

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Board of Library Trustees
Crean Mariners Branch Library
1300 Irvine Avenue, Newport Beach, CA 92660
Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 17, 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, Secretary Douglas Coulter, Trustee Barbara Glabman

Trustees Absent: Vice Chair Janet Ray (excused), Trustee Ash Kumra (excused)

Staff Present: Melissa Hartson, Library Services Director
Francine Jacome, Administrative Support Specialist
Rebecca Lightfoot, Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager
Annika Helmuth, Branch and Youth Services Coordinator
Andrew Kachaturian, Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator
Alex Jenkins, Mariners Branch Librarian
Liz McKibbin, Senior Library Clerk
Christine Chapel, Children's Librarian
Rokhsan Shafiei, P/T Library Assistant

Staff Absent:

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

IV. **NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC** – Waived

V. **CONSENT CALENDAR** – Administrative Support Specialist Francine Jacome

A. **Consent Calendar Items**

1. **Minutes of the September 19, 2022, Board of Library Trustees (BLT) Meeting**

Chair Watkins introduced the Consent Calendar and confirmed that the other Trustees did not wish to discuss and/or did not wish to remove items from the Consent Calendar. Hearing none he noted that he had several comments.

2. **Patron Comments**

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

Chair Watkins pointed to Page 13, Patron Comment #3, and congratulated Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Rebecca Lightfoot on locating an article for a patron from 1979.

Adult Services Coordinator/Acting Library Services Manager Rebecca Lightfoot indicated that she found the article digitally.

3. Library Activities

Monthly update of library events, services, and statistics.

Chair Watkins commended the Mariners Report and the Branch Youth Services Report.

4. Expenditure Status Report

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

Chair Watkins reported that 25% of the year had elapsed and they were 3% under budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23. The budget is \$9.3 million annually.

5. Board of Library Trustees Monitoring List

List of agenda items and dates for monthly review of projects by the BLT.

Chair Watkins called for the public comment.

Jim Mosher, Newport Beach resident, called out Page 20 of the packet and the Activity Report. There was quite a difference between the circulation of adult materials and children's materials. He suggested that it could be useful to show the circulation and break down the adult and children's numbers to see if they could find trends.

Chair Watkins called for a Motion on the minutes and noted that Secretary Coulter would be abstaining because of his prior absence.

Motion made by Trustee Glabman, seconded by Secretary Coulter, and carried (2-0-1-2) to approve the Consent Calendar with the minutes as presented.

AYES: Watkins, Glabman

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS: Coulter

ABSENCES: Ray, Kumra

VI. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Items for Review

6. Mariners Branch Update

Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator Andrew Kachaturian will provide the annual overview of Mariners Branch operations.

Library Services Director Hartson introduced Mariners Branch Librarian Alex Jenkins.

Mariners Branch Librarian Alex Jenkins took a moment to introduce his staff (listed in the roll call) to the BLT.

Chair Watkins indicated that the Mariners staff could return to their work and leave the meeting if necessary.

Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator Andrew Kachaturian explained he would give a highlight of his report. Mariners is a joint use facility with the adjacent school and this year was a return to normalcy. The library is also a joint facility with the community room with Recreation. Numbers were picking up and things were returning to normal. The building opened in 2016 and that is why some Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) were coming into play. Currently they were adding lighting all along the building and increasing it by the book drop. Following the meeting he noted it would be dark enough for the Trustees to see some of the improvements. An HVAC repair was also in progress related to the chiller and other equipment. The branch has had significant HVAC issues during the past several years so the project would be greatly helpful. Other improvements included the sign along Irvine Avenue, issues with the shades on the side of the building, and other facility maintenance. With respect to public service there were over 100,000 circulations. It was hard to compare the year to prior years due to the different service model with curbside pickup, but the circulation had increased. There were over 20,000 reference questions addressed in the past FY as well. Children's storytimes have been held on the field as part of the COVID procedure. It was incredibly popular outside, and the attendance rose by about 90 people.

