



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 8/18/2025
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Locations: Teleconference and
Arrillaga Family Recreation Center
700 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Chair Herrick called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Crockett, Herrick, Orton, Shafer, Sisbot, Westcott, Yule
Absent: None
Staff: Library and Community Services (LCS) Director Sean Reinhart, Assistant Library and Community Services (LCS) Director Nick Szegda

C. Public Comment

None.

D. Study Session

- D1. Review and provide feedback on the ad-hoc subcommittee progress report (Staff Report LC-2025-035)

Commissioners Crockett, Orton and Vice Chair Westcott introduced the item.

Director Reinhart made a presentation (Attached).

The Commission discussed the ad hoc subcommittee report, potential changes to the Library Commission (LC) report out to the City Council, potential modifications to the LC work plan for 2025-26, the potential to work with staff to further refine the report and returning an updated report to the LC in September or October.

E. Regular Business

- E1. Approve the meeting minutes from the July 21, 2025 meeting (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (Crockett/ Orton), to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2025 meeting, passed unanimously.

- E2. Recommend Library Commission work plan for 2025-26 (Staff Report LC-2025-036)

Assistant Director Szegda introduced the item.

ACTION: Motion and second (Orton/ Westcott), to approve the work plan for 2025-26 with the following changes:

- Add new item as #4 – “Complete and recommend a report on the “library of the future” to the City Council in Fall 2025 that will include a request that the City Council hold a study session focused on the library”
- Change numbering of current item #4 “Support and advise...” to #5
- Change numbering of current #5 “Annually review...” to #6, passed unanimously.

E3. Prepare Commission report out to City Council on 2024-25 work plan (Staff Report LC-2025-037)

Chair Herrick introduced the item and shared a draft presentation (Attachment).

ACTION: By acclamation, the Commission removed the “synergies” bullet item on slide 3 and added ad hoc subcommittee activities to slide 9.

E4. List of annually recurring Library Commission activities (Staff Report LC-2025-038)

Assistant Director Szegda introduced the item.

F. Informational Items

F1. Library Commission tentative agenda calendar (Attachment)

The Commission added the following items to the calendar:

- September – discuss ad hoc subcommittee report
- October – Recommend ad hoc subcommittee report
- November – updates on library operations, budget and strategic plan
- January – review library budget

G. Commissioner Reports

G1. Individual Commissioner reports

Commissioner Sisbot reported on her attendance of the Redwood City Library Commission.

Commissioner Orton reported on recent activities of the Library Foundation.

H. Adjournment

Chair Herrick adjourned the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

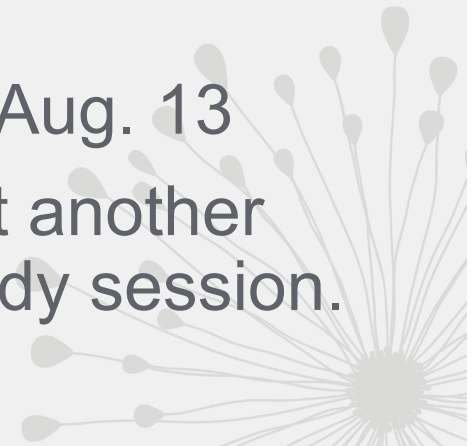
Staff review of ad-hoc subcommittee's draft recommendations

Library Commission, August 18, 2025

Background



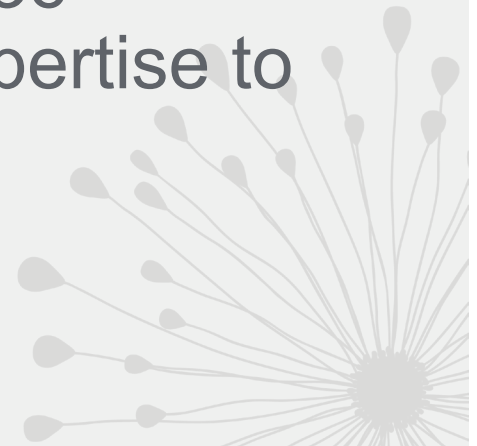
- The Library Commission (LC) assigned the ad-hoc subcommittee's scope of work on Oct. 21, 2024:
 - "Continue to work toward achieving Library Commission work plan goal #2: "Review library programs and services, identify potential service gaps for specific age groups or affinity groups, and advise to fill needs to create the 'library of the future.'"
- The ad-hoc subcommittee submitted its draft recommendations to staff on Aug. 13, 2025, the day before the Aug. 18 agenda packet was due to be published
- Staff saw the draft recommendations for the first time on Aug. 13
- Rather than delay the ad-hoc subcommittee's draft report another month, staff opted to present staff's review during the study session.



