

Citizen's Review Panel
October 26, 2005

Members present: Mike Wyrick, Venancio Gaona, Jan Kafton, Debbie Ikeda
Members excused: Sallie Mook, Robert Speechly
Members absent: Martha Rodriguez, Victor Chavez
Others present: Karen Bosch Cobb, Linda Calandra, Paul Connor, Dusty Guthier,
Elida Mendoza

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Mike Wyrick, Chairman, at 6:10 p.m.
2. Introductions. Karen introduced the following people:
 - Debbie Ikeda, new member of the Citizen's Review Panel
 - Linda Calandra, 1st Vice President, Friends of the Fresno County Library Board of Directors
 - Dusty Guthier, President, Friends of the Fresno County Board of Directors
 - Paul Connor, Librarian, Senior Resource Center Library
 - Elida Mendoza, Administrative Secretary, Fresno County Library
3. Roster Update and Update on Committee Membership and Response to Press Release: At the last meeting, Karen offered to send a press release to solicit new members for the Panel. Since there was no response from the community, staff members were asked to submit names of persons interested.

Ken Moore was suggested for District 1, Supervisor Phil Larson's district. He is a member of the Kerman City Council, and is currently serving as Mayor. He works for Kerman Telephone, and is very active in literacy issues. Karen noted that literacy is a component of Measure B. Ken needs to submit his application to the Board of Supervisors. His appointment is pending.

The Board of Supervisors received an application from Sharon Thomas, a retired teacher from Riverdale. Her appointment is also pending. She would replace Patty Fontes who was an "at large" appointee.

Staff members recommended Angelina Mosier, Director of the Neighborhood Activity Center in Laton and Rico Aguayo, Fowler City Council member.

Karen will contact the Rico Aguayo and Sharon Thomas about their interest in serving on the Panel.

4. Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was adopted as presented.
5. Approval of Minutes of June 30, 2005: It was moved by Venancio Gaona, seconded by Jan Kafton, to approve the minutes as submitted. Motion carried.

6. Presentation from Friends of the Library: Members of the Panel received information about the Friends of the Fresno County Library from President Dusty Guthier and 1st Vice Chair Linda Calandra.

The Friends of the Fresno County Library have been in existence for 25 years. The organization was established in 1980. Their primary role is to bring people into the libraries. They currently have about 800 members.

The Friends' role is to be a fundraiser and improve circulation by improving awareness of the library and its services. Dusty said a recent major area of activity for the Friends was to support Measure B. A goal of the Friends is to make it a priority to always make the composition of the Board of Directors timely to what the needs are; to recruit Board members who can use their expertise to assist the library.

All fundraisers tie into literacy and reading. As Board president, Dusty has worked to bring all branch Friends of the Library together to share ideas. He said this is a very effective way to generate interest and community support. The Friends of the Fresno County Library operates as the main group, and there are about eight other Friends groups throughout the community that are active.

Linda Calandra, 1st Vice President, said that one of the other roles of the Friends as a 501(c)(3) non profit organization is that they can receive gifts to the library. Most of the fundraising is through events. Over \$14,000 was raised last year through the annual Dinner in the Library event. All proceeds went to the endowment fund.

The Friends bookstore is very successful. Last year they raised \$39,000. The theater night event raises about \$1,000 per year. Mother Goose and Friends is an event for children that raised about \$1,000 last year. Linda described it as a great literacy promoting event. The Friends have given money to the library to upgrade teen areas.

These fundraisers have allowed the Friends to donate an average of \$30,000 to the library each year. The Friends have also donated \$5,000 each year for scholarships to be given to students attending library school. This year they have funds for four more students.

Karen said at the staff training day there were about 25 people interested in library school.

At this time the Friends do not directly solicit funds from corporations. Dusty said that as the Friends grow, this might be a direction the Board may want to take. They may want to consider a paid staff member to do that. Cathy Rehart is the Administrative Assistant for the Friends

A recent fundraiser event was a Barnes & Noble fundraiser that gave a percentage of the purchase amount to the library. This event raised about \$600, and also resulted in new books added to the library collections. Some people who purchased books donated them

to the library. Dusty said they are hoping these fundraisers become more successful as plans are to do at least two a year.

The Hanson Mural at the Woodward Park Library was purchased with money donated by the Friends.

Karen said she is very pleased with the Friends and their professional approach. Having all of the community friends organizations under one group, the Friends of the Fresno County Library, has been very positive. She said she heard of another library that has 70 friends groups. The friends groups were credited with helping Measure B pass, and they are very much appreciated.

In closing, Linda commented that there are people in the community who are very interested in the plans for a new central library and they are waiting for developments so they can become involved.

Mike thanked Linda and Dusty for their presentation.

7. "The Evolution of a Library " PowerPoint Presentation from Paul Connor: Paul showed a PowerPoint of the Senior Resource Library. His focus the last few months has been on getting the library opened.

The grand opening was held on June 17, and about 100 people showed up. Supervisor Phil Larson and Karen spoke. Karen noted that Supervisor Larson has a special interest in this library because he serves on the Fresno Madera Area Agency on Aging board. Supervisor Susan Anderson also has a special connection there. Her special project is the Kids Closet which donates clothes to foster children.

Paul explained that the building is just one component of the service. He does outreach to other agencies. A books-by-mail program will be starting in a month or two. There is also a website with good leads with further information to investigate. Paul has only been with the library for one year.

The Senior Resource Library opened in response to the community's interest. In 1998 there was a survey done and senior services rose to the top. A second survey in 2003 again indicated that service to seniors was prominent on people's lists, and this same survey showed that people were very satisfied with services.

The Senior Resource Library is centrally located in Fresno in the Senior Resource Center. The center belongs to the Fresno Madera Agency on Aging (FMAAA). It houses current and planned services provided by many other agencies such as Fresno City Police Department Elder Abuse, Fresno County Medical services, computer classes, exercise and recreation programs.

Karen mentioned that plans are underway to temporarily move the California History Room and Genealogy service to the center.

The library has large print books videos, DVDs, CDs, and magazines with a focus on seniors. It started out with about 1500, and Paul estimated they now have about 2000. He conducted a visual tour of the library's website to show people how to find the Senior Resource Library. New books are highlighted on the website, and the list is updated every month. There are four public computers available at the library. Parking at the facility is free and there are no time limits. A survey will soon be done to determine preferences for hours of service.

Paul's outreach activities have included riding along on the bookmobile to meet activity directors at the senior centers, and attending senior care fairs to advertise the library. A books-by-mail program will start on November 19. This program will be strictly for books.

Mike thanked Paul for the presentation, and everyone thought it was very informative.

8. Questions/Comments: At one time, Karen said they considered housing the Volunteer Coordinator at the center because the thought was there might be a large volunteer pool available there, but that has not happened. The Career Librarian's office is at the Central Library. She travels a lot as most of her work is in the community.

In response to a question about library building projects, Karen said Mendota, Orange Cove and Tranquillity libraries are in the design stage. Work is underway to hire a firm to negotiate the land purchase for the new central library. There is a lot of enthusiasm and interest being generated in the area designated for the library. Karen said statistics show central libraries are big economic engines for cities' downtown areas. The first year the Seattle Public Library opened it brought in \$16 million to the downtown economy according to a Seattle study.

9. Planning for the next meeting:

- a) Date: In February after Valentine's Day (date to be determined)
- b) Place: Talking Book Library
- c) Topics: 1) Talking Book Library 2) Results of Facilities Support Survey

10. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.