

REGULAR Meeting
BELVEDERE-TIBURON LIBRARY AGENCY
Belvedere-Tiburon Library, Tiburon, California
April 21, 2025

AS APPROVED ON MAY 19, 2025

Roll Call, Present: Chair Anthony Hooker, Vice Chair Emily Poplawski, Treasurer Jeff Slavitz, Pamela Goldman, Roxanne Richards, Kenneth Weil

Members Absent: Katherine Sutton

Also Present: Crystal Duran, Kristin Johnson, Lucy Churton, Joey Della Santina

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Hooker called the meeting to order at 6:13 pm

OPEN Forum:

Chair Hooker opened the floor to comments or questions from the public.

Rick Grossman, long-time resident of Tiburon, Library fan and user, speaker at a Library series, and trial attorney, said that he was speaking on behalf of major donors in the community to express their extreme concern about the legal fees the Library is incurring related to the current employment dispute. He noted that the Library's financial report shows an overage in the legal line item of 200% over budget at this time.

Mr. Grossman recommended that the Library consider a nonbinding arbitration for the dispute. Mr. Grossman recently sent an email to the Agency Trustees regarding the available services of his legal nonprofit. He offered to provide a facility whereby the parties can jointly choose an employment expert to decide the case with a binding decision in less than half the time at less than half the cost of the other attorneys.

Victoria Fong, Tiburon resident who has been engaged with the Library since its post office days said that she was speaking to support Mr. Grossman's offer to take care of the legal matter. She encouraged the Agency Trustees not to fester in a decision, and she supports and reiterates Jeanette Carr's statement at the April meeting that a prolonged process will be divisive in the community, and that the Agency's legacy should not be a costly delayed and dragged out decision.

Violet Marshall, resident of Belvedere-Tiburon for 60 years, said that she has never seen anything like this in the community. She asked that the Agency consider Mr. Grossman's offer to ensure that the conflict is quickly settled with minimal cost and further damage to the community and to the Agency's legacy. She asked for common sense and for consideration in use of the taxpayers' money.

Chair Hooker closed the public comment at 6:28 pm.

STAFF BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Chair's Report

Chair Hooker reported on the Library's progress in three areas of focus: Programs and Services, Finance, and Library Director Achievements. He thanked Vice Chair Poplawski for her support in this reporting:

In the Programs and Services area, The Belvedere Tiburon Library is currently open more hours per week than any other library in Marin County. Staff and Agency are doing everything possible to listen to and serve the community, to consider requests and needs, and to respond appropriately.

The Art Committee's latest exhibit, Artist Narratives, opened 2 weeks ago, with high attendance, high quality art, and great community goodwill. General Program attendance is up 50% from last year.

In addition to a number of teen volunteers at the Library, Corner Books is managed by Foundation Director/Volunteer Heather Lobdell and is staffed by 43 volunteers. The Foundation is ramping up volunteer activity management. At the Library, the meeting rooms are booked most of the time.

In the Finance area, the Library budget is \$3.5 million now, we are no longer a small library. The Library is staffed with 25 staff, at 18 Full-Time Equivalents. By nature of libraries, staffing is the largest budget item at 66% of the total budget.

The Agency is proud to have paid off the Library Expansion debt last fiscal year. The Library agency and staff are working hard with the Foundation as equal partners in fundraising for program development and support, and volunteer program development. The Foundation is actively involved in furniture improvements and children's play area improvements. Director Crystal Duran has been instrumental in championing Library needs with the Strategic Plan, community input, and collaboration with the Foundation.

Director Duran has also initiated collaborations with the local Rotary Club, the Town of Tiburon, and local schools. She has dedicated time and committee exploration to improve compensation plans and policies, employee benefits, and the employee manual, and launched employee development programs including coaching. She has also procured a \$72,000 Sustainability Grant and organized staff to develop "Green Takeover" Sustainability Programs.

Library and Foundation staff and volunteers are on the same track, working well together and getting the word out via the quarterly In the Stacks publication and the Ark Newspaper. Chair Hooker encouraged all present to read the newsletters and the posters in the Library to learn about upcoming programs, including art talks, digital resource and device training, makerspace creativity, and children's and teen programs.

The Agency continues to work with staff and the Foundation to re-emphasize the Library's vision, mission, and values we cherish through policies and programs alike. From a small library in the old post office building, the Library has evolved to be central, in the heart of the community.

Trustee Richards added that the Agency feels strongly about the work accomplished and Director Duran's leadership and contributions. She also expressed appreciation for the volunteer architect and interior designer Jean Fair and Jennifer Hull, who have donated their time for the Library Project Refresh.

2. Library Director's Report

Director Duran reported that the Green Takeover Group is planning a Green Fair on Saturday, June 21. Volunteers will be doing 80% of the work, alongside staff, to prepare for the Fair.

Library Staff are planning to host a summer art exhibit. The Art Committee has also finalized the 2026 Art Show Lineup.

Staff are developing a local author series, with authors grouped for mini ted-talk type events with presentations and Q&A. This is in response to community feedback toward the Library's Strategic Plan.

