REGULAR Meeting
BELVEDERE-TIBURON LIBRARY AGENCY
Belvedere-Tiburon Library, Tiburon, California
May 20, 2024

AS APPROVED ON JUNE 17, 2024

Roll Call, Present: Chair Roxanne Richards, Vice Chair Anthony Hooker, Treasurer Jeff Slavitz, Niran Amir, Lawrence Drew, Emily Poplawski, Kenneth Weil

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Crystal Duran, Brenda Bottum, Jane Cooper, Naomi Friedland, Kristin Johnson

CALL TO ORDER: **Chair Richards called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm**

OPEN Forum:

Chair Richards opened the floor to comments or questions from the public. There were none.

CLOSED SESSION

RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION at 6:30 pm

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM CLOSED SESSION

Chair Richards announced an action taken: The Agency will fully cover Director Duran's Kaiser health insurance coverage at the family level.

Chair Richards called the open meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

OPEN FORUM: Chair Richards opened the floor to comments or questions from the public. There were none.

STAFF BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Chair's Report**
   Chair Richards reported that Katherine Sutton has been appointed by the Reed School District to the Library Agency.

2. **Library Director's Report**
   Director Duran thanked Trustee Hooker, his wife Betsey, and Trustee Richards for helping at the Senior Fair. The fair attracted 200 attendees.

3. **Belvedere Tiburon Library Foundation Report**

   Foundation member Brenda Bottum reported that the annual campaign has raised $121,000 so far this year. The Teddy Bear Tea held on March 23, for the 24th year, was a success. The Tea was enjoyed by 300 people, 100 each in 3 seatings. The Foundation wishes to use the proceeds to fund an improvement to the Children's outside patio area. Rubber mats will be purchased and installed to soften the concrete surface for safe playtime. The Art Committee's Gallery Show, "Recapturing Humanity" featuring the artists of San Quentin has been installed and celebrated. On Wednesday, a free screening of the documentary “26.2 To Life” will be presented to complement content in the Art Show. The documentary features Markell Taylor, a local Tiburon resident who will be present for questions and discussion.

4. Financial Statements, April 30, 2024

Clerk Johnson reported that, with 83% of the budget year passed, revenues are at about 63% of budget, slightly lower than normal for this time of year, due to April Taxes arriving in May and to ERAF taxes for April still due from the Town of Tiburon.

Expenditures are at 74% of budget, which is normal for this time of year compared to prior years. Personnel is slightly below budget as we continue to hire. Circulation Materials are at 86% overall, on par. Program Services are at 66%. Building Expenses are on par, with some higher post-construction repairs tempered by savings in other areas. Agency Administration is high due to Board-approved additions for the Strategic Plan, Staffing, and Compensation consulting studies.

Current cash projections indicate a November-December low point for total cash at $1,000,000, with operating reserve at about $400,000.

5. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

CONSENT CALENDAR

6/7. Motion to approve the Minutes of April 15, 2024 and the Warrants for the Month of April, 2024.

Ayes: All in favor.
Absent: None.
Noes: None.
All in Favor. Motion Passed.

TRUSTEE CONSIDERATIONS:

8. PRESENTATION OF COMPENSATION STUDY AND CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTING FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDED PAY SCHEDULE

Patty Howard of Regional Government Services (RGS) discussed the Library Staffing and Compensation Study.

Ms. Howard said that her team at RGS evaluated the Library’s staffing at the highest level in the Administrative area, including the Library Director, Assistant Director, and Finance, HR and Administrative Manager positions. The RGS team’s goal was to assure that the Library had the right makeup of positions to distribute and accomplish the necessary work for this department, and to provide job descriptions and classifications and recommendations to support the departmental structure. They also created a job classification plan that supports succession. A kickoff meeting with Director Duran was held to determine the focus of the study. RGS staff collected and reviewed Library documents, organizational materials, and budgets. They then created a staffing assessment questionnaire for the higher-level positions, duties, and responsibilities, and followed up with interviews of the 3 staff members. They then analyzed data, and made recommendations.