Staff review of the ad-hoc subcommittee's draft recommendations



- Staff appreciates the ad-hoc subcommittee's efforts to conduct its own research without significant involvement from staff
- Staff appreciates and agrees with some of the ad-hoc subcommittee's recommendations
- However, staff has observed that some of the recommendations are based on incomplete data
- Staff welcomes the opportunity to work with the ad-hoc subcommittee to help provide additional data and expertise to help strengthen and refine their work.



Staff review of the ad-hoc subcommittee's draft recommendations



Ad-hoc recommendation #1: Departmental structure

- Numerous other municipalities include and benefit from library and recreation in one unified department, for example: Sunnyvale, Pleasanton, San Rafael, Salinas, Huntington Beach, El Segundo, San Marino, Corona, and many more.
- Other Menlo Park departments such as administrative services also have unified organizational structures that include multiple functions.
- The multidisciplinary Belle Haven Community Campus is an example of the many synergies, efficiencies and improved services made possible by this unified organizational structure.



Staff review of the ad-hoc subcommittee's draft recommendations



Ad-hoc recommendation #2: Library budget

- Menlo Park's operating budget and staffing are authorized by City Council per its vision and direction for library services.
- The City's budget is fully transparent online and includes user-friendly tables and graphics that show revenues and expenditures for every functional area in the department from topline summary down to the line-item level.
- Staff recommends that the ad-hoc subcommittee revisit its comparisons to other libraries, and also include key factors such as population, library square feet per capita, expenditures per capita, library open hours open per capita, and labor hours performed by temporary employees.



Staff review of the ad-hoc subcommittee's draft recommendations



Ad-hoc recommendation #3: Program and service improvements

- Staff agrees with the goal of continuous improvement and adapting services to the changing needs of the community
- The most significant recent service change was the opening of the new Belle Haven Library at BHCC, which was informed by robust quantitative and qualitative data collected over several months during 2023 and 2024, the advice of the LC and the approval of City Council
- More recently, staff conducted (with the LC's advice) a citywide survey focused on libraries, recreation and parks to gain more insight into current and trending new needs in the community.



Staff review of the ad-hoc subcommittee's draft recommendations



Ad-hoc recommendation #4: Analyze deficits in the 800 Alma St. facility

- Staff agrees that there exists several opportunities for maintenance, repair and renovations
- The Public Works department manages facility repair, maintenance and renovation projects through the Capital Improvement Program and other buildings-related programs
- The City's Public Works department commissioned a Facilities Condition Assessment of all city buildings in 2022, and staff is happy to share and review that assessment with the ad-hoc subcommittee.

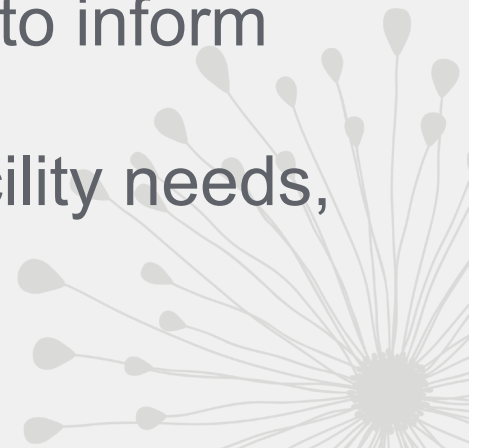


Staff review of the ad-hoc subcommittee's draft recommendations



Ad-hoc recommendation #5: Assess feasibility for a new library facility

- City Council approves the Capital Improvement Plan annually, and has not directed staff to explore the feasibility of a new library facility on the Burgess civic center campus
- The previous 2017 Main Library Space Needs Study did not account for the far more critical need to replace the Belle Haven Library at that time
- Staff believes that additional analysis of main library facility needs and options for addressing those needs could be helpful to inform future City Council decision-making
- Staff looks forward to working with the LC to evaluate facility needs, if the City Council so directs.



Staff recommendations

- Staff appreciates the ad-hoc subcommittee's efforts and looks forward to continuing and building on the good work
- Staff recommends that the LC task the ad-hoc subcommittee to work closely with staff to provide additional data to help review and refine the ad-hoc subcommittee's report

