CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 3

MEETING DATE: Thursday, May 28, 2009
AGENDA ITEM #: 9
ITEM: CORRESPONDENCE

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
March 17, 2009

Susan Bonilla, Chair
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
651 Pine St.
Martinez CA 94553

Subject: Contra Costa County Library 2009-2010 Budget

Dear Chair Bonilla,

The Contra Costa County Library Commission thanks you for the Board’s long term support of the Contra Costa County Library. In these challenging economic times, libraries are providing critically essential services to our citizens.

Throughout the county, hundreds are learning to read with our literacy services, improving their resumes and posting them on-line by using the library’s Internet computers as they search for jobs. Despite increasing computer literacy, the digital divide has been growing wider, as more people can no longer afford their computer connection service, and the library is a resource open to all.

It is unfortunate that as circulation and usage continue to set records throughout the county, that the library is faced with difficult choices relative to reducing its service hours and building its collection. The Library Commission understands the need for these hard decisions, however, it trusts the county and cities will continue to work together to maintain the partnerships that have developed over the years so as to minimize the impact on the library community.

The Commission does not believe that facility and property management are core or priority services for the library and strongly supports the proposal to transfer these functions and costs to the cities.

Many studies in recent years show that on average for every dollar invested in library operations, $4 is returned to the community in economic value. Thus, we must maintain and protect the Contra Costa County Library as it is, like good schools, an essential part of our county’s infrastructure. Indeed, libraries not only provide information, they truly transform people’s lives as our citizens obtain the information and skills that are essential in this Great Recession.

Again, on behalf of the library community, thank you for your continuing support of the Contra Costa County Library.

Sincerely,

Chris Tang
Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission

cc: Supervisor John M. Girosa, District I
    Supervisor Gayle B. Uilkema, District II
    Supervisor Mary N. Piepho, District III
    Supervisor Federal D. Glover, District V
    David Twa, County Administrator, Contra Costa County
    Anne Cain, County Librarian
    Library Commissioners
March 18, 2009

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor
State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Public Library Foundation (PLF) Preservation

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger,

On behalf of the Contra Costa County Library Commission, I am writing to request that PLF be preserved during these fiscally challenging budget times.

Throughout the state and our county, usage of library service is at an all time high. Our citizens are streaming into libraries to learn resume writing, research job opportunities, improve their English skills and seek the information they need to manage through this Great Recession.

The funds received from PLF are essential to help preserve public library operations, especially, when local funding is reduced due to the economy. Even though PLF has been slashed over 75% in the past few years, the funds are used to invest in expanded collections and to limit the reduction in hours of service to the public.

A typical day in the Contra Costa County library system (25 community libraries) has over 8,700 people visiting the library (more than twice as many as last year). They will check out or renew over 20,000 items, including 87 at the Juvenile hall library. There will also be about 3,000 Internet sessions, with many of those people posting resumes on-line and doing job searches. The staff at our Antioch Library report they receive 30 job search questions a day plus 12 related for help on improving or writing their resumes for the first time.

It should be remembered that libraries, like good schools, are an essential part of our state's infrastructure and provide true economic value to the community. Recent studies show that for every dollar invested in library operations, $4 is returned to the community in economic benefit.

Thus, the Library Commission urges you and your financial staff to preserve the funding of the Public Library Foundation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chris Tang, Chair
Contra Costa County Library Commission

cc: Christine Kehoe, Chair Senate Appropriations Committee
    Kevin de Leon, Chair Assembly Appropriations Committee
    Senator Mark DeSaulnier, Senate District 7
    Senator Loni Hancock, Senate District 9
    Assembly member Tom Torlakson, Assembly District 11
    Assembly member Joan Buchanan, Assembly District 15
    Assembly member Nancy Skinner, Assembly District 14
    Susie Bonilla, Chair, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
    Anne Cain, County Librarian
    Library Commissioners
April 1, 2009

Mr. Chris Tang  
Chairman  
Contra Costa County Library Commission  
1750 Oak Park Boulevard  
Pleasant Hill, California 94523-4497

Dear Mr. Tang,

Thank you for writing to me recently to share your thoughts about funding for the Public Library Foundation in our state budget. I appreciate your willingness to be a part of this lengthy, complicated process, and I can report that we ultimately ended up with a product that will strengthen our state for the future.

