Notice of Regular Monthly Meeting of Marin County Law Library Board of Trustees

Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at 5:15 p.m.
Marin County Law Library
20 North San Pedro Road, Suite 2007
San Rafael, CA 94903

Agenda

Call to Order*

1. Approval of Minutes
   1.1 September 2017

2. Open Forum: Opportunity for Comments from Public

3. Financial Report
   3.1 September 2017 Fiscal Report
   3.2 October 2017 Warrants

4. Librarian's Report
   4.1 Staffing Update
   4.2 Computer Replacement Update

5. Reports of Special Committees
   5.1 Report from Lawyers in the Library Committee Chairperson
   5.2 Report from Outreach Committee Chairperson

* This meeting may be recorded as authorized by the Government Code

If requested, pursuant to Government Code Section 54953.2, this agenda shall be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Section 12132), and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof. To make a request for disability-related modification or accommodation, please contact (415) 473-4381 (Voice/TTY) or 711 for the California Relay Service or e-mail disabilityaccess@marincounty.org at least five working days in advance of the meeting.

A complete packet of information containing reports and exhibits related to each item is available for public review at least 72 hours prior to the meeting or, in the event that it is delivered to the Law Library Trustees less than 72 hours prior to a meeting, as soon as it is so delivered. The packet is available at the front desk of the Marin County Law Library, on the Law Library's bulletin board, and on the Law Library website at www.marincountylawlibrary.org. It is also available 24/7 outside the ground floor lobby of the middle archway entrance to the Civic Center (the one allowing access to the Courts floor) at 3501 Civic Center Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903 at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.
6. Old Business
   6.1 Discussion and Action Item: Discuss and Approve Purchase of Health Care Insurance for Law Library Director
   6.2 Discussion and Action Item: Discuss Creation of Formal Procurement Procedures

7. New Business
   7.1 Discussion and Action Item: Review and Revise Law Library Strategic Plan
   7.2 Discussion and Action Item: Discuss Scheduling Joint Working Retreat for the Marin County Law Library Board of Trustees and Friends of the Marin County Public Law Library Board of Directors

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

9. Adjournment
   The next board meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 21, 2017 at 5:15 p.m.

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


Tuesday, September 19, 2017 at 5:15 p.m.

Present: Sam Ware, Jonathan Frieman, Tracy Barrett, Alexandria Quam, Emily Vance, Donald Drummond, and Laurie Vaala-Olsen, Ex-Officio Secretary
Absent: Denise Bashline
Also Present: Bill Hale, Moti Zainalizadeh, Jaftha

Call to Order

President Sam Ware called meeting to order at 5:18 p.m. and thereafter presided.

1. Approval of Minutes

1.1 The August 15, 2017 Minutes were reviewed by the trustees. Tracy moved for approval of the Minutes as presented. Jonathan seconded. Motion passed with 5 Ayes, 0 Noes and 0 Abstentions.

2. Open Forum

Bill requested that more notice be provided for posting the agenda packet. Laurie pointed out that the amount of notice provided from the date the agenda packet is posted did not change when the monthly board meeting was moved to Tuesday evenings. Ms. Zainalizadeh said she is writing up some concerns that she has and will present them to Sam in a few days.

3. Financial Report

3.1 August 2017 Fiscal Report

Laurie presented the August 2017 and July 1, 2017 to August 31, 2017 Year-to-Date Fiscal Statement. The Unrestricted Fund Balance as of September 13, 2017 was $57,055.68. She noted that the Law Library is ahead of revenue projections by roughly $3,000.

3.2 September 2017 Warrants

Laurie presented the September Warrants, noting that the Law Library had several large expenses this month; they included SPTJ (new computers), Branden Barber and Associations (fundraising consulting services) and renewal of the Lawyers in the Library liability insurance (half of which will be paid for by the Marin County Bar Association).
Discussion ensued. Tracy moved for approval of the warrants as presented. Emily seconded. Motion passed with 5 Ayes, 0 Noes and 0 Abstentions.

4. **Librarian’s Report**

4.1 Staffing update – Laurie is continuing to interview candidates. She and Robert have been covering for Bettina’s hours.

4.2 Computer Replacement Update – The public access and front desk computers have been installed, configured and connected to the printers and copiers. Westlaw is now available on each of the public access computers for easier access; when both seats are in use further access will be denied. Chien will install and configure Laurie’s computer after the board meeting.

4.3 CCCLL Fall 2017 Meeting Report – Laurie reported on the issues discussed at the CCCLL Fall Meeting, highlighted developments in some of the other county law libraries and stated that Bonnie Hough was the featured speaker.

4.4 Holiday Hours – Laurie will take vacation from December 19 through December 26 this year. Robert and Bettina can cover Laurie’s hours except for Tuesday, December 26, so the Law Library may have to close that day or be open for reduced hours unless a new part-time assistant has been hired by that time.

