

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Board of Library Trustees
Newport Beach Central Library
1000 Avocado Avenue, Newport Beach, CA 92660
Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 16, 2022 – 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, Secretary Barbara Glabman, Trustee Douglas Coulter, Trustee Janet Ray

Trustees Absent:

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

Staff Absent:

III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Library Services Director Tim Hetherton

IV. **NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

V. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. **Consent Calendar Items**

1. **Minutes of the April 14, 2022, Board of Library Trustees Special Meeting**
2. **Minutes of the April 18, 2022, Board of Library Trustees Meeting**

Chair Watkins confirmed that the other Trustees did not wish to discuss and/or did not wish to remove items from the Consent Calendar. He then confirmed no members of the public wished to discuss the Consent Calendar. He noted that he had the following correction to the minutes:

- Handwritten Page 14, change “prized” to “prize”.
- He complimented Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Rebecca Lightfoot on the wonderful instructions on how to download eBooks on Patron Comments, Handwritten Page 16.
- Handwritten Page 18 listed special software devices. He asked Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot if they were sound effect

choices. She indicated that was a simplified way of describing them. She indicated that she was working with the IT Department to determine if it could be configured in a way that would be useful to the public. They did not want to spend too much time or effort on something that was not utilized.

3. Patron Comments

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

4. Library Activities

Monthly update of library events, services, and statistics.

5. Expenditure Status Report

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

Chair Watkins noted that the Board of Library Trustees (BLT) was 4.54% underbudget. Over the past several months the BLT advised staff to make any good faith expenditures that were necessary and Library Services Director Hetherton and Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator Melissa Hartson have advised those funds may be expended by June 30, 2022.

Library Services Director Hetherton stated that would most likely occur.

6. 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 stated that the COVID-19 Update would not be necessary in the future. He noted that due to an absence Vice Chair Kost would abstain from the April 18 minutes. He then called for a Motion.

Motion made by Trustee Coulter, seconded by Secretary Glabman, and carried (4-0-1-0) to approve the Consent Calendar with edits to the minutes.

AYES: Watkins, Glabman, Coulter, Ray

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS: Kost

ABSENCES:

VI. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Items for Review

7. Appointment of Library Services Director

Per City Charter Section 708, Subsection (e), the Board of Library Trustees shall approve or disapprove the appointment of the Library Services Director, who is the Department head of the Newport Beach Public Library. The City Manager has proposed to the Board of Library Trustees the appointment of Ms. Melissa Hartson, effective May 21, 2022, following an open recruitment process that occurred in

Spring 2022. Ms. Hartson currently serves as the Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator for Newport Beach Public Library.

Library Services Director Hetherton was pleased to announce that current Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator Melissa Hartson was selected as the new Library Services Director. He stated that she was a wonderful person and a great librarian and colleague who he believed would do a good job for the City.

Chair Watkins called for BLT discussion.

Trustee Ray thought the BLT was part of making a good choice and congratulated Ms. Hartson.

Trustee Coulter also congratulated her.

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

Motion made by Secretary Glabman, seconded by Trustee Coulter, and carried (5-0-0-0) to approve the appointment of Melissa Hartson as the Library Services Director, effective May 21, 2022.

AYES: Watkins, Kost, Glabman, Coulter, Ray

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENCES:

8. 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 in 2021 when she gave her report to the BLT the Media Lab was still closed to the public for COVID. They reopened once the 6 feet and capacity restrictions were lifted. IT replaced all the Macs, and the PCs will be updated shortly. The new Macs required software and hardware updates and they are looking to purchase a new scanner and vinyl digitizer. Tech toys circulate really well and new items were added, such as recording devices which can be plugged into computers. They also added classic video game systems which are very popular. In response to Chair Watkins inquiry, she stated that the library had three or four Go Pros but indicated that they were becoming less popular. They will be replaced at some point as they are currently several years old.

