

October 19, 2020, BLT Agenda Comments

These comments on Newport Beach Board of Library Trustees (BLT) [agenda](#) items are submitted by:
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Item 1. Minutes of the Sept. 21, 2020 Board of Library Trustees Meeting

Suggested corrections: The passages shown in *italics* below are from the [draft minutes](#) with suggested corrections indicated in **strikeout underline** format.

Page 2 (6 of packet), Item 6, next to last paragraph: “*Jim Mosher ~~thanks~~ thanked Chair Watkins for addressing the difference between expressive activity areas and expressive use areas.*”

Page 3 (7 of packet), Item 7, paragraph 1, sentence 4: “*~~The~~ FY 2019-2020 budget was \$125,000, \$85,000 coming from the City and the State.*”

Page 4 (8 of packet), Item 8, paragraph 1, sentence 2: “*Four of the five members ~~present~~ of the ad hoc subcommittee ~~were present and~~ agreed on one layout scheme.” [I seem to recall all those in attendance agreed, but Council member Dixon was absent.]*

Item 3. Library Activities

With regard to the herons nesting at the Balboa Branch, staff and the board may wish to be aware that although the City has had concerns about the involved species of tree in the past (prompted by a fatal accident on Irvine Avenue), three of the blue gum eucalyptus trees around the parking lot (as well as two of the Canary Island date palms front Balboa Boulevard) are designated as Landmark Trees in [Council Policy G-1](#), which gives the trees (irrespective of the birds) additional protection against their removal.

Item 9. COVID-19 Update and Reopening

I am mystified by the comment regarding the Central Library limited reopening (paragraph 4 under “Discussion”) that “*Public computers are available **by appointment**. Patrons can make an appointment online by visiting our website or by calling 949-717-3800 option 2.*”

I have stopped by Central two or three times on my way to meetings at the City Hall, and on each occasion found the public terminals available for use without any prior [reservation](#), much as they were pre-COVID. The only differences I notice were that a substantial number were taped off, and users were kicked off after one hour of use even though no one else was present, rather than automatically “renewed” as they had been in the past. I don’t know if the one-hour limit is strictly enforced (should one, for example, as for a “guest pass”), but the reason for it, in the absence of users, was not self-evident.

In addition, since staff is monitoring the number of people going in and out of the building, it would seem reasonable to let the board know the number of patrons estimated to be in the building at various times. My impression was it was well under the 100 limit, with staff likely outnumbering patrons.