Upcoming programs include Coffee with a Cop at the Library (part of the Sustainability plan related to community connections), a behind the scenes tour of the Marine Mammal Center by Foundation Director and Center Volunteer, Brenda Bottum, and a presentation by author Alka Joshi.

The Agency Compensation Committee has been meeting for several months to review benefits for staff. In December the Library launched a low-cost Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program, which provides pretax health cost savings for employees. In June, the Library's Long-Term Disability (LTD) and (improved) Life Insurance programs will be consolidated with Reliance Matrix, along with the new additions of Vision (per the October employee survey) and an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The additional cost to offer all these programs under this provider is modest.

Director Duran has successfully applied for Library Participation in BayREN Energy Roadmapping Project, which provides public assistance for greening building operations. This will help to addresses goals identified in the Library's Strategic plan, which include being able to continue Library operations during power outages and offering the Library as a central hub in the case of disaster.

3. Belvedere Tiburon Library Foundation Report

Foundation Director Lucy Churton reported that Library Donors will be honored at a celebration on Thursday, April 24th from 5-to-7pm with the Library's Hootenany Group performing, and the Makerspace open for tours and demos.

The Children's patio covering has been poured, which makes the ground surface safer for toddlers. Phase 2 of this project will provide shade coverings, and Phase 3 will provide greenery and warmth.

The Foundation will be supporting the Coffee with a Cop event next week.

In October, a Legacy celebration for the Library's 30th anniversary is planned to thank the community shapers of the Library.

The Annual Fund has been very successful, with \$170,000 raised.

The Volunteer Task Force is still in the works for fall, with goals of organizing volunteers through a database, and creating a system for signup and work projects.

The current Art Gallery show, "Artist Narratives" has sold 4 pieces.

Vice Chair Poplawski asked about Teen Volunteers. Director Duran said that there are weekly opportunities for teens to sign up to help with Library Operations and Events. On May 15, there will be a youth-focused Art & Literature event which teens will help with.

4. Financial Statements and Quarterly Treasurer's Report, March, 2025

Clerk Johnson reported that cash reserves are at \$2.3 million, compared to a December low point of \$1.2 million, and operating reserves are at \$1.6 million, compared to a December low point of \$500,000. About \$45,000 of the \$50,000 Expansion Reserve carried forward has been used for Library furniture and building repairs and improvements, and \$42,000 has been spent on grounds from the operating reserve. A portion of the grounds improvement will be covered by the garden donor.

1995 Bond Debt Service has been paid for the year, and 3 payments of principal and interest remain through September 2026, a debt balance of \$228,050. Pension and OPEB liabilities total about \$2 million as of the end of last fiscal year.

Most of the Spring property taxes have been received with total revenues at 60%, normal for this time of year. Total Expenditures are at 74% of budget, par at the 75% marker of the fiscal year.

Director Duran added that the Finance Committee has reviewed a draft reserve policy for possible action at the next Agency meeting, along with draft budget.

5. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

CONSENT CALENDAR

6/7. Motion to approve the Minutes of March 17, 2025 and the Warrants for the Month of March, 2025. Made by Trustee Richards, Seconded by Treasurer Slavitz.

Ayes: All present in favor

Absent: Katherine Sutton

Noes: None

All in Favor. Motion Passed.

TRUSTEE CONSIDERATIONS:

8. Presentation on the Library Collection and Usage

Librarian Joey Della Santina presented statistics on what is moving in the Library's collection as support to explain how Librarians select items for circulation. He explained that Collection Development is basically managing the Library's large inventory of items available for checkout and responding to patrons' needs. Purchasing can be based on

circulation-items that move the most, the number of holds (requests) and resources at Belvedere Tiburon, and the number of holds and resources at other libraries. Staff use Library review journals, newspapers, magazines, bookstores and museums, and Library programs and discussion groups to research desired additions to the collection. Patrons can request Library purchases through 5 different methods.

Current cataloging practices are evolving more and more to “Inclusive Cataloging” methods, which target an unbiased approach to labeling and grouping, and physical placement. Some of the groupings in the Belvedere Tiburon Library include Classics, Poetry, Library of Things, Green Collection, and Local Area Information.

Library Collection Items are “weeded” periodically, to make room for the new. Deaccession practice is currently to “weed” all items that have not circulated within the most recent 2 years (1 year for DVDs).

Current strategies for the Collection include having a Bestseller collection (currently popular items which can have as many as 200-300 holds), use resources to collect more usage data, buy Overdrive items with hold waits, and continue to develop specialty areas and program support items.

Checkouts of physical items peaked in 2023 after the pandemic, and were expected to decline after 2023, but have continued to increase. Between 2023 and 2024 Belvedere Tiburon Library Circulations increased by 8%, Holds by 17%, and Holds Filled (by BTL as opposed to elsewhere in the consortium) by 13%. Highest circulating items were J Picture books, followed by Movie DVDs and J Non-Fiction. Circulation can be affected by where items are placed in the Library.

Digital Resource item checkouts increased by 19% for Overdrive (e-books, audiobooks, magazines), 20% for Kanopy (movies) and 1.5% for Hoopla (all formats).

Overdrive is mostly used by adults (85%).

