

## CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

**Board of Library Trustees  
Newport Beach Central Library  
1000 Avocado Avenue, Newport Beach, CA 92660  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, December 20, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.**

**I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER – 5:00 P.M.**

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

Trustees Present: Chair Paul Watkins, Vice Chair Kurt Kost, Trustee Douglas Coulter,  
Trustee Janet Ray

Trustees Absent: Secretary Barbara Glabman (excused)

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

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Chair Watkins**

**IV. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

**V. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. Consent Calendar Items**

**1. Minutes of the November 15, 2021, Board of Library Trustees Meetings**

Chair Watkins called for comments on the Consent Calendar, but the Board of Library Trustees (BLT) and public had none. Chair Watkins stated that on Handwritten Page 9, the date for the Council discussion on Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) will be Saturday, January 29, 2022. The Library Lecture Hall and the Balboa Branch projects will be discussed, and BLT attendance is encouraged.

Library Services Director Tim Hetherton stated the discussion would be held in Council chambers at 9:00 a.m. A reminder will be sent to the BLT.

Chair Watkins had the following correction to the minutes:

- Page 11, correct the spelling of “prologue.”

**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 reported they were 2% under budget and recognized Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator Melissa Hartson for her efforts.

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

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

Motion made by Trustee Coulter, seconded by Vice Chair Kost, and carried (4-0-0-1) to approve the Consent Calendar with edits to the minutes of November 15, 2021.

AYES: Watkins, Coulter, Kost, Ray

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENCES: Glabman

**VI. CURRENT BUSINESS**

**A. Items for Review**

**6. Review of the Library Lecture Hall Policy (NBPL 15)**

Staff recommends that the Board of Library Trustees review and accept revisions to Library Policy NBPL 15, *Library Lecture Hall*.

Library Services Director Hetherton reported that the BLT reviewed the item in November prior to it going to Council on November 30, 2021. Since then, there have been suggested additions to policy by Chair Watkins and the City Council. The policy now includes the City of Newport Beach having first priority as a user of the facility for official business and programming. Secondly, it states that the Fire Marshal will establish the capacity of rooms. Newport resident, Jim Mosher, is correct that the lettering is off, and it will be fixed in the final version.

Chair Watkins called for BLT comments or questions. Hearing none he requested that Library Services Director Hetherton take the subsection on attendance and create a separate item from Letter G. He noted that he was speaking about Page 40 and gave instruction to Administrative Support Specialist Francine Jacome.

Library Services Director Hetherton agreed with the request.

Chair Watkins called for a motion to adopt the revised *Library Lecture Hall* policy. He called for BLT discussion and the public comment, but there was none.

Motion made by Vice Chair Kost, seconded by Trustee Ray, and carried (4-0-0-1) to accept the revisions to Library Policy NBPL 15, *Library Lecture Hall*.

AYES: Watkins, Coulter, Kost, Ray  
NOES:  
ABSTENTIONS:  
ABSENCES: Glabman

**7. Review of the Laptop Borrowing Policy (NBPL 10)**

Staff recommends that the Board of Library Trustees review and accept revisions to Library Policy NBPL 10, *Laptop Borrowing*.

Library Services Director Hetherington reported that the policy had worked well since its inception and that staff recommended no changes other than those to fix grammatical errors and to change “customers” to “patrons.”

Chair Watkins called for BLT discussion and the public comment, but there was none. He called for a motion to adopt the *Laptop Borrowing* policy.

Motion made by Trustee Coulter, seconded by Trustee Ray, and carried (4-0-0-1) to accept the revisions to Library Policy NBPL 10, *Laptop Borrowing*.

AYES: Watkins, Coulter, Kost, Ray  
NOES:  
ABSTENTIONS:  
ABSENCES: Glabman

**8. Fine Elimination in Public Libraries**

Staff will present as a current library topic of interest – for information only – a report on fine elimination in some public libraries.

Chair Watkins complimented Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator Hartson on her summary on Page 49. He called for the report.

