

WKNA General meeting
Sept. 8, 2022 7 p.m., Keizer Civic Center
Submitted by Carolyn Homan, Secretary

Call to Order: 7:05 p.m., President Rhonda Rich

Welcome – Rhonda welcomed 21 attendees, including guest speakers BJ Toewe and John Goodyear, representatives of the YES for Keizer Public Library campaign, and City Council liaison Shaney Starr. Introductions were made around the room.

Minutes from May 12, 2022 – Gary Blake moved approval as submitted; Art Mauer seconded. Motion carried.

Budget – Rhonda reported expenditures of \$431.04 spent so far from the \$800 budget for the July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, period. Expenses include \$289.07 for 1,000 brochures, thanks to an employee discount from FedEx Office; and \$141.97 for printing newsletters, etc. (for ink cartridges for Rhonda's printer). Other expenses will include about \$200 for our website and possible purchase of more signs. We have \$368,96 left to spend.

YES for Keizer Public Library campaign -- Rhonda introduced BJ Toewe and John Goodyear to explain the campaign for Keizer Community Library to become a public library. BJ is the Library Board Treasurer and John is Board Vice President. BJ gave some background, starting in 1988 when three Keizer teachers, eyeing improved literacy for the city, joined forces to launch Keizer Community Library. They secured a room in the old Keizer City Hall, achieved nonprofit status and through donations and volunteers, launched the Community Library. Vicki Brameier was the longtime volunteer librarian, but last year the Library Board finally hired a part-time librarian using money in their reserves. That one hire boosted the Library's budget from \$27,000 to \$52,000. The Library had operated strictly on volunteers until then and still does for the most part, including donated books to build the Library collection. With the part-time librarian and volunteers, the Library is able to open 4 hours/day, 5 days/week.

At the beginning of 2022, the Board began working on a budget in the hope of getting the City to support the Library. Working with the Council and the Council Work Group appointed to examine possibilities, they got the OK to seek a \$2.50/month fee added to the City Services bill (\$5 per bill cycle, which is every 2 months). The fee is to be voted on in the November election.

To be called a Public Library, an entity must meet 10 requirements as defined in Oregon Revised Statutes. Only the State Library of Oregon is charged with verifying compliance. Keizer Community Library meets 8 of the 10 requirements. The final two requirements include that half of library funding must come from public sources – that's where the \$2.50 fee comes in. It will yield \$416,000, well beyond half of the budget. The other requirement is to prepare an annual report, which obviously can't be done until a library actually is declared a public entity.

At one time, Keizer was the largest incorporated city in the country without a public library. It may still be, but BJ said she hadn't researched it lately. If the fee passes, the first thing the Board will do is hire a professional librarian and after that, a children's library, which are both critical services. The next step is applying to Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service for membership. That will open up the ability to apply for varied grant funding, online access to ebooks and databases, courier services for borrowed books, computers and more. The system includes 17 libraries around Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties plus Chemeketa College and the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde.

The amount the fee will generate will provide a great start to becoming a solid public library. They will be able to fill gaps in the collection with the ability to purchase books, which to date have all been donated. They can build the children's selection and allow for better wireless capability and purchase of new equipment. Many people access computers via the library, they said. Not everyone has their own setup at home.

There are no plans to seek an increased fee and any increase would have to go back to the voters anyway. They have no plans to build a new library building.

In the question and answer period, BJ specified that the library will remain a nonprofit. The City will collect the money and the library nonprofit will contract with the city to provide the services.

Federal American Rescue Plan Act funds were not an option for funding in part because of the timelines involved for use of those funds.

The library is looking for endorsements and volunteers to help with the campaign. Go to YES4KeizerLibrary.org for information.

They emphasized once again that a public library is a great leveler for a lot of people. People have printer access, computer access that they may not have at home. It allows seniors to search for Social Security help, for the job seeker to fill out employment forms. And librarians are wonderful at helping people find the information people need. Google does not provide access to all information because they are paid to host data. Libraries can access millions of data points unavailable elsewhere. "Librarians spend their day helping people find what they need," BJ said.

As for why bother to have a Keizer Public Library when Salem is so close? BJ pointed to children's programs, access for senior citizens or others who have mobility challenges and computer access for lower income people who also lack transportation.

REPORTS

City Council liaison Shaney Starr— Council is held a hearing on a fireworks ordinance (no one testified) and directed the City Attorney to tweak the draft and bring it back to Council Sept. 19 for a decision. The idea is to give police tools to enforce penalties for illegal firework use.

Council also acted on two traffic calming proposals for streets in West Keizer. At Shoreline and Dearborn, Council directed Public Works to install flashing speed signs as a calming device. Council will calendar a revisit to see if it's helping slow speeders. The second element OK'd is a speed "cushion" by Cummings Elementary at the Delight crossing to protect children crossing to school.

Little Library, Kris Adams – She said book donations are still coming in, Kids books still go the fastest. She noted that the annual book sale at Keizer Community Library will be held the first weekend in November.

Food barrels, Rhonda—Donations are way down at the two collection barrels sponsored by WKNA at Copper Creek and Bi Mart. Higher food prices may be a factor. The need is as great as ever, however.

Parks – WKNA held a work day at Palma Ciega in May and since then R&R Tree Service limbed the trees at the picnic area and Parks installed a viewing bench along the river. Parks and volunteers also spread bark chips under the bench and the picnic area. An Eagle Scout will be working on a new access path to the river this fall. City Council's annual Parks Tour will start at Palma Ciega this coming Monday at 6 p.m.

KRP Turf fields – Rhonda and Carolyn have attended work group meetings to keep tabs on progress toward this project. Our goal: to ensure sufficient parking to ease the burden on surrounding neighborhoods.

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Upcoming meetings;

Sept. 12, 6 p.m. – Council/Parks Board tour of Palma Ciega Park

Sept. 15, 6 p.m. – Traffic Safety Bikeways Pedestrian Committee

Oct. 6, 7 p.m. – WKNA Board Meeting

WKNA General meeting, Oct. 13, 7 p.m. – Speakers include Cummings Elementary Principal Andrew Kronser and Marion County Parole/Probation officer Eric Bandonis. WKNA November speaker will be Keizer Public Works Director Bill Lawyer

Events

Sept. 20, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Trashy Tuesday Litter Pickup at Wallace House Park

Sept. 24, 9 a.m. to noon – Cummings School Playground Beautification Project