5. **Reports of Special Committees**

5.1 Lawyers in the Library

Alexandria reported that she had tendered her resignation from the board; this is her last meeting. Emily expressed interest in taking Alexandria’s place as the Attorney Coordinator for the program. Tim Nardell will replace Larry Strick as the Bar Association contact because Larry is stepping down from the MCBA board.

5.2 Outreach

Jonathan reported that he has recruited two directors for the Friends Board and has invited Court Executive Officer James Kim to the Law Library for a meeting. Further, he requested input from the trustees for developing a major donors list, and reported that he will work on editing the existing Strategic Plan to update it, noting that the County Administrator has asked for a 5-Year Strategic Plan from the Law Library.

6. **Old Business**

6.1 Discuss and Approve Purchase of Health Care Insurance for Law Library Director

Laurie elaborated on the report in the agenda packet regarding insurance plans offered by the Small Business Unit of Kaiser Permanente. She stated that the Law Library Board could purchase health insurance from Kaiser without any additional requirements, such as establishing a retirement plan for the Law Library Director. If the Trustees purchase the health insurance by December 1, 2017, they will lock in the 2017 premium rate. Kaiser’s rates will be increasing in 2018. Sam stated he would like more detailed information about the plan. Tracy offered to look into it further. Sam resurrected the Personnel and Benefits Committee and appointed Tracy to the committee. Donald said he would like to see the Law Library make a timely decision on this matter. This issue will be revisited next month.
6.2 Discuss Creation of Formal Procurement Procedures

Laurie reported that she queried other county law libraries and not one of the six respondents reported having a formal procurement policy. Alexandria raised concerns regarding spending public monies without ensuring that there are no conflicts of interest. Tracy also raised concerns about performing due diligence in this regard. The matter was tabled.

6.3 Discuss and Approve Policy For Conference Room Use at No Charge

Sam referred trustees to the Draft Conference Room Rental Policy prepared by Donald which was attached to the agenda packet. Discussion ensued resulting in several revisions to the policy. Emily moved to approve and adopt the conference room rental policy as amended, and Tracy seconded. Motion passed with 6 Ayes, 0 Noes, and 0 Abstentions.

7. New Business

7.1 Discuss and Approve Resolution 2017-10 to Amend FY 2017-2018 Budget for Computers and Fundraising Consultant

Sam presented the revised budget that was attached to the agenda packet. Discussion ensued. Tracy moved for approval of Resolution 2017-10 as presented. Jonathan seconded. Motion passed with 6 Ayes, 0 Noes, and 0 Abstentions.

7.2 Discuss and Approve Annual Report for FY 2016-2017

Sam referred trustees to the attached FY 2016-2017 Annual Report. Discussion ensued with various revisions suggested. Donald moved for approval of the FY 2016-2017 Annual Report with the amendments discussed at the meeting and allowing for some minor further work on it by Jonathan and Laurie. Jonathan seconded. Motion passed with 6 Ayes, 0 Noes and 0 Abstentions.

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

Donald volunteered to look into procurement procedures. There also was interest in further discussion about the Law Library's contract with Branden Barber/Better World Engagement so it will be revisited at the October meeting.

9. Adjournment

All relevant business having come before the board, Alexandria moved to adjourn the meeting and Emily seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m. The next board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Ware, Esq., President

Laurie Vaala-Olsen, Ex-Officio Secretary

Page 3 MCLL September 19, 2017 Minutes
# Marin County Law Library 2017/2018 FY

## September 2017 and Year-To-Date (July 1, 2017 to September 30, 2017) Fiscal Statement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Munis Object (G/L Acct. No.)</th>
<th>Account Description</th>
<th>Projected Budget, Jul 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018</th>
<th>Projected Budget Monthly Basis</th>
<th>Actuals, Sept 1 - 30, 2017</th>
<th>Projected Budget, July 1 to Sept 30, 2017</th>
<th>Actuals, July 1 through September 30, 2017*</th>
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<td>$19,500.00</td>
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<td><strong>Total Credits:</strong></td>
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<td>$198,659.00</td>
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**Difference:**

- Actuals, Sept 1 - 30, 2017: $19,894.94
- Projected, July 1 through September 30, 2017: $23,272.93

## DEBITS

### Staff Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Munis Object (G/L Acct. No.)</th>
<th>Account Description</th>
<th>Projected Budget, Jul 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018</th>
<th>Projected Budget Monthly Basis</th>
<th>Actuals, Sept 1 - 30, 2017</th>
<th>Projected Budget, July 1 to Sept 30, 2017</th>
<th>Actuals, July 1 through September 30, 2017*</th>
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<tr>
<td>511110</td>
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<td>512110</td>
<td>Retirement/Director</td>
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**Difference:**

- Projected, July 1 through September 30, 2017: $5,484.42

### Admin Expenses

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<th>Account Description</th>
<th>Projected Budget, Jul 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018</th>
<th>Projected Budget Monthly Basis</th>
<th>Actuals, Sept 1 - 30, 2017</th>
<th>Projected Budget, July 1 to Sept 30, 2017</th>
<th>Actuals, July 1 through September 30, 2017*</th>
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<td>522110</td>
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**Difference:**

