

Library Board, Santa Monica Public Library
Director Report
December 2019
December 5, 2019

Citywide Priorities:

Wellbeing Summit: More than a dozen Library staff and volunteers participated in the day long Wellbeing Summit which attracted more than 800. About a dozen new library cards were issued and hundreds of people stopped by to review the information, books and other materials highlighting the Santa Monica Public Library and its impact on the community's wellbeing. The Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library was featured as a place to volunteer, to give back and to purchase books for any occasion. Thanks to Nancy Varat for joining our team to promote the bookstore and the Friends. Jennifer Boyce and Karen Reitz led our library team in set up and volunteer recruitment and assignments to support the two Library Tech presentations/Appy Hours that drew about two dozen people of all ages and highlighted the library's technology to advance customer engagement and experience. It was good exposure for the library – many of our team got to meet representatives from the other featured Marketplace vendors as well as get flu shots from our Kaiser Permanente friends! Arlene Hopkins represented the Library Board.

Library Facilities Update:

Fairview: The window and front door replacement is almost complete. The contractor discovered that the existing metal framing was very thin and substandard; current construction was long overdue and will bring the building up to standards that will withstand weather as well as ensure stability for years to come.

Pico: While the desk itself is installed, the sides and tops were temporary to accommodate the filming of the Census 2020 Public Service Announcement. The desk is scheduled for complete installation by the end of the year. The public and staff are quite pleased with the functionality of the desk, its placement on the floor and the visibility for staff and customers alike.

Library Facilities Master Plan: David Schnee and Jill Eyres from Group 4 joined key members of the library and city staff to kickoff the first meeting of the Library Facilities Master Plan process to discuss the scope of the work and the building of team in approach. Members shared what they liked about Santa Monica and the Library in a blog-like exercise to highlight aspirations and develop expectations for the process and outcomes. A strong consensus developed around community and staff engagement as a

primary set of activities. The consultants toured the Main Library and most of the branches, meeting staff, taking photographs and recording the architectural features and common uses of the facilities.

Library Services and Programs:

Diversity: The Inservice Day Implicit Bias training conducted by Kikanza Nuri-Robins with assistance in small group facilitation by Equity Think Tank members was well received. The afternoon deeper dive involved about 25 staff. Evaluations were distributed and Equity Think Tank members will debrief to discuss outcomes and next steps. The handouts and learnings were welcomed and some staff indicated a stronger understanding of bias.

The Inservice Day was an inspired series of events ranging from yoga to bullet journaling to social worker 101 to DIY Dream Pillows and a self defense workshop. Rideshare Jeff Snyder took about 20 people on a citywide bike ride and others learned podcasting and how to play ukulele and info on attending library school for those who were interested in the MLIS. All staff participated in Unit meetings for some face to face work time. Lu Plauzoles joined us for lunch! The Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library supported the keynote presentation and the hospitality for the day.

Library Strategic Plan: An updated Strategic Plan integrates the four key areas of the original process – Vibrant Learning Center, Wellbeing Cultivator, Dynamic Third Place, Community & Cultural Connector - with current key priorities that reflect both City framework and activities that are staff directed. The Principal Librarians worked with staff in their respective units to highlight areas of greater staff activation. The Library’s Communication arm- Rachel Foyt, along with Jasmine Gutierrez- created the graphics and video representation of this effort. The refreshed and updated Strategic Plan was shared with staff and the Santa Monica Library Board in late November; the Board will review and adopt those priorities at this meeting.

Santa Monica Library Board: The past few meetings have been focused on refreshing Board agenda building. With the new year, the Board will highlight areas of interest, taking a look at the future of libraries from a variety of topic exploration. There will be a stronger emphasis on advocacy and the Board’s role in communicating the value of libraries in Santa Monica. A priority will involve filling the current vacancy on the Board in early 2020. Many thanks to Susan Lamb and Kathy Lo, Erica Cuyugan and Cecilia Tovar, for preparing and presenting the first of a series of topics on data and how we use the data to identify and support existing programs and services.

