

LIBRARY SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, December 9, 2010, 5:30 p.m.

E.P. Foster Library, Topping Room
651 E. Main Street, Ventura, CA 93001
Tel: (805) 648-2716

Minutes

Present:

Supervisor Kathy Long, County of Ventura, District 3; Chair & Mayor Carol Smith;
Mayor Kevin Kildee; Mayor Sylvia Muñoz Schnopp; Mayor Bill Fulton;
Councilmember Jamey Brooks; Library Director, Jackie Griffin.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m.

2. Roll Call

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of the October 21, 2010 Library Commission meeting.

Approved

5. Public Communications

Three members of the public were heard.

6. Commission Member Comments

Commissioner Fulton stated that the City of Ventura has decided not to give the library system notice of withdrawal at this time.

The City of Ventura's current plan of action includes the following:

1. In the next six months to update the City Strategic Plan for Library Services in Ventura.
2. To move forward with the partners on the Library Commission and work together to restructure the library so that the cities can all enjoy the service that they currently have.

7. Discussion of Governance and Funding of the Ventura County Library and possible next steps. Discussion/Action

Director Griffin gave a brief history of the Ventura County Library, which is described, in detail, in the Commission Meeting packet Item 7.

The original action that was requested was that Director was to bring to the Commission two possible models of service.

1. Contracting for library service by each of the individual libraries in the system.
2. Creating a pooled resource or County Library System.

Director Griffin explained, that at this time, there is no sample individual contract model to present. The reason for this is that there are so many variables to this process. Also there are no other cities or county library systems that use this individual city contract method. There are variables of what it costs to run a library.

Return to Source as a budgeting model, or contracting as a budgeting model, is the antithesis of the way Ventura County Library is providing library service and the way that users are accessing our libraries. Given the fact that every city library is underwritten by some portion of unincorporated taxes, resources are shared across the system.

Director Griffin strongly recommended that the cities return to a true library system and pool resources. To begin with, the Ventura County Library System would have the operating hours that are currently in place. Ventura County Library will recognize the reality that we are sharing resources across the system. If we utilize this model a much stronger and better system will be created.

The Commissioners discussed what this would mean to the system and to their cities libraries.

Supervisor Long stated that the time has come to change course and direction. After over a year of meeting and attempting to work out a new MOU with no success, going back to the centralized system is the best way to continue a seamless operation of libraries in this county.

The MOU came about because at the time the MOU was created there was a total lack of trust with the management at the time.

What we have now is an open and transparent library budget and how the funds are being spent and what revenues are available.

Contracting would be a hybrid that would be difficult to implement.

Supervisor Long stated that she thinks there will an interest with the Board of Supervisors to go back to a centralized model.

Chair Smith asked if a city decides to vote in a special tax, would the monies be kept separate for that city that raised that money?

Director Griffin answered, "Yes, the monies would be kept separately for that city."

Public Comments

Four members of the public were heard.

ACTION - Supervisor Long requested that at the next meeting the commissioners bring back answer if they are willing to move ahead with recentralizing the libraries.

Director Griffin stated that she will be available to present to the cities what this proposal entails.

It was decided that more time is needed to study it and present what this means to their cities, especially in Simi and Ventura.

Director Griffin stated the piece for a VENTURA COUNTY LIBRARY system will be presented to the Board of Supervisors during the next budget cycle.

Supervisor Long stated that the first budget discussions will take place at the Board of Supervisor's meeting in February and March.

Director Griffin stated that we should think of this as this as one fund not individual funds for each city.

ACTION - At the next commission meeting Director Griffin will bring back more concrete details about the benefits of a Centralized Library System, as well as what the savings and efficiencies will be.

Marta Rodriguez, Library Fiscal Officer, reported that the first steps in the budget will determine what efficiencies will be. There are currently twenty one different budget units which will all need to be consolidated with the different libraries.

ACTION - Director Griffin will compile the budget information, from other factors, and send them to the commission before the next meeting.

8. Library Director's Report

Report

Starrett Kreisman, former Library Director passed away.

The Ventura County Library is In the process of preparing for Camarillo leaving and making adjustments for 30 staff who are leaving. Ventura County Library is losing it's next generation of bright young library people. The library staff, across the county, are being very supportative.

Carol Chapman head of Project READ Adult Literacy for Ventura County Library spoke regarding the Adult Literacy Program at Camarillo Library.

Camarillo had fifty seven pairs of tutors and learners last year.

Carol Chapman asked for permission from the Commission to continue providing service at Camarillo Library. It's the only place where we have our own literacy room. Where tutors can come in at any time to access literacy resources. It is also the most centralized location for tutor training.

She stated that she spoke with Mark Smith from LSSI. He said that it was unlikely that they could support the Literacy Program. That it would die a natural death because it is extremely difficult to maintain.

During their meeting they came up with the proposal of a basic plan that Camarillo Library under the LSSI ownership, will provide funding for the site coordinator and tutor training for \$13,000 estimated cost. This also includes using the Camarillo Library Community room at no charge. They would potentially apply for a Literacy Program for the Camarillo Library.

ACTION - Director Griffin stated that they will continue to negotiate and this will be revisited at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on:
February 24, 2011
Simi Valley Library in the Community Room
5:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.