

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING  
Monday, June 12, 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 Levitt at 4:15 pm at City Hall in person and remotely via Zoom (hybrid).

**B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

**C. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Bond, Doll, Jones, Chairperson Levitt (remote)

Absent: Jester, Vice Chair Newell

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

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 8, 2023**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bond and seconded by Chair Levitt to approve as written. Due to concern regarding meeting a quorum needed to approve, the Chair suggested postponing approval to the next meeting, and, with no objection, it was so ordered.

**E. CEREMONIAL**

Chair Levitt noted that Commissioner Newell has resigned her seat because she will be moving out of state. SMA Robb indicated that Commissioner Newell’s resignation has been forwarded to the City Clerk but it is yet unclear of the timeline for the council to appoint a new commissioner.

Chair Levitt welcomed new Commissioner Doll who gave a brief self-introduction noting that her family has lived in Manhattan Beach since 1997; she is lawyer/legal analyst, has two children in high school and college and is happy to contribute and serve on the Commission.

Library Manager Josh Murray announced or invited all interested parties to in-person library activities as follows:

- The annual “Summer Discovery Program” is now live, for all ages; accessed online at: [LACountyLibrary.org/Summer-Discovery](http://LACountyLibrary.org/Summer-Discovery) or a paper version is available in-person at the library.
- June 13, 10:15 am to 10:45 am: “Summer Songs and Stories”, children 0 to 3 years.
- June 13, 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, “3D Star Constellation Cards”, for teens.

- June 20, 6:00 to 7:00 pm, adults, “Using DNA Testing in Family Research” with Charlotte Bocage.
- June 19<sup>th</sup> all libraries will be closed in honor of the Juneteenth holiday.
- The LA County Public Library has been selected as a recipient of the 2023 National Medal for Museum and Library Services, the nation’s highest honor given to museums and libraries that make significant and exceptional contributions to their communities.

**F. GENERAL BUSINESS**

1. 2023 Work Plan Discussion
  - a. **Learning at the Library**—Chair Levitt updated that Peggy Curry is lined up for October 21<sup>st</sup> and the library room is reserved. She will discuss further details with Ms. Curry during the summer.
  - b. **M.B. Poetry Event**—Commissioner Bond will now be chairing this. In a brief discussion, two ideas were raised for future discussion: having a poetry event, such as a reading at the library and incorporating in some way, the Mira Costa “Slam Poetry” for all ages.
  - c. **Library Appreciation Events**—Commissioner Jones reported that these events were very successful and very worthwhile. Chair Levitt read a letter from Manhattan Beach Middle School Librarian Cory O’Meara thanking the Commission. Commissioner Jones noted that owner of event caterer Un Caffe Altamura has posted its letter of thanks from the Commission at the restaurant.
  - d. **Library Commission Book Giveaway**—Chair Levitt noted with changeover in two key commission seats, perhaps this program should be paused until a full commission is seated.

Commissioner Jones suggested that the Commission discuss whether the program fits with the goals and vision of the commission and/or whether there is overlapping of the giveaways with book sales held by the Friends of the Library (FOL). She suggested FOL may want to take on the giveaway program and Chair Levitt suggested having a conversation with FOL.

Commissioner Jones noted that at the Photo Op event, the FOL held a book sale and the commission also gave away about 250, primarily children’s books. Commissioner Jones noted that the FOL was happy to be at the Photo Op event but she feels there has been some friction between the two groups due to overlap with what the two groups do. Chair Levitt noted her concern is whether the Library Commission has the capacity to staff this event and also questions whether FOL wants to take on this program including taking possession of the 14 boxes of books that have been stored for future giveaways.

Commissioner Jones explained the program, noting the FOL has held monthly book

sales over many years, and over the last six years the commission (led by Commissioner Schreiner) began to gather books for giving away at events, mainly for children—over 3,000 books over this period. Commissioner Bond emphasized that Commissioner Schreiner always carefully sorted through the donated books and set aside any that were of a high value to give to FOL to sell.

There was a consensus that the commission should discuss this program’s goals and what is the desired measure of success when a full commission is seated in July or August and meanwhile Chair Levitt will reach out to FOL.

- e. **StoryWalk**—Chair Levitt reported that all of the 16 book structures have been installed. Commissioner Bond explained the StoryWalk concept and that this originated as an eagle scout project by a local teen. Commissioner Bond will now install all of the existing book pages into the structures and will work with Kristin, the city’s graphic designer to develop and produce an introduction page, which will include a QR code linking to the author and when complete she will install.