Library Services Director Hetherington reported that it was a growing trend in public libraries to move to a model with no fines. Ultimately if the books are not returned within a certain time they are declared a lost item and the patron is charged. It is a trend that could become an expectation among library patrons, but also may not. There is a theory that the policy would increase circulation and patron visits, but his research shows that so far the difference is not significant. He recommended that staff continue to monitor the issue and noted that no fine policies take materials out of the hands of patrons for significant periods of time. It is stressful to collect fines, but it would be more stressful to try to collect significant material replacement fees from patrons. Fines work as a mechanism for items to be returned timely. An Australian did a study on fines and proved that the higher the fines are the sooner materials were returned. The item is informational only and staff will continue to investigate the matter.

Vice Chair Kost asked if libraries tracked the value of lost materials.

Library Services Director Hetherington indicated they did.

Vice Chair Kost thought it would be interesting to see if that expense would go up under a no fine model.

Library Services Director Hetherton explained the average price of a new hardcover book is \$25.00. Newport Beach's Library is well funded, but they still must protect public resources. He wanted the fairest policy available.

Trustee Coulter agreed with Library Services Director Hetherton.

Chair Watkins asked if Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator Hartson had anything to add.

Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator Hartson said that automatic renewals have been a goodwill gesture to the community.

Chair Watkins said the topic was of current interest and included in the *Library Journal* often. He listed several larger cities including San Francisco, New York, and Chicago that are doing away with fines based on income levels and noted that was not a concern in Newport Beach. From a common sense and personal responsibility standpoint he thought fines were sensible and suggested discussing the issue further from time to time.

Trustee Ray felt strongly that not having accountability sent a bad message and that reasonable fines were acceptable. However, she noted her interest in continuing the discussion.

Trustee Coulter agreed with Trustee Ray.

Chair Watkins commended the staff report.

Vice Chair Kost agreed with the rest of the BLT.

Chair Watkins called for the public comment.

Rhonda Watkins, Newport Beach resident, suggested drop off locations for library materials throughout the City for people with mobility issues.

Library Services Director Hetherton described the concierge service at Marina Park, Newport Coast Community Center, and OASIS and noted they are always looking for ways to expand the program.

Chair Watkins announced that the BLT received and filed the report.

## **9. Lecture Hall Update**

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

Trustee Ray reported that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was approved by the City Council and the Foundation. Robert Coffee Architects is working with the City on approvals. There will be a meeting by the end of January 2022. She is involved in many aspects of the community and people are excited about the Lecture Hall.

Chair Watkins asked Jerold Kappel for an update.

Jerold Kappel, CEO of the Newport Beach Public Library Foundation (NBPLF) explained they were developing a prospectus, brand, and logo for the campaign. He hoped they would be ready to print mid-January. They are printing a limited number so that if things change, they can update the document. Data sheets are complete, and the pledge form must be reviewed by the City Attorney. By the end of January, they will be in full campaign mode.

In response to Chair Watkins' question about the makeup of the campaign committee Mr. Kappel explained it was Teddy Ray, Jill Johnson-Tucker, Janet Hadley, and Lizanne Witte. There will be a small steering committee with a larger committee for solicitation of prospects. They are setting up a separate escrow account and all funds will be held earning interest until it is released to the City. If the project does not happen funds would be returned to donors per the pledge form.

Vice Chair Kost asked if they would solicit for pledges at the Witte and Library Live lectures.

Mr. Kappel said that they could but reminded the BLT they must raise \$700,000 per year. The committee plans to go after major donors, especially as there is a naming opportunity for the building.

Chair Watkins called for further comments, but there were none. The BLT received and filed the report.

**10. Balboa Branch Replacement Update**

Trustee Ray will report on activities related to the Balboa Branch Replacement project, and staff will present a public survey concerning Balboa Branch services and resources for review and approval.

Library Services Director Hetherton said that the survey was standard. At the pre-meeting with Chair Watkins and Vice Chair Kost they agreed to include Mr. Mosher's suggested question about services patrons would like to see at the new branch in the survey.