Human Resources:

Library Classification and Compensation Study: Segal Waters has received almost all of the related surveys from comparable cities and agencies in the Southern CA area that

are closely linked to Santa Monica Public Library job descriptions for salary and responsibility information. The comparison will contribute to a comprehensive review of like library positions as part of a set of draft recommendations that will be coming before the end of the year. Following the recommendation process, library leadership will be working with the Staff Advisory Group to determine next steps in staff engagement.

Admin: Brian McCloskey, Staff Assistant III in Administration, has opted to pursue other interests and will not be returning to City employment. Brian has been a valued member of the Admin Team since 2003 and we wish him well. Admin will be working with HR to determine next steps for the position.

Funding and Events:

Donations: On December 4, the Library celebrated Sharla Boehm's 90th Birthday with a beautiful ceremony in the MultiPurpose Room of the Main Library. Surrounded by family and friends, and city and library leadership, the event highlighted the Boehm family donation of \$70,000 towards the digitization of decades of Santa Monica telephone directories. The directories are often used for historical analysis and are frail and disintegrating. The digitization project will ensure ongoing use of the materials for the public and researchers for years to come.

Grants: The Verizon grant was not awarded to the Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library. Staff is working with Verizon leadership to determine if refinement and submission at a later date is a possibility.

On December 11, the Library will receive an artpiece in memory of Library Service Officer Mike Castagnola who passed away too soon. Mike was a beloved and longtime staff member of SMPL. He was known for his wit, cartooning, and his improvisation. The wooden bench was created by furniture designer Mike Zicopoulos and features the work of artist Christopher Darga. Funds for the bench were raised by his family, friends and fellow performers. The dedication will take place on December 14 at 11 a.m. at the Ocean Park Branch.

Partnerships:

Santa Monica Regional Consortium for Adult Education – coordinated by Santa Monica College and the Adult Education arm of Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District – Dr. Dione Carter met with our Public Services, Adult Services team to discuss coordinated services for adult learners. We explored noncredit support for adult learners and their children through the LEARN program (and perhaps simultaneous learning for the adults), other collaborations that might include an official liaison position with the Consortium based in the Library.

Safety & Security Monthly Report

- The Library Service Officer (LSO) Team continues to do partner patrols with non-uniformed staff at the Main Library. This is an opportunity for staff to talk about different situations, how best to advise our customers about the rules, and other tips to be aware of around safety and security. During the latter part of November, LSOs also partnered with one another to do patrols around the exterior of the building. This helps with more consistent rule enforcement, as well as learning from each other's strengths when deescalating problems or rule violations. Partner patrols at the branches will begin in December.
- In early November, the LSO team also had a meeting with Ron Hooks from West Coast Care. In this meeting, we were reminded of what the West Coast Care model provides (<https://westcoastcare.org/>) They also shared some tips they use when interacting with the homeless. We were reminded to be friendly, ask questions, and provide them with resources that could be of assistance to them during their transition.
- LSO Supervisor Lou Enriquez presented at the City's SamoStat meeting, where he talked about how LSO and library staff work to help address homelessness through engagements, referrals, and collaboration with SMPD's HLP (Homeless Liaison Program) Team and local organizations like The People Concern and West Coast Care.
- Members of the Safety and Security Taskforce met this month to discuss their work on 1) Creating a Safety & Security Onboarding document for new staff, 2) Reviewing how staff uses the Staff Incident log, 3) Exploring the idea of Pocket Response cards (for emergencies), and 4) Discussing opportunities for going over emergency exits and other safety procedures with part-time and newer staff on a semi-regular basis. The next meeting will be December 18. In the coming weeks, the taskforce, along with management, will also be discussing ways to enhance and improve communication protocols around security and/or emergency related events.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Wong, Director of Library Services