Recommendations include adding 2 staff positions to the Administration Department: An Accounting Technician and an Administrative Assistant. Kristin Johnson, the current Finance, HR, and Administrative Manager, has been covering most of the work in this area, with Director Duran performing some of the HR functions. The Accounting Technician is a paraprofessional, working at a higher level than just clerical functions, but not a professional accountant. Functions include payroll, human resources technical work such as onboarding, and collaboration with supervisors and managers. This would push routine work to a lower level and allow the new designation of Administrative Supervisor to better manage systems, policies, and other higher-level functions.

The Finance, HR, and Administrative Manager has been re-designated Administrative Services Supervisor, and will directly Supervise the Accounting Technician and Administrative Assistant.

The Assistant Director position has been re-designated Library Services Manager. Assistant Directors generally manage branches in much larger library systems.

The Youth Services Manager has been re-designated Supervising Librarian – Youth Services.

These position additions and title changes reflect the actual internal services of the organization, and titles more commonly used in government agencies of similar size and function. The administrative functions are thus the umbrella for all of the services that support the public service functions of the Library Agency.

COMPENSATION STUDY

In addition to the Administrative Functions study, RGS staff completed a compensation study to assure that Library salaries are in alignment with comparative agencies. Both base pay and benefits were studied in the marketplace for those comparative agencies.

RGS used standard methodology for the studies, including the components of: Agencies comparative in size, and Libraries of different sizes. An initial sample of 14 agencies was narrowed to 11. The benefit elements of medical, dental, vision, retirement, and deferred compensation were included, along with benchmark position classifications.

Data including duties, knowledge & skills, and experience required for positions were compared to those of other agencies, with matching to Library positions using a "70% rule." If a position in the data group was noted to match 70% in duties and responsibilities, it was used for comparison and benchmark for Library positions. If there were greater differences, including special assignments, they were noted for specific positions.

Analysis of the data indicated that some Belvedere-Tiburon Library Agency salaries are low and all benefits are currently much lower than other agencies. This is due to the historically used increase methods, in which Step Increases and COLA Increases were separated. Legal issues around this method have recently arisen regarding salary schedules and postings for public sector agencies. The Library's schedule wasn't up to date with COLA updates for the Step and Track levels, and didn't reflect actual salaries, since those who had graduated from Step and Track were receiving just COLA increases. RGS staff created a new salary schedule for review and approval that will be externally competitive and internally equitable and meet all requirements of the law.

California SB1162 requires all public and private employers with 15 or more employees to post schedules of pay schedules that include actual current pay for all employees. The pay scales are required to show hourly and salary scales. For applicants, this needs to be a public document. Salary records must be kept for 3 years after employee termination.

Since the Library Agency is a member of CalPERS, and CalPERS determines "PERS-able" eligible pay types and retirement allocations, all current pay rates must be published in a schedule. The schedule must be approved by the board or the governing body whether it indicates flat rates or pay ranges, and must be posted on Library's website and at a physical location. Schedules must be retained for current and future examination.

The Library Director position was used as the benchmark class because it was the closest to the market median. RGS staff created an internal alignment for other positions below that class. Differentials are based on industry standards and on various classification standards. A Schedule that is within 5% of the market median is considered competitive. Special assignments can have different scales. All salaries on the RGS new schedule are within 5% of the studied market median.

Under the new schedule, 6 Library employees will be Y-Rated. Y-Rating is used when an incumbent's current salary is higher than the top step of the approved range. Pay for Y-Rated incumbents is frozen until that salary range meets their salary, typically through COLA increases.

BENEFITS STUDY

Regarding Benefits, RGS staff study concluded that the Library Agency contributes the least amount of money to the health plan (medical/dental/vision) compared to the data sample. The Agency should consider benefit enhancement. Some employers contribute on behalf of their employees. Some agencies offer a wellness stipend for work-life balance.

Longevity pay is an additional benefit seen in the comparative marketplace. The Salary Schedule does not take this into consideration. Under the "Step and Track" Salary Schedule, employees received annual reviews for a standard level of service and increase Step-by-Step to the maximum Step on the schedule. Some agencies offer an additional milestone for years of service and/or merit, either ongoing, or one-time. Agencies can determine such rewards at their discretion. These are benefits offered by other libraries that BTLA doesn't offer.

