

FINAL Minutes

Friends of the Juneau Public Libraries Board Meeting

February 26, 2025

6:00 PM Downtown Library

- I. **ATTENDEES:** Andi Hirsh (president), Anne Fuller, Karina Reyes (Secretary), Eva Varadi (treasurer), Martha Moore (vice president), Louise Miller, Sue Walker, and Catherine Melville (JPL Director)
- II. **AGENDA:**
 - A. Agenda accepted - moved by Eva Varadi; seconded by Sue Walker
 - B. Minutes from previous meeting accepted - Anne Fuller made a motion and Sue Walker seconded the motion to confirm vote taken via email to approve November 30, 2024 annual membership meeting minutes.
- III. **Reports**
 - A. **Library Director Report**
 1. JPL Director Catherine Melville gave a report on what has transpired since last meeting. Lots of upheaval in our federal government but since we get a few “pass through” federal level grants and loans— for example, the State Library providing services to rural areas is covered by IMLS grant already on hand, or E-rate, the federal subsidy of internet and tools to help connect to internet, the money goes from the feds to the vendor so it does not pass through the library’s hand. Neither have been paused or cancelled but these are the two areas where we get federal funding.
 2. At the state level, we are trying to avoid being politically exposed and will attempt to safeguard funding during the budgeting process. Catherine is encouraged by the recent public outrage when state funding to libraries were cut.
 3. CBJ budget is currently smooth sailing and through the City Manager’s approval process and will go through assembly next. So far no snags.
 - B. **Library Community Outreach Report**
 1. Melinda Sandkam shared a binder with the past year’s flyers of events that happened in the year. We have a newsletter with 306 people signed up. Jan Gardner, marketing and grants person gets it out. She’s also creating most of the flyers and social media posts.
 2. The library hosted Christmas Carol with Theater Alaska and there were a total of 101 attendees.
 3. Community events:
 - a) Lacey’s sleepover - 64 participants
 - b) Clothing swap - 250 participants
 - c) Estate planning sessions set up by Sheri –69
 - d) Platypus gaming
 - e) Youth services did big band event - 275 people

- f) Author talks
 - g) Battle of the books
 - h) Story time
 - i) Elders' lunch
 - j) Class visits
- 4. Shoutout to Hannah Schempf and to seniors and elders tech event
- 5. Continue to grow partnership with AARP, downtown Rotary with their literary caboose, Gruening park visits gently used books being handed out; Fourth of July planning with the literary caboose; SERRC Learning Connection's learning center
- 6. Thanks to Forget Me Not who had a positive visit to FOL bookstore
- 7. \$500 given by Rotary for Children's books
- C. IT report - Anne Fuller
 - 1. FB posters are up
 - 2. So far only 7 renewals this year but we are expecting around 125 renewals. Letters and emails were sent out end of January to all people in the database.
 - 3. We have posted to Mastodon with hashtag #ilovemypubliclibrary
 - 4. We should explore alternative software platforms instead of Wild Apricot which is expensive. Andi asked if Anne could gather information on other non-profit vendors and see what might be a better option. Anne and Catherine will work on this.
- D. The Amazing Bookstore – Sue Walker
 - 1. Ebay sales are live and five books are already listed. User name: friendsofthejuneaulibraries
 - 2. There is a 5% fee through eBay
 - 3. Test sales conducted and money successfully transferred to our bank
 - 4. If book is worth \$10-\$100 it will be included with the valuable shelf/ rare books cabinet in the bookstore. If it's \$100 or more, then it will be listed through eBay.
 - 5. Rare books such as the Book of Martyrs from 1785 is probably worth 2K and a Tolkien book worth 7K is beyond our ability to truly determine market value. Sue and the bookstore committee will be meeting with the internet sales group to see if they can directly send these types of books to the booksellers for them to sell.
 - 6. A separate line item for eBay sales will now be in the treasurer's report.
 - 7. The cost to rent space to store books went up 35% and we are making less money from ThriftBooks. We would like to find someplace where we do not have to pay for storage space. Our current storage space square footage is the size of a one-car garage and every storage unit in Juneau has a wait list.

