

September 20, 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 August 23, 2021 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 4 (page 8 of agenda packet), paragraph 3, sentence 1: “*Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator Melissa Hartson explained that the hand carry service is when a customer uses a courier which causes the application to be handled in a different manner and carries ~~and an~~ extra fee.*”

Page 5 (page 9 of agenda packet), Item 10, paragraph 1, sentence 3: “*Vaccinated people can go ~~mask-less maskless~~ and unvaccinated should be masked with patrons self-attesting.*”

Page 6 (page 10 of agenda packet), last sentence: “~~On~~ *September 8, 2021, is International Literacy Day in the Friends Room at 10:00 a.m.*”

Page 7 (page 11 of agenda packet), Item 12, paragraph 3: “*Mr. Jerold Kappel, ~~NBPLF Board Member Chief Executive Officer~~, reported that they were catching up and are ready to announce the Witte Lecture series and Library Live.*”

Page 7 (page 11 of agenda packet), Item 12, paragraph 4: “*In response to Chair Watkin’s question about the Ethical Policy, Mr. Kappel said it identified how the Board will account for gifts, discusses how all federal and state regulations will be followed, and discusses agreements with the City.*” [add comma]

Page 7 (page 11 of agenda packet), Item 12, paragraph 6: “*In response to Trustee Coulter’s question about the vaccine requirements, Mr. Kappel stated that they did not have to follow the suggestion, but noted their events take place in public spaces.*” [add comma]

Page 7 (page 11 of agenda packet), last sentence: “*In response to Trustee Coulter’s question about the Library Lecture Hall utilities and the City’s responsibility, Chair Watkins stated that was an argument and ...*” [I am guessing this was the “utilities” that were referenced, and that the argument is over who is responsible for paying to move the utility lines during construction, rather than the later bill for use of the utilities.]

Item 2. Patron Comments

Only three comments received in August?.

Item VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

The August 23, 2021, draft minutes (on page 3) indicate that one of IT's accomplishments during the pandemic was to have "*implemented a web content filtering software.*"

This new software, "Fortinet," has come with some frustrations.

For example, it blocked access, even by librarians, I believe, to the website of [Stop Polluting Our Newport](#), a respected community organization that Fortinet tagged as a "phishing" operation.

The messages it provides are not particularly helpful. On a personal device connected to the library's WiFi the message is something like "*Fortinet may not be installed correctly on your device*" -- without any explanation of what Fortinet is or why whether one had actually unwittingly installed something of that name. On library computers, patrons get a message to contact Fortinet, and report improperly blocked sites.

This seems contrary to the intent of the BLT's Internet Use Policy [NBPL 5](#), which says "*Any adult Library patron who is unable to access a lawful website that is not harmful to minors may request Library staff to unblock access to that website. Library staff shall respond to requests regarding the filtering software promptly.*" In fact, prompt, temporary unblocking of sites does not appear to be possible with Fortinet. Instead, patrons have to discover on their own that they should contact a librarian when they see these message, library staff then appears to have to contact IT staff, who in turn have to negotiate with Fortinet staff to have a URL removed from Fortinet's blocked list. This is not a simple process, and it can take many hours, if not days, to complete. It is not even completely clear the blocking can be removed at all without Fortinet staff's consent.