Regular Meeting of the
Board of Law Library Trustees
of Marin County

A California Independent Public Agency Under
Business & Professions Code Section 6300 et seq.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 5:15 p.m.

Present: Sam Ware, Denise Bashline, Jonathan Frieman, Tracy Barrett, Alexandria Quam and Laurie Vaala-Olsen, Ex-Officio Secretary.

Also Present: Bill Hale

Call to Order

Sam Ware, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m., and thereafter presided.

1. Approval of the Minutes

1.1 Tabled.

2. Open Forum – Bill Hale commented that the Lawyers in the Library program does not address the public’s need for attorneys who can provide pro bono advice on a long-term basis.

3. Financial Report

3.1 January 2017 Fiscal Report

Sam referred to the attached fiscal report. Unrestricted Balance hovers at about $65,000 for a few months. He is not aware of any anomalies in the budget and invited others to comment on that. There was some uncertainty about the figures on the financial report. Tracy inquired about administration expenses for insurance; Sam stated that the insurance includes the Lawyers in the Library insurance payment that was not included in the budget.

3.2 February 2017 Warrants

Sam saw no anomalies in Warrants. Denise moved and Alexandria seconded that the February 2017 Warrants be approved as presented. Motion passed with 3 Ayes, 0 Noes and 2 Abstentions (because Jonathan and Tracy had not yet been sworn in).
4. Librarian’s Report

In Laurie’s absence, Jonathan spoke about the Marin Legal Services Network and the CCCLL Meetings. He stated that he found the meeting to be an extremely valuable resource for the Law Library Director and noted that most law libraries are not doing much, if any, fundraising, either because they do not have the time or the staff. He further reported that he learned you could have the same people on the Friends of the Library Board as on the Trustees of the Law Library Board. A discussion ensued regarding the question of whether the Judicially Appointed Trustees of the Law Library may participate in fundraising efforts. Sam expressed that he would prefer not to set up a separate 501(c)(3) fundraising organization to raise money for the Law Library because of the amount of work it will require. Jonathan also reported on the Marin Legal Services Network meeting held in February 2017, which Alexandria, Jonathan and Laurie attended in addition to numerous representatives of other Marin County public legal service agencies.

5. Reports of Special Committees

5.1 Report from Lawyers in the Library Committee

Alexandria reported that we have had approximately 6 clinics now and that we had to turn people away last time. The demand is definitely there, but recruiting attorney volunteers continues to be a challenge. Supervisor Damon Connolly recently participated in one of the clinics. Denise expressed interested in recruiting more attorneys to volunteer for the program. Alexandria recommended that she contact Mee Mee Wong about that because attorney volunteer recruitment is the responsibility of the Marin County Bar Association. Alexandria said it would be helpful if someone drafted a press release about the program for the Marin Independent Journal. Alexandria will talk with Laurie about the press release and get back to Denise. Lawyers in the Library intake documents contain demographic data about participants in the program and it would be very helpful to put that information into an Access database. This would enable us to create reports with data specifically requested by a given funder. Also, it would be helpful to have a directory of the attorney volunteers. Alexandria stated that attorney volunteers like to receive acknowledgement from the judges, but the presiding judge is very busy at the present time.

Jonathan reported that the San Diego Law Library has an annual event at which they publicly acknowledge their volunteers which he thought would be a good idea for us to follow. Denise suggested that we obtain a Resolution from the Board of Supervisors acknowledging attorney volunteers in the Lawyers in the Library program. She also suggested posting a brief note on our Facebook page after each clinic regarding the types of legal issues that were presented and the number of people seen.

Upon Laurie’s arrival, she swore in recently appointed Trustees Jonathan Frieman and Tracy Barrett so they would be able to vote on matters before the Board.
5.2 Report from Outreach Committee

Jonathan referred Trustees to the written committee report provided in the agenda packet. He stated that he had met with Branden Barber recently regarding the possibility of hiring him to spearhead fundraising efforts for the Law Library at a cost of $5,000 to $10,000. Jonathan will provide more details about this at the next board meeting. He elaborated on the Outreach Committee’s ideas for events listed in the committee report. Denise suggested organizing an event at the Law Library in honor of Women’s History month. Tracy suggested asking Judge Adams to speak so there is a legal connection. There was also discussion about the possibility of designating the Law Library as a sanctuary for immigrants. Alexandria suggested the idea of brief workshops or seminars regarding a specific topic of interest for non-attorney patrons. Sam stated that the Law Library can support this type of event by providing the space for someone to give a seminar, which would provide press coverage for the Law Library without burdening the staff with additional organizational responsibilities. Laurie encouraged the board to seize the opportunity to provide informational workshops or seminars for the non-attorney public. The legislators she met with in Sacramento are particularly interested in these types of services for the public. Sam requested that Laurie place on the agenda for the next board meeting a formal motion to allow anybody who has an admirable proposition to provide a seminar to the public be provided the opportunity to present it to the board.