Trustee Poplawski asked whether the wellness benefit would be taxed. Director Duran said it could be set up on a reimbursement basis, which would not be taxed.

RGS recommends that the Agency develop pay and benefit policies in order to provide equity and consistency with respect to classifications and compensation, and detail how increases are implemented. According to Library practices in the past, if someone received a step increase, they did not get a Cost of Living Allowance increase (COLA). Those above step 6 did get a COLA only. COLA should be given Agency-Wide. It is a recognition of the fact that the cost of living has increased. RGS recommends for future that, when COLA is given, it is given to all steps and classifications. COLA should be implemented and applied to the entire salary schedule separately from any kind of merit increase that is given.

Trustee Drew asked how many of the entities surveyed award a COLA increase. Ms. Howard said that most agencies give some amount of COLA. COLA awards are not always the same year-to-year and across the board unless bargaining units are involved. COLA increases are fiscally determined, based on actual cost of living changes and affordability to the agency. When possible, most agencies do give COLA. If COLA is not applied/awarded as the CPI increases, an agency will fall behind the market in its pay schedule.

Vice Chair Hooker asked what factors determine the size of the COLA. Ms. Howard said that the percentage is often based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). If COLA is written into a contract, it is determined as a percentage in different years, depending on the length of the contract. Sometimes it is negotiated. Some agencies have policies that base it on the CPI. Contracts and policies can potentially cause fiscal problems based on economic factors which arise.

RGS staff do recommend that the Library establish a compensation policy which includes parameters on how COLA is provided, how often to do a study to upgrade, and how to set salaries in comparison to the market. One strategy for this is to be the preferred employer, designating pay at 10% above the median in order to be more competitive in the marketplace.

A compensation policy is also a good setup for succession, i.e. guidance and roadmap for new directors. Policies can be set without locking in future promises.

Vice Chair Hooker asked about merit situations, since the step system seems not merit based, but more automatically awarded. Ms. Howard said that the step system *is* supposed to be a merit system. However, in reality, step progression in most agencies is based on satisfactory performance. The standard practice is to give step increases annually.

Treasurer Slavitz said that a local agency he is affiliated with has established by policy the requirements for reaching each step.

Vice Chair Hooker asked how an agency could award employees who get an upgraded degree while in the Agency's service. Ms. Howard said that, if it's not a requirement for the position, it would not merit a step increase, but it would be a promotional opportunity. Some agencies provide an academic compensation if someone has a degree above what the position requires. If the Agency values that, recognition pay can be given.

Vice Chair Hooker asked how compensation would be increased after an employee reaches the highest step on the schedule. Ms. Howard said that would involve COLA only, which would be applied to the schedule and increase all steps, including the final step amount. In the public sector, there is an end level to the top pay for any particular position. Vice Chair Hooker asked whether COLA and Step progression could be bifurcated. Ms. Howard said that is what has been historically done in the Library, and the current recommendation is to apply COLA to the Step Schedule. The work is being paid for, not longevity. If you wanted to reward someone for tenure, you could give bonus pay. COLA needs to be applied across the board, Agency-wide, with all employees receiving the same percentage.

Trustee Drew asked about the credentials of the RGS staff who did the study. Ms. Howard said that all RGS staff have 20 years of public sector Human Resources experience. They are experts in classification and compensation. Trustee Drew asked if they were specialists in Libraries, adding that Librarians might see the addition of 2 administrative staff differently that Accountants. Ms. Howard said that Administrative staff is standard in public agencies.

The study included agencies that were the same size as the Belvedere-Tiburon Library. Director Duran added that a staffing analysis hadn't yet been done on the Library Service side.

Trustee Weil asked whether, since the salary scale is all based on setting positions at percentages below the Director's position, if current director left, would the next Director hire be a step 2 or step 1, setting the percentage difference system off a bit. Ms. Howard said that the salary for the Director was and would in the future be based on the range, not individuals. Trustee Weil said that would make the comparison to other classifications not established. Ms. Howard said that, with people at many different steps in the salary schedule the standard percentage of difference from the top position only applies at the top levels. Chair Richards added that the RGS comparisons with other organizations was what solidified the ranges of each position. Ms. Howard reiterated that the study showed the current Director's salary was right on the mark, thus was used as the benchmark. The top step represents the *potential* to an applicant. The top step for the Director is competitive in the current market.

