertainment featuring almost 50 performers on stage
 - 4 radio stations doing a live broadcast
 - 2 costumed characters (Molly of Denali and Dash from Alaska 529)
 - \$8,500 budget, all from donations
 - [Malie from KGOT did a fantastic Facebook live video](#) and a tour of the event
- May youth programs at Loussac were reduced due to staffing, the need for summer preparation, and to do outreach visits at local schools to promote Summer Discovery. Including Reading Rendezvous there were still 23 events that served 4,083 people Highlights are:
 - 4 school visits serving 613 people!
 - 2 special storytimes (science and art) serving 51 people
 - 294 people participating in scavenger hunts to practice letters and library skills
 - UAA Engineering partnered with Jon Ebron (Teen Librarian) to host middle school engineering programs
- Keelin Baughman (Mountain View Youth Librarian), visited 3 ASD classrooms for Storytime and Summer Discovery sign-ups.
- Jamie White (Gerrish (Girdwood) Library) visited K-6 classes at the Girdwood school to promote library services, materials, and Summer Discovery.
- Red Coffey (Muldoon Youth Librarian) promoted Summer Discovery at Susitna, Creekside Park, and Chester Valley elementary schools.

- Chugiak-Eagle River Library had 504 Summer Discovery signups in the first 10 days of the program.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Summer Programs begin June 1st with storytimes resuming a twice-weekly schedule at Loussac and every location hosting a special Summer Discovery program for elementary school-aged children. (organizing staff Elizabeth Nicolai, Youth Services Coordinator)
- Teens will have twice-monthly “Life Skills” programs at every location focusing on things like First Aid, Bicycle Repair, Job Interviews, and more. (organizing staff Jon Ebron, Teen Librarian)

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- Due to the lack of staffing in youth services, we are offering far fewer programs and services.
 - In June 2019, Loussac Youth Services offered 46 programs. In June 2022, we will offer 21.

Bridge to Information and Resources

Recent Accomplishments

- APL selection staff chose 2838 new items which were then ordered by Nate Howes (Acting Collection Management Coordinator)
- Technical Services processed 543 new items to add to shelves, during the month of May.
- Chugiak-Eagle River circulated 12,118 items in May. That is 25.7% of Loussac’s circulation (47,160 items) and 17.9% of APL’s circulation (67,602).
- With the teamwork of many staff, Gerrish (Girdwood) Library was able to get a phone/quiet booth transported and set up inside the library. This will help meet the needs for patrons that need a quiet place to work, do a virtual meeting, or interview.
- The Gerrish Library completed 12 notary services in May, our highest number so far.
- CITC Youth Navigation brought 9 students on a field trip to Mountain View library. They learned about library services, did the kids scavenger hunt, got library cards and signed up for Summer Discovery.
- CITC Peer Navigator program toured the Mountain View library. They learned about library services, workforce development resources, and volunteer opportunities.
- Meneka Thiru, Stacia McGourty (Adult Services) and Misty Rose Nesvick (Community Relations) tabled at the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce’s Young Professional Summit at the Dena’ina Center. They connected with about 50 people, issued new library cards and demonstrated access to library resources on mobile devices
- Meneka Thiru (Adult Services) tabled at the Mental Health Fair hosted by Alaska Public Media. She spoke with 60+ people, issued new library cards, and helped them access digital resources. She also met some of the other vendors at the fair and talked about future collaboration ideas.
- Kristie Nelsen (Adult Services), Misty Rose Nesvick (Community Relations), and Meneka Thiru (Adult Services) worked together to survey library staff for literary characters to fill our practice election ballot.
- Kristie Nelsen (Adult Services) wrote a news article about ebook/audiobook benefits for travel and accessibility, then recorded, edited, and posted a video on how to change reading and listening settings for ebooks and audiobooks in Libby to accompany the article.
- Sarah Preskitt (Adult Services) reorganized the Alaska storage area to be more accessible and updated signage to assist staff with finding what patrons need. All Alaskan donations and extra materials are now organized in one place and the municipal publications have been consolidated to take up fewer shelving units.

- Elizabeth Nicolai (Youth Services Coordinator) and Kelsey Skrobis (Youth Services) prepared and turned in selection carts of materials for the new Mobile Library.
- Elizabeth Nicolai (Youth Services Coordinator) completed additional ordering for juvenile and picture book fiction, normally undertaken by a position currently open in Youth Services.
- Elizabeth Nicolai (Youth Services Coordinator) and Samantha Blanquart (Early Literacy Librarian) met with Waterford representatives to help share information about Kindergarten readiness activities and opportunities.
- Kristie Nelsen (Adult Services) coordinated with Sarah Preskitt (Adult Services) and Misty Rose Nesvick (Community Relations) on a redesign of the Loussac Collection brochure.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Samantha Blanquart (Early Literacy Librarian) will be distributing books purchased with a special grant to students at ASD Nutrition sites over the summer.
- Adult Services and Community Relations are coordinating “Books Get Our Vote- Library Representative Edition” to help the public understand how the “Pick 1 Primary” and “Ranked Choice General” elections will work.
- APL will be promoting the Loussac Collection of artwork (part of the Alaska Collection at Loussac Library) with a campaign encouraging patrons to bring visiting friends and family to the library or incorporate a visit as part of their Summer Discovery learning activities.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- Supply chain disruptions plague our vendors, delaying the arrival of new materials.

