

LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
September 21, 2023 - 2:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Judy Cohan, Chair
Kathleen Kennedy, Member
Linda Borgia, Member

MEMBERS ABSENT: Wendy Holmes Boring, Member

STAFF PRESENT: Betcinda Kettells, Library Director
Ariana Wilson, Admin. Assistant – Clerk’s Office
Jennifer McMahon, Chief Operating Officer

Chair Cohan called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Member Borgia would like to add a discussion item regarding programming.

Member Borgia moved and Member Kennedy seconded the approval of the agenda with the addition of the discussion item; the motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

2. Audience Comments –None

3. Approval of Minutes

a. 3/30/23

Member Kennedy moved and Member Borgia seconded the approval of the 3/30/23 minutes; the motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

4. Action Items

a. Approval of the 2024 Meeting Schedule

Member Kennedy moved and Member Borgia seconded the approval of the 2024 Meeting Schedule as presented with no changes; the motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

5. Discussion Items

a. Past Programs including Summer Reading

Mrs. Kettells recognized the contributions of Betty Norberg who recently passed away. Betty along with other members of the St. Petersburg Beach Community Club, started the library in 1951. Without Betty and other dedicated members of the community, there may have not been a library in St. Pete Beach.

Mrs. Kettells reviewed some past programs which include:

- Physical and mental health
- Cat adoption event
- Craft programs for adults and kids
- Added documentary and foreign films to the lineup of movies for all ages
- Local presenter lectures on local history

- Some events included, butterflies, reptiles, and even a visit from a princess

Mrs. Kettells announced that in an effort to increase library patronage to pre-pandemic levels, the Library concentrated on creating a robust summer reading program. During June and July, the Library offered 74 active programs and received 1,200 people in attendance. Last year's numbers were 48 programs and 503 people in attendance. The Library also offered 16 self-directed activities and had a response of 829 participants.

Mrs. Kettells also announced some collaborations with other organizations that included a back-to-school bash with the Recreation Department and Fire Department and a health series from BayCare directed to encourage kids to make healthy choices.

b. Upcoming Programs

Mrs. Kettells announced the Friends of the Library will be sponsoring some programs including hosting Agatha Christie as part of Friends of the Library Week in October, a local author showcase, and the Friends annual meeting in November.

Mrs. Kettells also announced as part of the fiscal year budget she has requested an increase in the amount of funds for performers and instructors.

Mrs. Kettells reviewed some upcoming programs which include:

- Winter reading program geared toward adults
- Want to replicate the success of the outdoor spring concert series (more information to come later)
- Do-It-Yourself exhibit from the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History titled "Exploring Human Origins"

Mrs. Kettells also announced a new database named Freegal, a platform that provides free music streaming and downloads, for people who have St. Pete Beach library cards. There are no advertisements and it is completely free. Freegal allows 3 downloads per week and 5 hours of free streaming per day. This database for the first year has been funded by the Friends of Library.

Chair Cohan asked how to go about setting up a table at the Sunday Market for the Friends of the Library to advertise the Library and their upcoming programs. Mrs. McMahon spoke about what the process is and was able to provide Chair Cohan with some contact information.

c. Future Partnership (*added*)

Member Borgia spoke about a conference that happens at the Tradewinds every September called Novelist Inc. where writers from all over the country come together to address the needs of career novelists. She suggested the library work on a partnership with them to schedule some programs for next year's conference.

Member Kennedy asked about statistics regarding attendance at the Library.

Mrs. Kettells announced if the budget is approved as it stands the Library will be partnering with USF to hire a library page position who presents on the autism spectrum. The Library has partnered

with the Center for Autism and Related Disorders and now offers sensory-friendly browsing hours before the library opens once a month.

6. Adjournment - Next meeting 3/21/2024

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

These minutes were approved at the March 21, 2024 Library Advisory Committee meeting.