

# Memo

**To:** Library Trustees

**From:** Jerold D Kappel, CEO

**Date:** September 10, 2025

**Re:** Library Foundation Report

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1. **Governance:** The September 2025 Board Meeting was held on Monday, September 8. Melissa Hartson, Library Director, and Dorothy Larson, Library Trustee Liaison attended.
  - a. The next Foundation Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 13, 2025.
2. **Rebranding of Foundation:** The meeting began with an overview of the rebranding project by consultants Pip Tompkins and Jill Nordquist. The rebranding will include a restatement of the mission, a tag line, and a new logo. That project has a deadline of November 15, so that the new “brand” can be announced in the Winter Bookmark.
  - a. The consultants interviewed 10 Foundation key stakeholders as research for their analysis. We know who the consultants interviewed, but there is no attribution so that those interviewed could speak openly.
3. **Beyond Books Campaign**
  - a. As of the date of this report, the Foundation has raised \$11,717,314.34. Of that amount, \$731,933.47 is in future payments.
    - i. Due to the recently passed P.L. 119-21, One Big Beautiful Bill Act or OBBBA, it may be advantageous for those in the 37% tax bracket, and/or for those that itemize, to accelerate 2026 and later pledged contributions to 2025. Beyond Books donors that have gift payments in 2026 and future years have been notified of this option.
  - b. The proposal to name the auditorium “The Library Foundation Auditorium” with the designation of the Tod and Linda White contribution is being reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Yolanda Summerhill for presentation to the City Council for approval. It is anticipated that it will go to the Council in October.

- c. We update the construction video on the website every 7-10 days. Everything is on the Witte Hall tab on the website—why it is needed, what it will accomplish, how to support, the gift agreement form, donor levels and benefits. NBPLF.foundation/Witte Hall
- 4. **Development:** Due to the Library closure and logistical difficulties in holding the event at another location, the Library Leadership Reception usually scheduled for the Fall will be postponed to a later date after the Stahr Courtyard is available.
  - a. A letter is being sent to the Library Leadership donors (\$1,000 and above) notifying them of this change.
- 5. **Finance:** The 2025 fiscal year audited financials are in final draft. It is expected that the audit will be final and sent to the Finance Committee for acceptance by September 23. The IRS 990 is also in draft. Once the audit is accepted by the Board and the 990 approved, the documents will be published on the Foundation website.
  - a. The Foundation includes three years of 990s and audits on its website. It has a 4-Star rating from Charity Navigator and is rated Platinum for transparency and accountability by Candid. The Foundation has also passed two privacy and payment security compliance tests for contributions through its website.
- 6. **The Witte Hall:** The Grand Opening is still scheduled for the weekend of March 20-22, 2026. With the agreement of the Library, the Library Foundation will hold its Witte Hall donor recognition event on Friday, March 20. The event will include a dinner with food stations throughout the Central Library followed by leadership and donor recognition and a prestigious speaker in Witte Hall. Randy Heyler is chairing the planning committee for this event.
  - a. The August construction report states that the projected completion date is now March 6, 2026.
  - b. The Foundation is seeking corporate sponsors to underwrite the opening weekend and will seek advertising in the program book for that weekend and for Library and Library Foundation programs for the remainder of the fiscal year (June 30 end.)
- 7. **Programming:** All programming for the 2025-2026 season was announced in the Summer Bookmark magazine. Single tickets for Library Live went on sale September 1. Witte Lecture single tickets will go on sale September 26.
  - a. All four Library Live lectures are sold out. To accommodate overflow for the two programs held in the Civic Center Community Room, the side doors will be opened and extra chairs added outside. The Foundation has sold 152 season passes for Library Live.
  - b. There are already 91 season passes for the Friday evening lecture and 98 for the Saturday afternoon lecture. The first Witte Lecture is in February.
  - c. Because of the Stahr Courtyard construction, four of the Foundation programs for the Fall/Winter will be held in the Civic Center Community Room or at the Oasis Center. One Finance Workshop will be held in the Newport Coast Community Center. Only the Book Discussion Group will be held in the Friends Room.

- d. After the March 20 grand opening of Witte Hall, the Witte Lecture series, Library Live, and Spotlight on Science will be moved to Witte Hall. The Financial Literacy Workshops and Medicine in Our Backyard will continue to be held in the Friends Room.
8. **Library Renovation closing:** The Foundation will have a hybrid home/library work schedule during the Central Library closing because of the HVAC replacement and other renovations during the September closing.
- a. Foundation programs and meetings for the week of October 6 will also be scheduled for locations other than Central Library.
9. **Bookmark:** The Fall/Winter Bookmark is in editorial layout. It will include Winter/Spring programming, the annual report, an introduction of the new “brand”, the announcement of the Grand Opening of Witte Hall, an article on Trustees, an essay and a poem from the Project Adult Literacy In Your Own Words booklet, and at least four pages dedicated to Library events and news.
10. **Advocacy:** There is some concern that E-Rate funding for Wi-Fi in libraries may be eliminated by the FCC. This will impact rural and tribal libraries more than urban libraries.
- a. Although the administration and some legislators are pushing to eliminate the IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) completely, the House Appropriations subcommittee seems unwilling to do so. The first version of the relevant bills includes funding for library services through the Library Services and Technology Act and funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Funding may probably be reduced in the final bill, but the agency may not be eliminated. (The National Endowment of the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities are also facing elimination but may get by with only significantly reduced budgets.). California received \$15.7 million in federal funding in 2024 through the Library Services and Technology Act. Every state receives LSTA funding. The state has to match the federal funds.