

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

CITYWIDE

Citywide Budget:

At the 10/27 meeting, City Council voted to accept staff recommendation for a one-time allocation of CARES ACT funding in the amount of \$50,000 for library page hours. The Library Board was encouraged to work with the Library leadership on a phased rebuilding plan. If Measure SM passes this could mean longer term funding for library services.

Citywide Commitment to Race and Equity:

Christopher Edwards was appointed the Library's Equity and Inclusion Officer (EIO). Congratulations Christopher! The Library hopes to reactivate the Equity Think Tank so there will be a team working on EDI in the library. Christopher will be working with 15 other EIO in the city to develop an Equity Plan and an Equity Tool Kit. They will focus on key areas for the City; informal mentoring, recruitment, job descriptions and performance evaluations, reviewing and making recommendations to adjustments in policies and procedures from an equity lens. Christopher will meet regularly with Library leadership to share information and plan on implementing and addressing equity needs in the Library.

The Black Agenda: a nonprofit will be established in Santa Monica to support the economic and racial equity needs of the African American community. Susan Lamb and Patty Wong will be working with other city staff to support community fora planned for the year.

Thanks to Jennifer Boyce for leading the 21 Day Racial Equity Challenge that concluded recently. Thanks to Jennifer and Ann Wilson for leading the book discussion on **Just Mercy** by Bryan Stevenson.

The Library is also part of the Southern California Library Consortium. The Glendale Library and Arts District has offered a series on race and equity – Be the Change – and allowed all local libraries to partake in the virtual programming.

Santa Monica Public Library Operations:

Rebuilding for a new library system: Library leadership continues to work with HR manager Mark Brower on developing a team and making decisions together.

Curbside Service and Returns: Montana Avenue Branch began curbside service on Wednesday, September 24. Initial services are scheduled for Monday and Wednesday which mirror proposed open hours when buildings are available to the public. Montana Avenue customers were delighted that service was restored. Beginning in October, Pico and Main will offer

Saturday curbside services the first week of the month from 10-4 p.m. The no appointment, walk up service has meant a significant increase in service and circulation.

Human Resources: Youth and Family Services Librarian III Lenore St. John will be leaving SMPL mid-November to travel home to Texas. She will be an early childhood literacy librarian for the Episcopal School of Dallas. We wish Lenore well in her new journey.

Holiday Schedule:

- Day after Thanksgiving (11/27) the Library will be closed
- Week of December 28 - January 1 the Library will be open with limited services and staffing. The Main Library will hold curbside service

Ocean Park: Beginning November 3, the Ocean Park Branch will be closed for renovation. A crane will populate the Norman Place street for demolition related to replacement of the roof and HVAC systems.

Construction Period: Construction is expected to start on November 3rd and continue through December 15, 2020. Crews will be working Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

Restricted Access: During construction there will be minimal sidewalk closures, lane closures, and road closures in the work area. Temporary traffic controls will be implemented to redirect vehicle and pedestrian traffic as necessary.

Parking: Parking adjacent to library, on Norman Place, will be closed off during demolition work.

Book Return: The book return at Ocean Park will be open and accessible throughout the construction. **Except on Tuesday, November 3 the book return will not be accessible.** The LSOs will empty the book return daily.

If patrons would like to receive weekly construction-related traffic alerts by email or text, they can sign up for SMAAlerts.net. These updates cover the entire City of Santa Monica.

Services: Staff is working on SMPL@ Your Door to replace the former shut-in -services. Working with Elizabeth Scharetg from Community Service who now serves as EOC coordinator, the Library will provide materials to be delivered to older adults and those who may be home bound. The EOC will screen potential volunteers and the Library staff will provide training. Volunteers will drop off and pick up library materials.

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. Antonio met with the Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library Board to discuss ways to collaborate in fundraising and program support.

Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library: The Friends are hoping to use the north courtyard for an occasional booksale. This service is sorely missed. Friends leadership met with City Safety Officer Don Coccozza and EOC Director Lindsay Call to determine the best protocols and process. No dates have been determined yet, but there is a target of mid-December and a call for donations is being processed. Librarian I Jeff Schwartz will be working with the Friends to coordinate donations.

Santa Monica History Museum: The Santa Monica History Museum added another 1000 items to its digital offerings and will create access for the public as part of its continuing commitment to the public as part of their lease.

Board Priorities: Kathleen Rawson, ED of DTSM (Downtown Santa Monica) provided a key overview of DTSM goals and challenges and the evolution of the Promenade 3.0. The Library Board voted to support a presence at Downtown Santa Monica, perhaps populating one or more of the cards available. Vice Chair Arlene Hopkins will work with staff to begin planning what activation could look like.

The Board will hear from Gary Carter, Community Broadband Manager on broadband as it relates to community access. Gary will be joined by Sarkis Metspakyan, Information and Cloud Services Manager, and Joseph Cevetello, Chief Information Officer at the next Library Board meeting.

Safety/Health & Security Monthly Report

Lou Enriquez, Library Services Officer Supervisor, and his LSO Team, provided the following report:

The LSO team continues to monitor and patrol the Main and the branches keeping them safe and secure for staff and patrons on a daily basis. We work closely with library staff with the transit and handling of library materials going to and from all our locations. We assist with any needs that arise during curbside and work with library staff in setting up and break down for curbside daily.

We are preparing for the Ocean Park closure for construction on the roof and will be redirecting all materials to the Main Library to be quarantined and processed in a timely manner.

We have met and are working with The Friends of the Library to develop a process to receive donations in a safe and secure method for staff and patrons. We will work with Lu and other Friends volunteers to strategize and plan for a Friends Book sale in December.

Our team has been monitoring and directing our public to the Vote by Mail boxes; patrons ask continuously throughout the day.

One of our Library Services Officers, Christopher Edwards, has been chosen as one of the Equity and Inclusion Officers representing the library and will be serving on the city's newly formed Racial Equity Committee to help advance our city wide equity and social justice goals that are being developed based on their input from the social justice forums.

Professional note: We wish Chief Cynthia Renaud well on her retirement in October. We wish her well on her new role as lead for the International Police Officers Association. We would be remiss if we did not mention the return of Chief Jacqueline Seabrooks to the City of Santa Monica and Santa Monica PD. Chief Seabrooks is an avid reader and library lover and a good friend of SMPL. The Library and SMPD worked quite collaboratively before her retirement. The Chief will support SMPD while the recruitment and selection of a new chief is underway.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Wong, Director of Library Services