

Friends of the Fresno County Public Library
Board Meeting Minutes
August 25, 2025
Fig Garden

MINUTES

PRESENT: Nancy Kast, Becky Brown, Nick Andrade, Shannon Wise, Rosa Huerta, Mark Kalchik, Jim Poptanich, Butch Dies, Vicki Love, Sandra Knudson, Deborah Janzen, Amanda Stinnett

REGRETS: Mark Kalchik, Brian Baker

ABSENT: Brooke Payton

ALSO PRESENT: Terry Eckman, Susan Renfro, Kim Sturges, Lora Nehring

1. CALL TO ORDER/OPENING REMARKS

- The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by President Shannon Wise.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REGRETS AND EXCUSED ABSENCES

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM JULY 28, 2025 MEETING

- **Motion:** Nancy Kast
- **Seconded by:** Jim Poptanich
- **Carried**

4. DEPUTY COUNTY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT – TERRY ECKMAN

- Selma is tentatively scheduled to be completed in October but will still need to be added to the County network for phone service, which will take additional time. Additionally, furniture and books will need to go back in, so there's little likelihood of reopening before the end of the month.
- The Clovis groundbreaking will be on Wednesday and Reedley will be on Thursday. Someone from Harris Construction is taking care of all the details for both ceremonies. Construction will begin in October.
- At Politi's new building, the furniture plan with Demco is done. The building owners are hoping for things to be done by December, but this is probably too optimistic.
- Regarding the Central infrastructure grant, there is a price estimate but no plan or vendor lined up. Because of the scope and cost of the work, and the fact that there are likely no vendors who have experience with a project like this, the Library may be asking for an extension on the funding.
 - A Real Property person has finally been hired at the County, which may help move projects like this along and make it easier to find alternative spaces while the work is being completed.
 - In order for the asbestos abatement to be done in the basement, everything will need to be cleared out (which is complicated, due to the permanent shelving) and the entire staff will need to be relocated.

- Terry is hopeful that there will be a way to keep the SJVLS room up and running with zero downtime or moving. This might require generators, but he's willing to do whatever it takes, considering over 100 libraries rely on it.
- Most of the meeting rooms will wind up being voting centers for the special election and will be unavailable from late October to nearly mid-November (depending on whether they'll need to be used for vote counting, as well). This will mean some programs will be moved or cancelled, but this won't affect Fresno County Reads.

5. COUNTY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT – SALLY GOMEZ

- The Library has hired about 16 new Library Assistants and a full-time Graphic Artist, so staffing is almost back to normal.
- The Board of Supervisors are looking into requiring approval for all holiday celebrations and displays, including from the Library. This has not gone to County Counsel yet, and the idea may die there, but the Library is attempting to ask very exhaustive questions about what this might mean for them and to stress how challenging this would be in terms of providing programs and services as they always have.

6. LIBRARY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF REPORT – SUSAN RENFRO

- Fewer people signed up for the Summer Reading Challenge than in 2024, but more people completed it. In terms of why there were fewer signups this year, Susan noted that the press package didn't get as much pick-up as usual, which may just be the new normal during the Trump presidency, considering how quickly the news moves. Selma's closure may also have had an effect on the numbers, considering not everyone who would normally have participated at Selma would have been able to make it to a different branch. The live spot with E&M Reptiles that had been mentioned in July was also cancelled at the last minute.
- Amanda Stinnett asked what kind of outreach the Library does with the local schools. Sally Gomez confirmed that they do conduct outreach, but how much of it and where they can make it depends on staffing levels.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- Election of new board member:
 - Kim Sturges. Kim's resume was shared with the board via email before the meeting and she briefly introduced herself at the July Zoom meeting.
 - Jim Poptanich made a **motion** to accept Kim as a member of the board and Deborah Janzen **seconded** the motion. **Carried**.
- Converting from Quickbooks Desktop to Quickbooks Online
 - Last month's discussion could not lead to a vote because there was no quorum. An email vote was sent, with no further discussion and no nays. Jim Poptanich made a **motion** to ratify the online vote, with a **second** from Nick Andrade. **Carried**.

