

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, April 10, 2023
4:00 PM
Location: MB City Hall/remote (hybrid)

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Library Commission was called to order by Chairperson Bond at 4:01 pm at City Hall in person and remotely via Zoom (hybrid).

B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners, Jones, Levitt, Newell, Darrow, Vice Chairperson Schreiner, Chairperson Bond

Absent: None

Others Present: Sr. Management Analyst (SMA) Linda Robb, Recording Secretary Rosemary Lackow.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 13, 2023

A motion was made and seconded (Levitt/Schreiner) to approve, with one change:

Page 1, Call to Order: strike “Chairperson Bond” and replace with “Vicechair Schreiner”.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Levitt, Jones, Newell, Vice Chair Schreiner, Darrow, Chair Bond

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

The motion passed 6-0.

E. CEREMONIAL – None

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit)

Librarian’s Report – Library Manager, Josh Murray

Manager Murray announced the following in-library events:

- April 12, 4 – 5:00 pm, Teen Advisory Board (TAB)
- April 14, Friday, 1-3:00 pm; COVID-19 vaccination clinic (free).
- April 19, Wednesday, 4–4:45 pm, Gardening with Joan - Herb Container Gardens, ages 6-12

- May 1, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Adult Book Club will discuss “You’re Invited” by Amanda Jayatissa.

Chair Bond inquired about the monthly Teen Advisory Board meeting; she will reach out to Manager Murray about this program (grades 6 – 12) as this seems a good opportunity to publicize and promote the library in the schools. Manager Murray noted currently there are 3 active members plus a few occasional participants.

Commissioner Newell asked Manager Murray about kits that are made for the various group activities; he reported 20, the standard maximum, are made and occasionally more if supplies are available. Chair Bond will follow up with Manager Murray regarding possibly augmenting the number of kits.

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. 2023 Work Plan Discussion

a. **Learning at the Library**—Commissioner Levitt led discussion on author outreach, reporting that she’s contacted Tony Tetro; he and co-author (“The Con Artist”) are available for May 20 (Saturday). Although she will not be available it was agreed to go forward; she will work with Manager Murray to reserve a room. Commissioner Newell reported that Lily Brooks-Dalton (The Light Pirate”) is not available. Commissioner Levitt put out a general call for authors in Los Angeles and has received info regarding an author, Tracey Rose Peyton (debut novel “Night Wherever We Go”) and perhaps one event could be an interview of Ms. Peyton by Dr. Anthony Lee regarding novels set in the time of slavery; she will try for July. In the fall, they will have cookbook author Peggy Curry and see if another cook book author (e.g. Pamela Salzman) can be incorporated into the event. Commissioner Jones feels the authors should be diverse, suggesting an author on pickleball or a children’s author (e.g. April Wayland) and it is important to lock in the authors as soon as possible. Commissioner Levitt questioned whether a children’s author may overlay or overstep library programming. Chair Bond suggested focusing on a young adult author; they may be able to work with the middle school teachers for a tie-in to the school’s curriculum/book list. It was suggested that if Tracey Rose Peyton is not available in July, perhaps this would be great time for a pickleball author; Commissioner Levitt will check on both.

Commissioner Levitt raised the possibility of holding an evening event at the library, similar to a “Late night at the Library” events that occurred about five years ago. SMA Robb noted that a few such events took place; they were a staff initiative (no role by the Cultural Arts Commission) and were tied to exhibitions held at the Art Center and discontinued due to strain on both library and city staff. The Chair and/or Commissioner Levitt will give staff with a description and staff will investigate and advise if this is a “go”. An item “Late Night at the Library” was noted to be on the Commission’s internal work plan tracking chart. SNA Robb will double check that this event is not on a council approved work plan and should be deleted.

b. **MB Poetry Event**– Commissioner Schreiner reported that the next event will be this Wednesday and everything is set. The Dial-A-Ride van will not be needed as no one signed up will need a ride.

