

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Board of Library Trustees
Civic Center Council Chambers
100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA
Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 18, 2026 – 5:00 PM

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Lauren Kramer called to order the Board of Library Trustees meeting for May 18, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. All trustees were present.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jim Mosher clarified that his comments are for the regular portion of the meeting and not the Closed Session, as he will likely be unable to attend. He reported that he submitted written public comments about the Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget, noting an absence of funding for Balboa Branch and adding that he will ask the reason for this at the May 26 City Council meeting.

III. CLOSED SESSION

At 5:01 p.m., the Board adjourned to Closed Session to discuss the following items.

1. **Discuss the Library Services Director's Appointment, Employment and Evaluation of Performance (Government Code § 54957)**

IV. RECESS

V. RECONVENE AT 5:45 P.M. FOR REGULAR MEETING

Chair Kramer reconvened the Board at 5:46 p.m.

VI. ROLL CALL

Trustees Present: Chair Lauren Kramer, Vice Chair Antonella Castro, Secretary Dorothy Larson, Trustee Meghan Murray, Trustee Chase Rief

Trustees Absent: None

Staff Present: Melissa Hartson, Library Services Director
Francine Jacome, Administrative Support Specialist
Rebecca Lightfoot, Library Services Manager
Andrew Kachaturian, Adult Services Coordinator
Miranda Gentry, Circulation Coordinator

Staff Absent: Annika Helmuth, Branch and Youth Services Coordinator

VII. CLOSED SESSION REPORT

Chair Kramer reported performing the annual performance evaluation for Library Services Director Melissa Hartson during the Closed Session. She commended the work of the Library Services Director and the Library staff.

VIII. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Kramer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IX. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Chair Kramer waived the Notice to the Public.

X. CONSENT CALENDAR

Administrative Support Specialist Jacome read the Consent Calendar Notice to the Public.

A. Consent Calendar Items

2. Minutes of the April 20, 2026 Board of Library Trustees Meeting

3. Patron Comments

Monthly review of evaluations of library services through suggestions and requests received from patrons.

4. Expenditure Status Report

Monthly expenditure status of the library's operating expenses, services, salaries, and benefits by department.

5. Board of Library Trustees Monitoring List

List of agenda items and dates for monthly review of projects by the Board of Library Trustees.

Chair Kramer opened the items to public comment, and there was none.

Motion made by Trustee Chase Rief, seconded by Secretary Dorothy Larson, and carried 5-0-0-0 to approve the Consent Calendar Item Nos. 2-5.

AYES: Kramer, Castro, Larson, Murray, Rief

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENCES:

XI. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Items for Review

6. Fiscal Year 2026-27 Library Services Budget

Staff requests that the Board of Library Trustees review and approve the Fiscal Year 2026-27 operating budget for the Library.

Library Services Manager Rebecca Lightfoot reported that the Library's FY 2026-27 will be before the City Council in June. She stated that staff anticipates that its requests for programming enhancements will be awarded, including an additional \$50,000 for library materials, along with extra funds for facilities maintenance and the new door counting system to better capture Library attendance.

In response to Secretary Larson's inquiry, Library Services Manager Lightfoot clarified that while the bulk of facilities maintenance work has shifted to Public Works, the Library remains responsible for some bills and the FY 2025-26 allocation proved to be insufficient.

Chair Kramer opened public comment.

Mr. Mosher encouraged the trustees to look at the more detailed budget summary as opposed to the overview presented, as the detailed summary includes departmental goals and performance measures for FY 2026-27. He added that the Board should consider whether the performance measures are appropriate.

Chair Kramer closed public comment.

Chair Kramer stated that the budget increases are modest, with most of it coming from staff wages.

Motion made by Chair Lauren Kramer, seconded by Trustee Chase Rief, and carried 5-0-0-0 to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Library Services budget.

AYES: Kramer, Castro, Larson, Murray, Rief
NOES:
ABSTENTIONS:
ABSENCES:

7. Acceptance of a Grant from the Library Foundation

Staff recommend the Board of Library Trustees approve the acceptance of a grant from the Library Foundation of Newport Beach for Project Adult Literacy.

Library Services Manager Lightfoot reported that the Library Foundation of Newport Beach has awarded its annual \$25,000 grant to Project Adult Literacy. She requested acceptance from the Board, adding that the funds go towards materials, an annual database subscription, office supplies, training, travel, and support of program events.

Chair Kramer opened public comment, and there was none.

Motion made by Secretary Dorothy Larson, seconded by Chair Lauren Kramer, and carried 5-0-0-0 to accept the grant.

AYES: Kramer, Castro, Larson, Murray, Rief
NOES:
ABSTENTIONS:
ABSENCES:

8. Library Activities

Monthly update of library events, services, and statistics.

Library Services Director Melissa Hartson reported that April was a busy month, featuring National Library Week with programming for all ages. She added that the Library had special guest Storytime readers at all open locations. She added that the KIT Coffee location at the Central Library has opened, energizing the space and bringing in additional people.

In response to Vice Chair Castro's inquiry, Library Services Director Hartson agreed that it would be worth exploring having items that coffee shop patrons can check out near the store along with materials promoting Library services. She noted that several coffee shop patrons have gone from its second-floor location down to the first floor.

Chair Kramer agreed that the coffee shop is a great location to promote the Library's programming.

Chair Kramer opened the item to public comment, and there was none.

Chair Kramer received and filed the report.

B. Monthly Reports

9. Library Foundation Liaison Report

- A. Library Foundation Board – Report of the most recently attended meeting.
- B. Library Live Committee – Report of the most recently attended meeting.
- C. Witte Lectures Committee – Report of the most recently attended meeting.

Trustee Rief reported that Library Foundation Chief Executive Officer Jerold D Kappel has his standard detailed written report from the last meeting. He added that the Witte Hall Grand Opening is set for July 10.

Secretary Larson reported that the Library Live Committee and Witte Lectures Committee are moving ahead with lining up programming well in advance. She added that Mr. Kappel's report has good information about upcoming programming and lauded the attendance at recent programming.

10. Foundation Literacy Liaison Report

Trustee update of the most recently attended Foundation Literacy Committee Meeting.

No report was given.

11. Friends of the Library Liaison Report

Trustee update of the most recently attended Friends of the Library Board meeting.

No report was given.

Chair Kramer opened the monthly reports to public comment, and there was none.

Chair Kramer received and filed the monthly reports.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – THREE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

None.

XIII. BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES ANNOUNCEMENTS OR MATTERS WHICH MEMBERS WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION ACTION OR REPORT (NON-DISCUSSION ITEM)

None.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT – 5:58 P.M.

The next meeting will be on June 15, 2026.

DRAFT