Ms. Howard said that two salary schedules have been included for approval in the packet tonight: (1) The first is the recommended schedule from the RGS study. (2) The second one adds 3% COLA for next fiscal year.

Vice Chair Hooker asked whether the schedules are representative of the Library's geographic area. Ms. Howard said that the list of comparative agencies is either in the geographical area, the same size, or have a combination of comparative factors.

Director Duran said that she recommended approving the first schedule (without the COLA) tonight. This would allow employees who will be receiving an equity adjustment to get that immediately. The Schedule WITH COLA would be approved in June for the new fiscal year, 2025.

Vice Chair Hooker asked what the basis was for a 3% COLA on the second schedule. Director Duran said that the City of Belvedere is applying 3% for fiscal year 2025, the Town of Tiburon is looking at up to 4%, and Mill Valley and Marin County are applying 3% this year. Vice Chair Hooker asked if the 3% applied this year would set a precedent. Director Duran said, that no, COLA is determined on a year-by-year basis

Trustee Weil thanked Ms. Howard for the amount of work that went into creating the schedule. However, he expressed a philosophical difference in that the Agency isn't adopting a schedule based on a decision about who the Library Agency is and where the Agency wants to be in terms of pay scale. While he appreciates the RGS method of using a median figure and not setting everything in stone, the public in this community requires a certain level of education and experience for Library service, and the Agency wants to be able to retain employees. Does the Agency want to be in the middle where everyone else is or to provide the resources to keep the Library Special? There have been historical problems with decision making during the recent transitions at the Library, and an Assistant Director is needed to support the Director. He agreed that, for now, just to get started on the right path forward, the Agency could adopt the schedule to set a base level of positions, and then talk about exceptions to that. Trustee Poplawski added that this should be especially considered for the more junior positions. Director Duran said that the salaries had been set at a competitive level for the lower staff. Trustee Weil said he could not vote for the whole package.

Chair Richards asked the difference is between a Manager and a Supervisor. Ms. Howard said that different agencies use different titles. Assistant Directors are typically in much larger systems. Library Services Manager was used in other agencies. This is the person who is second in command overseeing multiple services. The intent was for that person to assist the director in strategic planning reports research special studies. The Manager designation differentiates them from Supervisors and technical Library Specialists, that is, managing larger programs. Chair Richards argued that the job descriptions are similar. Ms. Howard said that the updated description focuses on the true assignment of the job.

Trustee Drew asked if there could be a selective application to repair only the employees who are underpaid. Director Duran said that agencies can't be selective, and must apply changes to the entire system. Trustee Poplawski said that, if steps are defined, it works out over time. Alternatively, an additional upper step level could be assigned. Director Duran said that with the current changes, non-Y-rated employees would be moved up to a step that gives at least a 5% increase currently. Trustee Poplawski asked about compensation versus level banding. Treasurer Slavitz suggested the Agency approve the current schedule without COLA proposal, see how it goes, and make changes if necessary next year. Ms. Howard added that RGS can do smaller "refresh" studies each year.

Ms. Howard added that, if the Agency wants to reflect the uniqueness of the Library, the Agency could adopt a policy at a higher percentile from the medium. The RGS recommendations were fiscally conservative. Every agency should have a compensation philosophy that considers competition in the marketplace. Director Duran said that the Agency is still slightly above Mill Valley, and some positions are above market in comparison to Marin County.

Vice Chair Hooker said that the Agency doesn't have the revenue to go above market. Real estate taxes have only exceeded a 5% increase in less than half of the years that the Library has been operating. Trustee Weil reiterated that he would like to see a schedule that makes sense for *this* community specifically. Chair Richards added that the Strategic Plan did indicate what the Belvedere-Tiburon Library Agency wants to be and who we are, and that the staffing salaries are right up with the Director's.