Trustee Ray inquired about the procedure for de-acquisitioning items.

Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot explained the IT Department decommissions old hardware and then may auction them off or dispose of them through another process.

Trustee Ray asked if IT reimbursed the Library with whatever funds they received from its old items.

Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot stated that she did not know the answer but guessed that they did not receive reimbursement. The money came to the Library through the City Budget.

Trustee Coulter said that it was a net zero.

Chair Watkins inquired about older people using the Media Lab.

Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot said that there was a robust population using the Media Lab.

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

9. Marketing and Social Networking Update

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

Chair Watkins called for the staff report.

Marketing Specialist Maria Nicklin reported that it had been a year since their last conversation. She thanked Library Services Director Hetherton for recognizing the power of effective marketing and design and letting her succeed in her position. The overriding goal was to effectively communicate the Library's relevance and modern offerings. The current marketing agenda was based on next steps from 2021. The first step was polishing the Library's branding; ensuring there were polished graphics, a recognizable look, and a consistent and interesting voice. They started with the website which has been undergoing a refresh over the past year. The website is now tonal blue, which is a neutral background that allows the images and news to stand out. The website is tied to the same template that the City website uses so Marketing is looking into workarounds with that. When she took her position the opening rate for email marketing was 15% and that has risen to 42%. The list includes approximately 26,000 email addresses. She attributed the increase in the opening rate to strong subject lines, limiting the number of emails sent, and by focusing on popular topics. She showed the BLT an email which was opened at a rate of 47% and led to a sold-out event. They created a new email sign up card which resulted in a 70% increase in email signups over three weeks.

Library Services Director Hetherton asked if the City had to pay for the image of the little girl on the card.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained that it was a stock image and that she kept interesting stock images she saw for potential future use. In response to questions, she explained that the cards were placed all over the libraries at all branches. The image will also be featured in a web banner ad and on social media. She showed the BLT another email about Storytellers that went out on May 12th. The program sold out both sessions within a day. With social media they were focused on Instagram with Facebook as a secondary platform. Instagram has a slightly younger audience and allows you to reach all your followers with a post unlike Facebook that sends information out to only 5% of the audience and then offers to sell them back access to the other 95%. Marketing is more effective on Instagram and the Library has increased its followers to over 2,000. The goal

for next year is to be at 4,000 followers. When there is a program they want to publicize in a smaller way instead of through an eblast they do it through social media.

Vice Chair Kost inquired about links in Instagram posts.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin indicated that you could not post links on Instagram, but you can put links in the bio. She usually directed people to the website and its banner ads. She thought the best way to reach children was by getting the parent's attention with good design. A Library Assistant told her that the Library design was very recognizable as the Library on social media and the website, which pleased her greatly.

Trustee Coulter stated that the colors were pleasing.

Vice Chair Kost indicated that he liked an image and asked if it was an Instagram post.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin stated it was used as a poster, on Instagram, as a digital ad, and for other things.

Vice Chair Kost asked if they were looking at posters that would be displayed throughout the branches.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin stated that they were.

Secretary Glabman inquired if they had ever asked Instagram followers to share the Library's posts with their own followers.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin stated that was a good idea. She personally shared everything and thought that she had increased numbers significantly that way. The eblasts include a link to Instagram and a reminder to follow the Library. Every time they send out an eblast the Instagram following increases by about 20 people. Strategic follows like following the schools and important people in Orange County helps increase visibility as well. She thought strategic follows were responsible for a 200-300 follower increase. She admitted that she discussed Instagram tips with teenagers. She shared images for the teen and adult summer reading programs with the BLT.