Chair Watkins directed the attention to Page 54 and instructed them to eliminate the words "if at all."

Vice Chair Kost asked how the survey was to be distributed.

Library Services Director Hetherton explained there would be print copies at the branches, an email would go out to the mailing list, and it would be advertised in The Daily Pilot and StuNews.

Vice Chair Kost confirmed it was not geared to the Peninsula residents.

Library Services Director Hetherton said that it was not as the tax dollars came from the entire City. There are also patrons who use multiple branches.

Chair Watkins called for BLT comments, but there were none. He called for the public comment.

Mr. Kappel offered to publicize the survey in the spring *Bookmark*.

Library Services Director Hetherton thanked him.

Chair Watkins asked for a motion to adopt the survey as slightly revised.

Motion made by Vice Chair Kost, seconded by Trustee Ray, and carried (4-0-0-1) to adopt the survey as revised.

AYES: Watkins, Coulter, Kost, Ray  
NOES:  
ABSTENTIONS:  
ABSENCES: Glabman

**11. Review Holidays and Meeting Schedule**

Staff requests that the Board of Library Trustees review the 2022 holidays and meeting schedule.

Library Services Director Hetherton reported the schedule is generally handled in January, but as that meeting is impacted by a holiday it was moved to the December meeting. The BLT meets the third Monday of the month unless there is a holiday, then it moves to the following Tuesday.

Chair Watkins directed the BLT to Page 55. The January and February 2022 meetings are one day late due to holidays. He called for BLT comments or questions, but there were none. He called for the public comment, but there was none. He called for a motion.

Motion made by Trustee Coulter, seconded by Vice Chair Kost, and carried (4-0-0-1) to accept the 2022 holiday and meeting schedule.

AYES: Watkins, Coulter, Kost, Ray  
NOES:  
ABSTENTIONS:  
ABSENCES: Glabman

**12. COVID-19 Update**

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

Library Services Director Hetherton reported that on December 15, 2021, they returned to full masks indoors in public places. Signage is posted.

Chair Watkins called for BLT comments or questions, but there were none. He called for the public comment, but there was none. The BLT received and filed the report.

**13. Library Services**

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

Library Services Director Hetherton reported they are a 3-Star library for the twelfth time in 14 years. He noted that Chair Watkins believes that if they had counted website visits as they indicated they would that Newport Beach would have been 4-Star. The website information will count in 2022.

On November 30th Librarian II Annika Helmuth attended a virtual seminar about library design. She reports that it was a panel discussion on the trends in public library design. Flexibility to modify spaces, bringing the outdoors indoors, shelving, sustainability, environments that allow for collaboration, Wi-Fi availability, meeting rooms, and other topics were discussed. It is important to design libraries for people and the community and not just materials. Information learned by Librarian II Helmuth can inform the Balboa Branch discussions.

Chair Watkins suggested a copy of Librarian II Helmuth's report be placed in the Balboa file.

Library Services Director Hetherton stated they would do so.

Chair Watkins indicated the BLT would receive and file the report.

**B. Monthly Reports**

**14. Library Foundation Liaison Reports**

**A. Library Foundation Board – Report on the most recently attended meeting.**

Vice Chair Kost reported they met on December 6 via Zoom. Patricia Dreyfuss is a new member of the Foundation. Library Live received a \$10,000 donation. The Joanna Kim Family Foundation donated another \$10,000. The November 2021 total was \$85,000 in gifts and pledges. They are replacing library banners to feature programs in the new Lecture Hall. There are over 14,000 people on the Foundation's email list. Their "Giving Tuesday" event raised \$5,000.

Mr. Kappel added that they presented a proposal for a \$25,000 gift to the Central Library for children's non-fiction dealing with math and science, biographies, and classic fiction. The donor agreed to the gift, and the Foundation will provide a \$25,000 check hopefully the first week of January 2022. The \$5,000 from the "Giving Tuesday" campaign will also go to the Mariners Library and the children's section.