- Actuals, Sept 1 - 30, 2017: $(15,851.38)
- Projected, July 1 through September 30, 2017: $(16,832.55)

### Legal Publications Collection

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<th>Projected Budget, Jul 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018</th>
<th>Projected Budget Monthly Basis</th>
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<td><strong>Subtotal:</strong></td>
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<td>$15,750.00</td>
<td>$19,002.69</td>
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</table>

**Difference:**

- Actuals, Sept 1 - 30, 2017: $151.64
- Projected, July 1 through September 30, 2017: $(3,252.69)

### Total Debits:

- Actuals, Sept 1 - 30, 2017: $14,036.65
- Projected, July 1 through September 30, 2017: $28,498.40
- Difference: $42,109.95
- Actuals, July 1 through September 30, 2017: $56,710.77
- Difference: $(14,600.82)

## BALANCE:

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<tr>
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<th>September 1-30</th>
<th>July 1 - Sept 30, 2017</th>
<th>$11,351.95</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unrestricted Fund Balance (as of 10/12/17):</strong></td>
<td>$51,179.46</td>
<td>$51,179.46</td>
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</table>

* Based on financial data available in Munis, including transactions not yet posted to Law Library account.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JULY</td>
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<td>20,840.65</td>
<td>18,553.72</td>
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| ANNUAL TOTALS | 260,266.77 | 230,610.81 | 204,395.29 | 182,611.11 | 174,589.13 | 169,736.33 | 174,589.13 | 169,736.33 |

Each current month's filing fee revenue represents income generated from the Court filings of the past two months. October revenue comes from August filings, etc.
## Marin County Law Library
### October 2017 Warrants
(Account Balance: $51,179.46)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Current Amount Due</th>
<th>Suggested Payment</th>
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**Salaries:** $5,734.07

**Total Expenses:** $14,353.81

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LAWYERS IN THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE MEETING
October 2, 2017

By Emily Vance

At the October 2 Lawyer's in the Library Meeting, the discussion primarily revolved around ways to maintain and strengthen the LIL program.

This included the following:

1. Limiting the scope of the case type (ie. Family Law, Landlord Tenant Law) and holding a separate monthly clinic for other more technical case types (Employment, Wills & Trusts).

2. Recognition of volunteers, including Thank you Notes from Judges, volunteer recognition at the Annual Judge's Luncheon, and an annual reception for the volunteers.

3. The success of the Sign-up Genius and ways to improve volunteer sign-up. Need to include a note to potential volunteers to remind them to notify Laurie if they are unable to attend at their scheduled time.

4. Update resource list for the patrons, including the addition of Whistle Stop in San Rafael and Mill Valley (a great resource for older adults).

5. Marketing strategies, including press releases and Yelp.
Development Plan for the Invigoration and Sustainability of the Marin County Public Law Library

Background
The Marin County Law Library has a long history, opening its doors over 125 years ago in 1891 for practicing lawyers who needed access to legal research materials. But over the last few decades, more and more self-represented patrons have found their way to the Law Library doors. Now, of the 4000 patrons who come into the Law Library each year, almost half—about 2000 people—are unable to secure legal representation, and so must represent themselves. They come to the Law Library for help, and they find it here.

And most often they come to us as a last resort. For so many the Law Library is literally their last hope and their lifeline. It is imperative that we continue to serve all Marin County constituents to the best of our ability to help them prepare for their day in court.

Law Library Services
The Law Library is open and staffed more than 45 hours a week. We have no income or class restrictions—we are open to all. Our well-lit, warm, roomy and comfortable location is served by public transportation. We have a knowledgeable and caring staff always available for all our patrons, and who are trained especially to aid those who must represent themselves. Lawyers are easy to serve—they just need a finger pointed in the direction of the correct book stack. But providing a welcome environment for the self-represented individual is right in line with the Trustees’ impetus to keep providing good service to those who might feel overwhelmed, and perhaps even panicked, by their legal situation.

It is important to note that Law Library staff cannot dispense advice, even if the director is indeed an attorney. Attentiveness, and precise and caring guidance, is essential to providing excellent service.

The Law Library’s place in the County’s Legal Services Network
The Law Library is part of the newly-formed Marin County Legal Services Network; which is comprised of the larger non-profit outlets such as Legal Aid of Marin, the Canal Alliance, and Fair Housing. Other entities include the Public Defender, the Self-Help Legal Center, the Family Law Center, and New Beginnings Law Center. When any or all of the above entities cannot serve a client because they have income restrictions or run a clinic at a time inconvenient to a prospective client, or their capacity is exceeded, then the Law Library is the remaining safety net, as if it is situated “underneath” all the other entities in the network.