Vice Chair Kost asked if there was a way to work with VRBO or Airbnb for people who rented their homes on the Peninsula to have Library materials included in their check in packets.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin thought that was a good idea. She explained that building a photo library and having strong photography was the ground floor of good marketing. She showed the BLT new photos that had been added to the photo library. Good photography captures a moment in time. She intended to work with one of the Children's Librarians to continue to capture images over the next year. She also showed the BLT websites and examples of things that she used as sources of inspiration. "Inspired words" are used as banner ads and on Instagram and received more likes than anything else posted. The next steps are to continue defining and strengthening the brand, move forward with graphics, grow the email list, grow the social media following, win over new audiences, and focusing on storytelling.

Trustee Coulter commended Marketing Specialist Nicklin on her ideas and presentation.

Chair Watkins called for other BLT questions.

Secretary Glabman stated that what Marketing had done was exciting and that they needed to continue to outreach to the community.

Chair Watkins asked when they would focus on the Library Lecture Hall.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin stated that was a separate issue with the Foundation.

Vice Chair Kost asked how Marketing collaborated with the Foundation.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained that she was in communication with the leadership of the Foundation and included their information on everything she released. There is a line between the Library's activities and events and the Foundation's activities and events.

Vice Chair Kost confirmed that Witte and Library Live was under the Foundation's purview while storytimes were handled by Marketing.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin stated that was correct.

Jerold Kappel, Newport Beach Public Library Foundation (NBPLF) CEO, explained there was a spread in *Bookmark* that was on Library activities. He edited the information in the *Bookmark* to put in the two pages.

Vice Chair Kost asked how he thought the arrangement was working.

Mr. Kappel stated that they did not really overlap. When Marketing Specialist Nicklin works on the *Bookmark* or the Lecture Hall it was not done on Library time.

Secretary Glabman asked if *Bookmark* was separately funded, and Trustee Ray mentioned this was how it is with Literacy.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained that Literacy marketing was in her purview.

Trustee Ray thought that was interesting as they were putting together a video.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained that she did the branding and new logo and assisted with the name, but she was not involved in the video.

Vice Chair Kost asked if she was stretched thin.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin explained she was a one-person department.

Vice Chair Kost asked if there were plans to expand the department.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin indicated that was up to Library Services Director Hetherington and future Library Services Director Hartson.

Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator Hartson said that in an ideal world the department would absolutely be expanded.

Chair Watkins congratulated Marketing Specialist Nicklin on her excellent report.

Trustee Coulter appreciated the items that Marketing Specialist Nicklin showed the BLT.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin said that libraries normally did not focus on marketing, so she sincerely thanked Library Services Director Hetherington for his support. There are a few libraries that do marketing, but most do not stand out, so they have a unique opportunity to create a polished product with their beach library.

Vice Chair Kost asked if she was borrowing ideas from other libraries.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin noted that there was not much to borrow from. She follows many libraries including New York and internationally. The reason she showed the BLT the examples was because those were done right, and libraries were not doing it right due to slim marketing budgets and inexperienced people.

Vice Chair Kost stated that he had noticed an uptick in good emails over the past several months.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin said that 95% of the emails that are opened are on desktop computers versus phones. She explained that she could tell who had clicked on what and how many followers increased as a result.

Chair Watkins called for the public comment.

Rhonda Watkins, Newport Beach resident, stated that she had tried to look at the website from her phone but had been unable to get a signal. She thought that and being able to see the captions better might be the reason for the increased desktop computer traffic.

Chair Watkins asked Marketing Specialist Nicklin if she was happy in her position.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin stated that she enjoyed her position and enjoyed the control that Library Services Director Hetherington trusted her with. She said that another difference between herself and the type of person who would usually take a Marketing Specialist position was that she was experienced. Normally marketing strategy, copywriting, and design were done by three different people.

Chair Watkins said that she was thinking outside of the box and expanding things. He enjoyed the creativity and thanked her for doing a good job. He praised the library as an institution. He indicated that the BLT would receive and file the report and thanked staff.

10. Lecture Hall Update

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

Trustee Ray reported that they met the previous week, discussed meeting with the architect, and reviewed suggested materials. Sample chairs are available for testing at City Hall although she thought they were going to continue looking at other options. They

may be done with the ad hoc committee since the next steps involved finishing the drawings and pulling permits. The silent part of the campaign would start in the fall.

