

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, August 14, 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 4:00 pm at City Hall in person and remotely via Zoom (hybrid).

B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Bond, Jones, Millea, Chairperson Levitt

Absent: Doll, Jester

Others Present: Senior Recreation Manager (SRM) Melissa McCollum, Senior Recreation Supervisor (SRS) Kari Bell, Senior Management Analyst (SMA) Linda Robb, Recording Secretary Rosemary Lackow

D. REORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION

Chair Levitt welcomed new Commissioner, Mike Millea, who gave a brief self-introduction. Growing up in Manhattan Beach, he spent much time in the library and reading books was very important; he looks forward to working with the Commission.

SMA Robb advised that, with the departure of former commissioner Newell a new Vice Chair is needed and, pursuant to established protocol, Commissioner Doll (seat 4) is next in line to serve.

It was subsequently moved and seconded (Levitt/Bond) that Commissioner Doll serve as Vice Chair. Chair Levitt called for a voice vote, and the motion passed 4-0. (Ayes: Bond, Jones, Levitt, Millea).

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 10, 2023

Chair Levitt called for any additions or corrections to the minutes; seeing none, it was moved and seconded (Bond/Levitt) to approve the minutes as submitted.

The motion passed 4-0 in a voice vote (Ayes: Bond, Jones, Levitt, Millea).

SMA Robb clarified that when the draft minutes are circulated, if a commissioner sees something that needs correction and will not be able to attend the upcoming meeting in person to propose those changes, she can be contacted regarding the changes needed.

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

1. Friends of the Manhattan Beach Library Presentation

Melinda Reiter, President of the Friends of the Manhattan Beach Library (FOL) addressed the Commission. FOL is a non-profit organization whose main function is to conduct used book sales and donate the proceeds to the library. FOL sells books at quarterly book sales, at the library on an ongoing basis, and online through eBay. Ms. Reiter noted that membership drives are done about once a year (current individual membership: \$10).

Commissioner Jones asked about possibly raising book and membership prices. Reiter noted that prices for children's books have been raised but even expensive books that have been priced higher often do not sell. She believes raising the cost for a membership would not necessarily result in more memberships as even with such a low membership cost, very few residents seem interested during the annual drive.

Commissioner Jones expressed her endorsement for raising book and membership prices and suggested adding signage to call attention to the well-organized sale area inside the library. Ms. Reiter stated the FOL is considering putting some signs on the top of the bookcases and perhaps some additional signage on the outside of the library for the quarterly sales. In closing Ms. Reiter informed that interested persons can join the FOL online at: <http://www.friendsofthemanhattanbeachlibrariesinc.org>. The next membership drive will be in December; she will send all commissioners an email at that time.

Chair Levitt announced that volunteers are needed for the FOL book sale: Friday, August 18 from 9:15 am to 10:30 am, Saturday, August 19 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, and on Monday August 21 from 11:00 to noon.

2. Librarian's Update - Manager Josh Murray

Library Manager Murray made the following announcements regarding upcoming library programs and statistics:

- August 24, 10:15 – 10:45 am, Smarty Pants Storytime - “Get Ready for School” - 2-5 years
- August 29, 10:15 - 10:45 am, “Baby Toddler Time” – up to 2 years
- August 29, 4:00 – 5:00 pm – “Build a Mini Biodome” - teens 13-17 years
- August 30, 3:00 – 4:00 pm – “Piggy Bank Preparedness” - 6-12 years
- Free tutoring is available for students K through 12th grade, online on a 24/7 basis in three languages (English, Spanish and Chinese) through the “Brainfuse” service. Subjects covered; math, sciences, essay review and social studies and more. <https://lacountylibrary.org/students/> (click on Brainfuse link)
- Staffing: the library is working hard to fill a vacant adult services librarian position and when that position is filled, more offerings will open up for adults.
- Statistics: the Manhattan Beach branch, within the LA County Library system has: second highest circulation; second highest number of holds; most open hours within the West Region; and between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 it had over 130,000 visitors.

Manager Murray stated he will look into adding an announcement of the FOL membership drive to the library's social media and requested that the information be emailed to him in advance.

3. Introduction of Senior Recreation Supervisor Kari Bell.

Chair Levitt welcomed Senior Recreation Supervisor (SRS) Kari Bell who gave a brief self-introduction noting her education (BA in public administration and Master's in public relations) and experience developing programs for seniors for the cities of Lawndale and Pasadena. She will be managing the older adult programs, Dial-a-Ride and will be the Library Commission liaison. She looks forward to working with the Commission.

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

Chair Levitt recited the mission statement for the Library Commission: "Established by resolution, the Library Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council regarding library services provided by the Los Angeles County Library System to the citizens of Manhattan Beach. This Commission also serves as a liaison between the County, City and public/private community groups supportive of library services. The Library Commission consists of 6 members who meet the second Monday of each month at 4 pm."