The network’s task is daunting. A 5-year-old report from the Marin Community Foundation ascertained that there is a fairly large justice gap here in Marin County—every year upwards of perhaps 10,000 individuals in Marin go without legal representation, and the number of individuals actually served was only around 3,000 or so. The Law Library’s 2400 patrons (see the Lawyers in the Law Library section below) were not included in the study.
Thus, it is evident that the need for legal help in Marin is great, and it is evident that adding our 2400 patrons to the study's numbers demonstrates that the Law Library serves as a safety net to catch those individuals who, for whatever reason, cannot be served by the other organizations in the Network. It is imperative we increase our capacity to remain a valuable community service.

**Lawyers in the Law Library Program**
The Law Library provides the location and resources for the recently initiated *Lawyers in the Library* program. With the assistance of volunteer attorneys who dedicate their time twice a month, this program offers legal advice to the almost 400 self-represented individuals in the community who would otherwise lack access to legal guidance. A wonderful side-effect of this new *Lawyers in the Law Library* program is that patrons who come to the Law Library twice a month for this new program always sit together while waiting to see a lawyer, and they develop affinity: they talk about their cases with each other, compare notes, and exchange phone numbers for support.

**Demographics**
From October of 2016 through February of this year we learned a lot about the justice gap in our county because of our *Lawyers in the Library* program. While our daily sign-in sheet tells us whether a patron is a lawyer or unrepresented, and why they have come to the Law Library, the intake forms from the *Lawyers in the Library* program give us more specific demographics as to our unrepresented patrons. Those numbers show that 60% of those patrons are women; 63% are Caucasian and 10% Latino. A quarter seek Landlord/Tenant advice, and almost as many seek guidance in Family Law matters. Almost a fourth have incomes below $1000 a month and another quarter have incomes below $2000 a month. Overall, two-thirds of attendees earn under $3000 a month. Most find their way to the evening sessions because of the brochure we circulated, and a substantial portion are referred by the County Clerk's office. And it is disheartening to note that almost a third are retired, with most of those on fixed monthly incomes below $2000.

**The Law Library Budget**
The budgets of all county law libraries in California are derived from a portion of the filing fees for civil cases. Nine years ago, our budget was a fairly robust $260,000 a year. Since then our budget has declined 30% to a margin-thin $180,000 a year. That decline began with the economic downturn in 2008, but is also due in very large part to the proliferation of alternative dispute resolution services.

Like all county law libraries in California, we have had to cut staff, let go of important subscriptions, and pull back on the number of hours we are open. That included closing on weekends. But our staff does an excellent job and is so committed to serving the community that we are open more hours in a week than some of the libraries of other counties whose budgets are twice the size of ours.

It is important to acknowledge the “hidden” ongoing support of the County of Marin, which is
evident in the County’s remodel of the Law Library facilities. Even though maintaining the brick and mortar is compelled by State law, it needs to be emphasized that the Law Library is a better facility thanks to this partnership and the recent remodel.

Law Library Goals Over the Next Few Years
Our goals are simple: hold our ground, reach more people so that they know about the Law Library, extend our hours, recapture subscriptions we have lost, increase the compensation level of our staff (the level of which is well below market), and engage more staff for an increased capacity to serve.

For more people to be better benefited by the Law Library, we need to do several things. First, we much boost our service capacity—the 8-month old, twice-monthly Lawyers in the Library effort has boomed in popularity, and now must turn people away even though it is so needed. Second, we are in the process of collaborating more effectively with the providers of Marin’s Legal Services Network, increasing mutual community support. Finally, we want to help close that justice gap—representing oneself in a legal case is not to be pitied or scoffed at—it should be supported. The law is here to provide protection for everyone, and the more we can make that possible, then the narrower that gap will be.

Our Focus on Fundraising:
There is much we can do to support the Library, and it is clear that to bolster the financial foundation of the Library effective fundraising is our best strategy. We will be writing grants, seeking individual donor engagement, holding events, and pursuing and securing government funding. Here is a closer look:

- Individual donor engagement – This will require instituting a donor management effort as well as engaging a professional to train us on best practices. This expert fundraiser will help us develop elevator pitches, support our donor outreach and engagement through letters, calls and meetings, and stabilize that program.
- Grants – Develop a template for a grant proposal process and engage a seasoned writer.
- Engage Marin Community Foundation’s donor advised segment, where we will bring donors in for site visits to the Law Library and present Law Library offerings at their offices, etc.
- Events – from house parties to an annual gala, we can create opportunities to recognize our partners and advocates as well as raise funds while generating community and highlighting meaning through the lens of the Library.
- Create a “Champions of the Law Library.” This Giving Circle would be comprised of high donor individuals.
- Create a Membership Program which could both increase revenue as well as provide opportunities for outreach and development of community. If only a third of the registered lawyers of the Marin Bar Association gave $10 a month on an annual basis, that could add significant revenue to our bottom line. (see budget chart below).
- Create of a Friends of the Law Library tax exempt entity: when people see there is
already such a group, it presents the true image that a circle of support, separate from the Law Library, is already in action.