Trustee Poplawski asked if there would be any negotiation of the approved schedule. Director Duran said no, that there could be potential turnover, but if the approved salaries are above the median for the area, people may not find other opportunities. Trustee Weil asked if new hires are required to start at step 1. Director Duran said no, step can be determined based on qualifications.

Vice Chair Hooker asked if the COLA is approved, do the Y-rated staff receive COLA. Director Duran said no, that Y-rated staff do not receive increases until the COLA updates applied to the schedule catch the top step up with their current salaries.

Chair Richards called for motion approve schedule without COLA effective the beginning of the pay period including June 1.

Motion to approve the updated Salary Schedule developed by RGS without COLA effective the beginning of the pay period including June 1 made by Treasurer Slavitz, seconded by Vice Chair Hooker.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ayes: Chair Roxanne Richards, Vice Chair Anthony Hooker, Treasurer Jeff Slavitz, Niran Amir, Lawrence Drew, Emily Poplawski, Kenneth Weil

Absent: None.
Noes: None.
Motion Passed.

9. FIRST REVIEW OF PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 BUDGET AND PROPOSED APPROVAL OF UPDATED SALARY SCHEDULES

Director Duran said that the Budget includes a County-estimated 4.7% increase in basic taxes. ERAF is budgeted conservatively based on changes at the State level and by County indications. Director Duran and Clerk Johnson have reviewed all of the expense line items for consistency with current trends and for reasonableness within budget parameters.

Some additional expense lines were added for Fiscal 2025: Line 7115 includes an additional $25,000 for OPEB Payment or 115 Trust funding. In addition, Line 8890 adds a contribution to the operating reserve at 1% of operating revenue.

In the 7000 Personnel section, salaries are budgeted at 18.2 FTEs, which includes the addition of an Accounting Technician, as recommended by the Administrative function Regional Government Services Study. Personnel is lower than the prior year because one librarian position was eliminated for this fiscal year.

Director Duran has added a budget introduction memorandum, describing the background of the Agency and goals from the Strategic Plan.

Trustee Drew asked whether the approval of the Salary Schedule Upgrade also includes approval of the additional position. Director Duran said, no, that the included Organizational Chart shows all potential positions. Not all of these positions are included in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget. Current vacancies which staff hope to fill are specifically noted.

Treasurer Slavitz asked whether the budget assumes the new Salary schedule with the 3% Cost of Living Allowance for 2025. Director Duran affirmed, and added that the budget also includes the new Accounting Technician position. The budget doesn't currently include the benefits coverage approved for the Director in closed session this evening. That amount will be updated on Line 7110, PERS Health Benefits, for the June presentation.

Chair Richards asked for a motion to approve the updated salary schedule for Fiscal 2025 including a 3% COLA increase.

Chair Richards suggested that a protocol for future salary evaluations be developed.

Motion to approve salary schedule with 3% COLA effective FY24-25 developed by RGS made by Trustee Weil, seconded by Trustee Drew.

Ayes: Chair Roxanne Richards, Vice Chair Anthony Hooker, Treasurer Jeff Slavitz, Niran Amir, Lawrence Drew, Emily Poplawski, Kenneth Weil

Absent: None.
Noes: None.
Motion Passed.

10. CONSIDERATION OF RESOULTION NO 298-2024 AUTHORIZING THE CLOSURE OF MECHANICS EXPANSION CHECKING AND MONEY MARKET BANK ACCOUNTS.

In light of FDIC insurance and other considerations, it was determined that discussion and vote on this resolution should be postponed.

11. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 299-2024 AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF $250,000 IN BUILDING RESERVE FUNDS TO THE INSURANCE RESERVE

Motion to approve RESOLUTION 299-2024, made by Vice Chair Hooker, Seconded by Trustee Drew.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ayes: Chair Roxanne Richards, Vice Chair Anthony Hooker, Treasurer Jeff Slavitz, Niran Amir, Lawrence Drew, Emily Poplawski, Kenneth Weil

Absent: None.
Noes: None.
Motion Passed.

9. Schedule of 2024 Meeting Dates

The next Regular BTLA meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2024.

Chair Richards adjourned the meeting at 8:26 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. Johnson, Clerk of the Belvedere-Tiburon Library Agency Board