For a budget to work in this difficult economy and state fiscal crisis, it had to include spending reductions, revenue increases, economic stimulus and measures to make government more efficient, which together form what I refer to as a “four-legged stool.” It included some extremely difficult choices, ranging from delaying projects to furloughing state employees to raising revenues, that I do not doubt will have serious impacts on life in our great state.

But the budget also has good news. Every revenue increase is a temporary measure and will expire within a few years. I fought for significant economic stimulus measures because if we ask Californians to pay more in taxes and also reduce their services, we must do everything we can to help create jobs and boost our economy. The state is joining California’s families and businesses in tightening our belt by reducing spending and working to increase our overall efficiency.

Not only does this budget include the tough but necessary steps that it will take to get us through our current difficult financial situation, but it also puts us in a stronger position for the future through reforms I have been fighting for since before I took office. Systemic changes that include a real rainy-day fund, open primary elections and limits on legislators’ pay raises will go before voters, and I will be a partner in the effort to pass these common-sense changes.

The 2009-10 budget contains some measures that will pose real challenges across our great state, but I believe it also contains some true bright spots. I appreciate all the voices that went into this process, and I hope you will remain in touch with me in the future. Thanks again for writing.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger

State Capitol • Sacramento, California 95814 • (916) 445-2841
March 30, 2009

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
State of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Public Library Foundation (PLF) Preservation

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

On behalf of the citizens of Concord, and the entire Contra Costa County Library community, I am writing to request that PLF be preserved during these fiscally challenging budget times.

In Concord, and throughout our entire county, library service and usage is at an all time high. Our citizens are streaming into our local libraries to learn resume writing, research job opportunities, improve their English skills and seek the information they need to manage through this Great Recession.

The funds received from PLF are essential to help preserve public library operations, especially, when local funding is reduced due to the economy. Even though PLF has been slashed over 75% in the past few years, the funds are used to invest in expanded collections and to limit the reduction in hours of service to the public.

A typical day in the Contra Costa County library system (25 public branches) has over 8,700 people visiting the library (more than twice as many as last year). They will check out or renew over 20,000 items, including 87 at the juvenile hall. There will also be about 3,000 internet sessions, with many of those people posting resumes on-line and doing job searches.

The staff at our Concord Community Library reports an increase in usage of nearly 8.0% from 2007 to 2008; an average of 17,550 people use the library monthly and 298 people enter the library hourly. The library’s children’s material is 42% of their circulation and this number is likely to increase as school libraries suffer cuts.

Staff receives 2000 job search questions annually along with several related to helping patrons improve or write their resumes for the first time. Additionally, on average, 1000 others annually use the public access internet computers to file for their unemployment benefits. Due to the economy, many of our culturally diverse citizens no longer can afford home internet connection fees, and must rely upon our library’s internet computers.

Yours sincerely,  
[City Manager's Name]  
City of Concord  
1950 Parkside Drive  
Concord, California 94519-2578  
Ph: (925) 798-4636  
Fax: (925) 798-4656  

City Council  
Laura M. Hoffmeister, Mayor  
Guy S. Byrke, Vice Mayor  
Helen M. Allen  
Mark A. Peterson  
William D. Shian  
Mary Rae Lehman, City Clerk  
Thomas J. Wendling, City Treasurer  
Daniel E. Keen, City Manager
It should be remembered that libraries like good schools are an essential part of our state's infrastructure; as well as providing true economic value to the community. Recent studies show that for every dollar invested in library operations, $4 is returned to the community in economic benefit.

Thus, as the Mayor of Concord, I urge you and your financial staff to preserve the funding of the Public Library Foundation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Laura M. Hoffmeister
Mayor of Concord
Dear Anne:

Thank you and the Committee for the beautiful plaque and letter covering my service.

I have enjoyed being a part of your well-run organization. I have always loved Libraries so it distressed me to have to resign.

Keep up your fine work and I'll be monitoring from afar.

