

**CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH**

**Board of Library Trustees  
Civic Center Council Chambers  
100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 16, 2026 – 5:00 PM**

**I. ROLL CALL**

Chair Lauren Kramer called to order the Board of Library Trustees meeting for March 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Trustees Present: Chair Lauren Kramer, Secretary Dorothy Larson (arrived during the meeting.), Trustee Meghan Murray, Trustee Chase Rief

Trustees Absent: Vice Chair Antonella Castro (excused)

Staff Present: Melissa Hartson, Library Services Director  
Francine Jacome, Administrative Support Specialist  
Rebecca Lightfoot, Library Services Manager  
Andrew Kachaturian, Adult Services Coordinator  
Annika Helmuth, Branch and Youth Services Coordinator  
Miranda Gentry, Circulation Coordinator  
Evelyn Rogers, Balboa Branch Librarian

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Trustee Chase Rief led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC - Waived.**

**V. CONSENT CALENDAR**

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

**A. Consent Calendar Items**

**1. Minutes of the February 23, 2026 Board of Library Trustees Meeting**

**2. Patron Comments**

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

**3. Expenditure Status Report**

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

#### 4. 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 Trustee Meghan Murray, and carried 3-0-0-2 to approve the Consent Calendar Item Nos. 1-4.

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

#### VI. CURRENT BUSINESS

##### A. Items for Review

#### 5. Balboa Branch Update

Staff presents an overview of Balboa Branch's activities and resources, and a branch replacement update.

Secretary Larson joined the meeting at 5:02 p.m.

Balboa Branch Librarian Evelyn Rogers noted that the replacement of the building has made this year unlike any other in the Balboa Branch's nearly 100-year history. She reported that the building closed on March 1, with its staff now working at other branches after hard work to make the transition as seamless as possible.

Balboa Branch Librarian Rogers reported that the most notable changes over the year were to the children's programming schedule and collection size. She stated that children's storytime is now being held on Wednesdays at Marina Park. She added that Toy Train Thursday is now held on Tuesdays at Corona del Mar Branch, remaining popular and successful. She reported that special programming has been moved to Marina Park. She thanked the Friends of the Newport Beach Public Library for sponsoring the children's programming.

Balboa Branch Librarian Rogers reported that the Branch's collection was reduced dramatically by February, with most of the items transferred to other branches, including the Nautical Collection being relocated to the Central Library. She reported that staff from all other branches helped process remaining materials after the building's closure on March 1, in preparation for the weekend book sale. She reported that many long-time patrons came to the Branch in its final days to thank staff and share memories. In response to Chair Kramer's inquiry, Balboa Branch Librarian Rogers stated that she will be based at Crean Mariners Branch during Balboa Branch construction.

In response to Chair Kramer's inquiries, Library Services Director Melissa Hartson reported that Balboa Branch's two vacancies were filled within the past couple of months. She stated that they do have other vacant part-time positions and judiciously moved forward with some of them.

In response to Secretary Larson's inquiry, Balboa Branch Librarian Rogers stated that Marina Park's concierge service, which has been in place for years, is managed by Marina Park staff. With the closure of Balboa Branch there is much more activity than in the past. Library Services Director Hartson added that children's programming will continue at Marina Park through the end of June and resume in the fall.

In response to Trustee Rief's inquiry, Library Services Director Hartson stated that the Nautical Collection has its own space at the Central Library.

Chair Kramer opened public comment, and there was none.

Chair Kramer received and filed the report.

## **6. Library Gift and Donor Policy (NBPL 3)**

Staff requests that the Board of Library Trustees review and approve revisions to Library Policy NBPL 3, *Library Gift and Donor Policy*.

Library Services Director Hartson presented proposed revisions to the Library Gift and Donor Policy (NBPL 3) to clean it up and to be consistent with matters like naming conventions to match how groups like the Board are commonly referred to in other City documents. She added that staff also reduced language where applicable and reported speaking with the Library Foundation of Newport Beach to discuss its references in the policy, leading to minor edits. She stated that the Pals4pal non-profit organization has dissolved, so donors interested in contributing to Project Adult Literacy are now directed to the Foundation.

