

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY
ADVISORY BODY 2017 ANNUAL REPORT
TO CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**



ADVISORY BODY: Contra Costa County Public Law Library Board of Trustees

MEETING TIME: 12:15 p.m. on the last Thursday of each month is the normal meeting time. In the case of a meeting date conflicting with a holiday, the meeting is scheduled one week earlier in the month.

LOCATION: Contra Costa County Public Law Library
1020 Ward Street, Floor 1
Martinez, CA 94553

PRESIDENT DURING REPORTING PERIOD: Hon. Susanne Fenstermacher

STAFF PERSON: Carey Rowan, Library Director

REPORTING PERIOD: January 1- December 31, 2017

I. ACTIVITIES / ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Administration:

- ✓ The Board of Trustees met publicly during each month of the year with the exception of February, March and December. Meetings for these three months were cancelled due to lack of quorum. A total of 9 meetings were held.

Service:

- ✓ The public law library served the people of Contra Costa County out of 3 locations, until September, at which time lack of funding forced the closure of the east county branch, housed in the Pittsburg Courthouse. This closure forces the people of east county to travel to Martinez in order to use a public law library. This may be difficult for seniors, disabled persons and the economically disadvantaged. The law library currently offers services from its main branch in Martinez and the west county branch in Richmond. Law library staff interacted with more than 45,000 users seeking services, either by telephone, email, fax, or in person.
- ✓ The law library hosted 72 programs during the year. These events included workshops covering Guardianship, Conservatorship and Small Claims, in addition to monthly Lawyer in the Library clinics.

Staffing:

- ✓ Staffing consists of 3 full-time staff members.
- ✓ Extra help (hourly) workers are used to supplement the full-time staff, especially in times of staff absence.

Outreach:

- ✓ Staffing shortages brought about by severe budget reductions necessitated decreasing the library's outreach activities again this year. The library did participate in the annual Richmond Senior Health and Information Fair last spring. A more robust outreach program can be developed if funding for the law library improves.

TRUSTEE	II. ATTENDANCE/REPRESENTATION				III. TRAINING/CERTIFICATION
	Monthly Board Meeting Attendance				County-Mandated Training for Trustees
	Cancelled	Attended	Absent		Completed
Nolan Armstrong, Esq.	3	4	5		Yes
Tom Cain, Esq.*	3	8	1		Yes
Hon. Lewis Davis	3	6	3		Yes
Hon. Susanne Fenstermacher	3	8	1		Yes
Hon. Anita Santos	3	7	2		Yes
Hon. Penny Scanlon	3	7	2		Yes
Hon. Charles "Steve" Treat*	3	1	2		Yes
Vacancy	3	0	9		Yes
*No longer on the Board of Trustees.					

IV. PROPOSED WORK PLAN / OBJECTIVES FOR 2018

A. The library's goals as specified in the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan, are still in effect:

- Provide free access to legal information throughout the county and work with the courts, government, public libraries, educational institutions and the community to expand services to all users groups.
- Provide a relevant, integrated, balanced collection of material in a variety of formats designed to meet the needs of all user groups, and provide trained staff to assist users in accessing the using the material.
- Ensure adequate infrastructure within the library, including providing and maintaining reliable, up-to-date technology to meet the diverse needs of library staff and library users.
- Develop and provide specific collections, programs and services designed to meet the needs of self-represented litigants.
- Strengthen community awareness of the role and value of the law library.
- Work with public libraries throughout the county to make certain that all libraries are equipped to provide basic legal reference and research assistance to users.
- Work to ensure long-term funding for the county law library system.

B. The following areas have been identified for concentrated effort during 2018:

- Public service to the bar, the bench and the community will remain the law library's top priority.
- The law library will strive to increase visibility and awareness among the people of Contra Costa County.
- Collection development and collection analysis will be ongoing throughout the year.
- Our plan is to have a Lawyer in the Library clinic twice monthly, with one session scheduled for Martinez and another session scheduled for Richmond each month. This program depends on being able to get attorneys to volunteer for slots at the clinics.
- The law library-sponsored Conservatorship training will feature two tracks again this year: One track geared towards the needs of young adults and another track focusing on the needs of seniors. We will work closely with the probate court in this area.
- Collaborative efforts with other law library professionals to address California law libraries' declining revenues will be a critical focus during the year. Like other county law libraries in California, the Contra Costa County Public Law Library needs a solution to decreased funding resulting from sharp revenue declines in order to continue its long tradition of service to the people of Contra Costa County.

C. The law library will strive to meet the challenges of 2018.