c. **Library Appreciation Events**—Commissioner Jones reported that the event recognizing the public library staff is coming up on May 9th. Invitations to 20 staff will go out in ten days; everything including food (Caffe Altamura), is set. Seven copies of “Hello Beautiful” have been purchased and will be signed tomorrow by author Ann Napolitano and will be delivered to the school librarians on May 15th and 22nd. Commissioners Levitt and Bond can deliver on the 22nd and Commissioners Jones and Schreiner on the 15th. Commissioner Schreiner notes that she will coordinate certificates with Jan Buike.

d. **Library Commission Book Giveaway**—Commissioner Schreiner reported that everything is ready to go for the April 29th giveaway. Set up will be at noon.

Commissioner Jones raised an issue in that there seems to be some friction with the FOL as to the Commission’s giveaway program (is the Commission “stealing some thunder” from FOL?) and suggested someone on the Commission possibly attend a FOL board meeting to foster better rapport. Commissioner Newell raised the possibility of prison donations, recognizing there are many specific criteria; Manager Murray informed that the county library has an active book donation program with prisons, mainly adult fiction, paperbacks only and flipped through to make sure nothing inside that can slip out. And more can be sent.

Manager Murray reported that he just learned that the community meeting room is not available on May 20th, Commissioner Levitt will follow up with him for an alternate weekend.

Commissioner Jones believes, for efficient planning, by May the committee should know what books are going to which organization or group. Commissioner Newell noted that the Headstart facility in Lawndale will take any or all children’s books and another group, Foster Closet might want adult fiction but cautioned that organizations don’t always know in advance what type of books are needed, it’s a moving target.

Chair Bond pointed out that there are two pathways they can take which should be considered separately. After talking to FOL the committee will understand what the commission can do with the giveaways and this will inform on how to unload the books left over from the April 29th giveaway. If unable to reach an agreement with FOL, she feels the commission should not continue with collecting books to give away and take another path. The commission could pivot towards donating books specifically to an organization like Headstart and book solicitations would be for the kind of books the organizations will accept (e.g. gently used children’s for Headstart).

e. **StoryWalk**— Chair Bond is ready to go as soon as the location is approved by council. SMA Robb reported that item is set for the May 2nd council agenda and the Polliwog playground ribbon cutting is expected to be open by August. A meeting with the Botanical Garden group to review with them has not yet been set up. Commissioners are welcome to attend the council meeting to observe; Chair Bond will attend the council and emphasized once approved this is ready to go, notwithstanding scheduling by Public Works.

f. **Library Photo Op Day**— Commissioner Jones started discussion by stating she thinks this June 3rd event perhaps should not go ahead, because although they already have made arrangements with a musician and a photographer, there are many logistical items left to do,

requiring a lot of work for the April 29th concert event which is only about 30 days before the Photo Op Day. She feels discussion and direction is needed.

The Commission discussed the April 29th concert. Commissioner Jones provided examples of loose ends such as volunteer recruitment and arranging parking for the large band. Many things need to be funneled through staff and she feels she is at an impasse with the event only 19 days away. Also, what should happen if weather is bad on the 29th—can the event be postponed? She is in the process of writing up flyers for the photo op event and she feels right now is the time to decide what to do. She reiterated these events require much work and its necessary because she wants the event if going forward to be successful, attracting hundreds.

Chair Bond noted that there are many things that are out of the Commission's control. SMA Robb noted this is a good example of how the actual amount of staff involvement in planning and carrying out Commission initiatives is not well understood and underestimated because staffing has been tight or at a deficit. She understands the Commission's frustration however.

Commissioner Jones reiterated: should the June 3rd Photo Op Day event be postponed?

