

**Friends of the Fresno County Public Library**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**October 27, 2025**  
Fig Garden

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Nick Andrade, Shannon Wise, Rosa Huerta, Vicki Love, Sandra Knudson, Deborah Janzen, Brooke Payton, Amanda Stinnett, Kim Sturges

**REGRETS:** Nancy Kast, Becky Brown, Mark Kalchik, Brian Baker, Butch Dies, Jim Poptanich

**ALSO PRESENT:** Terry Eckman, Sally Gomez, Susan Renfro

**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 SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 MEETING**

- **Motion:** Sandra Knudson
- **Seconded by:** Vicki Love
- **Carried**

**4. DEPUTY COUNTY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT – TERRY ECKMAN**

- With Baker and Taylor going under, most libraries are scrambling to figure out how to ensure that they'll be able to get new books in a timely fashion. This closure will be rough on Fresno because Baker and Taylor handled the Library's pre-processing, which used to be its own department at the Library, and that department no longer exists. Until a long-term solution is figured out, there may be some delays with additions to the collection and book availability.
- There is a proposed solar plan for Woodward. Work is expected to start in December and should be finished by March. (This is not a Library project, but one directed by the County Board of Supervisors.)
  - Due to the nature of the work, there may be some issues with parking, which is worrying because Woodward is such a busy branch. Every effort will be made to ensure that sufficient parking is available throughout the project so that services won't be impacted.
  - The branch's electrical bill for July was in the range of \$20k, which is part of why the County wanted to explore solar. Additionally, the County owns the Woodward location, unlike several other branches, although the fact that the Library belongs to Dominion's Homeowner's Association may cause some issues.
- Selma has now been closed for an entire year. As of now, the end date for the remodel project is at the "end of this year."
- Central: Two potential locations have been chosen for relocating staff and operations: a County-owned office building on L and Tuolumne for office staff

and The Hive for shipping and receiving. Because the County owns the building on L, this should be an easy move, but The Hive would have to go before the Board of Supervisors. The Hive would be an ideal location because it has a loading dock, which is crucial for the Library's needs.

- The building on L can't be used as a service point, due to the age of the building, so as many service staff as possible will be moved to other branches.
- Further assessments have shown that the walls at Central are not independently anchored and are held up by the ceiling, so more issues may arise and the project may become even more complicated.
- Sam Retton will try to coordinate with Nancy Kast and Ernesto Amavizca about potentially moving all of the Friends of the Library's things stored in the basement of Central to the warehouse storage unit.
- Talking Book: The County has received permission from the City to replace the carpet in the regular location with vinyl tile. Once this is done, Talking Book will be able to return, which will hopefully be before Central closes so there's no disruption to services. This project will likely need to be completed before the Library can ask for new service point locations for Central or the Heritage Center.
- Brooke Payton mentioned that her husband works with a non-profit (Central California Asthma Collaborative) that wants to put air gradient monitors on Library branches in rural areas to help get better air quality monitoring and alerts in those locations.

#### **5. COUNTY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT – SALLY GOMEZ**

- The Library's annual volunteer reception was last Friday and plans are already in the works for next year's. The Library is open to any feedback from anyone who attended.
  - Sandra Knudson mentioned that holding the event somewhere along a bus line might be helpful, considering the River Center is quite car-dependent and some volunteers might not have access to a vehicle.
- Administrative Policy 80: The Library's first round of interaction with this policy was for Zoo Boo. They were approved to purchase candy for the event.
- Administrative Policy 81: The Library is still working to find out what does or doesn't have to be approved under this policy. Some things can be signed off as a memo and then approved retroactively, but it's unclear what falls under this category. There are currently over 2,000 lines of programs in the sheet for approval for the rest of the year, although some are duplicates for different branches.
- The County is working on social media guidelines for all departments.
- The Library will be doing another round of hiring for Library Assistants, starting internally. This will hopefully get staffing levels back to where they'd like them to be.

#### **6. LIBRARY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF REPORT – SUSAN RENFRO**

- There will be a full report in November, but Susan provided mid-program stats for Fresno County Reads:
  - 210 digital downloads of *Finding Gobi* or one of the read-alikes
  - Over 150 attendees at the author talks

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

- Potential Friends of the Library project with the Heritage Center
  - While the Heritage Center is closed, the staff are interested in doing an oral history project with current and former members of the Friends about the history of the organization and the Library. In the near future, there may be a monetary ask from the staff for some additional equipment for interviews for this project.
- Banned Books Week and Friends of Libraries Week social media recaps
  - During Banned Books Week, we were able to post something Monday through Friday, including a post from Brooke Payton and two from Friends members who are not on the board.
  - For Friends Week, we were able to highlight seven branches and do one post to highlight the Countywide organization. There was one sponsored post that led to the “Join” page of the Friends of the Library website, the budget for which was \$6 a day for a total of \$30.
    - Ad performance as of October 24:
      - a. 5,102 views
      - b. 107 link clicks
      - c. 7 new members in October, 2 during the run of the ad
    - As of October 26, the Instagram account is up 57 followers from the previous month.

## 8. BOARD REPORTS

- **PRESIDENT – SHANNON WISE**
  - All media inquiries should be sent to Sam Retton to be run by Susan Renfro. This information will also be communicated to the branch leadership at the next Branch Gathering.
  - The volunteer reception inspired Shannon to consider adding a branch Volunteer of the Year recognition at the next Annual Meeting. Rosa Huerta noted that Sanger does this at their branch.
  - Shannon attended the *Finding Gobi* author talk at Woodward and mentioned that it was a great time and well-attended. She noted that people were able to get books signed and “pawtographed” there. Deb Janzen attended the Betty Rodriguez event and found it really wonderful for all ages, despite being a children’s storytime.
  - Shannon has contacted Laura Ward but has not heard back yet about whether the Board can sign a letter of support for the Tower District Library.
  - We are still looking for fundraising ideas, but Shannon is potentially interested in trying to set up a book festival in the near future. In the

meantime, a fundraising committee will be started. Contact Sam Retton to join.

- **VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAMS – ROSA HUERTA**
  - No report.
  - Rosa mentioned that Sanger has a book and rummage sale on November 1 and has 15 high school students lined up to volunteer. The sale runs from 10-4 and clearance will begin at 3.
  - Sunnyside also has a sale coming up on November 8 and 9.
- **TREASURER – NICK ANDRADE**
  - The conversion from Quickbooks Desktop to Quickbooks Online is underway.
  - Unless something comes up, there should be October reports available in time for the November meeting.
  - All of the information necessary for the tax return has been provided and we are waiting for a draft of the return to be sent to the Board for feedback.

#### **9. OLD BUSINESS**

- Policies and Forms Committee: Shannon will send an email.
- Bookshop Update:
  - None.
- Sam Retton and the Executive Committee will work on drafting a schedule for next year's Branch Gatherings and Sam will email the branch presidents about media inquiries and signing contracts. We will do an annual review of policies and procedures at either the Annual Meeting or the first Branch Gathering of the year.

#### **10. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Brooke Payton mentioned visiting two libraries in Los Angeles and noted that in one branch, the teen area had a dry erase board and mood board and that the library had a gift wrapping station. She also showed an LAPL library directory, which includes a printed map of LA County library branches and the services each one has. She suggested that Fresno consider creating something similar and doing a passport program with some kind of rewards for patrons who visit different branches.

- **NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 24 at 7 PM via Zoom.**

#### **11. ADJOURNMENT**

- **Motion by:** Brooke Payton
- **Seconded by:** Sandra Knudson
- **Carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:24.**

**Submitted by Sam Retton, Executive Assistant.**