CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 4

MEETING DATE: Thursday, September 27, 2018
AGENDA ITEM #: 7.B.
ITEM: PROJECT EQUITABLE ACCESS

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Vote to send on to the Board of Supervisors.
The Library ensures easy, equitable access to library services for all CCC residents.

EQUITY/EQUITABLE
• Definition: The quality of being fair and impartial
• Synonyms: justness, impartiality, egalitarianism, objectivity, balance

ACCESS
• Definition: The means to approach or enter, the right or opportunity to use or benefit from something
• Synonyms: entry, approach, connection, in, open door, open arms
Some important questions to consider

- What does it mean to deliver equitable access to library services?
- What barriers do we face?
- What barriers have we constructed?

Current thinking about equity in public libraries

- GARE's Advancing Racial Equity in Public Libraries identifies library fines as a form of "structural racism." Negative consequences include being blocked from library and computer use, or being reported to a collections agency.
- Supporting Parents in Early Literacy through Libraries (SPELL) research reveals that library fines and fees are barriers preventing low-income families from using public libraries.
- ULC - Statement on race and social equity
  "Committed to achieving racial and social equity by contributing to a more just society in which all community members can realize their full potential."
Impact on Youth

- Of 132,000 youth accounts 43% owe a balance
- 21,000 youth accounts are blocked, preventing access to library materials

Outstanding Library Late Fines and Fees by Supervisorial District

- District 1: Supervisor Gioia - $1,224,230
- District 2: Supervisor Andersen - $757,718
- District 3: Supervisor Burgis - $937,342
- District 4: Supervisor Mitchoff - $590,021
- District 5: Supervisor Glover - $781,036

Total approximately $5,000,000
Fines and fees are dropping both in terms of budget and collections.
Fines are less than 2% of revenue.
Reflects lower circulation of physical collections.
Reflects higher circulation of fine free electronic resources.

Why fine free?

- Elimination of fines removes barriers for our community and makes access easy, equitable, and enjoyable for everyone.
- Doors are open to everyone in our community to take advantage of all the Library has to offer.
Will customers pay charges that were accrued in the past?

- No. All charges will be waived to give everyone an opportunity to restart their relationship with the library.
- Doors are open to everyone in our community to take advantage of all the Library has to offer.

What does “fine free” mean?

- The Library will no longer issue daily charges for overdue items.
- If an item is damaged or lost, replacement fees will still apply.
- No fines does not equal no responsibility. 30 days after an item is due, it is considered lost and the customer is charged the replacement fee and processing fee.
Proposed Fee Schedule

- Simplified! No late fines!
- All CCCL owned Books, CDs, DVDs – replacement cost is item price or $25.00, plus $5.00 processing fee
- Charges for major and minor damage
- UMS fee remains the same
- Other charges

Project timeline

- Communicate plan, build support – July-September
- Board Order – October
- New fine schedule implemented – November
- Clear all accounts of fines and fees- November
- Purge/clean-up of inactive adult accounts – end of 2018
- Establish processes to routinely purge inactive accounts – early 2019
- Establish a process to routinely write-off uncollectable debt – early 2019
Libraries eliminating all fines

- Berkeley Public Library
- San Diego County Library
- Palm Springs Public Library
- Outside of California
  - Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Free Library
  - Kitsap Regional Library, Washington State
  - Arapahoe County, Colorado
  - Dayton, Ohio
  - Salt Lake City, Utah
  - Nashville, Tennessee

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?