

Library Advisory Board Meeting – November 12, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Sam Little at 4:04pm. A quorum was established and those present included board members Sam Little, Carolyn Caldwell, Sarah Kathan, Rhonda Leblanc, and Susie Davis. Also present was County Librarian Valerie Jensen and Assistant County Librarian Annie Vass. Those not in attendance were Heather Puppa and Katie Jackson.

Board contact list was presented with no updates added.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Davis with a 2nd by Kathan.

Old Business:

Comments and concerns from the community – Leblanc asked about a rescheduled date for the groundbreaking in Winnie. Jensen explained that county officials suggested to cancel the groundbreaking due to Imelda and put all our efforts into the grand opening in late 2020.

New Business:

Terms for the following members expire in November of 2019: Little, Caldwell, Kathan, Jackson, and Leblanc. Jensen noted that Katie Jackson moved out of state and resigned from the board. Little, Caldwell, and Leblanc stated they would remain on the board to see the new library built. Kathan asked to remain on the board as well. The group forgot to make a motion, so that will be done at the February meeting. Jackson's seat will be filled by someone who is nominated by the library staff.

Librarian's Report:

Jensen discussed the status of the Juanita Hargraves Memorial Branch in Winnie after Imelda. The library was reopened on Nov. 12 after being closed 2 months due to water damage. Jensen commended the county for their quick efforts to start remediation so soon after the storm. Quick actions saved the books and other items that were high enough off the floor to avoid water damage. Leblanc recognized library staff that assisted in Winnie at shelters and with FEMA.

Jensen then gave an update on capital improvements for Anahuac and Winnie. Winnie should be seeing action at the future library site as well as a 'future home of' sign on the property. Jensen then discussed the news that the Chambers County Library in Anahuac will either be repurposed or demolished to make room for the justice center. The library will be relocated at another location and Jensen noted that the same floor/building plan that Winnie has will be used for Anahuac. An addition onto the library for the Historical Commission will also be included.

Next was an update on the 2020 budget approvals. Jensen and Vass asked for wage increases for certain job descriptions to be competitive with other libraries in the region. We tried to justify why it was needed with comparison job descriptions, hourly wages, and the growing job duties that our staff does. It was not approved but it will be pursued next budget year. It was also requested to increase the travel budget so all staff could attend the Texas Library Association Conference in Houston next year as well as funding for Valerie and Annie to attend the Public Library Association in Nashville. This \$2,000 request was approved.

Next, Jensen gave an update on personnel at Anahuac. April Knight is the new Children's Librarian, and Kari Hernandez is the new after school Page.

Finally, an update was given on Nerd Con 2. This event will take place on Dec. 7 at Eagle Pointe in Mont Belvieu. This is the 2nd year for this event and the organizers (library staff, city workers, volunteers) are anticipating at least double in attendance from the 2018 convention. Jensen passed out flyers to board members inviting them to join in on the fun.

A motion to adjourn at 4:37 was made by Kathan, with a 2nd by Caldwell.

Respectfully submitted, Valerie Jensen