**Branding:**
To achieve the above we need to consider and speak effectively not only to our audience — the self-represented patrons who come to us for help—but also to those who are open to supporting such individuals, which will increase our potential funding base. The story of the Law Library and its valuable place in or community will be told, by leveraging and harnessing the power of the board and our director. With new fundraising materials and training, we will have a renewed power source to effectively drive the Library forward towards greater sustainability and resilience.

**What We Shall Do with the Extra Funds:**
In order to achieve our goals, we will
- create an effective fundraising program
- work towards reclaiming some of the $40,000 worth of lost subscriptions, especially those geared towards the self-represented
- update or marketing materials such as our website and other printed collateral
- bring our employees' wages up to market rates
- further supplement our need for woefully inadequate computers
- and in a most ambitious intent, re-open for some hours on the weekend.

**Budget Request from the County, and the Road Ahead**
We are seeking a modest $25,000 per year for 3 years from the Marin County Board of Supervisors. The funds will help provide a wide range of support for all of the invigorating activities mentioned above. Here is an outline of how we shall use the supplement funds from the County's General Fund:

**Extra Income Starting 2017:**

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<th>Source</th>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Year Three</th>
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<td>Grants (all)</td>
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<td>Individuals</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Champions (major donors)</td>
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<td>Membership</td>
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<td><strong>$60,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$95,000</strong></td>
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Notes for the Above Proposed Budget:
1) The grants include the County’s $25k a year. We expect to write grants to institutions for another $15k over that total by Year Three
2) We expect to raise $5,000 from individuals in the first year and increase that to $15,000 by Year Three
3) Even though it’s impossible to predict an amount which could come from MCF’s Donor Advised program, we’re already working with them
4) Our Champions will be charged with raising $5,000 the first year and challenged to reach $25,000 by Year Three
5) We’ll find unique ways to create Membership Support

Conclusion
Because our current budget of $180,000 per year barely covers the basics, we should make the effort now to shore up our systems so that we can count future increases as bonuses to our annual budget. If we can gain the full support of the County Supervisors, and blend into the community as a viable resource by maintaining a strong fundraising program, we can go a long way towards fulfilling this ambitious effort.

A robust development program aided by County seeding funds will help us create the necessary materials and systems to drive an energized effort to support the current environment and its community. We will be able to return to a more resilient financial position. And it is to this end that we hope you will choose to support the Law Library in its bold new plan for self-sufficiency.

Finally, the Board of Trustees of the Marin County Law Library thanks the Marin County Board of Supervisors for the opportunity to present this proposal in support of its critically important resource so we can better serve our community’s underserved population, and our professional legal practitioners.

For more information please contact:

Jonathan Frieman, Law Library Trustee, on behalf of the Marin County Board of Trustees
E: yogi@well.com
415-845-1371
Law Library Strategic Plan Outline

1) Describe situation
   a. Describe evolution of law library from past into current situation where half the patrons are unrepresented
   b. Note lowering budget allocations from fees
   c. Note how different the law library is from other Marin legal service providers
      i. Open 45 hours a week
      ii. Staff available constantly
      iii. No income restrictions
      iv. Law library is mainstay of last resort
          1. Use Justice Gap research from MCF
      v. Beautiful location—well-lit, warm, roomy

2) Describe goal(s) to be reached
   i. Close justice gap—substantiate
   ii. Reach more people
   iii. Collaborate with other providers within the Marin’s legal service network to increase support for community

3) Describe methods of reaching goal(s)
   a. Fundraising to:
      i. Pay staff more
      ii. Be open longer hours
      iii. Perform outreach to alleviate justice gap
      iv. Replace and/or keep lost publications
   b. Outreach to people needing service
      i. Increase numbers served to close justice gap
         1. Web
         2. Flyer postings
3. Contact with legal service network

4) Events:
   a. Monthly events on pertinent topics
      i. Each month has some sort of name—highlight one with a speaker
   b. twice monthly lawyers in the law library
   c. art exhibits – perhaps clear out quiet room
      i. music?

5) Fundraising
   a. Grants
      i. Hire writer to develop grant template
   b. Pursue Individual Donors
      i. Poach local donor lists
         1. MGH; Marin Comm Clinic; large law firms; SOB donors
         2. Develop elevator speech—use hired writer’s assistance
            a. Send letters; make calls; go and pitch
               i. Writer could also go on pitch calls
      ii. Approach Marin Comm Foundation donor advised section
         1. Send template
         2. Bring in for site visit
            a. Bring interested donors in for site visit
   c. Fundraising events—one large one annually
      i. Recognize someone – not necessarily legal
         1. Mini-gala
   d. Approach Board of Supervisors for $25k per year for 3 years
      i. Present strat plan
         1. Ensure that goals will be striven for
         2. Remind BOS of service to the low income individuals
3. Remind BOS that duplication of services across legal services network is necessary because such great need is still unmet
4. BOS donation ensures good footing as law library increases revenue