Children's Librarian Christine Chapel explained that they held the storytimes outside under the trees and the patrons loved it. Children were even better behaved outside.

Trustee Glabman asked about the acoustics outside.

Children's Librarian Chapel stated that her voice carried but they did have a headset mic they could use if necessary. They also have a speaker that is tied into the iPad for music.

Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator Kachaturian explained that while the storytimes outside had worked well they could move indoors for inclement weather. They participated in three opportunities with Mariners Elementary including a parent's night.

Children's Librarian Chapel explained they held a TK/Kinder orientation, hosted a table at the Elementary Open House, and made an announcement over the PA for Flag Deck.

Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator Kachaturian explained that they were excited to be back in the schools. He explained that he had been the Mariners Branch Librarian for 4 years, and this was his fourth report. Mariners has a great staff.

Chair Watkins commended the team.

Trustee Glabman asked if the exterior lighting was being added for safety reasons.

Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator Kachaturian stated that safety was taken into consideration, especially with the book drop area.

Trustee Glabman asked if there was a homeless issue in the park.

Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator Kachaturian explained that he sometimes saw luggage and other things in the park, but that people do not cluster near the Library anymore.

Chair Watkins called for further Trustee questions/comments. Hearing none he called for the public comment.

Jim Mosher, Newport Beach resident, indicated that he wanted to follow up on his previous comment and requested a break down of the circulation between adults and children.

Circulation and Technical Processing Coordinator Kachaturian explained that with the school partnership they were very children heavy. He guessed that it might be a 75/25 or a 70/30 split.

Children's Librarian Chapel noted that children's books were thinner, so patrons tended to check out multiple books at a time.

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

7. Youth Services Update

Branch and Youth Services Coordinator Annika Helmuth will provide the annual overview of Youth Services.

Branch and Youth Services Coordinator Annika Helmuth provided the annual Youth Services Report. The last report ended in September 2021, so her report ran from October 2021 to September 2022. Much of the report discussed a return to normalcy with community outreach events and specialty events. There are children's personnel at all four locations and that makes up the Youth Services Team. They primarily focus on resources and services for babies through sixth grade. She thanked the Friends of the Library for providing funding for most of the children's programs, examples of which she listed for the BLT. Storytimes returned to full brilliance during the reporting period. There was a 20% increase in attendance from July 2022 to September 2022 despite summers usually being busy months. They hosted Council members, City administration, and the BLT as story time readers for National Library Week. They also reopened the Children's Sun & Sea Discovery Garden that week, which she encouraged the BLT to go view. The summer reading program was popular with registration totals up 15% from 2021. Youth Services has begun providing its specialty events again like crafts, Lego, sensory play, seek and find challenges, and local author events after a two year hiatus. Teen volunteers logged over 2,000 hours of service prepping and helping host events. With the collection there is a high turnover rate with children's materials. As they are popular, they require a lot of attention. Youth Services staff maintain and curate the collection and ensure the items are in working order. Staff completed the annual review of recommended reading lists, which are valuable tools for patrons and staff and were available on the website. The reading lists are available by grade level, genre, interest, and other categories. The outreach events included promoting the Summer Reading Program at the local elementary schools. Over 3,000 students, teaching staff, and parents were reached during the visits. Staff also attended the Orange County Children's Book Festival on October 2. Almost

1,000 people stopped by the booth to learn about programming. Staff was also excited to resume class visits, which were field trips to the library.

Chair Watkins asked if that was for first-grade students only.

Branch and Youth Services Coordinator Helmuth explained it was not although the Friends of the Library generously supported the first-grade visits. There were eight visits planned for the school year. They launched an Educator and Student Services Webpage in August 2022 which streamlined the process of scheduling library visits for students outside of first grade, in scouting, or being homeschooled. The webpage was a key tool for educators to use to schedule library visits, request a librarian come speak, or request library materials to support assignments. She looked forward to continuing to work with the very capable Youth Services team as they reimagine children's programs, services, and collections.

