

February 16, 2021, 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 January 19, 2021 Board of Library Trustees Meeting

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

Page 3 (page 7 of agenda packet), Item 9, end of paragraph 1: “*Fourth is streaming video, which is done predominately through ~~Canopy Kanopy~~ with a small selection of content on Overdrive.*”

Page 6 (page 10 of agenda packet), Item VIII, sentence 2: “*The Planning Session for City Council will be held virtually on Saturday, January ~~3-30~~, 2021 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.*”

Page 6 (page 10 of agenda packet), Item VIII, sentence 3: “*Chair Watkins hopes to speak to the Council regarding the Library Lecture Hall and the Balboa Branch **Empire Station** replacement.*” [I don’t recall what was said, but could “Empire Station” be a mistranscription?]

Item 2. Patron Comments

Regarding Comment 5 (agenda packet page 11), responding to a patron seeking assistance obtaining a circulating book owned by the Los Angeles “County” Public Library,¹ the reference to NBPL’s Interlibrary Loan Service is helpful.

It might also have been helpful to inform the patron that, until recently, if they were willing to pick up the volume at a branch of the Orange County Public Library (the closest being in Costa Mesa and Irvine), they could avoid the non-refundable \$5 service fee, since [OCPL did not charge for ILL](#). Unfortunately, the service is currently unavailable through them.

Item 6. Display and Distribution of Materials Policy (NBPL 8)

In Attachment B, in Guideline B, how does substituting “*City-designated Library support groups*” for “*Friends of the Library and Newport Beach Public Library Foundation*” improve the policy?

What support groups, other than those two, does the drafter have in mind? Newport/Mesa ProLiteracy?

And how does the City designate eligible support groups other than through this policy?

It might also be noted that many other public libraries provide space for display and distribution of a much wider range of community-interest materials and announcements, as once did NBPL. The current policy seems unusually restrictive.

¹ The patron seems to mean the [Los Angeles \(City\) Library](#). The [LA County Library catalog](#) does not show any copies. Based on [WorldCat](#), the next closest copies of the English translation are (apparently) in Northern California. As the patron may already be aware, the [French original](#) is more widely available, including at UC Irvine, and can be borrowed online from the Internet Archive’s [Open Library](#).

Item 7. Annual Budget - Preliminary Review

In Attachment B (Revenue Projections):

1. What does “map” sales refer to? I thought most [City generated maps](#) were produced by its GIS unit, which is not part of the Library Department.
2. Does “VIDEOPLAN RENTAL” refer to one-day video rentals? If so, why is no revenue expected for the current year? Aren’t video rentals currently being allowed?
3. Under “LIBRARY FINES,” I assume the new automatic renewal system is, in part, responsible for the precipitous drop in expected FY20-21 revenues. I, for one, greatly appreciate this new system with its message on the due date confirming the success or failure of the renewal before any fines have accrued. I find this vastly superior to the old one in which one heard nothing until several days *after* the due date, when one received a message announcing fines had accrued to your account.

One possible improvement to consider would be adding something to the message sent in advance of the due date to indicate how many future automatic renewals, if any, an item is eligible for. This is for two reasons:

- a. There seems to be some confusion about what the current renewal policy is. NBPL’s [“Using the Library”](#) page says (under “How do I renew a book or other item?”) “**Two** renewals (equal to the initial checkout period) are allowed on all materials, with the following exceptions.” But the Trustee’s [Circulation Policy](#) (NBPL 12, which I would think should be controlling, but with few patrons likely aware of the recent change) says “*Eligible items will automatically renew for **four** additional loan periods if the item has not been reserved.*”
- b. If the system knows an item has no renewals left, it is misleading to encourage patrons to wait till the due date with the current generic message that “*For your convenience, eligible items will automatically renew on their due date **if they qualify** for a renewal.*”

Item 10. COVID-19 Update

If staff has discovered that with the reopening of Central, “*The public’s use of the Library remains subdued, although the public computer workstations are well-used,*” then what is the rationale for keeping the branches closed?

Wouldn’t a similar experience be expected there? And wouldn’t that be both more patron-friendly and more efficient than curbside service?