5.3 Report from Paid Sick Leave and Employment Policy Committee Chairperson

Sam drew the trustees’ attention to the attached revised employment policy. He noted that paid time off for sick leave was added at section V(B)(i). Sam recommended that only full time employees be paid for court holidays, which at present would include only Laurie. This would cost roughly $2,600 and is a way that the trustees can modestly acknowledge that Laurie should be paid more for her time. In addition, he recommended that the Law Library provide paid vacation time only to full time employees, which would be only Laurie at the present time. See section V(A). The cost would be roughly $2,500 to do this, which includes the cost for someone to cover Laurie’s hours. Sam pointed out that the unrestricted fund balance is $69,000 so it will allow for this modest added expense. Alexandria expressed support for the vacation and court holiday pay for Laurie because our staff is paid far below what staff at the public library is paid, including the benefits. Denise opposed approving the vacation and court holiday pay for Laurie at the present time because she is concerned about whether the Law Library’s financial status can accommodate that as well as replacing the computers. Tracy stated that she prioritizes taking care of staff before upgrading the computers, and encouraged researching other bids for the computer replacement project. Jonathan stated we have been invited by two of the Supervisors to apply for Community Service Funds to pay for upgrading our computers. He stated that he is in favor of the pay increase because we need to pay our staff as well as we can. Tracy moved to approve paying full time staff, of which Laurie is the only one, for court holidays as presented in the 2017 Employment Policy at V(B)(ii), which was seconded by Alexandria. Motion passed with 4 Ayes, 0 Noes, and 1 Abstention. Alexandria moved that full time employees who work 30 hours or more a week shall be entitled to paid vacation of two weeks per year as set forth in the 2017
Law Library Employment Policy at page two, section V(a). Tracy seconded. Motion passed with 4 Ayes, 0 Noes and 1 Abstention.

Sam then requested that we formally dissolve the Paid Sick Leave and Vacation Pay Committee at the March meeting.

6. Old Business

6.1 Strategic Plan

Jonathan directed the Trustees’ attention to the Strategic Plan Outline that was attached to the agenda packet. He requested feedback and input from the other trustees by email. He emphasized that this document is crucial to our fundraising and outreach efforts.

6.2 Renewal of West Print Publications Contract

Sam reported that we signed a new multiyear contract with West but that there was a one month lapse between the old and new contracts. Now West is trying to charge us a higher rate for the publications we received in the intervening time, despite the fact that the delay was caused by West because they had not fulfilled the terms of the old contract prior to the end of the contract term.

6.3 Review of Wage Analysis Regarding Vacation Pay Benefits for Staff

This matter was covered in item 5.3 above.

6.4 Discuss and Approve the Hiring of a Fundraiser

Tabled until March 2017 Board Meeting.

7. New Business

7.1 Discuss and Approve Resolution 2017-4 Approving Raise in Wage for Law Library Assistant

Sam requested that the Trustees support a wage increase for Bettina Voelk, who has proven to be a valuable member of the Law Library staff. Tracy moved to approve Resolution 2017-4 to provide a $2 per hour increase in Law Library Assistant Bettina Voelk’s hourly wage from $15 per hour to $17 per hour, effective February 26, 2017. Alexandria seconded. Motion passed with 4 Ayes, 0 Noes and 1 Abstention.

7.2 Approve Replacement of Law Library Computers and Source of Funding for Same

Laurie directed the trustees’ attention to the attached summary of Chien Liew’s proposal to replace the computers. The general consensus was that the $10,000 price was quite high. Alexandria asked if Laurie knows what other law libraries pay for
their computer equipment. She did not. She was asked to check into this. Laurie was also directed to try purchasing something on Tech Soup to see if it is possible to complete a transaction with them. Alexandria asked if Chien Liew would still be expected to maintain the computer systems if we purchase the equipment elsewhere. Jonathan will prepare a Community Service Fund Grant Application for the cost of replacing the computers for the March Board Meeting. Trustees can then review and approve it for submittal to the Board of Supervisors prior to the March 31, 2017 deadline.

7.3 Discuss KQED Volunteer Opportunities

Denise proposed that we volunteer to staff four KQED telephone fundraisers in order to get free publicity for the Law Library. Jonathan moved for approval for Denise to submit an application to participate in the KQED telephone fundraiser, and Denise seconded. Motion passed with 5 Ayes, 0 Noes, and 0 Abstentions.

7.4 Tabled.

7.5 Tabled.

7.6 Law Library’s Resheling Policy

Laurie reported that notices have already been placed around the Law Library directing patrons not to reshelve their books, but instead to return them to the front desk to facilitate staff’s efforts to track patron usage preferences.

7.7 Data Collection Policies

Denise inquired about the status of the book sign-out data. Laurie reported that a high school volunteer started the project but has not finished it yet. Jonathan offered to update the Law Library’s Sign-In Sheets for the period September 2016 to February 2017.

8. Board Members’ Suggestions for Next Month’s Agenda

9. Adjournment

All business before the Board having been considered, Tracy moved to adjourn the meeting, and Alexandria seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m. The next meeting of the Marin County Law Library Board of Trustees will be held on Monday, April 17, 2017, at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signatures]

Sam Ware, Esq., President

Laurie Vaala-Olsen, Ex-Officio Secretary