Chair Watkins asked for more information on the book festival.

Branch and Youth Services Coordinator Helmuth reported that the book festival was held at Orange Coast College and was a day long event with several different zones.

The BLT thanked Branch and Youth Services Coordinator Annika Helmuth for her report.

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

8. Lecture Hall Update

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

Chair Watkins noted that Vice Chair Ray was absent and asked if there was a report.

Library Services Director Hartson stated that there was a meeting held.

Jerry Kappel, Newport Beach Public Library Foundation (NBPLF) CEO, reported that there were two naming right agreements in negotiation with the City Attorney. He did not know when they would be on the City Council agenda. The *Bookmark* listed all the details and was available at all libraries. It is also sent to about 1,600 homes. NBPLF has current commitments of around \$1 million, including a \$500,000 challenge grant. They are moving into a more public phase of the campaign with wider cultivation and solicitation.

Chair Watkins inquired about the donation matching.

Mr. Kappel explained that it ran to the end of January and so far they had \$100,000 pledged. The NBPLF Board approved the benefit package for Hall donors. After depositing contributed funds into the escrow account with the City any funds raised over the required amount would be placed into a temporarily restricted account for Witte Hall. Donor restrictions would continue even after the escrow was fulfilled. The plans for Witte Hall were still in plan check with the Department of Public Works. The NBPLF hoped that those plans would be released this month. They are continuing to work on seating options and audio/visual projection and lighting options. He recommended that the Trustees visit the hall in La Jolla for inspiration.

Chair Watkins asked if that hall was a public/private partnership.

Mr. Kappel indicated that it was. He announced that they had packages going out to 80 people this week for the public start of the campaign.

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

9. Balboa Branch Replacement Update

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

Trustee Glabman reported that Public Works assigned a project manager, and the Library and Fire Station replacement went out to bid the last week of September.

Chair Watkins asked if that was the architect's bid.

Trustee Glabman thought it was for building costs.

Library Services Director Hartson confirmed it was for the design phase.

Trustee Glabman explained the bids were due at the beginning of November. Once bids were in the project would go to the community and BLT.

Chair Watkins asked if the BLT would have input on the design.

Trustee Glabman said that she did not know how much input they would have, but there would be some.

Chair Watkins noted that it was preferable to have input from the BLT upfront rather than on the back end, but that was out of their control.

Trustee Glabman repeated that they would get to have input but did not know the weight it would carry. The project was moving forward.

Secretary Coulter asked if any decisions were made about the trees.

Trustee Glabman did not believe the decision was made but understood the trees were historical.

Secretary Coulter thought something should be done about the trees and noted that was why he raised the issue.

Chair Watkins called the public comment.

Jim Mosher, Newport Beach resident, recalled that the Library Lecture Hall had a competition between architects and the City chose the most popular concept. He was not clear what would happen with this bid and asked if the architects would be presenting conceptual designs or simply a cost.

Trustee Glabman indicated that she had no information to provide related to that.

Chair Watkins said that the Library Lecture Hall was private, and this project was City run so how it was handled was not in the control of the BLT.

Mr. Mosher said that for the Corona del Mar branch the architect was selected and then presented several design concepts which the public was able to vote on.

Chair Watkins said that he assumed Mr. Mosher was correct that after an architect was selected there would be design formats presented for Board, public, and community input.

Trustee Glabman thought it would be handled in much the same way as Corona del Mar.

Chair Watkins noted the BLT received and filed the report.

10. Library Services

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

Library Services Director Hartson reported that they were moving though recruitment and anticipated having a Literacy Coordinator in place in early November. In the interim the Newport Balboa Rotary Club invited someone from the Literacy Advisory Board to come speak about the program at their September meeting, which she also attended to provide additional information. It was an excellent place to highlight the Literacy program. The media lab open houses are ongoing, there is an upcoming Library author event, and a Foundation Library Live event upcoming. The past weekend had a well-attended Musicales with another coming up in November.

