

## CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

**Board of Library Trustees  
Newport Beach City Hall  
100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 24, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.**

I. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER** – Chair Watkins called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

II. **ROLL CALL** – Roll Call by Administrative Support Specialist Francine Jacome

Trustees Present: Chair Paul Watkins, Vice Chair Douglas Coulter, Secretary Kurt Kost (arrived at 5:07 p.m.), Board Member Janet Ray, Board Member Barbara Glabman

Trustees Absent: None

Staff Present: Francine Jacome, Administrative Support Specialist  
Rebecca Lightfoot, Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager  
Debbie Walker, Youth & Branch Services Coordinator  
Melissa Hartson, Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator  
Maria Nicklin, Marketing Specialist

Staff Absent: Tim Hetheron, Library Services Director (excused)

III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Vice Chair Coulter

IV. **NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

V. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. **Consent Calendar Items**

1. **Minutes of the April 19, 2021, Board of Library Trustees Meetings**

With respect to the April 19, 2021, minutes Chair Watkins had the following changes:

- Handwritten Page 6, in the last paragraph the seating limit should be 274, not 275.
- In the very last line following the word added it should read “; thus, there is not a net loss in the number of parking spaces.”
- Page 11 of the Agenda Packet, correct the spelling of “judgement”.
- Page 12, second full paragraph, place a comma after the word “staff.”

2. **Patron Comments**

Monthly review of evaluations of library services through suggestions and requests received from patrons.

**3. Library Activities**

Monthly update of library events, services, and statistics.

**4. Expenditure Status Report**

Monthly expenditure status of the library's operating expenses, services, salaries, and benefits by department.

Chair Watkins noted they are 83% through Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-2021 and are 8% underbudget.

**5. Board of Library Trustees Monitoring List**

List of agenda items and dates for monthly review of projects by the Board of Library Trustees.

Chair Watkins called for the public comment, but there was none.

Motion made by Vice Chair Coulter, seconded by Board Member Ray, and carried (4-0-0-1) to approve the Consent Calendar with edits made to the Minutes.

AYES: Watkins, Coulter, Ray

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENCES: Kost

**VI. CURRENT BUSINESS**

**A. Items for Review**

**6. Media Lab Update**

Acting Library Services Manager Rebecca Lightfoot will update the Board on the Media and Sound Lab at Central Library.

Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Rebecca Lightfoot reported that the Media and Sound Lab opened in November 2013. It was donated and funded by the Foundation. The Foundation continues to contribute to update software. The Media and Sound Lab is popular but closed in March 2020 with the COVID-19 Stay at Home Order. The Media and Sound lab will be reopened as soon as the COVID-19 restrictions end. IT assures the Library that everything in the Lab is up to date. In addition to the Media and Sound Lab the Library also offers "tech toys" which are circulated collection items such as video game consoles, GoPro cameras, portable sound equipment, and 5 mobile hotspots.

In response to Chair Watkins' question, Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot explained that a mobile hotspot is a device approximately the size of a cellphone, which is set up to connect to a Wi-Fi network. The hotspot comes with a username and password and allows patrons to connect to a Wi-Fi network within the Continental 48 States. This service has been available since February 2020. A few other Orange County libraries have them as well.

Chair Watkins called for Trustee comments and questions but there were none, so he received and filed the report.

**7. Marketing and Social Networking Update**

Marketing Specialist Maria Nicklin will provide the annual briefing on Library marketing and social media activities.

Marketing Specialist Maria Nicklin reported that the overriding goal related to the Library was to communicate its relevance and modern offerings in an intelligent visual way. She is working on a brand refresh and showed the Board the current website, which has been simplified. The website features banner ads.

Chair Watkins informed Marketing Specialist Nicklin that he loved the banner she included in Library Services Director Tim Hetherton's signature line.

In response to Secretary Kost's question, Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained that the banner ads rotate every few seconds and then are changed every few weeks with Library programming.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin showed the Board the Library's brand story and images. She explained that the images and a strong photo library are part of the marketing plan. Email marketing is one of the most effective ways to reach patrons and the Library's list is 26,000 strong. The real advantage to email marketing over social media is that you can reach everyone on your list, whereas with Facebook you must buy access to your entire follower list.

