



Annual General Meeting (2024)

The Old Library Annual General Meeting
June 11th, 2024

Attendees via Zoom

Volunteers	Others
Sailakshmi PS	Mr. Musaed (CDA)
Vertika Bisht	Ayadh Farooq (Honorary Board Member)
Priscilla Mok	Ysabel Maria Garcia
Livyat Nair	Priyanka Ghosh
Jockbed Gatwiri	
Deepti Raman	
Nitu Bhojwani	
Anuradha Bajla	
Mukhtara	
Insiya	
Penny Mackenzie	
Michele Sadoon	
Naeemah Mehta	
Shiva Subramanian	
Chafic Mekkaoui	
Amira Khleif	
Roshini Lalwani	
Aruna. T	
Nidhi Kumar	
Linda	

1. Minutes of AGM held on May 2nd, 2023
- Approved by Ayadh Farooq; Seconded by Anuradha Bajla
2. **Election of the New Committee** - See attached, page 5.
3. **Chairperson's Report** (Sailakshmi PS) – See attached, page 2.
4. **Treasurer's Report** (Priscilla Mok) – See attached, page 6.
- The financial report is available at the library for viewing.
5. **Questions from attendees** – See attached, page 8.



Annual General Meeting (2024)

Name: Sailakshmi PS
Position: Chairperson
Date of AGM: 11/June/2024

Opportunities that have helped us improve member engagements.

- a. Sundays open for shorter hours; **the library is now open all 7 days of the week**. Members have been able to take advantage of our weekend hours.
- b. **Summer Special Membership initiative** – 41 sign ups in two months that the program was live. And 17 of these members converted to Annual memberships.
- c. **'16 Book Holidays' for the Winter break**. Was quite exciting for our members, especially families with young ones. We hope to be able to repeat this initiative every year.
- d. During the summer, we ran a **"Volunteer for a day" program**. We had few sign ups, and one of them has now become a regular weekly volunteer with us.
- e. We published a **monthly newsletter** to highlight events at the library, serve as a reminder of our rules and offer book recommendations. We used the opportunity to put a spotlight on **one** of our volunteers. The newsletters have been well received and something members look forward to every month.
- f. **Storytime** was held every first Friday afternoon. While we used the story corner in the Junior section of the library in the warmer months; thanks to Emaar's continued support the Courtyard outside was our story corner during cooler months. We have also had readings by local authors who shared their stories with us. In order to be able to celebrate with our multi-cultural community their festivals and holidays, we had specials for Ramadan, Easter, Christmas, Diwali, National Day etc. adding up to **29 sessions** in the year.
- g. **Silent Book Club** runs every last Sunday of the month. Members bring a book of their choice and come together to dedicate reading time of 1-2 hours. We thank Alma Café for giving us the space to be able to run this club.

Our **Management Committee** has worked tirelessly through the year **2023** – making decisions, bringing focus towards its growth and helping the library community thrive.

- a. **Roster Secretary, Deepti** manages the volunteer allocation for shifts at the library every month. She also organizes social meetups every now and then, to bring together the volunteer community outside of the library.

59 volunteers helped run our library

6 volunteers sadly needed to say goodbye to us

And we had 4 coffee mornings and our delightful annual party on the barge in the Creek

- b. **Training Coordinator, Anuradha** runs the induction and training program. She shares regular updates and reminders on processes, while running refresher sessions through the year for our volunteers.

14 new volunteers joined our team

6 refresher sessions were run, that our volunteers could take advantage of



Annual General Meeting (2024)

- c. **Book Buying Coordinator, Jockbed** represents the Book Buyers on the Management Committee, bringing valuable insights while making decisions related to our stock of books. Updating and standardizing processes across the teams is another vital task she manages.

We bought 3,200 books

We ended the year with 26,674 books

50% of these were Junior & Young Adult books, and 50% were adult books

Overall, a mix of 75% Fiction and 25% Non-Fiction

- d. **Treasurer, Priscilla**, looks after the daily money matters at the library. She also works towards ensuring our long-term financial standing is healthy and stable.

Finance Report – Page 6.

- e. **Marketing and PR Coordinator, Paige**, with a team of volunteers is the planner behind the content on our Social Media platforms. She also helps with collaborations with other establishments that promote reading and learning.

Courtyard Playhouse and Emirates Literature Festival offered discounts to our members.

We set up a stall at the Sustainability Fair at Regent school.

A group of 30 librarians from Poland visited us and were very impressed with how we operate.

One of our videos on Tiktok went viral with 3.3 Million Views and 112,500 Likes.

- f. **General Secretary, Nitu** brings all the Committee members together to ensure big decisions are made. She liaises with everyone to bring closure to items that need Committee attention. Needless to say, she is here, as always, setting up our virtual meetings, putting together the agenda and sharing Minutes.
- g. **Vice Chairperson, Vertika** worked closely with me, and every other member of the Committee, to offer her wisdom and is the voice of reason behind many of the decisions that are made.
- h. Last but not the least, **our Library Coordinator, Livyat** is the person who patiently shoulders the responsibility of our day-to-day requirements of the library. In this admin role, she liaises with members, volunteers, vendors and suppliers to make sure the library operations run smoothly.