Trustee Glabman asked how many people attended the Musicales.

Library Services Director Hartson said they generally drew about 200 people and varied by time of year.

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

B. Monthly Reports

11. Library Foundation Liaison Reports

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

Library Services Director Hartson reported that the fall *Bookmark* was released and distributed. The Foundation hosted its Library Leadership Reception in September. Attendance is up at the free events hosted by the Foundation.

Chair Watkins checked with Mr. Kappel, but he had nothing to add to the report.

Trustee Glabman received input from several people who attended the It's Your Money event. She thought they should be put on the target list for Witte Hall donations.

Mr. Kappel had been asked to speak at a number of events at other libraries and centers in the area. Newport Beach had the largest turnout by far.

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

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

Chair Watkins noted that Trustee Kumra was absent, so he reported that he had seen Rebecca Scherm. There were less than 60 people at the program but it was the same time as the General Plan Update Committee meeting and other events.

Library Services Director Hartson noted that the Film Festival also opened that night.

Chair Watkins thought the talk was amazing and Ms. Scherm was brilliant. He reminded the BLT of the next lecture on November 17. There were 85,000 residents of Newport Beach and he suggested the BLT imagine a population decrease to 5,100 overnight. That was what happened with the Camp Fire in 2018 so the topic was very interesting.

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

Chair Watkins asked Mr. Kappel when people could reserve seats for the Witte Lectures.

Mr. Kappel said that members of the Foundation could order season passes now. Single tickets were scheduled to go on sale November 1.

Chair Watkins announced Anne Applebaum on February 10 and 11, Dr. Arthur Caplan on March 3 and 4, Cristina Mittermeir on March 31 and April 1, and Dr. Jill Lepore on April 28 and 29. Foundation members could order their season passes. The Friday night events include dinner while the Saturday events include coffee and cookies. He called for BLT or public comment, but there was none. He indicated the BLT received and filed the report.

12. Friends of the Library Liaison Report

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

Secretary Coulter reported that the September bookstore sales were \$14,683 and total income was \$15,124. When you compare that to the prior year they were up 7.2%. The group continues to hustle, and membership stood at 884 people. September dues totaled \$370. The volunteer lunch was scheduled for Tuesday, November 8.

Chair Watkins asked if BLT members could attend the volunteer lunch.

Secretary Coulter noted that it was only for volunteers of Friends of the Library.

The bookstore would be closed on November 8 for the luncheon. Art in the Park was scheduled for October 27 and the Friends would have books there for sale.

Library Services Director Hartson corrected that the Art in the Park was on October 22.

Secretary Coulter apologized for the incorrect date. The next big sale in the Library was January 13 and 14, with January 13 being only open to members. The Friends hoped to have 600 boxes of books by that date so it would be a large sale. Overall, the Friends did a great job, and he was honored to represent the BLT before them.

Chair Watkins called for BLT and public comment. Hearing none he received and filed the report.

13. Literacy Services Liaison Report

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

Trustee Glabman explained that Adult Literacy met every other month and there was no meeting in September. She reported a full schedule of classes had resumed and were well attended. The video storytelling and updated orientation were online. The marketing team was working on an annual impact report which was scheduled for completion shortly. The annual solicitation was being prepared and would be sent out in early November and new Board Members were being recruited. That concluded her report, but she had a response to a question raised at the last BLT meeting about tutors and learners and Zoom. The use of Zoom depended on the tutor and learner. Some are using Zoom, but the majority are now working in person. When a person enters the program they are asked for their preference.

Chair Watkins called for further comment or questions from both the BLT and the public. Hearing none he 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)

Chair Watkins announced that the next BLT meeting was scheduled for November 21. He also announced that the Media Lab Open House was on October 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and that he would attend.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – 5:47 P.M.

Submitted by: *Paul K. Watkins*

Chair Approval of Minutes