**Friends of the Sonoma Valley Library Board Meeting – Minutes June 11, 2020**

Present: Madolyn Agrimonti, Ken Brown, Janice Chadwin, Janet Constantino, Dave Dobbins, Tom Haeuser, Robin Kunde, Robyn Makaruk, JoAnne Sanders, Karen Sanders, Beverly Seyfert, Diana Spaulding, Marge Thomas, Sarah Vantrease

*Note: Meeting was in the form of a Zoom conference.*

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes of the May 14, 2020, meeting were approved.

Unfinished Business:

New Business: Book sale and donation systems deferred to discussion later in the meeting

Officer Reports

*Presiden*t:

FOL Presidents’ Council met May 21. Janet and Robin attended. Chair of Council, Bruce Robinson, has resigned; Sarah Swearingen, President of Santa Rosa Branch, will be Chair for next year. Discussion of book sales drew diverse opinions from receiving donation immediately to the possibility that book sales in current form will never return. Alternative ways to sell books will be discussed in future.

*Vice President:* Council also discussed budget reductions expected from drop in sales and property taxes. The library system faces an approximate $2.3 million short-fall.

*Secretary:* No report

*Treasurer:* Treasurer’s report for May previously distributed. Cash balance is $450,885; May income of $1,928 entirely due to off-site book sales by Tony Pisacane, who works with Book Forest. BF receives and sells books from our FOL and other groups.

*Member-at-Large and Publicity Chair*: Karen is waiting for information which can be publicized.

Committees:

*Book Sales*:

Note: *The discussion concerning the current and future situations for book sales and receiving book donations ranged through the meeting and is collected here. Discussion included the following comments/opinions/suggestions:*

* Dave was unaware that county system has decided that outside storage area maintained by FOLs could be accessed by volunteers. Tony has been accessing storage area, though no other receiving/sorting activities are occurring. Tony believes FOL should start receiving donations quickly. (His full statement was attached to agenda.)
* We should explore other ways to distribute books, such as lockers or on-line or small distributions.

The issue of making donations hygienic for re-sale:

* “What are the ethics of selling books which are not sanitized?”
* Books donated stay in storage for a week to three months.
* There are no Commission or staff protocols for the length of time donations must be sequestered.
* The county system intends to get information from a library agency working with the CDC on virus transmission through materials.
* “If someone gets COVID-19 and contact tracing leads back to the library, that would not be good.”
* Napa branch is receiving donations and sequestering materials for 72 hours.
* Our return to receiving donations should dovetail with the library’s return to taking returns.
* Staff suggests that even when the library begins taking books back, donations or sequestering of materials should be delayed longer. With a book drop, there is no control over what is placed in the receptacle.

The concern for the many volunteers who sort donations:

* A serious concern is the safety of volunteers who sort books. Social distancing under current system is simply not possible. “This has been an issue with other organizations, too.”

Dave’s Book Sales Report:

We are not looking at resuming sales in the format prior to the pandemic until 2021. When the library is open to volunteers and patrons, we hope to offer books for sale in a limited space and a limited amount inside, under Diana’s guidance. Tony would like to open donations quickly, but one major concern is storage. Where do we store the materials we will receive from all those who are eager to donate after such a long shut-down? We now send 75% to 80% of donations to St. Vincent de Paul. Two other major concerns: at this point we have no one to manage this operation; and social distancing must be enforced.

Dave is retiring, a situation discussed at length by the Book Sale Committee. (That report was previously distributed.) No member of the Committee wishes to take on the managing of the program. Next steps:

*Phase 1*: An email sent to everyone who has worked in sales and/or sorting to see if anyone in interested in managing any aspect of the work. *Phase 2*: A communication with every member of the FOL asking the same thing. This would go by email and by newsletter. *Phase 3*: Finally, the request would go out to the general public. Dave will connect with Karen when this publicity is needed. He will remain to mentor new manager(s).

*Membership*: No report

*Book Clubs*: Both Mary-Kay, of Classical Reflections, and Kassandra, of Mystery, are eager to return to their meetings. Sarah replies that no programs will be held until the end of August, though at some point groups of no more than 10 might be allowed. Diana will talk with Mary-Kay and Kassandra about the possibilities of conducting their meetings electronically.

*Newsletter*: Robyn is concerned about the relevancy of the quarterly newsletter. No publication in May because of lack of activity. The newsletter is distributed by email (to 700-800), snail mail (to about 25) and through the FOL website, though there are few “hit’s on svfol.org. Concerns include content and frequency (should we move from quarterly to monthly or bimonthly?). For the July agenda: Discussion on the future of the newsletter.

*The meeting was adjourned at 3:45. Next meeting: July 9. 3:00 p.m. Place and format to be determined.*

The LAB meeting immediately followed the FOL meeting and began with reports of concern to both groups. See LAB minutes for full reports.

*Commissioner:* Tom reported that as we discuss the budget for next year, we’re engaged in “big guesses”, we do not have hard data. But we anticipate a 5% decrease in property tax income and 23% in sales tax income. Some predictions regarding sales tax are as high as 30%. We do have a $2 million reserve fund for emergencies. But we anticipate that capital improvements, except the Roseland Branch project, materials purchases, and staff will be cut back in the next fiscal year. Digital services have been very successful during the shut-down, but Tom reminds us that large parts of our population do not have the computer and other electronic resources to access these services.

*County System:* Sarah reported that libraries are in Phase 2 of the re-opening progress. Five branches are resuming work with two shifts of staff members following strict protocols. When more staff members are working, we will add more programs at the community level. With only 5 branches offering curbside service, we have distributed 4,000 items to 1,000 patrons since the beginning of June. The next step will expand this service to other branches. We face challenges with fewer staff on site and a shortage of materials such as bags and sanitizers. We have a number of scenarios for the future. [phased reopening plan is on pages 10-11 of the document, [https://sonomalibrary.civicweb.net/document/5645](about:blank)]

*Branch Manager: (*See full report attached to minutes.) Diana reported the curbside program began June 1 and is between 10 am and 3 pm. We have checked out 475 items since opening, but can check out only materials in the branch, no new items and no items acquired from other branches. The web site,  [https://sonomalibrary.org](about:blank)/curbside  is a form for requesting books to be received curbside. The next steps depend on the public health situation and decisions from library leadership.

*Council:* Madolyn reported that it is true that the hotel tax and sales tax totals are low, but as we open up and people return to restaurants and shops, we may have better news. Sonoma has reacted to the situation in many ways. The Women’s Club is having a drive-by ice cream social with ice cream from “Sweet Scoops”; the Council and others, including the Chamber of Commerce, are holding electronic meetings. “The spirit of Sonoma Strong still holds up.

Marge Thomas, Secretary