Sincerely, Eleanor
This message was submitted to the Library Commission.

e-mail message:  This message was submitted to the Library Commission.

subject:  Commission mail, library hotspot

to:  ccclibcommission@ccclib.org

comments:  25 april 2009

greetings all,
i am a hercules resident and also a recent re-entry student at cal state east bay. for the past year i have been availing myself of this great library in order to study and do my homework. at times, i have needed to leave my books, coat, etc at my study location (generally, one of the study tables) in order to look-up something on the internet on the desktop computers even though i often bring my laptop.

what a surprise to see the message from the library that you all are experimenting with offering wifi. for me, for the next several years while i am a student, wifi would be the icing on the cake that is this great library.

btw, i was not a supporter of the efforts to establish a library in hercules. i has been frequenting the pinole library for my often-but-not-regular needs for books and felt that the two communities should continue sharing one library. i am grateful to all who made this library a reality, in spite of naysayers like me. i take every opportunity to 'eat crow' and praise this light-filled, cozy, well-stocked haven for students and the curious-minded alike. there's something here for everyone.

and if all that weren't enough, i happened to be in the library one rainy day last winter when the fireplace was on. what a treat to sit inside where it was dry, with nothing more than a pane of glass between me and the storm outside, and toast my damp toes by the fire. that was a day to remember!

melinda manzo
22-year hercules resident
former planning commissioner and design review board member

name:  melinda manzo

e-mail:  mleigh3@yahoo.com

spambegone:  library

phone:  510.724.7295
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email Correspondence from customer</th>
<th>Email Correspondence from Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **to:** libadmin@cccollib.org  
**Date:** 02/02/2009 05:04 PM  
**Web mail, Misuse of bicycle rack at E.C. branch.** | **Subject:** Fw: Web mail, Please respond to my complaint.  
**From:** GMcPartland@cccollib.org  
**Date:** Thu, 12 Feb 2009 |
| A few minutes ago, I noticed a large dog tethered between two of the three bicycle racks in front of the library's doors. These racks are on the premises of the library, not on the sidewalk. I do not think this is a proper or safe use of the bicycle rack and said so to the librarian at the reference desk. Instead of acting to correct this problem and protect the safety of a library patron who might attempt to use the bicycle rack, she instead argued that it was not safe to tether the dog anywhere else. This is a stupid and absurd statement as there are many sign poles and other stationary objects to which a dog can be safely tethered nearby. She seems to place the comfort and convenience of the dog's owner above the safety of the patrons of the library. Her point of view places animals above humans. I respectfully request that the staff in this branch always ask library patrons not to tether their dogs to the bicycle rack, beginning immediately, whenever they notice this occurring. Thank you.— | **Hello Mr. Kitt,**  
**My apologies for not responding sooner. Your message was received and is being addressed. With this note I want to assure you I am working with the El Cerrito staff to ensure the bike rack is used for bicycles only and the dogs are tethered elsewhere. I will not use your name to preserve your anonymity as your earlier email requested. Thank you for your feedback. Your interest in our library is greatly appreciated. Gail McPartland Deputy County Librarian / Public Services** |
| **Date:** 2-12-09 Please respond to my complaint.  
I e-mailed to you last week about a problem at the E.C. branch regarding a dog that was tethered to the bicycle rack. Do you intend to address or to ignore my complaint? | **From:** GMcPartland@cccollib.org  
**Date:** Fri, 27 Feb 2009 |
| **From:** Alfred Kitt  
**Date:** 02/14/2009  
**To:** <gmcpartland@cccollib.org>  
**Subject:** RE: Web mail, Please respond to my complaint.  
Dear Ms. McPartland:  
Thank you for your reply. What I am requesting is very simple and will protect library patrons who wish to use the bicycle rack from confrontations with dogs and their owners. I don't expect the staff to be surrogate police officers, but when a problem is politely brought to the attention, they shouldn't ignore the seriousness of it. Thanks again.—Al Kitt | **Dear Mr. Kitt,**  
**This email follows-up to your original email of Feb 12.**  
I have had a chance to speak with the staff at the El Cerrito Library regarding dogs being tethered to the bicycle rack. They have informed me that there have been occasions in the past when dogs have been tethered there and have been disruptive to library patrons, by way of barking or otherwise causing a nuisance. On the day in question, however, the staff felt that the dog that was tethered was not causing a nuisance to patrons. Furthermore, there were no complaints by people attempting to lock up their bicycles, so the staff felt that no action was necessary. Please be assured that staff has and will intervene in cases where a dog's behavior is causing a problem for patrons in the library or on library grounds. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have regarding this issue.  
**Best regards, Gail McPartland, Deputy County Librarian / Public Services** |

O:\COMMISSION\2008-2009\Email Correspondence from Kitt 2009 May agenda.doc
Alfred Kitt  Date: 02/28/2009  
To <gmpartland@ccclib.org>  
Subject Dogs tethered to the bicycle rack at the E.C. Library.