About the volunteers that run our Subcommittees.

- a. **16** volunteers work as Book Buyers across **5** different teams. They spend hours researching the kind of books that work best for our member's interests, what is popular in the wider world of readers, books that are award-winners, best-sellers etc. before bringing them into the library.
- b. The cataloguing team works closely to support the book buyers with admin tasks.
- c. The data entry team helps with populating the membership records on our system.

It is heartening to see them taking up additional responsibilities in different areas of our library. Over 30 volunteers in interconnected roles and helping the library with its constantly evolving processes is no mean feat.



Annual General Meeting (2024)

Unsung heroes who have contributed to what we have achieved in 2023.

- a. **Manika, who runs our popular Student Volunteer program.** She efficiently coordinates trains and offers students the opportunity to help the library, while they earn Community service hours. This popular program, only one of its kind in Dubai, is very successful and the credit goes to Manika.
- b. **Nidhi, who helps with the appearance of our display shelves** – and puts up books for special days, celebrations, and based on focus around what is happening in the world. She also helps with designing our posters, bookmarks and display stickers around the library. More than anything else she is the person who puts together our popular newsletter every month.
- c. **Wilna, who runs our monthly Storytime,** brings together the various storytellers and authors into our library and organizing activities. She does this exceptionally well, and cheerfully ensures our young readers have a great time at the sessions.
- d. **Danielle, who helps maintain and update our library website** on an ‘as-needed’ basis.
- e. **Penny, who put together an excellent PR, Marketing and Social Media team,** and created a very streamlined process to build a strong social media presence, passed on the baton to Paige who is now our PR Marketing Coordinator. Penny is also **the brain behind many of our successful initiatives** that have always helped improve our member engagement.

Heartfelt gratitude to Manika, Nidhi, Wilna, Danielle and Penny for the solid and continued support they offer to the library.

Thank you to all our 60+ volunteers for their dedication and commitment in keeping the library running smoothly and staying open every day of the week. It is heartwarming to see how well integrated we all are, and how we have made deep connections and friendship that goes beyond our love for books and helping our community.

Opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to the **Community Development Authority** for appreciating our effort in being pro-active, and in adhering to the requirements laid out by them as our Licensor. Their **generous gift of 50,000 Dirhams** has been well received by the library community.

The Management Committee proposed a **change to the Articles of Association.**

The position of Library Coordinator must be part of the Management Committee, with the caveat that the position is exempt from the defined Term Limits. Due to the nature of the job, this would ensure continuity in Operations.

Votes:

Yes – 15 (Sai, Nitu, Vertika, Priya, Aruna, Amira, Shiva, Jockbed, Roshini, Michele, Nidhi, Chafic, Anuradha, Deepti, Priscilla)

No – 1 (Penny)

Based on majority count, we have a vote to go ahead; the amendment to the Articles of Association will be made with immediate effect.



Annual General Meeting (2024)

Change of hands in the Management Committee this year. Some members are stepping down as they have completed their term limit, and others, including me, are unfortunately unable to continue in their roles due to personal reasons.

The nominations for all positions were opened in April. Since there were no multiple applications for any position, there was no need for elections, and the nominations have been accepted.

Welcome the **new Management Committee of The Old Library for the year 2024.**

Chairperson – Vertika Bisht
Vice Chairperson – Chafic Mekkaoui
Treasurer – Shivashankari Subramanian
General Secretary – Nitu Bhojwani
Roster Secretary – Roshini Lalwani
Training Coordinator – Naeemah Mehta
Book Buying Coordinator – Amira Khleif
PR and Marketing Coordinator – Paige Andrade
Library Coordinator – Livyat Nair



Annual General Meeting (2024)

Name: Priscilla Mok
Position: Treasurer
Date of AGM: 11/June/2024

We started the year 2023 with a Cash flow (Cash-in-hand and Bank balance) of **AED 367,214**, and a Fixed Deposit of **AED 856,000** in the bank. During the year, an additional **AED 44,000** was invested bringing the end of year FD figure to **AED 900,000**.

This deposit matures in June 2024, and the amount will be rounded off to **AED 1M** and reinvested for another year. An amount will be invested in Flexi Deposit too to be able to earn more interest.

Through 2023, the library has earned a revenue of **AED 498,658**. The two main revenues were from our membership fees and the overdue book fines (please refer to the table).