- Nick Andrade mentioned that branch reports will likely change and some people may be surprised or unhappy, because this has happened in the past, so before we make the switch, it will be important to communicate thoroughly with the branches. It will also be important to make sure that the switch doesn't impact the 2024 tax filing. The Executive Committee will work with the accountant on a roll-out plan.
- Kerman Friends of the Library funding request for Kerman Cosplay Quest 2025
 - Lora Nehring from the Kerman Friends presented.
 - Kerman Cosplay Quest 2025 will take place on September 27 and include cosplay story times, a library scavenger hunt, and library card sign-ups, as well as workshops, costume contests, and more.
 - The Kerman Friends are seeking funding for an 8'x8' backdrop with the Friends of the Library logo and Kerman Cosplay Quest logo on it for photos. It will not have the year on it so it can be used for future events. The Kerman Friends are asking for \$250 towards this purchase.
 - Jim Poptanich **moved** to approve \$250 for the backdrop and Deborah Janzen **seconded** the motion. After some discussion, though, and looking at the estimates Lora provided, Jim **amended** the motion to approve up to \$400 to cover the entire cost of the backdrop. Deborah Janzen **seconded** the amended motion. **Carried.**

8. BOARD REPORTS

- **PRESIDENT – SHANNON WISE**
 - The next Branch Gathering will be held on Saturday, September 20 at 1 PM at Sunnyside. The focus will be on Measure B and recruiting volunteers for that and a potential book sale.
 - Shannon will meet with attorney Laura Ward soon to discuss what the Friends of the Library can and cannot do regarding forming the political action committee for Measure B.
- **VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAMS – ROSA HUERTA**
 - Rosa has been actively looking for potential book sale locations, including the Fresno Fairgrounds, Sierra Vista Mall, and empty former Rite Aid buildings.
 - Rosa plans to talk to the school districts within the county about how to best go about finding student volunteers.
 - Jim Poptanich suggested that more remote branches take better advantage of the Bookshop's volunteer opportunities because the Big Book Sale is so much work. In the past, the overhead cost for the sale has been something like \$5-10,000, which is also something to consider, especially if we can't get space donated to us.
 - Terry Eckman noted that the Politi Friends have mentioned that they view the Big Book Sale more as good PR than just a fundraising opportunity, although the fundraising portion is important, especially for the smaller branches.

- Shannon Wise asked that each board member come up with other fundraiser ideas to help support the smaller and more remote branches and send them to Sam Retton ahead of next month's meeting so they can go on the agenda for discussion. Sam will also send an email asking for ideas to the branch presidents, which will help ensure that these ideas will feel feasible to the smaller branches.
- Rosa will call to see whether having a booth at the quarterly Home and Garden Shows might be a good option.
- Measure B preparations make planning a big sale a challenge because we'd have to split our energies, so until Measure B is passed, it was agreed that a Big Book Sale is not especially realistic or worth prioritizing for now.
- **VICE PRESIDENT, MEMBERSHIP – BECKY BROWN**
 - Becky passed out forms for collecting or updating board member bios and “elevator pitches,” as discussed in 2023.
 - Becky has been working on updating all of the letters and emails that go out to members and is working on an updated version of the membership brochure.
- **TREASURER – NICK ANDRADE**
 - No report.

9. OLD BUSINESS

- The Policies and Forms Committee (Shannon Wise, Nick Andrade, Rosa Huerta, Kim Sturges, Sandra Knudson, and Vicki Love) will meet soon.
- Nancy Kast, Jim Poptanich, and Shannon Wise will work on removing all former key executives from the Wells Fargo account and will eventually likely add at least the entire Executive Committee.
- Bookshop update:
 - There have been tons of donations and lots of great books coming in.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

- None.
- **NEXT MEETING: Monday, September 22 at 7 PM at Fig Garden.**

11. ADJOURNMENT

- **Motion by:** Jim Poptanich
- **Seconded by:** Butch Dies
- **Carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:28.**

Submitted by Sam Retton, Executive Assistant.