8. We have a contract with ThriftBooks but no one has a copy of it so we're waiting for our representative to send it to us
 9. Our current sell through rate is 22% and they would like it to be 25% or better to increase our profit sharing rate with which they reduced from 50% to 30%. They are also covering shipping cost from Seattle to Phoenix which we were previously charged. We need to check books before sending to Thrift. Use the the Thriftbook scanner which says to send or not send.
 10. The committee met with Stewart Ashton from CBJ. We are the biggest user and recycler of goods in Juneau and we have made a significant difference in extending the life of the landfill. Currently, CBJ moves our books on pallets and sends them to AML but this will no longer be the case. Instead, they are hiring Raven/Eagle courier to facilitate movement of books. Ashton said he will help find funding. Currently, recycling does not have the baler to handle the volume of books to recycle. CBJ may have a grant for a good baler that could accommodate more books to the recycling stream. He talked about the decision the city has to make about the landfill and the possible solution of having a transfer station
 11. The bookstore committee has decided to sell gift certificates to the library instead of giving them away as the practice currently stands. If the library wants to give gift certificates, then it is purchased via library grants. Anyone can buy gift certificates; we are no longer giving them away. A question came up about how we record sales of gift certificates. We record them as sales
 12. Catherine will make sure that gift certificates are purchased from FOL
- E. Treasurer's report - Eva Varadi
1. Balance sheet shared (see attached) *(side note from secretary– I don't have a copy of this so if we can get this electronically, we can attach it to the minutes)*
 2. Eva gave the highlights: 3 different tracks – Bookstore, Administration, Investments (Alexandria& JCF)
 - a) Net income from bookstore 30,948.42
 - b) Admin spent -24,446.32
 - c) Investment income: 15,266.93
 - d) If we exclude investment, net profit is 6K positive income
 3. Zoom meeting with Alexandria happened on January 20, 2025 where board members discussed our investments and our risk tolerance
 4. A meeting with Juneau Community Foundation will be held via Zoom meeting on March 4th @ noon
 5. One of our goals is to increase visibility and thus increase donations and it seems to be working
 - a) 2024 \$1600 donations

b) 2025 \$2000 (as of current today's meeting)

F. Bookstore Management Committee meeting - Sue Walker

1. We received a copy of the lawyer letter sent to the Landlord for Martha's flowers.
2. We still want to move the bookstore but will hold off on responding to the letter from Angie Nolan, Property Manager.
3. Contacted the manager of Mendenhall Mall and let her know we are still considering that space
4. Other bookstore relocation considerations
 - a) Floyd Dryden building Floyd Dryden is no longer in the running for new location as T&H and UAS have made arrangements and the Gym is staying with the Parks & Rec department. We are ranked 5th in space use priority.
 - b) Discussed different school building currently vacant due to the consolidation of schools in the JSD including the possibility of book storage at Floyd Dryden building. However, CBJ is focusing on two other leases and childcare is their primary focus.

IV. Other Discussions

A. Volunteer Appreciation

1. Anne proposed the idea of going to KTOO (\$500 for 18 30-second spots) or talk about the Bookstore in the Juneau Afternoon KRNN Joel Reid
2. Discussed options for recognizing our bookstore volunteers
 - a) possibility of a gathering with food inviting all 85 active volunteers
 - b) Personalized thank you card
3. Martha will be in charge of coming up with more ideas for volunteer appreciation and this discussion will continue via email.

B. Recap of Meeting with Alexandria Capital

1. Currently, our portfolio contains 56% in equity (stocks), 30% fixed income, 14% in cash
2. Questions include: What's our timeline? Do we think we'll pull money out for a project? If we are planning to sit on this, then we should consider long-term investments. What's our risk tolerance? How much liquidity should we have?
3. We can't touch the principal on JCF but Alexandria is more liquid for us.
4. We currently have approximately \$120K in cash that really should be invested
5. What possible smaller capital projects can we contribute to? For example, if the downtown library needs to be renovated the FJPL could help as an added layer of contribution.
6. Martha mentioned funding priorities; can we please send this email with the funding priorities, mark it as a draft and thought exercise; Martha

thinks we should be a bit more aggressive with our Alexandria allocations while Sue feels nervous about the financial situation of our country

7. Currently no large-scale city projects in the next five years.
8. Catherine mentioned that the perfectly timed maximum support was the 1.4M donated by FJPL towards building the Valley library (cost 14M to build, state paid for half; city brought value of the land, community donation, and the remainder came from 1% sales tax)
9. Louis wondered if we can use any of this money to find a safer location for the bookstore. We currently don't know the possibility of getting out of our lease so we are currently bound to staying at the Airport Mall. Our contract runs through August of 2027; if we move, we are looking at 200K which we would be paying for an empty space.
10. The Board needs to vote on what to do with the money (\$122K) at the next meeting.

C. FJPL financial handbook

1. Eva mentioned that two years ago we were in the process of developing a financial handbook; they hired Elgee Rehfield to help develop this but It died once the board changed; we need this financial handbook.
2. We are looking to ask the bookstore reps to take on the revision of the bookstore cash handling;
 - a) MOTION: Eva moved and Anne seconded that Eva, Louis, Catherine, and Andi will work on the handbook and will present it to the board by the next meeting.
 - b) MOTION: Andi moves and Karina seconded that Alexandria Capital 13.75% cash allocation will be reduced to 5%, increase equity to 60%, and 35% fixed income.

V. Meeting adjourned at 7:59pm. Next meeting: Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Respectfully Submitted by: Karina Reyes, Board Secretary