6) Increase subscriptions as revenue increases

7) Hold lawyers in law library intake events with selected partners in different locales around county
   a. Canal Alliance; Legal Aid; Self Help Center; Fair Housing
2016-2018
Strategic Plan

Marin County Law Library

PROVIDING LEGAL RESOURCES TO THE CITIZENS OF MARIN SINCE 1891
Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018

Contents

Law Library Mission Statement 3

Synopsis

1. Improve Legal Research Capabilities and Reference Assistance 3
   1.1 Adjust collection development priorities to suit changing user needs, new technologies, and budgetary restrictions 3
   1.2 Make our resources available to patrons on multiple technological platforms 4
   1.3 Create a unified partnership with Marin County legal service agencies in order to direct people to the most appropriate form of assistance 4
   1.4 Partner with the Marin County Bar As to provide attorneys for legal workshops 5

2. Utilize Mobile Technologies to Better Serve Patrons 5
   2.1 Create and implement a green online card catalog that allows attorneys, students and community members to access the Library’s card catalog remotely 5
   2.2 Expand public access to legal information through library web pages and a green online forms catalog 6
   2.3 Implement an electronic document delivery service for county employees and the general public 6

3. Develop a Well Trained Team for the Delivery of Legal Reference Services 6
   3.1 Invest in career skills and professional development for library staff 6
   3.2 Increase Library Staff 7
   3.3 Explore new avenues for library internships, volunteers, and other recruiting initiatives 8

Appendix A:
Strategic Plan Contributors 9
Mission

The Marin County Law Library serves the public by providing access to legal information resources through a variety of media, research assistance, and technologies.

[eliminate: needed to give practical expression to the law while maintaining a flexible and supportive presence that fosters the ends of community service and social justice.]

Synopsis

Even before the advent of this new political climate, which may very well be more exclusive than inclusive, the Board of Trustees of the Marin County Law Library had pledged to ensure that everyone has access to the law. This shift in viewpoint was necessitated by a review of the library’s daily sign-in sheet, which shows that among an annual registry of 4000 visitors, almost half of whom are unrepresented.

Unschooled in the law, they nevertheless are motivated to represent themselves. Their issues cover a panoply of matters, from landlord/tenant disputes, to family law matters, to issues as simple as a traffic ticket. Just eyeing the patrons tells the library staff that the poor and needy are no longer the only people representing themselves in court: much of the general middle class does not have the resources to hire an attorney, and are therefore using the Law Library on an increasing basis.

At the same time, the number of civil court filings per year, from which the library receives 90% of its budget, has dropped steadily each year since 2008. Staff has been cut, the hours have been cut, and the number of publications carried have been cut.

The Board recognized that it must be more energetic. With the advent of new board members are working hard to re-engineer its thrust from being mere stewards of a repository of legal books. The Library is being actively repositioned as an valuable community resource for its 4,000 visitors.

But moreover, the Board recognized that the one facet which makes the Law Library extremely valuable to the community is the mere fact that its doors are indeed open to the public for more hours than the regular workweek—a formidable 45 hours a week.

And there is assistance available for all 45 hours. That’s a strength which complements all the other nonprofits in the newly formed Legal Services Network, which includes such stalwarts as Legal Aid of Marin and the Canal Alliance.

This active repositioning includes two innovative efforts: the proffering of membership dues, and an active foray into fundraising.

This Strategic Plan outlines those efforts as well as the obvious cost-cutting efforts. Each of our goals will begin by asking who our partners might be and what can be achieved collectively.
1. **Continue Legal Research Capabilities and Reference Assistance**

1.1 Adjust collection development priorities to suit changing user needs, new technologies, and budgetary restrictions

With steady declines in the Library budget, some subscriptions have been cut in order to make budget. Eliminating duplication, enhancing cooperative agreements with other institutions, and an increasing the use of interlibrary loan services all allow the budget to be stretched. This reduces the costs of maintaining those collections while still making them available to interested patrons.

1.2 **Make resources available to patrons on multiple technological platforms**

The Library now provides additional resources through electronic technologies such as Lexis, Onlaw, and Westlaw. One of the main efforts of the Library Board and Staff in this next year will be to acquire new computers. This will allow the Library to provide services for all of its users, and in so doing, will allow those users to be more efficient and effective in their legal research.

1.3 Create a unified partnership with Marin County legal service agencies in order to direct people to the most appropriate form of assistance

As mentioned, there is a new Legal Services Network here in Marin of which the Library is a main participant. This partnership with the Marin County Self-Help Center, Legal Aid of Marin, the Canal Community Alliance, and other legal service providers will accomplish several tasks. First, all of Marin County’s legal service agencies will better understand their role within the community. Second, as a result of that, each will be better able to focus referrals will allow patrons to connect with the appropriate agency as long as, in some cases, they meet certain criteria. Again, there are no criteria for using the Law Library.

[Not sure of where this statement fits: The Law Library encounters a number of Marin residents who need legal services and are unsure of where to turn.]