Dear Ms. McPartland:
I find your reply to my complaint utterly unacceptable and illogical. The bicycle rack is for the use of bicyclists—not dog owners who are too lazy, stupid, or selfish to properly tether their dogs where they will not inconvenience others. Why the staff at E.C., or you, would defend this antisocial behavior is a mystery to me. And why have you retreated from your statement in your e-mail of February 12 that: "With this note I want to assure you I am working with the El Cerrito staff to ensure the bike rack is used for bicycles only and the [sic] dogs are tethered elsewhere." Why do you want to expose the library to liability if a bicyclist is attacked by a dog tethered to the bicycle rack? Why, why, why? If you cannot assure me that no dog owner will be allowed to tether his or her dog to the bicycle rack, then I will appeal your misguided and illogical decision to the library commission and force you to defend yourself. Furthermore, I would like to suggest that a sign is installed at the bicycle rack stating that dogs must not be tethered there. On the day in question, the staff wasn't even aware that a dog was tethered to the bicycle rack, so their statements to you that "the dog that was tethered was not causing a nuisance to patrons" are disingenuous, if not downright dishonest. A library patron may have been inconvenienced but refrained from complaining. I will say this about you and the staff at E.C.: when under attack you are very adept at circling your wagons and defending your hides.

Date: 3/14/2009  
Commission mail, Hazard to patrons at the El Cerrito Branch comments:

A few weeks ago I noticed a dog tethered to the bicycle rack at the El Cerrito Branch Library. I complained to the librarian in charge at the time of the incident and was rudely told that she would not ask the dog's owner to tether the dog elsewhere. Her reason was that the "bike rack is the safest place to tether a dog."

Please review the following e-mail exchanges and then tell me if you agree with Gail McPartland's position or with mine. Thank you.

Re: Dogs tethered to the bicycle rack at the E.C. Library.  
From: GMPartland@ccclib.org  
Date: Mon 3/02/09  
To: Alfred Kitt  
Cc: Anne Cain (acain@ccclib.org)

Dear Mr. Kitt,
Thank you for your follow-up email. My previous email did say we would ask folks to tether their dogs elsewhere; however, when I discussed this with staff at El Cerrito Library they expressed concern that the bike rack is the safest place for the dogs and they had not found the practice to be a bother to others. Obviously, this is great concern to you and bears further investigation.

I am sorry we have not found a solution that meets with your approval. I will continue to work with El Cerrito staff so we may find a solution that best helps El Cerrito including bicyclists, dog owners, and the overall community. I can be reached at 925-648-6423 should you find it easier to discuss this via the telephone rather than over email. I would be happy to hear more about your concerns and to discuss the matter more fully.

Gail McPartland, Deputy County Librarian / Public Services

OVCOMMISSION/2009-2009Email Correspondence from Kitt 2009 May agenda.doc
From: Alfred Kitt  
Date: 03/30/2009  
Subject: Web mail, Gum-chewing by employees when on duty.

Comments: Is this disgusting behaviour allowed? If it is, why? Also, did Gail McPartland advise you of my complaint about dogs tethered to the bicycle rack at the El Cerrito branch, or does she divert all such complaints from your consideration? (I intend to appear before the library commission and complain about her decision in this matter. My objective will be to force you to defend this reckless policy.) Thank you.

Name: Al Kitt

To: Alfred Kitt  
Subject: Fw: Web mail, Gum-chewing by employees when on duty.  
From: acain@ccclib.org  
Date: Tue, 7 Apr 2009 17:32:25 -0700

Hello Mr. Kitt - Gail McPartland did inform me of your concern about the bike rack. Today I was at the El Cerrito Library - two dog "hitching posts" have been installed. Staff will ask people to tether their dogs to these rather than the bike racks.

The County does not have a policy prohibiting the chewing of gum.

The next Library Commission meeting is Thursday May 28.

Anne Cain  
County Librarian  
Contra Costa County Library

From: Alfred Kitt  
Date: 04/07/2009  
Subject: Web mail, Gum-chewing by employees when on duty.

Dear Ms. Cain:

Thank you for you reply to my concerns. I am very happy to hear that you have abandoned your reckless policy of allowing dog owners to appropriate the bicycle rack for their personal use. I am disappointed that you do not prohibit employees from chewing gum while on duty. I don't like talking to someone who is slurring wad of gum about in his or her mouth. You have saved me a trip to the next Library Commission meeting. Thank you. (BTW, I hope you have informed the staff that it is their job to inform dog owners of you policy.)—Al Kitt