CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 3

MEETING DATE: Thursday, January 26, 2017
AGENDA ITEM #: 10 B
ITEM: Triennial review of the Library Commission, Internal Operations Committee (IOC) copy

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

No action recommended.
Update Report on the Triennial Review of the Library Commission

Internal Operations Committee (IOC) Meeting, September 26, 2016

Library Commission Meeting, November 17, 2016

Mayors Conference Meeting, January 12, 2017

Background and History

In accordance with the Board of Supervisor’s policy, a Triennial Review of the Library Commission was conducted in 2015 by the former County Librarian, Jessica Hudson. The review was prepared with and co-signed by the then-Chair of the Commission, Rodger Lum. The recommendations in the Triennial Report were listed, but not heard, on the Library Commission agenda in November, 2015. The topic was listed again and recommendations were presented verbally by Ms. Hudson at the Library Commission’s January, 2016 meeting. The written report was provided to Library Commission members at the March 24, 2016 Library Commission meeting and the Internal Operations Committee (IOC) on March 28, 2016.

The Triennial Report recommended the IOC consider two alternatives: either sun-setting the Library Commission entirely, or, reauthorizing it with fewer members (by eliminating the alternate members and/or the 5 Special Representatives) and developing a renewed charge, mission and work plan.

At the March IOC meeting it was determined that the Commission should continue in operation through the end of 2016, for a review of its charge, mission, proposed work, membership structure, and continuation going past 2016. In May 2016, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) extended the Commission until the end of December, 2016, to allow the Commission, the Mayors Conference and staff the time needed to conduct this review.

At its May, 2016 meeting, the Contra Costa Mayors Conference also approved the extension of the Library Commission through the end of 2016. The Conference established an ad hoc committee of Mayors to review the matter and make further recommendations about the Library Commission to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayors.

Mayors Conference Recommendations

Following the meeting of the Mayors Conference where reauthorization of the Commission occurred, the Executive Director of the Conference and a group of Mayors began their review of the Library Commission. Their report, which is attached, recommends continuation of the Library Commission and also recommends continued participation by all Cities in the County, with the exception of the City of Richmond. This change is recommended because Richmond chose, through Council Resolution, to no longer participate in the Library Commission or appoint a Commission member and alternate. This report will go to the full membership of the Mayors Conference and is expected to be approved with no changes.

Library Commission and County Staff Updates

Since June, the Library Commission and an appointed ad hoc Revitalization Committee made up of Library Commissioners and Alternates have been reviewing such issues as the mission, charge and work
of the Library Commission, the number and type of members, specifics within the Commission’s by-laws and whether or not the Commission should be reauthorized.

During these months, Library Commissioners and the ad hoc Revitalization Committee have invested a significant number of volunteer hours imagining the future of the Library Commission, developing recommendations for restructuring its membership and work products, drafting the Revitalization Report for consideration and review by the entire Library Commission and beginning to draft by-law changes.

In addition to this work by Library Commissioners and the Mayors Conference, the Interim County Librarian and newly appointed County Librarian, Library administration and staff and the CAO’s Office engaged in numerous discussions to consider the future of the Library Commission, consulted regularly with the Library Commission Chair and ad hoc Revitalization Committee members and provided staff assistance to the Library Commission and its ad hoc Revitalization Committee. Staff from the CAO’s Office and County Counsel have also assisted by researching and providing guidance on technical questions raised by the Commissioners.

The Draft Revitalization Report, Recommendations and Proposed Changes

Throughout this process, the current Library Commission Chair, Alan Smith, has provided leadership and facilitated review of the Commission’s structure and mission. He was present at the September IOC meeting to talk about the work of the Library Commission’s appointed ad hoc Revitalization Committee, the draft Revitalization Report, and to answer questions regarding the draft recommendations and their work to this point.

In the final Revitalization Report, the ad hoc Committee and the Library Commission is recommending that the Commission be reauthorized. This report, also envisions a number of changes to the Library Commission’s voting membership structure and the Commission’s work going forward.

All recommendations contained in the final Revitalization Report have been developed by ad hoc Revitalization Committee members and Library Commissioners and made available to the public through the open meeting process and requirements. To date, there have been 5 public meetings noticed on this topic since June, 2016.

In addition to developing and writing the Revitalization Report, the ad hoc Committee and Library Commission have been reviewing the Commission’s current bylaws and possible changes to them. If the decision is made to reauthorize the Library Commission, they will be ready to work with County Counsel and library staff to draft a revision that contains the proposed changes, for the Board of Supervisors review and approval.

Highlights from the Final Revitalization Report

- The Library Commission recommends a slightly smaller voting membership structure that retains alternate members and changes most of the Special Representatives (except the Central Labor Council) to ex-officio/non-voting status. Alternates would vote only in the absence of the regular appointee. In addition, the City of Richmond passed a resolution to give up its membership on the Commission. With these changes, voting membership becomes 24, with 13 voting attendees needed for a quorum.
• Off-cycle voting for a new Chair or Vice Chair will be allowed, to ensure that both a Chair and Vice Chair will be in place if a mid-term resignation occurs.
• The agenda will be streamlined and notice and opportunities for the public to comment on issues will be made clearer and more prominent.
• The number of meetings will remain at 6 per year.
• Minutes will be streamlined and distributed electronically to members, unless requested otherwise.
• Requests for information shall be routed to designated library staff through the Chair of the Commission or an ad hoc committee chair.
• Library Commission advisory duties will be focused on planning, policy review, financial review, advocacy and funding recommendations, community outreach, support and advocacy for Library services.
• The prohibition against inquiry or investigation into personnel policies and practices and the day-to-day administrative operations of the County Library will continue in place.

Recommendations from the CAO’s Office and the County Librarian

We have thoroughly reviewed the final Revitalization Report’s recommendations and proposed changes. Our assessment is that these proposals are sound and have the potential to modernize and reinvigorate the work and structure of the Library Commission.

In concert with the recommendations from the Mayors Conference, we support reauthorization of the Library Commission, in the structure as recommended in the Conference report.

At their November 17, 2016 meeting, the Library Commission voted unanimously to approve the structure and future work for the Commission, as outlined and recommended in the final Revitalization Report. We recommend the Board of Supervisors reauthorize the Commission until the end of December 2019. We further recommend that 2019 be set as the year for the next Triennial Review of the Library Commission.

If the BOS agrees with these recommendations, we propose the new County Librarian begin to work with the Library Commission and County Counsel to rewrite the Commission by-laws to reflect the changes as outlined, in the Mayor’s Conference report and the ad hoc Revitalization Committee report.