



Those in attendance

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Salt Lake City Public Library was held on Friday, October 28, 2011, at the Main Library. In attendance were: Kevin Werner, President; Ella Olsen, Vice President; Elizabeth Gupta, Secretary; Mark Alvarez, Mimi Charles, Luana Chilelli, Ila Rose Fife, and Hugh Gillilan; Beth Elder, Library Director; notetaker Shelly Chapman and Andrew Shaw; and members of the media, staff, and public.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

II. CLOSED SESSION

→ **MOTION:** Mark Alvarez moved that the Board enter into a closed session, in keeping with Utah Code § 52-4-204, for any of the following purposes: discussion of the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual pursuant to Utah Code § 52-4-20(1)(a); a strategy session to discuss pending or reasonably imminent litigation, pursuant to Utah Code § 52-4-205(1)(c); and for attorney-client matters that are privileged, pursuant to Utah Code § 78B-1-137. Ila Rose Fife seconded the motion. Mark Alvarez, Mimi Charles, Luana Chilelli, Ila Rose Fife, Hugh Gillilan, Elizabeth Gupta, Ella Olsen, and Kevin Werner each voted in favor; a unanimous vote.

The meeting reconvened to an open session at 2:55 p.m.

III. PERSONNEL ISSUES

→ **MOTION:** Elizabeth Gupta moved that the Board accept the resignation of the Library Director, Beth Elder, according to the proposal jointly prepared by counsel for Ms. Elder and the Salt Lake City Attorney's Office dated October 27, 2011. The Board President is authorized to execute a final separation agreement, as prepared by legal counsel to both parties, which is consistent with the terms of the October 27, 2011 proposal. Hugh Gillilan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Gupta and Elder read a joint statement regarding Elder's resignation

Statement from Elder:

At today's Board Meeting, I voluntarily offered to resign as Director of this great library system, and this offer has been accepted. I made this decision because increasingly my role as Director is at the center of any discussions about the Library. Being a lightning rod of controversy has detracted from the Library's numerous accomplishments during the 3½ years I have headed it. As a result, I can no longer effectively do my job of promoting and administering SL CPL. So today I remove myself from the hot seat so that this community can focus on all that this library has become.

During my tenure, I have had just one goal, that of delivering on the Library's promise to provide exceptional service to the community. Many have coalesced around this vision.

Together, we have designed and implemented a forward-thinking Strategic Plan focused on keeping the Library at the center of the community and at the center of people's lives.



Together, we have achieved a five-star rating from Library Journal due to increases in virtually every measure used to assess the health and vitality of libraries.

Together, we weathered a 2010 budget shortfall without reducing library hours or cutting staffing or salaries.

Together, we have ushered in a new era of professionalism and fair and equal employment practices.

And together, we are increasing library access in a City where library use is 4 times that of libraries in cities of comparable size by securing \$1.2 million in additional annual funding for new branches in Glendale and Marmalade.

We have been able to do all this when other libraries have been besieged by budget cuts and are challenged by the question "will libraries be relevant in the future?"

In Salt Lake City, due to our collective efforts the answer is a resounding "yes, our Library is relevant and vibrant and growing." This is thanks to the efforts of the Mayor and City Council; those on the Library Board and Friends of the Library, who shared this vision; the hundreds of community partner organizations, who recognized the necessity of strong alliances; and those on the Library Staff; who are not satisfied to look back but forward in designing innovative services that inspire patrons.

I have a deep admiration for the SLCPL and for the people of this community. I would like to thank our patrons for their love of this Library. Thank you for making me a part of this great city. I wish you all continued success.

Statement from Board:

The Board of Directors agrees and supports Ms. Elder's statement and thanks her for her service to Salt Lake City. The work and the contributions she made during her tenure have laid the groundwork that will carry our library system in the future.