Treasurer Slavitz asked whether e-book Bestsellers work the same way as physical Bestseller. Librarian Della Santina said that Libby offers “skip the line” checkouts. He added that e-book purchases are managed through the MARINet consortium. Overdrive can be used to determine volume of holds by Belvedere-Tiburon patrons and purchase the desired books, but the books will be part of the entire consortium. So, the availability to local patrons is diluted for e-books in that sense.

Director Duran added that e-book hold times are now down to 39 days for best sellers (the wait time used to be months). In addition, the MARINet consortium is collectively buying more. She introduced the idea in the consortium that all libraries in the consortium use their allotment to by “skip the line” titles. She added that the need to be collectively spending more on e-books is a current concern.

E-book and audiobook usage have jumped substantially over the last 5 years in 2025.

Trustee Richards asked about trends in print books. Director Duran said that new popular books are kept in the collection for shorter times than in the past, but, in terms of availability, e-books are available in the same way as physical books, in that they can only be checked out 1 copy to one person at a time, so patrons wouldn’t necessarily be able to get the book faster digitally.

Trustee Richards asked how the composition of the collection has changed based on popularity of titles. Librarian Della Santina said that librarians will continue to balance title popularity versus breadth of information. Treasurer Slavitz asked whether being a member of MARINet makes a difference in that balancing act. Director Duran said that patrons can get books in other local libraries or request a purchase through Zip Books. Belvedere Tiburon Library has been purchasing more of the high demand items.

Patrons can ask for books feedback through a biblio-commons request, Libby “notify me,” in person at library service points, by email to the Library info desk, and through Zip Books. Requests are limited to 5 per month per patron. Director Duran said that, since Zip Books is funded by state grants, it is not yet known if the program will be impacted in the near future.

9. Consideration of adding one dual EV charging station

Director Duran said that the 3 EV charging stations (1 dual station and 1 accessible single station) which the Library added in 2023 have been very popular, and that there are only 2 other locations in the area with public EV chargers: City of Belvedere City Hall and Tiburon Lodge. Library chargers are currently available from 6 am to 10 pm, and generate about \$7.14 per charging session at about 151 charging sessions per month, or \$13,000 annually.

Installation costs was zero net cost due to available rebates. The life of the units is about 10 years. The installation/equipment cost before rebates was \$16,000.

Last year the Library increased the charging fee from 38 to 40 cents per kWh. Pricing has not yet been tiered based on peak hours. Gross revenue this year is about \$11,000 to-date, and is expected to be about \$16,000 for this fiscal year.

The Library subscribes to service support, currently \$5,000 over 3-years (expected to be lower in the future with 5-year contracts), in addition to incurring the PG&E cost of the stations, currently at \$12,000 per year, and expected to increase 10% annually.

The Town of Tiburon has a goal to increase public access to charging stations and has asked if the Library would add another station. The Town will pay for the cost of the new unit installation and service contract, so out of pocket to library would only be utilities, which is expected to be offset by the revenue.

The Library stations are currently at level 2. Increasing delivery speed would require additional investment.

Motion to approve adding one dual EV charging station Made by, Treasurer Slavitz, seconded by Trustee Weil.

Ayes: Chair Anthony Hooker, Vice Chair Emily Poplawski, Treasurer Jeff Slavitz, Pamela Goldman, Roxanne Richards, Kenneth Weil

Absent: Katherine Sutton

Noes: None

Motion Passed.

10. Discussion of possible uses of Bonnie Spiesberger Gift for Capital Expenditures

Director Duran said that Bonnie Spiesberger, former Foundation President and Agency Chair, and longtime contributor to the Library, had made an estate gift to the library. The gift is restricted to capital projects or an endowment fund. Director Duran and Foundation leadership have discussed using \$100,000 of the gift to complete Project Refresh.

The Foundation will meet in May to discuss the gift, and Director Duran would like to take a proposal for this use of funds to their meeting. She is asking the Agency for direction and feedback.

Community member Victoria Fong suggested a first-aid kit accessible to program attendance.

Trustee Poplawski asked about prioritization of desired projects, and whether Director Duran might consider using the portion of the gift toward solar rather than toward Phase 2 of Project Refresh. Director Duran said that she plans to suggest a reserve plan for the solar project, and that the Library Nave layout is important right now for the community to be able to find things and use the space.

11. Consideration of Sculpture addition to I'Lee Hooker Memorial Garden

Chair Hooker recused himself for the Sculpture consideration.

Trustees discussed the issues of setting precedents with donors adding items after the fact to previously promised naming, and about the problem of upkeep and care of the sculptures, and of possible attraction to children crossing into the retention basins.

Motion to deny the proposal Made by Trustee Poplawski, seconded by Treasurer Slavitz.

Ayes: Vice Chair Emily Poplawski, Treasurer Jeff Slavitz, Pamela Goldman, Roxanne Richards, Kenneth Weil

Absent: Katherine Sutton

Noes: None

Motion Passed.

12. Meeting Dates

The next Regular meeting of the Agency is scheduled for May 19, 2025.

Chair Hooker adjourned the meeting at 8:33 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

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