CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION

AGENDA ATTACHMENT 3

MEETING DATE: Thursday, November 19, 2015
AGENDA ITEM #: 11A
ITEM: STATE LIBRARY FUNDING ISSUES

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Commissioners will address the State Library funding.
CALIFORNIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE
Pasadena CA November 5-7
Notes prepared by Alan B. Smith

1. CPLA Awards Dinner
   - Oakland City council member Dan Kalb was honored for his strong support for OPL Staff and commissioners said that when first elected, they met with him. He said he bought all his books. They still put an OPL book mark in his jacket pocket. Since then he and much of the city has used the library for research.
   - In closing he said “Without libraries there is no past, and no future”.
   - Sari Feldman, ALA president spoke about the new ALA theme – Libraries Transform. It is an outgrowth of a recent Pew study that found visits to libraries are declining. She and Susan Hildreth (former CA state librarian and former IMLS director) both spoke on the same theme later. ALA is concerned since they have been saying library usage is up.

2. Future of Libraries: Coming Soon
   - “Space Place”. What libraries should look like – retail. When planning look at other buildings.
   - Use open space, e.g. Apple Stores. Staff goes out to the customers.
   - Have lower stacks for easier access.
   - Have clear signs.
   - “Most eBooks downloaded are not read.”
   - Consider allowing the payment of fines with food donations.

3. Lofty Goals
   - This was a discussion about deselecton issues that the San Jose State University and San Jose PL have faced in recent years.
   - Faculty senate can have final say. If don’t give faculty sufficient time to review list of books to weed, they will veto all. Made the mistake of sending a list of thousands of books and giving them two weeks to review.
   - In ‘97, they had to buy back books they had discarded as a professor was working on a major thesis and needed the ones they had discarded.
   - Have been faculty concerns about allowing the public to check out academic books.
   - SOUL - Save Our University Library – example of protests about book weeding.
   - UC Berkeley does not face such issues as they have a large warehouse in Richmond in which to store books.
   - Much discussion about print books vs. eBooks. Survey finds most want print books, however, budget is geared 80% to eBooks.

4. Small Libraries: Square Footage is Just a Number
   - Three library branch managers discussed how they serve the public in small facilities in Riverside Co.
• One manager when people complainer about the size of the library gave them a handout with the names etc. of both city council members and board of supervisors; along with meeting times. Suggested go complain to them. When the city council started planning a new city hall, residents showed up and said a new library was more important. Plans for the new city hall were put on hold.
• One library sits on a high school campus with 4,000 students. Library opens at 3:00 when school lets out. Library can only hold 100 people. Have to lock door until one leaves to let another in. Has enlisted the help of the school librarian to assist in giving out PL cards as well as with book circulation. Some of this is done at school lunch time.
• With fewer resources, must have stronger advocacy.

5. **Advocacy in Action: Meet the Dillons**

• Mike and Christine gave an update on the past legislative year and the increased funding received. They stressed the need for Day in the District and letter writing. Mike gave a shout out to me for my letter writing.
• The revised term limits will have a large impact as those elected next year can stay in office until 2028.
• Little chance of PLF and TBR coming back. Due to mandates, only about 6.5% of the budget ($7.4 billion) is discretionary.
• CLA will push for library construction bond in 2018. Libraries are now providing construction needs assessment. This is the process that was started when SB1455 (DeSaulnier) was vetoed by the governor in 2014.

6. **In Conversation: Scott Bonner and Misty Jones: The Ferguson Public Library**

• Scott became the city librarian of Ferguson on 7/1/14. He discussed the events and how he kept the library open during the chaos. It was recognized as a safe place. At one point, a bottle was thrown at the doors and shards of glass remained in the frame. Next month they are getting sliding doors – the first step to becoming ADA accessible for people in wheel chairs.
• Scott is a very easy going guy. Looking at him on the street, you would never think of him as a hero. We sat at the same table at another event, and he is very down to earth.

7. **State Librarian’s Brunch**

• LSTA grants will have a new focus in the coming year. One part will be reserved for cultural preservation. The concepts are in development.

8. **Community Engagement: Pst – It Is Not About the Library**

• This was a discussion about how the library can work with outside stake holders on issues relevant to the community. The PH branch manager discussed working with the PH mayor on educational initiatives. Chris Brown talked about War Ink.
Library Director Luis Herrera greeted us and recommend we read futurist Thomas Fray’s 10 Issues With Libraries. Frey has several library articles on his website. One issue is that search will become more complicated as we move away from text searching – more towards video searching.

Keynote Speaker: Nena Simon, Director Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History. Later she was joined by Interim Director of the Santa Cruz County library.

Nena talked about how she took over the museum in May 2011 which was almost bankrupt. In four years it has gone from 17,000 visitors annually to over 50,000. Many of the techniques she used apply to running a library. One idea is Pop Up Museums and taking the museum outside of its four walls. She has instituted many programs that attract youth as well as an ethnically diverse population. She likes it when some older people complain it is too noisy!

One of her programs includes a blind magician. “Now you see me. Now I don’t see you”!

She believes in “space making”. And she allows staff to take risks – it is ok to fail.

Chris Brown and War Ink were mentioned as a great innovative idea.

They agreed to focus on who is not coming to programs and ask WHY?

Santa Clara City – Northside branch librarian. She focuses on programs with startups. She gave many examples where startups hold programs at the library with large attendance.

Cupertino Youth Librarian. He recently held a “Hack-a-thon” where dozens of youth came for 19 hours to the library. They formed teams and produced workable apps. Judges awarded prizes for the best ones – all of which worked. They ate many pizzas and went through 537 sodas to stay awake. The library has a coding club.

Catherine Cormier – SFPL. They have converted the teen area into “The Mix”. This is an area where teens (only) can use the professional sound and video equipment to produce quality programs. It was equipped via equipment and funds from Microsoft, KQED, and California Academy of Sciences etc.
http://themixatsfpl.org/

Note: The program was videotaped. The video including slides is available at plpinfo.org