

## June 20, 2016, BLT Agenda Item Comments

Comments on the Newport Beach Board of Library Trustees (BLT) agenda items submitted by:  
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### **Item 1. Minutes of the May 16, 2016 Board of Library Trustees Meeting**

[note: especially on the latter pages of these draft minutes, I found my own comments significantly mis-reported. Other speakers may wish to check that the substance of their comments is accurately represented. For them I have, for the most part, offered only corrections to obvious grammatical errors.]

**Page 1:** Public Comments, paragraph 2: “*Jim Mosher commented that upon reviewing the Library’s Expenditure Report, it seemed that the Library is a little under budget. However, he noted that a citywide budget was released indicating that the expenditures of the Library may be ~~over-budgeted~~ over budget.*” [note: this comment was based on the proposed FY16-17 budget detail [posted](#) by the Finance Department, which I may have been misreading. Looking at it again, and comparing “2016 REVISED BUD” to “2016 PROJECTION,” it now appears to me that there are only a very few items projected to end the year over budget. Instead, and as reported to the Board, nearly all the line items, and the division totals, appear to be expected to end under budget.]

**Page 4:** line 1: “*Chair King opened ~~for~~ public comments.*”

**Page 4:** Item 7, paragraph 1: “*Ms. Schweitzer reported that Council Policy I-7 allows for fees to be charged for the use of the library ~~meeting room rooms~~.*”

**Page 4:** Item 7, bullet 1: “*Staff ~~is~~ proposing to delete the Refund Charge and increase the Cancellation Charge fee from \$31.00 to \$59.00 to reflect the full cost of service.*”

**Page 4:** Item 7, bullet 2: “*~~Staff recommends Reducing reducing~~ the refundable cleaning deposit from \$105.00 to \$96.00*”

**Page 5:** paragraph 2, sentence 2: “*Ms. Kelly answered that it was due to staff’s discretion ~~as that~~ the fee has never been used, therefore ~~it~~ can’t justify ~~the~~ usage fee.*”

**Page 6:** Item 9, paragraph 2, last sentence: “*... staff stated that the Daily Pilot converted to digital format in 2003 and then to microfilm in 2007.*” [This could be correct, but it sounds backwards. One would expect the transition to be to microfilm followed by digital.]

**Page 7:** paragraph 1: “*Mr. Mosher suggested ~~instead moving the local history collection to the Sword Room and~~ converting the ~~present history space into a meeting area~~. ~~He mentioned the earlier conversion of the business room into the~~ teen area ~~for adult usage.~~” [note: I did not suggest changing the teen area]*

**Page 7:** paragraph 3: “*Chair ~~King~~ closed public comments.*”

**Page 8:** paragraph 1: “*Chair King asked if all positions ~~from on~~ the board are filled.*” [?]

**Page 8:** paragraph 1: “*Secretary Johnson-Tucker noted that thanks to ~~the~~ Foundation Board member Karen Clark, many revisions have been made to the by-laws ...*”

**Page 8:** Item VII, paragraph 3: “Mr. Mosher commented on copyright issues ~~in the event the library decided to convert to~~ when patrons download digital materials from the library databases. Mr. Mosher also stated that the Board and staff might be interested in archiving the Board minutes ~~and have them be~~ in a form searchable for future use.”

### ***Item 3. Library Activities***

I love the Director’s opening quotes. However it seems to me that this month’s one (“*Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities*”) is, in its effort to be clever, overly dismissive of the value of library collection building. The comment may be apt for city libraries, but it would certainly seem to me there are libraries for which the maintenance and development of the collection is their primary reason for existence and the extent to which they fulfill that mission is the measure of their excellence. Even within the NBPL, the development of a viable, in-depth local history collection seems to me a worthy goal, and I don’t think devoting resources to that would make NBPL a “bad” library.

Regarding the Survey, is there a deadline by which completed questionnaires need to be submitted? And what is planned to be done with them? I found it rather daunting to complete.

### ***Item 6. Corona del Mar Branch Update***

I fully appreciate the value of the CdM Branch to its community, but I continue to find its proximity to the much larger and better endowed Central Library (which, historically, it predates by many years) to be problematic.

While I appreciate the argument that the neighborhood structure of CdM is somehow uniquely supportive of such a facility, I also continue to believe that if such a branch were offered in an more underserved area even farther from Central – such as West Newport or West Newport Mesa, or East Bluff, or Bonita Canyon or Newport Ridge/Coast – it would rapidly come to be regarded as an equally popular, beloved, “unique” and irreplaceable neighborhood amenity, sharing nearly all the qualities attributed to the CdM Branch.

### ***Item 7. Financial Report Comparison of the Beginning Budget to the End of Year Amended Budget***

I believe the intended purpose of this Monitoring List item is to review not just how the additional contributions from support groups were allocated, but also what the ending status of the various budgeted line items is expected to be. In particular, I think it is important for the Board to understand which line items staff expects will end the fiscal year over or under budget, what the consequences of that will be, and the extent to which unspent library appropriations will have to be returned to the City’s General Fund. I believe that some of the unspent funds, including not just donations, may be regarded as “encumbered” or “committed” and hence not have to be returned. But I am not sure how those affect the next year’s appropriations.

### ***Item 8. Adult and Reference Services Update***

It might be helpful to update the Board on the various classifications of library employment. Having attended quite a few Library Trustees meetings, I don't recall the names and duties of the various categories ever having been made entirely clear. The report, for example, refers to promotions from "Library Assistant" to "Librarian" and I believe there are several categories of "Librarian."

As a general comment, while I applaud staff's adult programming and educational efforts, it seems to me the effort is highly concentrated at the Central Library and very little, especially of the live adult programming and training, is taken to the community through the branches.