

Library Board, Santa Monica Public Library
Director Report
March 2020
March 5, 2020

Citywide Priorities:

Negotiations: Library staff is part of a number of employee bargaining units represented by the Board of the Coalition of City of Santa Monica Employees otherwise known as the Coalition. Negotiations have now moved from impasse to factfinding and Management has provided the Coalition with a “supposal” which provides a “suppose we try this proposal” since a formal offer cannot be made. A decision about the “supposal” will be made soon by the Coalition. The “supposal” does away with PERS on PERS, a separate contract for health care with an increase and a stepped repayment plan for those who participated in PERS on PERS. Admittedly all involved are feeling very stressful about the process.

Library Programs and Services:

Santa Monica named Library Journal Five Star Library for the 10th Year:

For the 10th year in a row, Library Journal identified Santa Monica Public Library as a FIVE STAR LIBRARY

<https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=ljx191230StarsByNumbers>

The LJ Index is based on per capita and six different measures: total circulation, circulation of electronic materials, library visits, program attendance, public internet computer use and WiFi use. Data is based on the most recent findings from the IMLS Public Library Survey 2017. The libraries are compared to their budget category and their population. Many libraries (1028) were eliminated from consideration as they did not answer the WiFi query as eligibility is based upon data from all six measures. WiFi is new this year.

Congratulations, SMPL and a great team of staff, volunteers, and board members and Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library!

Library Facilities Update:

Fairview: All glass replacements and the windows and doors are completed; we await more permanent blinds and window coverings. The Library is taking the lead on finding a solution.

Ocean Park has some HVAC issues that will need attention.

Pico: The walk through for our new front desk took place. The roof leak has been patched; the resulting water damage to the front facing walls of Study Room 3 are being investigated with communication from the City Attorney's Office to the roofer. Steelcase is the vendor for the front desk; minor repairs may not be able to be made – the City will get a credit.

Main Library: Adult Literacy still awaits a plan to integrate HVAC ductwork with existing systems to direct heat to the room. There are funds remaining in the CIP for the project. Landscaping redesign: Thanks to Library Board member, Arlene Hopkins' suggestion, Architecture is looking to work with SMC students or Sustainable Works as potential allies in the review of possible options. This work can tentatively be incorporated with the Library Facilities Master Plan (LFMP). The Facility Improvements CIP (desk consolidation and AMHS) will revise the scope of the LFMP and incur no additional costs.

The temporary signage for the enhanced safety and security needs of the Library have been installed at the Ocean Park, Montana and Fairview Branch Libraries with the Main Library soon to follow. This will enable SMPD and the LSO teams to enforce the Library Rules of Conduct around the perimeter of the buildings. CCS and the Library are working to determine language needs as Pico is part of the Virginia Avenue Park campus.

Capital Improvements Projects (CIP): The Library submitted three projects this week for consideration.

1. Safety and security: cameras, silent alarms, and security systems for all locations.
2. Continuation of consolidated desks and automated materials handling sorter (AMHS) at the Main Library
3. Integrated Library System (ILS) Request for Proposal (RFP) as the existing system is going on seven years of age and there are several improvements in the technology industry and indicators that our current system may not be a strongly supported. The ILS is the foundation of any Library's systems. All circulation and customer systems are driven from this platform including a record of all of the library's holdings.

Library Facilities Master Plan: Group 4 is planning to come for a site visit on May 18 and 19 for staff and community engagement. Plans include an All Staff meeting, a Supervisors forum and group meetings with the public (users and nonusers) and the key staff associated with architecture, mobility, facilities maintenance, sustainability, public safety, public art and Library partners. Group 4 will also be training staff to do outreach associated with the LFMP at the Arts and Literacy Festival.

Library Classification and Compensation Study: Segal Waters has requested critical data about the staffing patterns of SMPL staff as one factor in determining recommendations.

Santa Monica Library Board: Today's educational focus will feature library technology. Principal Librarian for Information Services Division, Greco Venegas will present highlights of the Technology Plan, goals for the immediate fiscal year, and his vision for the future. Each meeting will include a guest speaker when available on a topic of priority and interest for the Board as well as a potential presentation from a partner. When available, the Board would like to meet as library staff as possible.

Adopt a Branch program: The Library Board members are matched with a library facility. Their goal is to become familiar with the services and to advocate for that location as needed. The Director will provide an outline of considerations and expectations to support this goal.

Human Resources:

Staff Development: Five staff (Lenore St. John, Andrea Eitsert, Barbara Fleeman, Jennifer Boyce, Patty Wong) recently attended the Public Library Association Conference in Nashville. There was a strong focus on equity, diversity and access, literacies of all types, engagement and outreach, with strong preconferences and more than 100 programs. The event featured outstanding speakers like Stacey Abrams and Soledad O'Brien and Samantha Bee and dozens of authors and illustrators. The Conference drew more than 8500 people and featured a strong trade show with more than 250 vendors, many exhibitor-sponsored receptions that featured delicious Southern culinary delights and hospitality. The Nashville Public Library (2010 IMLS National Medal and 2017 GALE/LJ Library of the Year), under the leadership of Director Kent Oliver, was prominently featured and is a wonderful example of sustainability and reuse and service to their community.

Partnerships:

Foundation of Santa Monica: Restoration of the 501(C) (3) is underway. Antonio Spears is interested in bringing back leadership to the Foundation and exploring alternative funding opportunities and corporate support.

Safety & Security Monthly Report

All staff and Management discussed ideas for Safety and Security meetings or forums as a way for staff to learn, share, and give feedback on ideas that will help improve the environment in our library locations. We acknowledge that while staff does receive comments on how the library has improved and issues are being addressed more consistently, there is still work to do around perception and staff/community feeling

safe in the buildings. This requires all staff working together to address these issues, as well as the effect on well-being.

The Safety and Security Taskforce met this month to discuss ideas for quarterly staff forums and conversations. In addition, the group discussed how to improve the environment by activating areas such as the Main lobby to help reinvigorate the community's use of our spaces for learning and connecting. The Safety Onboarding document is nearly complete and will be reviewed by Management Team. This document will be incorporated into a new employees' onboarding process, and units will also find ways to review with existing staff, particularly as-needed and frontline staff who interact with the public.

The LSO Team will be rolling out a new service in March, "Text an LSO." As part of the year-long campaign, this service will be piloted as a way to address a need for instant communication and report to our security team from our public using the library. The team, along with Management, will monitor the requests and respond appropriately, much like a call or request they receive on the radio from staff. LSO's will triage the requests, follow-up with supervisors on staff, and provide feedback on what is and is not working. Signage has been placed in the public areas, outlining how to Text an LSO, as well as a review of the Rules of Conduct. We hope this will be a useful tool for LSO's and our community to use when they see or experience behaviors that do not align with the expectations put forth by the Rule of Conduct.

Exterior Signage has been posted in all library exteriors, except the Pico Branch. This is a helpful tool for staff, our City partners such as PD, and community to better understand and articulate the Library Rules of Conduct. This also further defines areas outside our library buildings as library property. Library and CCS staff will be convening to discuss the unique nature of the Pico Branch and Virginia Ave. Park functioning on the same campus, but utilizing different staff for enforcement.

The recent incident at Ocean Park has generated a strong concerted effort on the need for increased communication and security to benefit staff and public and coordinated efforts at the City Manager, City Attorney and Office of Communications. Security needs at the Main Library and especially at the branches continue to be of great concern. The advocacy for increased tools such as camera use is something we are in discussion with SMPD and the City Manager's Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Wong, Director of Library Services