It was agreed that Commissioner Jones would send SMA Robb a list of what is needed from the staff for the April 29th event. Generally, this includes volunteers, posters for inside the library, a proof of pending insurance and advance publicity. Commissioner Jones will make an announcement at the April 18 city council meeting and SMA Robb noted city social media will be used and there is a plan to send out notice through the schools. Manager Murray reminded that all requests to the library to re-post city social media items should go through him at this time. Additional outreach needed was noted such as to The Beach Reporter, MB News (calendar), and the older adults' programs. Commissioner Newell will help with social media.

The following was discussed for the day of the event: Set up will start at noon (band arrives) and the concert begins at 3 p.m. During that interval 100 chairs need to be set up and parking cones need to be stationed. It was decided to **not** do event bracelets at this event to keep this simple.

Commissioner Jones mentioned as a separate but related issue that she has contacted a Cultural Arts Commissioner about whether they would be interested in using some of the public art trust funds to cover costs for concerts/performing arts that are part of the Library Commission initiatives. For example, the Jelly of the Month Club band is currently not funded for the fall entertainment series and the public art trust fund may be a funding source and perhaps for even any performing arts related to a Library event? She will see if it can be arranged to address the Cultural Arts Commission on a future agenda. Another idea mentioned by Commissioner Jones is that, instead of having five separate days for five separate school events, have one big kid/family event that could be an opportunity to attract families into the library (come to the concert and then flow into the library). It was briefly discussed. The commission in general while liking this idea expressed concerns for potential impacts to both the library and the city staff. It was decided to table this until at least after the April 29th event is held and lessons are learned.

Discussion focused next on open items for the Photo Op Day. The following updates were provided:

- 1) Food: Commissioner Newell is checking into getting 250 cookies from Becker's Bakery, and Chair Bond will get healthy snacks. It was decided that an independent food truck will not be recruited as it may draw too much attention away from the library and parking may be problematic.
- 2) Water: per policy no plastic water bottles for an outdoor event – however the library has a water bottle filling fountain.
- 3) Story time: limited, in shifts, Commissioners Newell, Levitt, Darrow will read. Commissioner Newell will check into getting someone notable to participate also.
- 4) Publicity: scheduled for local newspapers; there is no money in the current year budget for a quarter page ad in a local newspaper.

Commissioner Jones doublechecked which commissioners will be participating on April 29th; Commissioners Levitt, Darrow and Newell (maybe) will be there.

g. **Entertainment Series** – see discussion in item above, Photo OP Day.

h. **Library Awareness Initiative** – Chair Bond updated that, regrading a speaker's bureau, she has several emails out to various groups requesting permission to address them regarding the library and Commission initiatives; she will keep the commission informed. Commissioner Darrow will be meeting with Mustang Morning news group at Mira Costa; the Chair will provide marketing materials for that meeting. Regarding school librarians Commissioner Levitt feels that it seems that the library already has an outreach program with the schools and so it seems that a big outreach for library cards is not needed. She likes the idea of the one day event for children but doesn't think a concert is a must. Perhaps there can be a PTA tie in to the Photo Op Day.

The Commission discussed a tie in between the Photo Op Day event and school PTA but tabled at this time to give more time to consider. One issue was whether to design the Photo Op flyer going to the schools to be more informative about the library and whether can be tied to summer reading.

Manager Murray informed that the children's online summer reading program launches (tb confirmed) June 1st and the in-person version of the program launches mid-June (tb confirmed). Manager Murray will be happy to discuss offline to see and how this might work out.

Chair Bond suggested, circling back to their target audience, since the library already has a strong school outreach, that the target for marketing be adults and there was no objection.

H. STAFF ITEMS – SMA Robb notified that the IT Department is requiring all who have city email addresses take a 15-minute online cyber security training course. All commissioners should look for an email from the City, go to the link and complete the training. In general, all Commissioners should on a regular basis, check their city email for messages.

I. COMMISSION ITEMS – None

J. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded (Bond/Newell) to adjourn the meeting at 5:34 pm to May 8th, 2023.
The motion passed by voice vote, 5-0.