In response to Chair Watkins' questions, Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained that she can see the open rate on email marketing, and she watches the number closely. She also follows clicks, and the Library "staff picks" are popular as are vintage images. She uses this information to tailor future email blasts. She also coordinates the content with every department in the library system.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained that social media is an important and free tool. She is trying to disseminate information in a "smart, hip, cool, modern" library voice. They have also taken older programs and rebranded them with great success; for example, the teen journaling workshop has been turned into "Storytellers." The programs range in capacity from 30 to 100 patrons. The next steps are to continue to improve, polish, and strengthen the marketing message and grow.

In response to Secretary Kost's question, Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained she had previously worked with the Foundation on Bookmark and their recent website update. Since moving to the Library she has not worked with the Foundation. Their information is included wherever possible, and she does work with the Friends of the Library. She was unaware of any plans to extend staffing to the Foundation.

In response to Chair Watkins question, Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained she was a one-person team.

Board Member Ray complimented Marketing Specialist Nicklin on her work. She suggested promoting the teen events and programs earlier so that they are not missed by the public.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin agreed that teens are a challenging demographic. She has a 17-year-old at home and understands how to reach teens.

Chair Watkins called for the public comment.

Jim Mosher appreciated the website refresh but hoped that the structure of the website for information would not change. He gave the Orange County Airport website as an example of a poor website refresh.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin indicated that they have a web team, and the structure of the site has not been changed.

Chair Watkins thanked Marketing Specialist Nicklin and received and filed the report.

#### **8. Lecture Hall Update**

Trustee Ray will report on activities related to the Library Lecture Hall project.

Board Member Ray stated that following her lengthy April report they are working on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a few other things along that line. She emailed Bob Coffee regarding Mr. Mosher's April comments about the wall in the Bamboo Courtyard and learned that the wall was moving closer to Avocado Ave. by about 12 feet. The wall will be about 10 feet tall to provide protection from vehicular noise on Avocado Ave.

Chair Watkins called for the public comment after hearing none from the Board.

Jim Mosher announced that the next day the City Council would hear the planned Capital Improvement Program Budget for the next five years. The amount spent on the Lecture Hall to date has been \$640,000. From July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 another \$100,000 will be used for the permitting and environmental approval of the plans. The construction is planned for FY 2022-2023 with an additional budget of \$7,260,000. The City Council expects \$4 million to be contributed by an outside party. The Capital Improvement Program also mentions updating the Balboa branch with the design starting in 2022-2023 and the construction a year later. The branch costs less than the Lecture Hall.

Chair Watkins thanked Mr. Mosher for the information.

#### **9. COVID-19 Update**

Staff will update the Trustees on the Library's activities during COVID-19.

Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot reported that the previous Wednesday Orange County reached the Yellow Tier, which did not change anything for the Library. The Library is already at 100% capacity. Beginning Monday, June 7, the Central Library resumes pre-pandemic hours including nights and weekends and the Balboa and Corona del Mar branches will open with normal hours. Mariner's Branch will remain at its current hours of operation until July 6 due to staffing vacancies. Staff is waiting for guidelines from the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH or

Cal/OSHA) regarding social distancing and mask mandates and, until that is received, masks are still required, and social distancing is in place. In person programming and storytimes will return after guidance is received from Cal/OSHA. Friends of the Library are continuing to operate out of the meeting room until they are allowed in the bookstore.

Mr. Mosher requested clarification about the length of time people can spend in the library and at the computers.

Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot explained there was never a time limit in place for being in the library. The public computers are back to pre-pandemic rules: patrons receive one hour to start, and time is increased if no one is waiting.

Chair Watkins thanked Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot and received and filed the report.

## **10. Library Services**

Report of Library issues regarding services, patrons, and staff.

Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot reported they are working on opening the Friends Giftshop and Foundation Passport Office in the former credit union space. Several full time Library Assistants went to notary certification testing on May 15, 2021 and are awaiting results. Signage and library branded merchandise are being prepared for the gift shop. The black and white photocopying fees will be addressed at the next City Council meeting. The next Board of Library Trustees meeting will be held June 21, 2021 with the location to be determined.

In response to Chair Watkins question, Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot stated that before the Passport Office can open it must receive the State Department notice. They hope to have it open as soon as possible but could not provide a firm date.

Chair Watkins opened the item for discussion by the Board and called for the public comment.

Jim Mosher stated that the next Board of Library Trustees meeting is scheduled for the same time and date as the Aviation Committee meeting and that conflict seemed to be ongoing. He suggested one body or the other reschedule.