Mr. Kappel indicated that it had already started. He could not advise them of the name, but they have the lead donor. They have a second donor in the mid-six figure range, and a number of other interviews with potential donors upcoming. In the fall they will launch the public campaign, but that should not start until the major donors are secured as it dilutes the donor pool. All naming opportunities are negotiated with the City due to the necessary documents that must be signed with the City.

Trustee Ray asked if the lead donor was contingent on signing something with the City.

Mr. Kappel stated that the lead donor was contingent upon successful negotiation with the City. He indicated that he was unable to disclose the amount of the donation.

Vice Chair Kost asked what the donor would negotiate with the City.

Mr. Kappel explained that as it was a City building the City had control over the name and where it would be placed so there were public relations and payment issues to negotiate.

Trustee Ray inquired how long the negotiation would take and voiced concern that they might lose a lead donor.

Mr. Kappel believed that the document was currently being reviewed by the donor's attorney.

Trustee Ray inquired about the brochure.

Mr. Kappel said that they printed 100 digital copies and it would be reprinted in a smaller size on a different type of paper.

Trustee Ray gave her draft brochure to people who were excited about the lecture hall.

Mr. Kappel stated that everything in the document was accurate.

Trustee Ray suggested that after they complete the reprint the Trustees should be given copies to disseminate.

Mr. Kappel said that there were folders, letterhead, carrier envelopes, notecards, and a prospectus at the printer.

Trustee Ray requested a kit for the BLT at the next meeting or sooner if it was available. Mr. Kappel indicated he would see that the BLT received kits.

Secretary Glabman asked when everything would be clarified with the City.

Mr. Kappel said that the City provided them with the naming agreement about three months prior. They redlined it and sent it back within a week, but it is still with the City Attorney's Office.

Secretary Glabman asked how they could get the attention of the City Attorney's Office.

Mr. Kappel thought things were very fluid until the lead donor signed with the City. Following that they might go public and announce but between Memorial Day and the fall it was difficult to get anything done.

Chair Watkins asked if a formal announcement would be made when the agreement was complete.

Mr. Kappel said that there would be a press conference. The question was if it would be effective to have it in the summer or more effective to wait until the fall.

Chair Watkins asked if Marketing Specialist Nicklin was engaged by the NBPLF.

Mr. Kappel explained that she would work as a consultant.

Vice Chair Kost asked if the Summer Solstice event would work.

Mr. Kappel said that there was a lot going on with that event, so he was not sure.

Trustee Ray hoped it was not announced too soon.

Mr. Kappel did not think that was a concern.

Chair Watkins asked what the disadvantage was to announce the donor too soon.

Trustee Ray did not want to dissuade other potential major donors.

Mr. Kappel stated that they needed to go significantly over the \$6.5 million as the technology was more expensive than initially expected. There is no ticket booth in the design so they would have to draft a "mobile" one. Currently the cost of building materials is extremely high, so the project would go over \$7 million.

Trustee Ray stated that the architects were doing all they could to reduce costs.

Mr. Kappel said they were trying to at least keep it within the \$6.5 to \$7 million range.

Chair Watkins asked if the naming rights could be announced without stating the dollar amount.

Mr. Kappel indicated that it would be highly unusual not to name the dollar amount. Usually, they would not go public until they had at least 80% of the total funds in the bank. The hardest part of a capital campaign is collecting the last 20%.

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

11. Balboa Branch Replacement Update

Staff will report on activities related to the Balboa Branch Replacement project.

Library Services Director Hetherton reported that the public survey returned the expected results and showed broad support for the facility. The City moved to the Request for Proposal (RFP) phase and the project would be out to bid. There was a walkthrough scheduled for potential bidders on May 26.

