

NOTE: No action was taken on this document by Commission on 3/24/16.

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION

RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT REAUTHORIZATION OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION

WHEREAS, The Contra Costa County Library Commission (Commission) was established by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and the Contra Costa Mayors Conference in March 1991; and

WHEREAS, the purposes of the Commission are to 1) to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors and the County Librarian, 2) to provide a community linkage to the county library, 3) to establish a forum for the community to express its views regarding the goals and operations of the county library, 4) to assist the Board of Supervisors and County Librarian to provide library services based on assessed public need, 5) to develop and recommend proposals to the Board of Supervisors and County Librarian for the betterment of the county library including, but not limited to, such efforts as insuring a stable and adequate funding level for the libraries in the county.

WHEREAS, the Commission has consistently provided a forum for members of the public to express their views on library service, and

WHEREAS, library staff has brought proposed programs and issues to the Commission to "flesh out" any issues and to obtain its support prior to being submitted to the County Board of Supervisors for approval including the Library's 2014-17 Strategic Plan in which the Commission took an active role, and

WHEREAS, the Commission has usually received a budget presentation prior to the budget being adopted by the County Board of Supervisors and the Commission has either testified at Board meetings and/or written a letter of support for the budget; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has consistently supported increased and stable funding through such activities including;

- Endorsed and worked as individuals for Measure L and Proposition 81 (Library Construction Bonds) ("Reading and Literacy and Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 2006).
- Developed and approved resolutions for full funding of the PLF (Public Library Foundation) which were unanimously approved by the Mayors Conference in 2006, 2007 and 2008.
- Endorsed SB1455 (originally started as a Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond bill) (DeSaulnier); and SCA7 (Senator Wolk) (Local Government Financing: Voter Approval - Public Libraries) which would have reduced the threshold needed by which to pass library measures and many obtained letters of support from local leaders and one commissioner testified at three senate hearings, and

WHEREAS, many commissioners have been and are active in working in their communities to develop and build new libraries including, (but not limited to) Clayton, Danville, Lafayette, Walnut Creek, Orinda, Brentwood, El Cerrito and Oakley, and

WHEREAS, many commissioners have an on-going dialogue at the local level to keep elected officials informed about the library and continue to advocate for local funding support; as well as participating in CLA's (California Library Association) Day in the District where commissioners, Friends and library staff meet with their local legislators, and

WHEREAS, strong working relationships between the County Board of Supervisors, city and town elected leaders and the Commission has resulted in the Contra Costa County Library system remaining intact,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission has consistently performed its duties for the past 25 years, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Contra Costa County Library Commission requests continued re-authorization from the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and the Contra Costa Mayors Conference.

Approved by the Commission on March 24, 2016.

Ayes _____

Nays _____

Abstentions ___

Absent _____

Signed by:

Rodger Lum, Chair

Alan B. Smith, Vice Chair

STATEMENT TO THE INTERNAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

March 28, 2016

Peter A. Wilson

354 Kinross Drive

Walnut Creek, CA 94598

925-360-7170

CONTRA COSTA LIBRARY COMMISSION MEMBER (District IV Alternate)

I come before you to speak in regard to Agenda Item #7, specifically the recommendation that the Library Commission be (a) sunset, or (b) reduced in the number of meetings held per year, or (c) reduced in the number of seats on the Commission.

I speak in opposition to all of these alternatives for the following reasons:

1. The Library Commission is the **only** countywide advisory body for the library system. The local Friends/Foundations do not and cannot provide the countywide perspective that the Commission can and should present. That perspective is needed if the interests and needs of all County residents (not just those who are regularly library users as the report states) are to be represented.
2. The second recommendation speaks to the number of times per year the Commission meets (currently every two months). Let me suggest that the number of times it meets is not the issue. The issue is what happens at the meetings, and how that reflects on the achievement of the Commission's purpose and five (5) described responsibilities (see III.a. pg. 4 of the Report).

Certainly the Commission, in collaboration with the Supervisors and the Library Director achieved remarkable results in the past. I'm not clear that has been the case in recent years. I, and my colleagues on the current Commission, believe we can do so again. Arbitrarily limiting the number of meetings would be unwise at this point in time. It is clear to the current Commission members that we must more effectively and efficiently conduct our business in the interest of achieving our purpose and carrying out our responsibilities.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors Internal Operations Committee
Monday, March 28, 2016

Greg Enholm County resident since 1992: 3 years in Kensington followed by 21 years in Bay Point.

I am here to comment on the proposal to dissolve the County Library Commission. I want to make a specific proposal to continue the Library Commission by reducing the number of meetings to 2 per year as a full body but **requiring Library Commissioners to hold well-publicized public meetings in each of the County's 26 community Libraries on an announced schedule.** The Library Commissioners would summarize the public comments from these public meetings in writing. These reports would be reviewed and discussed at the semi-annual meetings.

Let me note that I am speaking today as a former County Library Commissioner for 2004-2013 appointed by the Board of Supervisors on the nomination of Supervisor Federal Glover and **not as a College Board Trustee.** I want to note that I proposed that the College District be authorized to be the replacement appointor when the Youth Council was dissolved. That change took 2 years to complete.

I have been an active user of Libraries for all my life. I have memories of being in Libraries when I was quite young. My mother took me to the St. Petersburg Library regularly starting when I was 5 years after our family moved from Arlington VA in 1959.

I reluctantly left the Library Commission soon after being elected to the College Board in part because the College District has a financial arrangement with the County Library to have the San Ramon Dougherty Station Library serve as the Library for our San Ramon Campus.

I make the proposal in the first paragraph above for the following reasons:

1) **While I believe the Library Commission started out when it was formed as an active group focused on improving Library services** in the County, by the time I joined in 2004, the Commission had **changed into a mostly passive group** which started its meetings discussing books of interest then switches to receiving presentations from Library staff. **There are exceptions such as the effort which led the Oakley City Council to place a measure on the June 2016 ballot to fund a new Library for Oakley.**

2) During my 9 years on the Commission, I learned a lot about Library operations but **felt there was not enough opportunity to let the public comment about what they thought about our Libraries.** It was uncommon to have people make formal Public Comment as allowed by the Brown Act.

3) From my experience with our Libraries, I believe changing the Library Commission's focus from receiving presentations from Library staff to listening to the public, especially those who use the Libraries, would be worth doing especially if written reports by the Library Commissioners based on holding public meetings at the 26 community Libraries were made at less frequent meetings of the full Commission.

4) **It will be necessary to have these Commission-sponsored committee meetings be limited to less than a Commission majority to comply with the Brown Act.** These committee meetings must be well-publicized both at the Libraries and on the Library website.

5) **I note that it is challenging to find the Library Commission on the Library website.** You must click on "About Us" on the home page then go down 9 items. **It is also challenging to find the County Library website itself from the home page for Contra Costa County.** For instance, it is **not one of the 9 bold items under Community** (but Parks & Recreation is a bold item). If you search "Library" the word "Library" appears on top of the search list and clicking that will take you to the County Library home page. Would it be possible to list **County Library** on that Community page?

If you have questions, you can call my cell at 925 878-5515 or email me at gbenholm@hotmail.com.

Thank you.