Side Note:

Figures for 2023:
Active members - **1,875**
New Membership – **1,035**
Renewal Membership – **792**
Volunteer Renewal - **54**

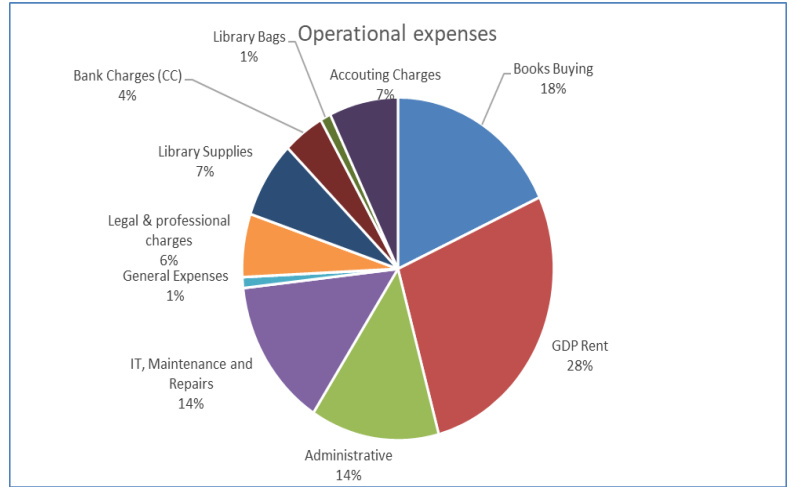
Income 2023	AED498,658	
New Memberships	AED227,720	45.67%
Membership Renewals	AED174,229	34.94%
Fines	AED69,914	14.02%
Used Book Sales	AED7,904	1.59%
Volunteers Renewals A	AED7,126	1.43%
Volunteers Renewals B	AED1,080	0.22%
Lost Book Charges	AED4,843	0.97%
Bag Sales	AED4,262	0.85%
Child membership cards	AED620	0.12%
Lost membership card	AED960	0.19%

Our operating expenses was **AED335,705** (without depreciation). The 5 main expenses were from the rent we pay Emaar GDP, Book buying costs, IT Maintenance & Repair, Administrative and Library supplies.



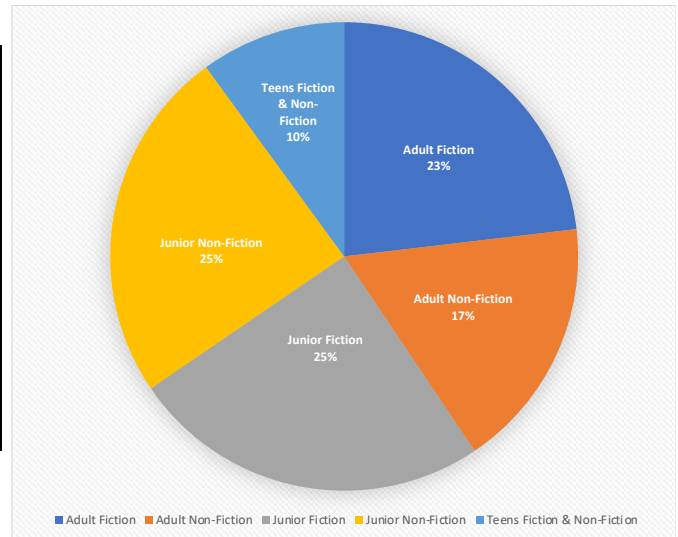
Annual General Meeting (2024)

GDP Rent	AED 92,512
Books Buying	AED 60,795
IT, Maintenance and Repairs	AED 47,090
Administrative	AED 44,730
Library Supplies	AED 24,388
Accounting Charges	AED 24,000
Legal & professional charges	AED 19,954
Bank Charges (CC)	AED 14,290
Library Bags	AED 3,662
General Expenses	AED 3,420
Marketing/Events	AED 864
	AED 335,705



As the main activity of the library is lending of books, about 18% of the expenses were for book buying.

Book Buying Costing for 2023	AED60,795
Adult Fiction	AED13,998
Adult Non-Fiction	AED10,354
Junior Fiction	AED15,562
Junior Non-Fiction	AED15,096
Teens Fiction & Non-Fiction	AED5,785



To summarize, the year 2023 ended with Main revenue of **AED498,658**, a Gift from CDA of **AED50,000**, Interest from Fixed Deposit of **AED8,634** and Other income of **AED465**. With Operating costs of **AED452,746** (including depreciation of **AED117,041**). This means that we have stayed profitable to an amount of **AED105,011**.



Annual General Meeting (2024)

The closing cash balance comprising of Cash-in-hand, Petty Cash and Bank Balance ending 2023, were **AED544,974**, and a Fixed Deposit balance of **AED900,000**.

TOL engaged an independent auditor (KAID Auditing Co.) for the financial year of 2023. The official audit report is available in the library and on the website for your perusal.

As the Treasurer of the library, I would like to place on record that the library is well positioned for future challenges and is of sound financial health.

Questions from attendees:

- a. Penny asked if we would repeat the Summer Special Program this year and if there will be a press release before that.
Response: Yes, we will be running the promotion and Paige will be able to confirm the press release. It will be planned for before the summer.
- b. Penny asked if we will be having extra Storytime sessions during the summer holiday.
Response: Yes, we will, subject to the availability of storytellers during the holidays.
- c. Musaed of CDA asked who our Auditors are.
Response: Kaid Accountant
- d. Musaed shared the new update in CDA rules where the library needs to choose 3 different accounting firms and take a quote from each of them. Ask our members to vote for one of them and use the elected firm to have our accounts audited.
Response: Yes, we will ensure this happens.

Next AGM

AGM for the 2024 year to be held in spring of 2025.

End of The Old Library's AGM for the year ending December 2023.