Library Services Director Hartson recommended changing the Friends of the Library portion to state that they accept donations of used books and other materials so that it also includes the non-book donations they accept.

Chair Kramer opened public comment.

Jim Mosher reported submitting recommended edits in writing, addressing some wording that could be unclear.

Chair Kramer closed public comment.

Secretary Larson recommended changing the wording of the fourth paragraph of the Foundation Gifts section of Attachment B to read that items donated for a specific subject would "generally not be integrated", noting that there are exceptions to this general rule. Library Services Director Hartson clarified that items donated to a specific collection would be integrated into it.

Secretary Larson agreed with Mr. Mosher's written comments about changing the title from "Gift and Donor Policy" to "Gift and Donation Policy." She pondered changing the lettering on the donor signage because the stainless steel does not show up well.

Library Services Director Hartson stated that she has never heard comments about the signage visibility, but that staff will gladly investigate using different materials in the future if the Board so wishes.

Chair Kramer reported spending a great amount of time earlier today contemplating the nuances between “donor” and “donation” in the Policy’s title and prefers to keep it as “donor.” She agreed that the donor signage is subtle but stated she does not object to it, adding that it is a good recognition without putting them above everything else going on.

Library Services Director Hartson noted that the wall’s paint colors do not always stay the same and may impact the visibility of the lettering.

Secretary Larson clarified that she was simply making a comment about the lack of visibility, and staff does not need to make a change at this time with so much going on.

Library Services Director Hartson noted that the next time a donor recognition with signage comes before the Board, it would be a good time to discuss the materials used.

**Motion** made by Trustee Chase Rief, seconded by Chair Lauren Kramer, and carried 4-0-0-1 to approve changes to NBPL Policy 3 with a revision to the Friends of the Library section to include the phrase “and other materials.”

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

## 7. Library Activities

Monthly update of library events, services, and statistics.

Library Services Director Hartson reported that staff had an opportunity to tour Witte Hall, reporting that the project is coming along nicely, including work on the bathrooms and seating area, referring the Board to interior progress photographs in her staff report.

Library Services Director Hartson reported that National Library Week is April 19-25, with celebration activities planned for all branches. She added that the City Council will issue a Proclamation recognizing it at their April 14 meeting. She encouraged all to attend.

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

Chair Kramer received and filed the report.

## B. Monthly Reports

### 8. 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 the Library Foundation has not met since the Board’s last meeting.

Secretary Larson reported that the Library Live Committee and Witte Lectures Committee met and made progress towards arranging for 2027 speakers. She added that there will

be a film program in conjunction with the Newport Beach Film Festival in August. She lauded the recent lecture by author Colm Tóibín, adding that it was well-attended.

Library Foundation Board of Directors Chair Marilyn Krahe agreed.

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

Chair Kramer received and filed the report.

## **9. Foundation Literacy Liaison Report**

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

Vice Chair Castro's absence prevented a report.

Chair Kramer continued the report to the Board's next meeting.

## **10. Friends of the Library Liaison Report**

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

Trustee Murray reported that she was unable to attend the meeting, but the Treasurer's Report indicated that the Friends of the Library raised \$15,662, which is consistent with the previous year.

In response to Secretary Larson's inquiries, Library Services Director Hartson reported that the final book sale at Balboa Branch was very successful, raising almost \$1,300. She could not confirm what percentage of the collection was sold. She stated that the building is now empty.

Chair Kramer opened the item to public comment.

Mr. Mosher noted that on their website, the Friends of the Library recommends residents participate in a program at Ralph's Supermarkets where funds are donated to select organizations, including the Friends of the Library. He inquired how much money is being generated by the program.

Chair Kramer closed public comment.

Chair Kramer received and filed the report.

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

None.

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

Secretary Larson reported that there are many excellent programs offered by the Foundation and encouraged people to follow the Library's social media accounts, and for staff to continue to use them to promote events.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT – 5:28 P.M.**

The next meeting will be on April 20, 2026.

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