Building Community

Recent Accomplishments

- Monthly Golden Afternoon senior program at Loussac, wrapped up for the spring with a successful event on stories through art; facilitated by Theresa Churchill (Mountain View Library). Meneka Thiru (Adult Services) and Judy Eledge (Deputy Director) also provided staff support for the program. Great feedback was received from patrons!
- Muldoon Library’s popular Wednesday Art Lab finished up for the season, taking its place will be Summer Discovery programs.
- Gerrish (Girdwood) Library hosted the Air National Guard Band of the South’s brass quintet for a performance that brought our community’s music lovers together.
- Loussac Library hosted the Air National Guard Band of the South’s rock and jazz bands with over 150 people attending including local youth camps, seniors, and families.
- Anchor Gardens and Yardocopia partnered, built, and filled raised beds for the Mountain View Teaching Garden. Gardening programs will continue throughout the summer.
- Meneka Thiru (Adult Services) attended the Korean American Community of Anchorage’s Scholarship Day event at the Wilda Marston to welcome people to the library and answer questions about resources.
- Nicole Levinson (Adult Services) created Patron Response bulletins board to encourage passive patron participation outside regularly scheduled programs. May’s theme was “Now Playing,” asking patrons to post their favorite movie.
- Both ILL and 800# staff (Lina Kianipour, Sandy Knipmeyer) continue to be a great help to the APL patrons and the larger communities around Alaska.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Meneka Thiru (Adult Services) received a Library Foundation grant in 2021 to fund a project to learn and get feedback from linguistically diverse communities in Anchorage. She met with 11 people in 2021.
 - She is continuing to reach out to and build relationships with community members in different language groups in Anchorage. Although recruiting participants for more focus groups has been a challenge, she is hoping that by building a continued relationship, she will be able to hold more in the future.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- Chugiak-Eagle River was closed to the public on Thursday, May 26 due to both technical and staffing issues. Staff continued to offer the Summer Recess program in the Eagle River Commons Park.
- Rebuilding trust with groups we haven't interacted with since the pandemic.

Internal Goals and Strategies

Recent Accomplishments

- EBSCO periodical processing consolidation: Time and labor savings suggestion by Rommel Laigo (Technical Services). Implemented 3 months ago, so far positive feedback from branches who are getting their magazines and newspapers faster with staff time being saved.
- RFP process started for book vendor contract. Shanna Allen (Admin), Stacy Gordan (Technical Services Coordinator), and Nate Howes (Acting Collection Management Coordinator) working on this project
- Chugiak-Eagle River hosted the Library Advisory Board meeting on May 18. Nancy Clark's (Branch Manager) presentation included a summary of activities and a brief tour.
- Chugiak-Eagle River has reached 98.2% of pre-Covid levels of service (by footfall and circulation).
- Nate Howes (Acting Collection Management Coordinator) provided Adult Services with eight new debut and diverse adult fiction titles for the top of their webpage
- Ariel Murrills joined Adult Services as a Library Assistant III. She's returning to Loussac after working at Chugiak-Eagle River. Welcome, Ariel!
- Sarah Preskitt (Adult Services) will be the acting Adult Services Coordinator following Stacia McGourty's departure.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Two of the three vacant Youth Services librarian positions were posted to applicants. We hope to interview in June and fill those. (Elizabeth Nicolai, Judy Eledge)
- Two Adult Services part-time positions have been posted. We hope to interview in June and fill those. (Sarah Preskitt, Judy Eledge)
- One Library Asst II position for Chugiak-Eagle River has been posted. We hope to interview in June and fill those. (Nancy Clark)
- The Collection Development Librarian position has completed interviews and hopefully will have new hire soon.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- Chugiak-Eagle River has 3 staff vacancies out of 8 positions (2 full-time Library Asst IIs and 1 part-time Library Asst I) resulting in requests for assistance many days.
- Staff are struggling to complete routine tasks due to staff vacancies.

- Muldoon continued to be down a staff through the end of May—they will be returning June 7th.
- Muldoon’s Community Resource staff position continues to be vacant. Rebecca Barker and Ziona Brownlow have helped support local residents as their schedules permit.
- Collection Management Services has 3 out of 8 positions vacant.
- Two vacancies in Technical Services as of January 3, 2022
- Loussac Adult Services is down one full-time position while the individual in that position is serving in an acting role elsewhere, another full-time position is waiting on posting, and two part-time positions remain open pending interviews.
- There have also been a number of staff illnesses.
- Vacancies and absences continue to make staffing desks, new programming, and outreach commitments difficult.
- System-wide time and staff bandwidth for services, programs, and projects is limited due to being short-staffed.
- Jacob Cole (Assistant Director) left APL to take a Director position out of state.

Photos/Social Media

Reading Rendezvous on the Loussac Lawn May 14