Vice Chair Kost asked if the funds would be for new books.

Mr. Kappel said that the "Giving Tuesday" funds could be used to buy books. The grant has a broader scope and could be used for shelving or other items. They just received \$1,500 from a former teacher at the Mariners Elementary School, which will also be directed to the Library by the Foundation.

Chair Watkins called for BLT comments or questions.

Trustee Ray asked if the school had a parent foundation.

Youth & Branch Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Debbie Walker stated they did.

Trustee Ray thought that they would have an interest in supporting the Library.

Youth & Branch Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Walker said that they had given generously through book sales.

Chair Watkins called for the public comment, but there was none. The BLT received and filed the report.

**B. Library Live Lectures Committee** – Report on the most recently attended meeting.

Chair Watkins stated that the last page of the Agenda contained a summary of the December 7 meeting spearheaded by Kunga Wangmo-Upshaw. The summary includes ticket sales and mention of adding someone to the committee.

Kunga Wangmo-Upshaw explained they had not added anyone yet.

Chair Watkins stated that the BLT received and filed the report.

**C. Witte Lectures Committee** – Report on the most recently attended meeting.

Kunga Wangmo-Upshaw reported that Friday Ezra Klein had sold out and the Saturday lecture was nearly sold out. Eddie Glaude, Jr. has sold 124 tickets for Friday and 116 for Saturday. Suzanne Simard has sold 120 for Friday and 106 for Saturday. Charlotte Alter has sold 112 for Friday and 100 for Saturday.

Chair Watkins stated those were good numbers considering that it was still early in the season.

Ms. Wangmo-Upshaw said that other than *Bookmark* they really had not advertised through printed materials, so they were pleased with the numbers. The capacity is 200 and they will not increase it.

Vice Chair Kost asked if the capacity was the same for Library Live.

Ms. Wangmo-Upshaw said it was also 200. They are starting to look for speakers for 2023. Friday nights will have dinners for donors and supporters.

Chair Watkins called for BLT or public comments or questions, but there were none. The BLT received and filed the report.

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

Trustee update on the most recently attended Friends of the Library Board meeting.



Trustee Coulter reported that the Friends of the Library had a great November totaling \$23,008. That is double the amount they brought in for November 2020. There was \$16,000 from the bookstore, \$2,196 from their triannual Book Sale, \$751 from Amazon sales, \$5,600 in donations of which \$5,000 was from one individual, and \$1,500 in membership dues. He announced the week's sales at the bookstore and noted the success of its recent sales. There are currently 776 members of the Friends of the Library. At the luncheon they celebrated eight people's fifth year as volunteers, six people at 10 years, and four at 15 years. During the Corona del Mar Christmas Walk, there were 450 visitors to the CdM branch at the holiday open house.

Chair Watkins called for Board or public comments or questions. Hearing none the BLT received and filed the report.

**16. Literacy Services Liaison Report**

Trustee update on the most recently attended Literacy Services Advisory Board meeting.

Trustee Ray reported that on December 4 they had the annual Saturday morning brunch where the learners and tutors come together. It was a heartwarming and wonderful event, but they were unable to do the traditional potluck due to COVID. There was also volunteer recognition and there were several volunteers who had given over 100 hours.

Chair Watkins stated that one tutor had 750 hours in one year. He also enjoyed the Saturday morning brunch. Eve Marie Kuntzman is finishing her term as president at the end of December. Cherall Weiss is retiring in August 2022, which will leave her position open and will be difficult to fill.

Chair Watkins called for BLT or public comments or questions, but there were none. The BLT received and filed the report.

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

None.

**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)**

Announcements:

- Trustee Ray commented that her college-aged grandson enjoys spending time at the Library.
- Chair Watkins announced that he and his wife attended the Corona del Mar Christmas Walk and enjoyed it.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT – 5:52 P.M.**

Submitted by:

*Paul Watkins*

Chair Approval of Minutes