

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, January 08, 2024

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 Recreation Manager (SRM) Melissa McCollum, Administrative Analyst (AA) Janeth Medina, Recording Secretary Rosemary Lackow.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 13, 2023

Chair Levitt called for changes; seeing none, it was moved and seconded (Bond/Millea) to approve as submitted.

Chair Levitt announced the motion passed 6-0 (voice vote).

Chair Levitt made two announcements: 1) Commissioner Jester announced that she has been accepted into Stanford University; and 2) to facilitate discussion, the Commission will start using the city council protocols for taking turns in speaking. The Commission congratulated Commissioner Jester on being accepted to her dream school.

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

1. Librarian's Update - Manager Josh Murray

Library Manager Murray announced upcoming library programs; registration as applicable may be accessed at the library website: www.lacountylibrary.org

- January 8 (tonight) 6:30: Book Club discussing “The Lifeguards: A Novel”, author Amanda Eyre Ward.
- January 9, 16th, 23rd and 30th at 10:15 a.m. Baby Playdate; ages 0-3 years.
- January 10, 17th, 24th and 31st at 10:15 a.m., Baby Rhyme Time, ages 0-24 months.
- January 11., 18th, 25th at 10:15 a.m., SmartyPants Storytime, ages 2-5 years; registration required on library website.
- January 9, 4 p.m. teens, Goal setting workshop, 4:00 pm.
- January 16th, 4 p.m., Teen Advisory Board to discuss input on teens services and discuss The Inheritance Games book 1.
- January 17th, 3 p.m., Wild World Dancing Jellyfish and the Art of Conservation; about Jacques Cousteau, ages 5-12; 6-12 years; registration required on library website.

- January 20 (Sat), 2 p.m., adults DIY Painted Book Edges art program. registration required on library website.
- January 24th, 6 p.m. teens- adults; Marine Mammal talk on bottlenose dolphins, Roundhouse Aquarium Teaching Center.
- January 27th, 1 p.m., New Year’s Nian Gao Cakes demo by Phobe Chow; attendance limited, registration required.
- January 30, 4 p.m., ukelele lesson, with Craig newton. Registration on website.
- January 31, 3 p.m., Book party “If You Give a Dog a Donut”; ages 5-12; registration available.
- February 4th, 2 p.m., celebrate Chinese New Year, adults with art of Chinese writing.

Manager Murray next:

- Reminded that library will be closed on January 15th in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. and,
- Introduced Tim Olshefski, new Teen and Adult Services Librarian; the Commission warmly welcomed him.

F. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. 23/0911.01 2024 Work Plan Discussion

- a. One City-One Story – Introduction of One Book, One County Program, Isabelle Briggs.

Isabelle Briggs, Los Angeles County Library Art and Culture Programs Coordinator, gave an overview of the “One Book, One County” reading program including what would be expected if Manhattan Beach were to participate. Ms. Briggs, on a management team in partnership between Los Angeles County and City libraries, (County Library Director Skye Patrick/LAPL head Librarian John Szabo) highlighted the following regarding this program: 1) It has a format very adaptable for cities; 2) Several other cities will be participating, 3) It is supported by three pillars of: education, community engagement/conversation; and collaboration between libraries of multiple jurisdictions; 4) The team has come up with a “short list” of four books including “The Perishing” by Natasha Deón; “Mercury Pictures Presents: a Novel” by Anthony Marra; “The Vanishing Half” by Brit Bennett, and “LA Weather” by Maria Amparo Escandón. The program is planned to launch in early spring and close late summer with events at both ends; each participating city will be invited to host a book event. A kick-off event in Manhattan Beach might be a smaller, more intimate event.

Ms. Briggs responded to questions: 1) The county is in touch with its book sellers to secure library book copies for the public but have left the books to be sold as private copies, up to the individual libraries; 2) The County has a budget that allocates funding for this program but some cost sharing may occur (tbd); 3) if Manhattan Beach signs on, it will have a high level liaison at the County Library (Ms. Briggs) and the role of each local county branch manager will be determined by each branch; 4) The book selection will be announced at the end of January or early February and branding guidelines will be finalized in March; and 5) this could grow into a regular program, possibly annually, tbd.

SRM McCollum noted that the Commission may want to suggest to the City Council that funds from the Library Surplus (up to a certain amount) could be expended for special additional programming tied to the community read program and noted the use of the surplus is not tied to a fiscal year. She also clarified that this is a County program and the Commission would not be working out program details as those are being worked out by the County/City

of LA libraries with 15 other library jurisdictions. The Library Commission might rename its existing community read committee to align with the name of the County program.

Chair Levitt stated that there is support for this program and the Commission is thrilled.

