

## September 22, 2014, BLT Agenda Item Comments

Comments on the Newport Beach Board of Library Trustees (BLT) agenda items, submitted by:  
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### **Item 4. Draft August 18, 2014 Minutes**

Changes to the passages shown in *italics* are suggested in ~~strikeout~~ underline format.

Page 5, Item 7: “*Jim Mosher thanked staff for providing copies of the Newport Beach Independent on the ~~give-away~~ current newspapers shelves. The next meeting held at Mariners would provide an opportunity for review of the laptop and desk top computer configuration, and the desk top computer usage at the Mariners Branch which is very popular due to the configuration with ~~an average a frequent~~ wait time of ten minutes ~~the Central Library~~. He noted that this is different than Central Library’s public computers usage.”*

### **Item 5.A.1. Customer Comments**

**Comment 2:** I would like to echo the suggestion for adding a capability for patrons to mail letters when visiting the Central Library. Apparently there is no public mailbox in the entire Civic Center complex or adjacent business areas. I was recently at Central considering whether to pay the fee necessary to have reference staff fax a semi-urgent communication of several pages, or to simply mail it myself. I was told the closest public mailbox is the one on Avocado adjacent to the gas station on the south side of PCH. Something closer to the library would be useful (and surprisingly it seems to me all the other branches have a mailbox more convenient than Central). Staff might also wish to look into whether the library might offer a service whereby patrons could fax PDF or Word documents via the internet on their own, without having to trouble staff to use a physical fax machine (government agencies seem particularly prone to creating this demand by insisting that documents be printed out and submitted to them by mail or fax only, rather than as paperless email attachments).

### **Item 5.B.4. Okazaki Gift**

At the September 2<sup>nd</sup> PB&R meeting, Director Hetherington made the interesting observation that the Bamboo Courtyard was itself originally viewed as “a work of art,” and as a result adding features in harmony with the original design is problematic. On the other hand, Trustee King said at a recent Corona del Mar Residents Association meeting that he thought it would be dwarfed at Irvine Terrace Park. I suspect it would be dwarfed in the Bamboo Courtyard as well, and as the statue is much smaller than originally imagined, I encourage Trustee King’s suggestion of testing a cardboard mock up in various locations. Finally, the absence of anything informing the public of what the statue represents (beyond “Friendship”) seems to have been recognized, but still needs to be addressed. I might suggest that in the future, the concept for potential gifts be more thoroughly discussed before they are actually fabricated and awaiting delivery.

### ***Item 5.B.5. Library Use Policy***

I would start by cautioning the Trustees to put limited confidence in staff's assurance that the "*amendments have been thoroughly vetted with the City Attorney's Office.*" There is a strong tendency for the City Attorney to dictate policy on matters regarding which it may be ill-informed (how many have experience as regular NBPL users?) rather than to simply suggest the best and most defensible language to express a Board or Commission's policy desires. The Trustee's should be aware that City Charter [Section 602\(d\)](#) explicitly requires the City Attorney to reply directly to the Boards and Commissions, in writing, in response to any questions they may have. However well-intentioned the effort may be, the Trustees should not rely on hearing the City Attorney's recommendations only as filtered through library staff, especially without knowing exactly what questions were asked.

My second thought is that this is a major and complex revision of a critical policy affecting how staff interacts with the public, the reasons for most of which is not explained in the staff report. The Trustees and public should be given a chance "to sleep on" what staff is proposing before adopting it wholesale.

Beyond that, I have these specific comments on the proposed changes, the references being to the "clean" revised copy:

1. The revisions remove the distinction in the existing policy between behaviors that would normally result only in a warning and those that would result in immediate ejection from the library. Why is this?
2. Regarding proposed policy A.1, the 20 foot smoking policy seems reasonable to me, but the Trustees should know this is far more permissive than [NBMC 11.04.080](#), enacted two years ago, which (at least theoretically) prohibits smoking within 100 feet of parks and park facilities.
3. Does the proposed policy A.6 requiring "*shirt and shoes*" mean patrons can't stop into the Balboa Branch in swimwear? Are flip-flops "*shoes*"?
4. What happened to existing policy 14 regarding patrons denying access to materials when others are waiting? That seemed one of the more important things to have as an "infraction" enforceable (and therefore correctable) by staff. In addition to computers and reference materials, this can be a problem with current newspapers and periodicals.
5. How does violation of the computer/internet usage policies relate to this (which is itself particularly confusing because there are computer use rules posted near the terminals which may or may not be part of any formal Board policy)? Does the same threat of suspension apply to violation of these?
6. In proposed policy B.1, I believe "*Staff will ask customer to stop violating actions ...*" would sound more grammatical if it said "*Staff will ask customer to stop violation ...*"
7. Does the "suspension" include access to the buildings? Or only use of borrowing, internet and other services for which a card is required?

8. In proposed policy B.2, does the “suspension” of privileges apply only to the branch at which the violation occurred (as opposed to B.3 and B.4 which say the suspension applies “*at all NBPL locations*”)? How does that work to have privileges suspended at one branch but not another (or online?), and again, what “privileges” are being suspended?
9. The frequent references in Sections B and D to “*the Library Services Manager, or his/her designee*” and to “*the Library Director or his/her designee*” add unnecessary complexity and uncertainty as to who will be issuing suspensions and hearing appeals.
  - a. I would suggest the “*or his/her designee*” should be dropped and replaced with a single, consolidated line explaining precisely who can be designated and under which circumstances. For example, “*In the absence of the Director, XX can be designated to act on his or her behalf.*”
  - b. It seems important that the appeals be heard by someone above and different from the person who issued the suspension. It also seems important to me that a patron should have a reasonable expectation that their appeal will be heard by the highest authority, that is, by the Director himself, before possibly being appealed to the Trustees. I would not think there would be enough suspensions or appeals that this would create a burden.
10. It seems important that there be a mechanism for removing the suspension if evidence of changed behavior can be provided. It would be nice to see something more than the vague and unexplained reference to the possibility of modification or reversal in Section D.6.

### ***Item 5.B.6. Circulation Policy Revisions to Section 3 Loan Periods***

In proposed **policy 3.04** (“Periodicals”), it bothers me that there does not seem to be a mechanism for other patrons to request or reserve a periodical which the original patron will apparently now be able to keep out for as long as 63 days. UC Irvine used to have a circulation policy with very long check-out times (1 year for faculty, I believe), but with the understanding that if someone else requested the item from the catalog, the patron having the item would receive a notice that they had to return it a very short period (3-7 days) or face a fine. That seems like a good model to me for something like this, and I wish NBPL would consider it.

With regard to **policy 3.04** (“New adult books”), I thought the reason for the 14-day limit was because we had long queues of holds for some and wanted to encourage rapid turnover. Encouraging the return of the item in a timely fashion also provides better visibility of the items on the new books shelves. It would seem a longer initial circulation time is going to increase the length of the queues. Is staff proposing a different category for “best sellers”? Or do we no longer have that problem?

***Item 5.B.7. Corona del Mar Branch Project Update***

I think it's unfortunate that participation in the on-line survey seems to require a Facebook or similar log-in. That certainly deters me from submitting comments, which I should think would be possible with a simple form.