Chair Watkins asked if Trustee Ray or Secretary Glabman should be on the walkthrough.

Library Services Director Hetherton said they were welcome and said it was scheduled for Thursday, May 26, at 10:00 a.m. Katherine Cho at Public Works was the contact.

Chair Watkins inquired about which staff members would participate.

Youth & Branch Services Coordinator Debbie Walker said administration staff, Circulation & Technical Processing Coordinator Hartson, Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Lightfoot, and herself would be present.

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

12. Library Services

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

Library Services Director Hetherton bid the BLT farewell and thanked everyone. He said he was very grateful for the experience and to the current and past BLT for their encouragement to make the Library better.

Trustee Coulter presented Library Services Director Hetherton with a gift card for dinner from the members of the BLT, thanked him for his service, and wished him well in his retirement.

Chair Watkins explained that Library Services Director Hetherton's last day is Friday, May 20. He will be missed and Ms. Hartson will help to continue all of the great work.

B. Monthly Reports

13. Library Foundation Liaison Reports

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

Vice Chair Kost stated that the spring *Bookmark* was in the final edit phase. It will highlight 25 years of Witte Lectures and recognize Library Services Director Hetherton's years of service. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Budget will include design and production of new general information banners in the Friend's Room and the entrance lobbies. There will also be an increase in marketing expenses for the Foundation. FY 2022 income goal was \$663,000 and they were currently at \$661,000.

Library Foundation C.E.O. Jerry Kappel stated that they were over the goal.

Vice Chair Kost said that the number of total donors was up 14% and the average gift was up over 12.9% from the prior year. The Summer Solstice Event was planned for June 25 at 6:00 p.m. in the Bamboo Courtyard.

Chair Watkins called for BLT questions or comments, but there were none. He called for 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 Page 52 contained a written summary of the item and indicated they would move on in the interest of time.

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

Secretary Glabman stated that the Witte Lectures Committee held its last meeting of the season. They reviewed the season and discussed the marketing for the coming year. They have a great potential new committee member and all four speakers in place. That information is not yet public.

Vice Chair Kost indicated he thought they had voted on the new committee member.

Secretary Glabman indicated that they may have.

Trustee Ray asked who the new member or potential new member was.

Vice Chair Kost said it was Whitney Gomez.

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

14. Friends of the Library Liaison Report

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

Trustee Coulter reported that the April total sales were \$19,403 which was 8.7% higher than April 2021. The Friends work hard every day and present specials regularly.

Vice Chair Kost noted that the Friends did an incredible job fundraising.

Trustee Ray asked if the Friends needed PR done in the community.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin mentioned that she and Library Services Director Hetherton had reached out to them on numerous occasions to refresh their marketing, but they like what they have going. She stated that she helps when she can.

Chair Watkins said that their self-marketing was not bad.

Marketing Specialist Nicklin stated that it had their own charm.

Vice Chair Kost asked if they had volunteers to work the shop upstairs.

Trustee Coulter indicated that was not part of his report.

Secretary Glabman asked if it was possible to do something with a senior photo and put it at Oasis.

Chair Watkins stated that Friends of the Library President Amy Hunt was open to suggestions.

Trustee Coulter indicated that concluded his report.

15. Literacy Services Liaison Report

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

Trustee Ray reported that the Happy Hour was a sold-out success. The author was very personable. Literacy Coordinator Cherall Weiss did a great job as the interviewer. Tutor and learner populations were rebuilding following the pandemic. Classes and attendance are on the rise. They are making a movie and Literacy Coordinator Weiss announced her retirement for later in the summer.

Chair Watkins announced the retirement celebration date of Thursday, July 7 at 1:00 p.m. in the Friends Room.

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)

Chair Watkins reminded the Trustees to attend the May 24 City Council Study Session to recognize the years of service by retiring Library Services Director Hetherington.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – 6:06 P.M.

Submitted by: *Paul Watkins*
Chair Approval of Minutes