1. 2023 Work Plan Discussion

a. **Learning at the Library**—Chair Levitt updated: 1) Roger BelAir, pickleball spokesperson has declined to speak in Manhattan Beach; she and Commissioner Jones will look for another speaker; 2) She has reserved the community room for September 30th and has two possible speakers: Jack Hobbs, author of *Show Them You're Good* and Eric Brinkman, the city's ceramics supervisor. If September doesn't work for Eric, she hopes he can speak in December and possibly incorporate a demonstration; 3) On October 21 she has cook book author Peggy Curry lined up; 4) For November, a potential speaker may be Lara Love Hardin, author of "The Many Lives of Mama Love".

b. **M.B. Poetry Event**—Commissioner Bond noted this item is paused for the summer and she will reach out to Shannon at Mira Costa after school starts in late August. One opportunity may be to coordinate an event in April, designated as "National Poetry Month".

c. **Library Appreciation Events**—Commissioner Jones noted that this item will go forward as in the past with two events, thanking the library staff with a brunch in May and lunch in November, and in June giving certificates of appreciation to school librarians.

d. **Library Commission Book Giveaway**—Chair Levitt noted this is tabled at this time and feels it is unlikely to be in the next Work Plan; she will update later.

e. **StoryWalk**—Commissioner Bond reported that the ribbon cutting for the installation held Friday August 11th was very successful and well attended. She will continue to look into how to resolve the condensation issue and, at the next meeting, make a suggestion as to which book to next place in the frames. The Commission briefly discussed some other possible follow up actions including: 1) placement of sandwich board signs around the park advertising StoryWalk, during the summer concerts (suggested by Commissioner Jones); 2) addition of a plaque or some other form of recognition to the installation to memorialize the role of the eagle scout (Henry) who raised the funds for the project (suggested by Chair Levitt); and 3) that addition of something to call out where the book starts (suggested by Chair Levitt). Chair Levitt noted that the StoryWalk author Seth Fishman is also a literary agent and she will be meeting with him to discuss possible local authors who might be available for the Learning at the Library program.

f. Photo Op Day—Commissioner Jones reported that Commissioner Doll has agreed to serve as chair/co-chair. They will meet again and further discuss dates for the event and come up with a plan. SRM McCollum suggested that the committee discuss first with Library Manager Murray to see if this event might have a tie in to a library program, such as National Library Week or the start of the Summer Reading Program. Commissioner Jones reminded that if live entertainment is to be provided, a new sponsor donation will be needed. SMA Robb will follow up and report back regarding the status of the “feather signs” to be used to bring attention to the special event, noting that the signs will not be specific to the Library Commission but will call out “MB Parks and Recreation Special Event”.

g. Entertainment Series – Chair Levitt noted that with the departure of Commissioner Newell, this event was not able to come together for the fall. The future of this item will be incorporated into the 2024 Work Plan discussions. Commissioner Jones noted that this item could morph into a different type of activity such as small music groups, within the library.

h. Library Awareness Campaign—Commissioner Bond reported that she has an email out to Manager Murray about all library programs and services. SRM McCollum suggested that the committee collaborate with the library to ensure that efforts between the city and library are not duplicated and City staff can assist by providing some visuals or review what the committee puts together. Commissioner Bond is compiling a list of community groups where presentations can be made such as: the city’s older adult program, Neptunians, Soroptimists, Chamber of Commerce, Amigos Unidos/Sandpiper, Scouts, PTA, etc. She encouraged the commissioners to submit any other groups to add to her list. Chair Levitt will reach out to Manager Murray to schedule a meeting to discuss. Commissioner Jones suggested that the student commissioner may be able to assist in putting together a PowerPoint presentation.

H. STAFF ITEMS –SRM McCollum announced:

- The Fall *Manhappenings* is out and registration for Parks and Recreation classes and programs has started; registration is significantly higher than 2022.
- There are three more summer concerts in Polliwog Park: *The Kings of 88, My Generation, and The Blue Breeze Band*. Staff has requested that the emcee make a StoryWalk announcement.
- The Manhattan Beach Open volleyball tournament will be held this weekend; the opening ceremony is Thursday, 3:30 p.m. Downtown will be busy during the event, so access to the library may be challenging.
- The next phase of the city’s Historical Collection Action Plan has started with processing and cataloging the historic collection at the Red House in Polliwog Park. Plans for the next step (Phase 4) are in development and will involve digitization of records and materials; more details will be forthcoming. Chair Levitt noted this important project and hopes that in the future the Library Commission might be able to host an event in support, perhaps as a work plan item.

I. COMMISSION ITEMS

Chair Levitt thanked SRM McCollum for her assistance as interim liaison. SRM McCollum noted she is happy to assist and she will continue to attend meetings until the end of this year.

Chair Levitt initiated discussion on preparing for the next (2024) Library Commission Work

Plan noting that the goal is to vote on a list of projects in October. Commissioner Jones suggested that staff email the PowerPoint from last year's City Council work plan meeting to the two new commissioners. SRM McCollum recommended that commissioners meet with Library Manager Murray for feedback on new work plan ideas. After checking with the library, the next step would be to email the list of possible work plan items to her as well as SRS Bell and SMA Robb by the end of August and this list will be placed on the next meeting agenda. Commissioner Jones suggested that websites of other libraries could be a resource for coming up with new ideas for programs. Chair Levitt noted that the commissioners can reference the mission statement of the Commission as a guideline in coming up with work plan projects.

J. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded (Jones/Millea) to adjourn the meeting at 5:04 pm to September August 14, 2023. The motion passed by voice vote 4-0-0-2 (Doll, Jester absent)