

Alpine Public Library Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 8, 2023
5:30 PM

AEP Foundation Multipurpose Room and Zoom

Mission: The Alpine Public Library works to build community, encourage literacy, and promote lifelong learning. We endeavor to create and maintain a welcoming facility with relevant and enriching resources that connect our diverse and geographically remote area to the world.

Vision: The Alpine Public Library envisions a future in which individuals and families are engaged, lifelong learners.

Members present: Don Wetterauer, Mary Bennett, Jaime Escuder, Ellen Ruggia, Kathy Donnell, Judy Bowers, Isabel Jones, Chris Ruggia, Linda Bryant

Members excused: Betsy Helesic, Martin Sandate

Guests: Kirk Patterson (Auditor) on Zoom

A. Call to order - The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm

B. New business

1. **Auditor's Report via Zoom** - this item was moved to the beginning of the meeting to accommodate the accountant on Zoom. Auditor read through the Opinion section of the new audit to make the Board aware of auditing practice and the responsibilities of each party. Auditor reviewed the Balance Sheet; the Income, Expense and Cash Flow Statements; various footnotes (including Liquidity, Investment, Interest, Net Assets, Income Concentrations); and the 990 return.

C. Changes to agenda

1. Linda Bryant moved the Auditor's report to the beginning of the meeting.
2. Chris Ruggia requested permission to give an oral Friends' report (added to consent agenda).

D. Introduction of guests and announcements

E. Approve the minutes - Chris Ruggia moved to accept minutes with edits. Passed.

1. **Minutes** - The abbreviation of names was discussed. Since the audience of the minutes may not know the Board members, it was decided that the precedent of abbreviating names to two initials made it difficult to follow. Chris and Ellen Ruggia suggested that at least the first appearance of each name should be spelled out. Don Wetterauer suggested that all. Names should be spelled out to remove the problem entirely. The board agreed.

F. Consent Agenda - Director's, Treasurer's and Friends' reports. Ellen Ruggia moved to approve, Jaime Escuder seconded. Passed unanimously.

1. **Oral Friends report** – Chris Ruggia reported on the Tuesday, June 6 meeting of the Friends of the Alpine Public Library. Updates were given on the July 8 Dancing with Big Bend’s Stars event (dancers still needed) and the Artwalk Silent Auction (Marilyn Gruebel will Chair the event, currently looking for a location).

Chris also presented a document titled “The Case for Increased Governmental Support of the Alpine Public Library from the City of Alpine and Brewster County” to be distributed to the Friends membership to encourage them to contact their representatives to help them prioritize APL during their budget deliberations. The Board gave its encouragement to distribute a version the document to the City Council and Commissioners Court and request a hearing from both entities. Jaime Escuder volunteered to represent APL at the meetings, if presentations are granted.

G. Ongoing business

1. **Direct Mail promotion** – Don Wetterauer and Linda Bryant expressed concern about the quality of the mailing list used for the first direct mail fundraising letter. Letters with bad addresses are coming back to the post office at a higher cost than it took to send them out.

Chris Ruggia responded that returns were expected and budgeted for, and that each returned letter will improve the mailing list. Making the second and third mailings more effective, as planned. Chris reported that Judy Ford was also very disappointed with the quality of the list as received. She has filed a bad review of the company and has received a response. She is waiting to get the best refund, etc, that she can.

Don reported that about \$1,500 has come in so far with expenses of around \$1,300, and Chris noted that the program expected the first mailing to break even, with the program’s real results expected by the third mailing, and also noted that \$600 or the \$1,300 in expenses was donated by Judy Bowers and Judy Ford, so we are ahead in our budget.

There was discussion of different ways to adjust the list on future mailings to avoid annoying regular donors. Don expressed his discomfort with continuing the program and sending additional letters requesting donations.

Chris and Ellen Ruggia said that much more frequent fundraising letters than APL is planning are exceedingly common in the nonprofit world. Don expressed his belief that this program would not work in Alpine. There was disagreement on this point among the attendees.

2. **Motion** by Jaime Escuder, second by Mary Bennett, to move remainder of agenda to next meeting. Passed unanimously.
3. **Building Committee** - moved to next meeting.

4. **Strategic Planning Update** - moved to next meeting, Board was asked to read the handout about the following issues and give input.

- A. **Ideas/Visions from Board Members**

- a. **Building maintenance and repairs**
 - b. **Technology needs and growth**
 - c. **Evaluation of previous plans**
 - d. **Fundraising**
 - e. **Board recruitment**
 - f. **Staff pay and recruitment**
 - g. **Relevance to the community**

- B. **Bingo at the Granada** – moved to next meeting

H. Next meeting date: July 13

I. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 6:35pm

2023 Board of Directors:

Linda Bryant, President (2024)

Isabel Jones, Vice President (2025)

Ellen Ruggia, Treasurer (2024)

Betsy Evans, Secretary (2024)

Kathy Donnell (2023)

Jaime Escuder (2023)

Mary Bennett (2025)

Judy Bowers (2024)

Chris Ruggia, Friends of APL Representative Greg Henington, Brewster Co. Representative

Martin Sandate, City of Alpine Representative