Statement from Kevin Werner:

As one of the most innovative thinkers in the library world today, Beth Elder deserves the thanks of the people of Salt Lake City for the positive impact she's had over a relatively short period of time. During her tenure, Beth was instrumental in shaping and implementing the library's forward-looking strategic plan focused on responding to the needs of the community. This strategic plan will carry our library system for years to come. Under Beth's direction, the library began implementing, for the first time, objective measures designed to assess whether those needs are actually being met. Beth brought new levels of fiscal accountability and transparency to the organization. Also during Beth's tenure the library has begun work to build two new library branches in Marmalade and in Glendale. These successes were the direct result of Beth's standing within the larger community and her ability to work with a diverse set of important community organizations. We are deeply appreciative of the service that Beth provided to the library and to this city.



Unfortunately, Beth's tenure was, at times, undermined both from within and outside of the library. In particular, I am saddened by the sometimes unfair friction she has faced by some on this board. In my interactions with Beth, this never dissuaded her nor did she lose sight of the best interests of the library and the city.

Beth is a talented director with a penchant for long-term innovative vision and adapting to shifting communities. I wish Beth all the best in her future pursuits and stand ready to support her in whatever those may be.

For the board, our next step in our transition plan is to quickly put in place a transition director. This person will be charged with much more than keeping the seat warm as we search for a permanent director. We are seeking a transition director that can address long-standing internal issues and create a truly professional work environment. Our staff deserves nothing less. We are taking immediate actions to lay the foundation for these important changes including a major update to the employee handbook, a compensation study, and the continued development of our own board procedures. Our transition plan also includes a community advisory committee to assist the transitional director, and a performance audit of the organization by City Council so the root causes of the problems we face can be identified and addressed.

We look forward to continuing to build on past successes and sustaining this library as one of the very best in the world.

Board votes to facilitate a search for a transitional Library Director:

→ **MOTION:** Ella Olsen moved that the Board charge the Executive Committee of the Board to facilitate the search for a transitional Library Director. Luana Chilelli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Board votes to name Debbie Ehrman Acting Director:

→ **MOTION:** Ella Olsen moved that Associate Director Debbie Ehrman be named Acting Director of the Salt Lake City Public Library until a transitional Director is approved by the Board. Luana Chilelli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Board votes to create a community advisory committee for the transition period:

→ **MOTION:** Elizabeth Gupta moved that the Board create a committee of community partners to serve in an advisory role during the transition period into the transition Director. Luana Chilelli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The committee would strictly serve in an advisory capacity to the Library Board and only for the period of transition.

Board votes to temporarily suspend the Employee Handbook and replace it with the employee policies used by Salt Lake City Corporation:

→ **MOTION:** Ella Olsen moved that the Board temporarily suspend the Salt Lake City Public Library Employee Handbook and replace it with the employee policies used by Salt Lake City Corporation, specifically "Standards of Conduct," "Disciplinary Guidelines," "Courteous and Respectful Behavior," "Standards and Responsibilities," "Employee Appeals and Grievances." Elizabeth Gupta seconded the motion.



Hugh Gillilan moved to table the discussion until the regular Board meeting in November. Mark Alvarez seconded the motion. In discussion, some Board members felt they didn't receive enough notice of the substitute policies in order to make a decision on the previous motion. The motion failed by a vote of 3 to 5.

Olsen's original motion passed by a vote of 5 to 3.

IV. MANAGEMENT AND PROCESS AUDIT REQUEST

→ **MOTION:** Mimi Charles moved to request that the Salt Lake City Council conduct a Performance Audit of the Salt Lake City Public Library to examine the Library's management systems and procedures to assess whether the Library is achieving economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of the Library's resources. Luana Chilelli seconded the motion.

Mark Alvarez moved to table the discussion. Ila Rose Fife seconded the motion. In discussion, Alvarez clarified the reason for his motion was to take the time before the November regular Board meeting to consider whether this is a wise action. The motion to table failed by a vote of 2 to 6.

Charles's original motion passed by a vote of 6 to 2.

V. ADJOURN

→ **MOTION:** Mimi Charles moved that the Board meeting adjourn. Hugh Gillilan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Gupta, Secretary.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Library Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2011, 3:30 p.m. at the Main Library, Board Room.