



# CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES STAFF REPORT

May 18, 2026  
Agenda Item No. 6

**TO:** BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

**FROM:** Library Services Department  
Melissa Hartson, Library Services Director  
(949) 717-3801, [mhartson@newportbeachca.gov](mailto:mhartson@newportbeachca.gov)

**PREPARED BY:** Rebecca Lightfoot, Library Services Manager

**TITLE:** Fiscal Year 2026-27 Library Services Budget

---

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff requests that the Board review and approve the FY 2026-27 operating budget for the Library.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Section 708. Board of Library Trustees. Powers and Duties.**

*There shall be a Board of Library Trustees consisting of five members which shall have the power and duty to:*

*(c) Consider the annual budget for library purposes during the process of its preparation and make recommendations with respect thereto to the City Council and City Manager.*

In accordance with the above statement, staff prepared the FY 2026-27 operating budget for the Library Services Department. Staff met with the City Manager and Finance Department in February to review the following program enhancement requests for the upcoming fiscal year.

The circulation of downloadable materials such as eBooks, eAudiobooks, downloadable magazines and newspapers, and streaming videos, has increased significantly over the last few years, around 10% each year. We are projecting an 11% increase in FY 2025-26 over last year. In addition, the cost of database subscriptions has increased, on average, around 14% each year. The databases we offer include resources on genealogy, art, literature, business, statistics, investing, legal information, training, learning languages, journal articles, encyclopedias, and more. These digital resources are well used and highly valued by the community we serve and represent our 24/7 always available eBranch. We are requesting a \$50,000 increase to our materials budget to continue to offer these valuable resources, keep up with the increasing demand for downloadable materials, and reduce hold queue wait times for the most popular items.

Library facility maintenance and projects transferred to Public Works on July 1, 2025. With this restructuring 95% of the Library's building maintenance budget allocations moved to Public Works. The Library still incurs costs associated with the upkeep and repair of the buildings that are outside of Public Works purview, such as refuse expenditures and furniture repairs. As a result, Library is requesting \$17,500 in additional funding to ensure the facilities and furnishings are kept in good working order for the nearly 60,000 patrons who visit our locations monthly. In addition, IT evaluated and approved new

door count systems at Central Library, Mariners Branch, and Corona del Mar Branch. We are asking for a one-time increase of \$16,000 to install the new system at the three locations. These door counters will provide a more accurate picture of how many patrons are visiting by capturing data at entrances that are not currently monitored by our current door count system.

The Library is requesting a one-time increase of \$45,000 in the Cultural Arts Division to fund a Pacific Symphony performance on the Civic Center Green in August 2026. After a seven-year hiatus, Pacific Symphony returned to Newport Beach in August 2025 and saw record attendance at the performance. The City Arts Commission is launching an inaugural Art Week in August 2026 and would like to host the Symphony to kick off Art Week. A symphony performance expands the concert genre offerings beyond cover band performers for the community.

The salaries and benefits budget allocations for FY 2026-27 are slightly increased from FY 2025-26 due to negotiated contracts with the employee bargaining units.

**NOTICING:**

This agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the Board of Library Trustees considers the item).

ATTACHMENT A: FY 2026-27 City Manager Approved Budget