

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, November 13, 2023

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Levitt called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Bond, Doll, Jester, Jones, Millea, Chairperson Levitt

Absent: None

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

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 10, 2023

Chair Levitt called for any changes to the minutes. Seeing none, it was moved and seconded (Bond/Doll) to approve the October minutes as submitted. The motion passed 6-0 by voice vote.

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

1. Librarian’s Update - Manager Josh Murray

Library Manager Murray announced upcoming library programs:

- November 14, at the Farmers Market, Caitlin, children’s librarian will hold a story time.
- November 15, 4:00 pm, “Dancing from Around the World” workshop with Teresa Smith
- November 15, 3 pm; “Gourds of Gratitude” paper pumpkin activity, 6-12 years
- November 16, 10:15, Smarty Pants Storytime
- November 18, 10:00 – 3:00 p.m. FOL quarterly book sale
- November 21, 10:15 am; story time: “Baby Playdate” (new format)
- November 21, 4:00 pm, for teens: “Ozobots Puzzle Challenge”
- November 28. 4:00 pm; weave a bookmark workshop, 13-17 years
- December 9, 1:00 pm; Heather Hach (“The Trouble with Drowning”)

Library Manager Murray introduced and the Commission warmly welcomed, new Lead Adult Services Librarian Lauren Wubbels.

Manager Murray explained that the new format for the Baby Playdate story time is needed due to large response; Commissioner Doll suggested that programming might include an event for parents/caregivers only and Commissioner Jones called for volunteers for the Friends of the Library (FOL) sale.

F. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. 2023 Work Plan Discussion

a. Learning at the Library—Chair Levitt appreciated assistance with the 11/6 Lara Love Hardin author event and the Commission discussed whether to pursue a ceramics presentation by staff member Eric Brinkman. It was agreed that Chair Levitt would put Mr. Brinkman in contact with Manager Murray to explore whether this is something that can be done through the library. Authors Curry and Hardin have been thanked.

b. Poetry Event—Chair Levitt noted this is completed and won't be carried over to 2024.

c. Library Appreciation Events - Commissioner Jones noted that tomorrow's event for the public library staff is set up; all Commissioners are encouraged to attend to meet the library staff.

d. Library Commission Book Giveaway. Chair Levitt noted that this project is completed and going forward will be handled by the FOL if mutually agreeable; no further discussion.

e. StoryWalk—Commissioner Bond reported that the new book is installed and the condensation problem is improved. To promote, staff will add to the Parks and Rec Instagram feed and provide to the Library for reposting; Commissioner Bond will reach out to chamber president David Archer and it was suggested that the library might promote during story times.

f. Photo Op Day—see vote below; this program to be discussed in the context of the next Work Plan; a new sub-committee chair will be needed.

g. Entertainment Series – see vote below; while complete for the current year, it will be discussed in context of the 2024 Work Plan; a new chair will be needed.

h. Library Awareness Campaign—see vote below - this program will not be carried over to 2024 as the library wants to do its own promotion.

Chair Levitt, referring to the October minutes, proceeded to summarize the straw poll decisions. To be discontinued in 2024: (a) Learning at the Library, (b) Poetry Event, (d) Library Commission Book Giveaway, and (h) Library Awareness Campaign. Programming to be continued and discussed further include Photo Op Day (f) and Entertainment Series (g).

Chair Levitt moved, seconded by Commissioner Millea, that the 2023 plan programming for the above stated four projects (a), (b), (d) and (h) be discontinued for 2024. **The motion passed with a voice vote 6-0.**

2. 2024 Work Plan Discussion

Chair Levitt revisited the work plan process noting that the Commission can develop its recommendations through to and including its January meeting if needed.

It was discussed that the City Council at its October 17th meeting, discussed future library programming using the county surplus, including a very preliminary discussion about the level of funding. It was noted that the council positively responded to a robust speaker series with a possible budget of \$125,000, a “Community Read.” Establishing a “cultural library” on the City’s east side was also discussed, including the possibility of having a “maker space,” although discussion was very preliminary and no commitments were made.

Chair Levitt raised the possibility of asking for library surplus funding of \$150k for a “marquee” speaker series that would be bundled with a music entertainment series and put on by the County Library.

Chair Levitt called for establishment of ad hoc committees to implement the 2024 work plan programs: Surplus Library Funding (chaired/co-chaired by Commission chair/co-chair), Library Appreciation Events, and StoryWalk (eventually chaired by the student commissioner who could coordinate with the library).

The Commission discussed speaker programming; it was noted that the library would choose speakers and run the program, hopefully with some city collaboration (to be determined). It was suggested that more information be sought about the Malibu and Rancho Mirage public libraries as both have strong programming.