This will not only make the Library more efficient and effective in its service to the public, it will also help reduce unnecessary back and forth trips between the Library and local legal agencies. The Law Library does continue to be the first point of reference for unrepresented patrons with legal questions, particularly in providing forms.

Partnering with local agencies will not only help Marin residents navigate the legal system, but also help relieve some of the pressure courts face in meeting the needs of unprepared litigants. Likewise, when litigants have the correct form in hand, clerks can more readily expedite filings. Judges may rule on an issue more effectively when relevant facts and the appropriate laws have been presented.
1.4 Partner with the Marin County Bar Association so that we may provide attorneys for legal workshops for the community

Just this fall the Law Library started a new program, called Lawyers in the Library, launched through the Law Library’s partnership with the MCBA. This effort, now run twice a month in the early evening, provides limited pro bono services to patrons through a brief 20 minute interview with lawyers. The patrons learn what kind of case they have and get referrals to Marin attorneys who serve pro bono. The Library envisions this program as forging yet another connection between the private bar and the community members who are least likely to otherwise access such opportunities.

All of the following is in bold because I don’t know whether this program was abandoned or just never started:

2. Utilize Mobile Technologies to Effectively Reach More People Within the Community and Increase Environmental Consciousness and Responsibility Among Library Staff and Patrons

2.1 Create and implement a green online card catalog that allows attorneys, students and community members to access the Library’s card catalog remotely

During the strategic plan of operation, the Law Library proposes modernizing its card catalog by replacing it with a green online card system. The Los Angeles Public Law Library installed their system in 1995. After nearly 20 years of computerized systems being in place, this makes our transition long overdue. If funding can be found, then the whole community will benefit. Marin residents will have the ability to quickly find materials and search the database online before arriving at the Library.

This project will more than pay for itself by allowing the public to have much easier and efficient access to the Library’s entire inventory. This massive undertaking can be performed both by increasing the hours of the Library’s current part-time employees, and also by utilizing an additional employee. Once the system is up and running, it would only require regular maintenance to keep it effective for Marin residents.

2.2 Expand public access to legal information through library web pages and a green online forms catalog

The Law Library also intends to serve the public through an electronic library with an online forms catalog. The Library will host the site on its new website and will be responsible for daily site administration, technological planning, legal updates, and, through collaboration with the Law Library Board of Trustees,
development of new information resources. The Director of the Law Library will be responsible for ensuring clear and effective communications between library patrons and website management. Additionally, library reference staff will offer recommendations for new content based on incoming reference questions from the general public.

Our new green catalog will provide residents and employees of Marin County with a common access point to forms and template pleadings. Managed by staff, the forms catalog will contain electronic versions of current forms, allowing patrons to more easily conduct business within the County of Marin.

2.3 Implement an electronic document delivery service for county employees and the general public

In addition to maintaining a green forms catalog, the Library intends to create a document delivery system via the internet for use with our online card catalog. This service is already provided as a courtesy to a number of County employees but would expand to include PDF delivery to the public, thereby allowing people to access information remotely. This service would lessen the need to visit the Library in person, which benefits the environment. Most importantly, document delivery would serve as an additional source of revenue for the Law Library.

3. Ensure that the Library Maintains a Well Trained Team for the Delivery of Legal Reference Services

3.1 Invest in career skills and professional development for library staff

Library staff are quite often called upon to assist users, both legal practitioners and laypeople, in using the research tools. As the number of laypeople how use the library grows, staff will also gain opportunities to improve their skills in working with such individuals, as well as knowledge of legal resources. The Law Library is committed to providing ongoing training to allow staff to better assist library patrons. We cannot underestimate the value of well trained staff.

The Library director attends conferences and workshops to learn current trends and developments in libraries locally and across the country. As well, the director also participates in the California Council of County Law Librarians and attends their annual conferences. Learning about innovation and ideas from other libraries and institutions around the state is valuable, as these ideas and information are brought back for discussion and possible implementation within our library.
3.2 Expand the Assistant Librarians to full-time positions in order to assist the Marin community with informational needs

One of the most significant changes over the last several years is the growing number of self-represented patrons, with 52 percent of Library respondents identifying as non-attorneys. These individuals are not trained in the law and require a great degree of assistance that in turn requires staff to spend their time explaining what each source contains and how to utilize them. Library staff must often clarify the difference between statutory law and case law as well as the difference between primary and secondary authority. The Law Library also acts as a distribution point for court forms and instructions, producing and assembling forms in multiple languages.

While these services can take the burden away from court departments that are not equipped or authorized to provide research training and referrals, the Library is finding that it is unable to keep up with the community’s increasing demands without additional staff hours. An assistant librarian would provide the requisite skills of online research, assistance to laypeople, referrals to various service agencies, organization of the online card catalog, and assistance in the multitude of daily needs that are thrust upon the Library. Such an employee would be critical to helping the Library become a more efficient and effective source of legal research for its patrons. This would help the public to better understand their legal matters, thereby creating less congestion at the court, less hassle for county employees, and better informed citizens overall.