Publicity was discussed. A ribbon cutting ceremony can be scheduled and there may be an opportunity to schedule it jointly with that for the new playground. Commissioner Jones suggested that the summer concert series would provide an opportunity for children to engage with StoryWalk; perhaps this can be announced on the stage. Commissioner Jones also suggested that individual Commissioners could be personally present at the structures for each of the concerts; Commissioner Jones volunteered to do so for the first concert (Sunday July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5:00 pm). Commissioner Jones also suggested that to the degree possible, that the intro page be designed as a template that can be reused with each new book. As applicable for all commission projects, the publicity (flyers, etc) should also be designed as templates for recurring events (StoryWalk, Photo Op Day, etc.)

- f. **Photo Op Day**—Commissioner Jones reported that the event was a great success with a good turnout and positive vibe and overall was a good example of the vision of what the Commission is working to achieve. Photos were beautiful and volunteers were great and the two-hour time frame worked well.

Commissioner Jones emphasized that next year new private funding will be needed (believes Zislis Group pledge now fulfilled) and estimates between \$1,000 and \$1,200 is needed. It was inquired as to whether the city could fund this and Commissioner Jones indicated that she thought it was not in the city’s purview but will look into and report back next month.

The Commission discussed various suggestions for next year’s event: 1) additional publicity e.g., a paid ad (needs to be budgeted), perhaps a street banner across Highland, perhaps encouraging “tagging” in social media postings; 2) “feather flag” displays; 3) more attention to break down/cleanup (cardboard trash cans and orange cones still at event site); in social media posts use “tagging” (to be discussed); 4) compile a list and advertise ways this event can be used to

memorialize special milestone events (maternity, engagement, anniversaries etc); 5) continue to cross-promote with schools (graduates: come take a photo in your cap/gown) and follow up as to what was done (e.g. being included in newsletters?) and get on school email lists if possible; 6) story time in the library: direct children into library after vs. prior to taking photo; 7) consider ways photos taken can be used to promote the library and city (with consent forms signed as appropriate).

g. **Entertainment Series** – Chair Levitt noted that the plan to date has been for a Fall (September) entertainment event geared for children featuring the band “Jelly of the Month Club”. As this was being chaired by Commissioner Newell, focus needs to be on how this can now be managed going forward. Commissioner Jones noted that the band has indicated it is available (second Saturday in September, to be confirmed) and new funding will be needed if the Zislis Group is no longer sponsoring, (to be confirmed). About \$1,500 is estimated to be needed. The Commission also needs to determine who on the commission will be the contact to approach the band. Commissioner Doll indicated she would be willing to co-chair this event with the new commissioner. Discussion focused on possible alternate event dates (e.g., the third or fourth weekend in October, with a Halloween theme) and the need for new funding. It was agreed that this discussion should be tabled until a full Commission is seated and it was acknowledged that this may mean significantly delaying the event.

h. **Library Awareness Campaign**—Commissioner Bond emphasized that this campaign is to promote library services to adults by reaching out to community organizations. She continues to reach out to community groups but many are taking a summer break. Commissioner Jones noted that she believes that this goal can be enhanced if dovetailed with the speaker series, Learning at the Library. The idea is for the Commission to develop a list of speaker events (via Learning at the Library program) and provide this list while promoting the library at group meetings. Commissioner Bond met with Chair Levitt recently and discussed possibly broadening the Learning at the Library pool of speakers to include speakers who are not necessarily authors (poetry event, painting class etc.). The Commission discussed and expressed interest in this concept and suggested perhaps educators may be good speakers.

Commissioner Jones expressed her hope that by January, the Commission can compile a roster of speakers and make this a “turnkey” operation. The goal would be to have six speakers over the year. Commissioners Levitt noted her commitment to working with Commissioner Bond going forward.

**D. STAFF ITEMS** –Chair Levitt expressed her appreciation to CSM Buike as this is her last meeting, recognizing her years of service to the City; in addition to serving as the Commission staff liaison for the last year Jan has worked for the city in various capacities since 2017. CSM Buike thanked the commission, felt that the city was a great place to work and acknowledged fellow staff members and volunteers.

## **E. COMMISSION ITEMS**

Chair Levitt suggested that at the start of the next meeting that the Commission revisit their mission statement to enable checking that new projects will align with their mission without creating a burden on the County library staff. Commissioners Bond, Jones and Doll concurred; Commissioner Jones noted that it should be clear that the Commission's job is not to do library programming but to promote literacy.

**F. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved and seconded (Jones/Bond) to adjourn the meeting at 5:27 pm to July 10, 2023. The motion passed by voice vote 4-0-0-2.