It was moved and seconded (Doll/Jester) to form committees, with chairs/co-chairs as follows: 1) Library Surplus Programming (Levitt/Bond); 2) Library Appreciation Events (Jones/Millea); and 3) StoryWalk (Bond/Jester). The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

Chair Levitt called for another motion to form a fourth ad hoc committee for the “One City, One Story” (Community Read) program. Commissioners Bond and Levitt volunteered to be chair and co-chair. It was moved and seconded (Doll/Jones) that a new ad hoc committee be formed to develop a Community Read program. The motion passed 6-0 by voice vote.

Chair Levitt suggested that the Photo Op and Community Read programs be tied together, with a preliminary budget of \$30k for Community Read (to pay bringing the author to the city and purchase related books for the library). Library Manager Murray noted that he has had experience with a Community Read program for the Diamond Bar library and another such program was run at the Claremont library. The committee was encouraged to connect with Manager Murray to learn more.

Chair Levitt moved that the Commission include a Community Read program in the 2024 work plan with the committee led by Commissioner Bond, with no budget attached. Commissioner Jones stated that she doesn’t feel she has enough information to support.

Chair Levitt suggested and it was agreed, that this motion would be tabled until December to allow more research to be done.

Commissioner Bond questioned tying Photo Op Day to the Community Read for the 2024 plan, due to timing issues. It was agreed that a separate decision about Photo Op Day is needed.

SMA Robb pointed out that the next Photo Op Day if held again in early June, would fall under the 2023-2024 budget. Commissioner Jones noted that she can see to it that a third event happens but she will term out effective June 1st. She suggested tying the 2024 Photo Op into StoryWalk, perhaps showcasing it through the library story time usually held during the Photo Op event. Commissioner Millea will discuss with Commissioner Jones.

Chair Levitt noted that the Commission can vote on Photo Op Day at the December meeting and the timing of a third Photo Op Day was discussed. It was noted that one factor in having in June was based on weather.

Chair Levitt moved and seconded by Commissioner Doll that the Photo Op Day not appear on the 2024 Work Plan in isolation but be connected to another 2024 Work Plan event. Chair Levitt called for a vote:

The motion passed 5-1, Commissioner Jones opposing; Commissioner Jones will explain her position at the December meeting.

Chair Levitt recapped discussion so far on “big ticket” items: to be removed from 2024 plan: Learning at the Library, Poetry Event. Music at the Library is to be tied into a speaker series.

Brief discussion followed on whether some kind of music event (Jelly of the Month band, if available?) could be held using fiscal year 2023/2024 available funds and could be planned by

the existing committee. Manager Murray advised that in May the library has a special themed event. He believes another date for a city event is advised.

It was agreed that the existing committee with Commissioner Millea assisting, would discuss and report back in December.

Discussion focused on other Commission suggestions for 2024 work plan projects: the Professor speaker series, music at the library (a la LAX series), jelly fish hunt, James Webb telescope talk (Commissioner Jones), and items related to the Fire Department and the Botanic Garden (Commissioner Bond). **It was agreed that Fire Department preparedness, Botanic Garden and display of art at the library** all be taken off the list of the Commission's potential 2024 Work Plan for now and that display of art at the library be rolled into the Library Surplus committee considerations as possible recommendation for a future eastside library facility.

Chair Levitt commented and Manager Murray responded that the suggestions for the 2024 Work Plan seemed to fall, with adjustment, under the umbrella of library programs. Commissioner Jones and Commissioner Doll will assume a role of liaison in a "conversation series", meeting with Manager Murray monthly; the Commission will consolidate and prioritize potential programming.

Until input is received through Library Manager Murray these suggested items will not be official work plan recommendations. Further discussion is needed for city specific programs involving the Fire Department and Botanic Garden (might include an annual FOL event or tie in with StoryWalk?). **It was agreed that an inquiry** should be made to the Fire Department and that the maker space item be folded into discussion by the Library Surplus committee.

Chair Levitt summarized the four new 2024 ad hoc committees: Library Appreciation Events, StoryWalk, Community Read, and Library Surplus Programming, which will include speakers and music. The Chair commented that she feels this approach will fulfill a vision long held by Commissioner Jones to create a cultural center through the Library Commission.

G. STAFF ITEMS

SMA Robb announced the Begg Pool Community Open House will convene today at 6:00 p.m. at Manhattan Heights Community Center. It was noted that those who cannot make this meeting can provide input on the options for modernizing Begg Pool by completing an online survey by November 30, 2023 at: www.manhattanbeach.gov/BeggPoolSurvey.

H. COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Jones requested that the bookmarks that were printed by the city and given to the library as giveaways be reprinted as the library supply is getting low. Commissioner Jones will work with SMA Robb to get this done.

I. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded (Levitt/Millea) to adjourn the meeting at 5:25 pm. The motion passed with no objection.