3.3 Explore new avenues for library internships, volunteers, and other recruiting initiatives

The Law Library is considering building upon its successful experience with volunteers and school interns and develop a program for students from paralegal schools such as Berkeley, San Francisco and Sonoma State University to intern on site. This project will assess the current program, identify best practices, implement standardized protocols and create guidelines and policies that will ensure continuity and secure a documented and replicable history. The result will be a formalized intern program with streamlined orientation and education and efficient utilization of staff time invested in implementing an optimum intern experience.

The internship program will offer students the opportunity to work on special projects as well as the opportunity to gain experience and enhance their research and reference skills. Past projects include exploring social media uses for the library, creating an attorney listserv, and working on the creation of a new Library website.
4. **Engage in a Fundraising Program Modeled after Public Benefit Nonprofits**

4.1 **Generate a new brand for the Law Library in the Marin Community**

It's clear that the best way forward in creating a new brand for the library is to refashion its appearance in the eyes of the community much as a nonprofit does. Even though the library is technically a governmental district, in that it gets a majority of its budget from a specific segment of the public, it's a free public service.

The standard three models of ___ are a) private business; b) governmental entities; and c) the tax exempt nonprofit arena. The law library fits two of those—it's a governmental entity and money contributions to it are tax deductible. For example, the Library receives government funds to keep open its doors, and it charges fees for such services as photocopying and use of its meeting room. Such services as staff guidance in use of forms are provided for free. Most notably, the Law Library provides a valuable and worthwhile tax deductible donation.

The new brand, intimated above in the note that there are no criteria for patrons to meet in order to be served, the Library is accessible, with person-to-person service, for 45 hours a week. Finally, its resources are available online.

4.2 **Create a Membership Dues Program**

Just as museum does, a membership program could come in the form of prepaid copying services, an ability to reserve computer time in advance, an opportunity to phone ahead and reserve time with a staff member for guidance in filling out legal forms, and other benefits. This offering might not engender a huge uptick in funds, and so other kinds of benefits need to be offered so that large law firms and individuals might feel compelled to become a member even though they may never use the library.

4.2 **Generate an Effective Fundraising Strategy**

The three segments of the public which nonprofits look to for funding are individuals, foundations, and governmental entities. All three take time for results to occur, especially the first—cultivation of individuals who might feel aligned with the library’s task in helping the patrons without legal representation can often take months, if not years.

But with the renewed brand and some new board members, the Library is committed to undertaking such a task. Outreach will occur through phone calls, letters, and follow-up visits, as well as the planning of and the conducting of events.
Efforts are already underway to find funding for the library. The first obvious segment of the public to be beseeched are large law firms, even though the law library is not a resource for such entities. While the law library is a valuable resource for the sole practitioner, large law firms are able to purchase the resources they need rather than go to the library. Large law firms can make sizable donations to the library.

Another resource is private donors. The tack here would be to teach and approach people who understand the value of the law library’s effort vis a vis its unrepresented patrons. MCF’s donor advised funds have already been approached and donor lists are easily available.

As for foundations, the way to approach this sector is by offering specific projects which follow its guidelines, and to be creative in that effort.

4.3 Support from County General Fund

The Marin County Board of Supervisors may consider exercising the power given it under California Business and Professions Code § 6324. Under that code, it may enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Law Library “to appropriate from the county treasury for law library purposes such sums as may in their discretion appear proper” for the purposes of funding library staff.

The one strong reason the Library needs to consider such an approach is that it will take time for the previous fundraising methods to gain hold. In effect, the Law Library is a new entry into the philanthropic consciousness. As well, it may very well compete against other current members of the newly formed Legal Services Network for the limited donor dollar, which could also impede the ability of the Library to garner a large amounts of funds.

4.3 Fundraising Help

One excellent idea is to find a professional fundraiser who could put the library on good footing through a hefty donation and fees. Their job would essentially be as a staff member, but one who is responsible for setting up a fundraising program.

4.4 Impact of Loss of Library

Another effort within the sales push for funds is to evaluate what it would mean to the community if the Library did not exist. While access to legal forms could come from online resources, there is no way to quantify the worth of a brightly lit, warm, quiet and calm environment with helpful staff. And Alameda County counts 75% of its patrons as unrepresented laypersons, and due to the fact that the staff notes that some people under great legal stress refuse to sign into the daily sign-in book, the numbers of the Marin Law Library might indeed be higher.
Conclusion
There is no doubt that Marin County deserves to have a first-rate public law library with a qualified permanent full-time staff, an excellent online presence, and valuable resource tools in order to ensure that people seeking access to justice are connected to such.
Appendix A:
Strategic Plan Contributors

Marin County Law Library Board of Trustees and
Strategic Plan Committee

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Jonathan Frieman

Board of Supervisors Appointed
Tracey Barrett
Board of Supervisors Appointed
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Robert Begley, Trustee
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Elliot Bien, Trustee
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