## **B. Monthly Reports**

### **11. Library Foundation Liaison Reports**

**A. Library Foundation Board** – Report on the most recent activities.

Board Member Ray requested that NBPLF Board Member Dorothy Larson provide the report. Ms. Larson thanked the Board, introduced herself, and announced the new Foundation CEO Jerold Kappel. Mr. Kappel is local, has 40 years' experience running non-profits and has most recently been a consultant for non-profits. The Foundation is excited for Mr. Kappel to come onboard in mid-June. The Witte and Library Live lectures

have concluded, and they were fabulously attended via Zoom. The Foundation completed its annual audit and filed its annual tax returns, so the finances are up to date and in good shape.

Board Members and public had no comment, so the Board received and filed the report.

**B. Library Live Lectures Committee** – Report on the most recent activities.

Board Member Glabman reported the season was over and it was successful. Nancy Dahlfors has stepped down and not yet been replaced.

The public had no comment, so the Board received and filed the report.

**C. Witte Lectures Committee** – Report on the most recent activities.

Secretary Kost stated that the Witte Lectures Committee wrapped its season and is on hiatus for the summer. A subcommittee is pursuing contract pricing and availability of authors for next season. The goal is to have a schedule in place by the middle of June. Events will be both streamed and in person next year due to the successful streaming this year.

Board Members and the public had no comment. The Board received and filed the report.

**12. Friends of the Library Liaison Report**

Trustee update on the most recent activities of the Friends of the Library.

Vice Chair Coulter stated that pursuant to Mr. Mosher's question, the Friends of the Library will accept French and Italian books. He reported that the Friends continue to run excellent deals and noted that they currently have many vintage books for sale. The hours are 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday to Saturday. Donations are taken from 10:30 until 12:00. In April 2021, Friends' ordinary income was \$17,904, and in April 2019, it was \$17,875, which is encouraging due to the pandemic and the limited hours. There is a partnership with Ralph's where community members can link their rewards cards to the Friends of the Library and then the Library receives funds. The Friends membership stands at 748 with 68 new members.

In response to Secretary Kost's question Vice Chair Coulter explained that he was not aware of the percentage, but Ralph's donates for linked rewards cards. He stressed that this type of creativity is common in the Friends group.

Chair Watkins suggested that Vice Chair Coulter communicate with Marketing Specialist Maria Nicklin about publicizing the Ralph's rewards cards.

Vice Chair Coulter suggested that Marketing Specialist Nicklin speak with the Friends directly. Marketing Specialist Maria Nicklin agreed.

Jim Mosher indicated his interest in the Ralph's program. He was pleased to know that Newport Beach's Friends group accept French and Italian books. His comment at the April meeting was so that all the Friends groups in Orange County could work together and compile a list of which Friends bookstores accept foreign language books.

Vice Chair Coulter explained that the County is not operating a Friends group and that someone needed to lead an effort like that, and it should not be the Newport Beach Friends.

Dorothy Larson thanked the Trustees for their reports on the Witte and Library Live lectures. The seasons were successful, and the committees are already working on next season. She also wanted to announce that community members could link their Amazon accounts to the Newport Beach Public Library Foundation (NBPLF) to generate charitable contributions through Amazon Smile.

The Board received and filed the report.

**16. Literacy Services Liaison Report**

Trustee update on the most recent activities of Literacy Services.

Chair Watkins reported there are currently 70 tutors and 103 learners in the program. The newsletter, *Literally Speaking*, is released every two months. There is \$465,000 in the bank. ProLiteracy has created public service announcements which will be broadcast on local radio shortly. The advisory board for the ProLiteracy program is amazing and invested in promoting literacy.

The Board and the public had no comment. The Board received and filed the report.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Jim Mosher stated that the Consent Calendar budget report showed that the Library staff is operating below their projected budget. He pointed out that anything underbudget would be returned to the General Fund and not replenished. He stated that items like training might have been prevented by COVID and hoped that Library staff was acting quickly on items that were deferred during the pandemic.

**VIII. BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES ANNOUNCEMENTS OR MATTERS WHICH MEMBERS WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ACTION OR REPORT (NON-DISCUSSION ITEM)**

Chair Watkins mentioned a visit with his wife to the Field of Honor Exchange Club presentation of flags and recommended the experience.

Chair Watkins announced the next meeting was scheduled for June 21 with a location to be determined.

Vice Chair Coulter recognized Chair Watkins and his wife on the storytime reading for National Library Week.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT – 5:58 P.M.**

Submitted by: *Paul Watkins*  
Chair Approval of Minutes