

**Library Board, Santa Monica Public Library**  
**Director Report**  
**August 2020**  
August 6, 2020

**Citywide Budget:**

Outlook: The budget situation has not changed for the Library. We are resuming operations in the new fiscal year and proceeding within this two-year cycle. Staff has provided a collection development adjustment based on the reduced budget. All support for nonessential activities has been curtailed or eliminated: travel and training, ULC membership, advertising and promotion, furniture, printing, outside contracts for after-hours security. Control of all expense authorizations will need to go through Library Administration.

City Council authorized a ballot measure regarding a real estate transfer tax for those sales larger than \$5,000,000. The measure would go on the November ballot, would require a simple majority and the tax indicates the library as one of the benefits of those funds. No formula of receipts has been established.

Staff is working on updating the Library Rules of Conduct in COVID-19 conditions. An outline of proposed changes will be available at a future meeting.

**Santa Monica Public Library Operations:**

Rebuilding for a new library system: Staff worked with Mollie Cooper and Paula Singer over the course of five hours over July 30-31 to identify key community priorities and focus on services in the next 6 to 12 months. The facilitated workshop was provided pro bono. Current staffing strategies focus on two teams – Team Purple and Team Blue – to provide curbside service at Main and Pico Branch, fulfill holds, and collect returns. Library leadership will take staff recommendations and overlay with staffing levels to prepare a new organization chart. An additional plan for Library Services for the Future and requisite funding is needed and will require Board engagement. Acting City Manager Lane Dilg will be meeting with the Library Leadership team in mid-August.

Curbside Service and Returns: A primary focus on operations is curbside service and circulation of materials, including collection development and returns. Due to new scientific analysis regarding the length of time COVID-19 remains active on a variety of materials, the recommendation for sequestering returned items has been increased to 4 days instead of 3 days.

Returns are coming in slowly with about 37,000 out of 57,000 items still checked out. Curbside service is M-F 11-3 p.m. and available with 5-minute self-selected appointments in a contactless environment. There were 1800 holds that had

accumulated since March 2020. Primary focus was to get the immediate holds out but now there is a hybrid approach of prior and current holds delivery. Staff recognize that the demand exceeds the availability of appointments. The Main Library will try expanding curbside to include an afternoon nonappointment time between 3-4 p.m. soon. Staff is contemplating evening and Saturday times in the future. Pico Branch started curbside service on August 5.

Building: Montana Branch has termites identified near the ceiling. Treatment will mean tenting the building and will create a delay in initiating curbside service until approximately late August/beginning of September. Staff is working with the neighbor at 1714 Montana to ensure a safe and cordial experience.

The Ocean Park HVAC system is in dire need of replacement and further delays will impact the roof. Building Maintenance and Architecture are aware of the situation and the immediate financial needs. Replacement estimates for the system hover at \$110,000.

Programming: The Summer Reading experience is midway using a new system, Beanstack, provided free from the California State Library. Participants of all ages earn points to read, review materials, and engage in supportive activities like taking up a new hobby or washing hands. The Santa Monica Reads program, featuring The Library Book by Susan Orlean, is sponsored by the Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library. The title has been a great success especially with our neighborhood book clubs. Susan Orlean provided an outstanding virtual program.

Staff continue to add more electronic resource links and titles to the ecollections on the dedicated ONLINE

Outreach: Staff provided training for CREST staff to use the library's educational resources for their programs at VAP and PAL. The summer program also featured Grab and Go packs of activities and materials for all youth participants as part of the Library's Lunch at the Library grant funded by the California State Library,

**Grants:** The Library will apply for a second \$5000 grant for eresources from the California State Library.

**Santa Monica Library Board:** The Library Board is allowed to meet during COVID-19 to focus on action only decisions. These actions might include: adoption of re-opening plans, collection development changes or amendments, amendments to the Library Rules of Conduct, acceptance of donations or awards on behalf of the Santa Monica Public Library, and elections of leadership within the group. It is customary at this time of the year to hold elections of Board Chair and Vice-Chair.

Another change is the operational support of the Board. With limited library staffing and

a need for increased attention around Library communications, Rachel Foyt will no longer provide the administrative support to the Santa Monica Library Board. We thank Rachel for her many years of service in this critical role. Priscilla Bouvet will assume the role as administrative support to the Board. Welcome Priscilla! This transition will take place officially in September.

### **Partnerships:**

Library leadership and Board Chair Lu Plauzoles is meeting with new City Council member Kristin McCowan to introduce her to library operations and priorities. Director Patty Wong will be meeting with Community Services Director Andy Agle to discuss opportunities for collaboration and ways in which the two departments have provided mutual support.

**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.

**Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library:** Friends and library leadership have met to discuss the possibility of using an alternative site – perhaps one of the branches not slated for reopening at this time – as a safe basecamp for sorting, housing of materials for online sales, and potentially physical sales. The City Operating Agreement with the Friends is currently being reviewed by the City Attorney’s Office to determine a quick amendment to allow support for that effort.

**The Bookmark Café:** Café owners Sean Sangwoo Chu and Nana Murata desire to resume operations and operate curbside service in conjunction with the Library’s re-opening. They are working with staff at the City’s Economic Development unit.

**Santa Monica History Museum:** Staff and board members from the History Museum met with library leadership and submitted a draft reopening plan which has been shared with Lou Enriquez and the City’s Safety Officer, Don Coccozza. Discussions also included plans to cross-promote virtual engagement and a commitment to ongoing communication.

### **Safety/Health & Security Monthly Report**

Lou Enriquez, Library Services Officer Supervisor, provided the following report:

Library Service Officers (LSOs) have assisted with the safety and health for all Library staff at the Main Library as well as all 4 branches. LSOs and the Assistant City Librarian have been working and communicating with the Emergency Operations Center in regards to ordering and distributing PPE supplies to all Library staff members. PPE supplies includes, hand sanitizer, disinfectant, gloves, face masks and hand wipes. LSOs

have also provided training on how to properly remove gloves and face masks in compliance with risk management.

LSOs have established protocols and coordinated drop off times with FedEx, UPS, and other City Departments, including staff members of the Friends of the Library when giving access to our facilities.

The LSO team has compiled three major incident reports: Vandalism, Defiance and Verbal assaults. SMPD has also been working with the LSOs and have been responding to all calls generated by the LSOs. In addition to the three major incidents, LSOs have been dealing and interacting with the homeless on a daily basis, asking them to move from book drop areas and staff entrances at all the facilities and occasionally referring them to available services. After several weeks of having the parking structure closed due to a broken gate, the parking structure has reopened for all monthly parking members and has resulted in an increase of homeless loitering on the parking levels. The LSOs have increased their patrol rounds and have been coordinating with SMPD regarding this issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Wong, Director of Library Services