A motion was made and seconded (Levitt/Doll) to rename the current Commission ad hoc committee to “One Book, One County” and to support it and recommend that the city support this County program including a kickoff event. It was decided that no budget would be tied to the motion.

The motion passed 6-0 with a voice vote.

b. Library Surplus Funding

Chair Levitt stated she has a motion ready in support of a feasibility study to look into developing a cultural center on the east side. The Chair commented on the many positive aspects of having a maker lab. It was noted that if the council approves ultimately, a maker lab it would be a County Library facility. SRM McCollum noted that the LAPL has a very large maker lab in DTLA and the County Library has “maker mobiles”. Chair Levitt suggested a tour of an existing maker lab which might be done as part of the feasibility study.

It was moved and seconded (Levitt/Jester) that the Commission recommend that the City Council approve using library surplus funds to conduct a feasibility study for an east side cultural library, to include the Manhattan Beach Digital Archives, a broad collection of MB artifacts, including pottery, a community maker lab and additional library services. Commissioner Jester seconded after suggesting that the maker lab include activates promoting digital literacy such as coding and AI, which while not part of the motion, will be included in Chair Levitt’s committee notes. The Chair announced that the motion passed by voice vote 6-0. The Commission expressed thanks to the Chair for her work.

c. Library Appreciation Events

Commissioner Jones reported that the library staff was appreciated in November, and thanked all for contributing to its success and the Commission likewise thanked Commissioner Jones. The next appreciation event will be on May 28th (Tuesday) – a staff appreciation brunch. School librarians will be appreciated on May 15th and 16th; Commissioner Jester will assist in setting up the event (caravan to schools) with the schools. The Chair will supply books as gifts to the librarians (the book selected for the Community Read).

d. StoryWalk—Commissioner Bond reported the next book will be installed in February/March. The commission briefly discussed ways to promote. SRS Bell will look into getting a sign made announcing the StoryWalk, said sign to be placed at the playground and perhaps the StoryWalk presence can be announced at the summer concerts in the park. Commissioner Jones suggested a marketing campaign that would entail sending a flyer to city pre-schools and perhaps schools (kindergarten and elementary teachers). SRS Bell will ask about resources for doing the campaign. Commissioner Bond has called several newspapers and the Chamber but has gotten no response.

2. 23/0109.01.2023 Work Plan Updates and Discussion

- a. StoryWalk
- b. Library Appreciation Events

Chair Levitt announced that the upcoming work plan meeting is now in February (2/13, 6 pm) as

opposed to March and reviewed protocols and summarized the work plan items approved by the Commission in December.

Further discussion ensued about Photo Op Day: it will be associated with other events with the same amount (\$4,000) requested and, based on a meeting Commissioners Jones and Doll had with Manager Murray - he will look into the possibility of Photo Op Day occurring on the same day or same time as an early afternoon library concert on June 1 which marks the beginning of summer reading. Chair Levitt suggested that the County summer read launch and Photo Op Day be linked regularly in future work plans and it was noted that if done for 2024 as such the cost will be within the current budget.

Manager Murray cautioned that the summer read program launch date may not occur on a weekend and this may only work for this year but will look into this. Commissioner Millea will assume the committee chair after May 31st and Commissioner Jones announced that a live band will not be needed; the committee has lined up a new photographer.

The Commission, in December approved that the Library Surplus Committee will work with city staff and the library to make recommendations about the use of library surplus funds. Learning at the Library, Poetry event and music at the library were either discontinued or rolled into another project.

SRM Melissa McCollum clarified that the Commission has established four ad hoc committees for the work plan and that there is also surplus library funding available; her understanding is that the Commission would like to use some of the surplus funds for a speaker series and additional music programs if approved by City Council. The four committees were recapped: 1) One Book, One County; 2) Library Surplus; 3) Library Appreciation Events; and 4) StoryWalk. At the February 13th meeting, staff will ask council for approval of support to use some of the library surplus to enhance programming which includes the speaker series, music series and feasibility study for the maker space/cultural library. Overall, the work plan will also include continuing StoryWalk and library appreciation events at the same funding levels. It was clarified that the Commission did not discuss music series very much – the intent was that music events (possibly tapping into musicians such as at LAX) are those that are programmed by the County with city input. The Commission concurred with SRM McCollum as clarified for the music series. The February presentation will not be detailed but rather will provide the authority to proceed with programs.

Commissioner Doll updated regarding a meeting between the library/city liaison committee and Library Manager; one idea is to have more outdoor events (June 1st concert to be the first). They will meet again in January and discuss the speaker's series further.

G. STAFF ITEMS – no report

H. COMMISSION ITEMS - None

I. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Levitt thanked all for their hard work and, with no objection adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.