

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 5**

MEETING DATE: Thursday, January 22, 2009

AGENDA ITEM #: 12 A

ITEM: BUDGET

Anne Cain, County Librarian, will discuss the Library's budget for fiscal year 2009-2010.


RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Commissioners will be asked for input on the Library's priorities.

County of Contra Costa
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 2, 2009

TO: Department Heads

FROM: David J. Twa 
County Administrator

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT HEADS SUMMIT, JANUARY 30, 2009

On January 30, 2009 we will meet starting at 9:00 am at the *Public Works Maintenance Facility, 2475 Waterbird Way, Martinez* for what I hope will be an exciting and productive day. Lunch will be provided, and we expect the Summit to last until approximately 3:00 pm. The Topic will be to develop a strategy for dealing with the current budget crisis, the next two years budget crisis, and how the County can position itself to weather the storm and come out of this stronger, and better able to serve our constituents.

As you know, additional cuts to the current and next two year Budgets will be necessary. Although the exact number is not yet know it could easily be \$25 million in additional cuts. This is even before we know about the final cuts from the State once they have completed their budget process.

Additionally, Chair Susan Bonilla has recommended that the Board of Supervisors Finance Committee review and recommend to the Board of Supervisors, within 90 days, strategic priorities to guide the budget process. Our Summit will give Departments the opportunity to have input into framing these strategic priorities for the Supervisors.

As a start, I would like you to discuss with your Department employees every possible cost savings that could be implemented, or have been implemented in your department and that could be put into place County wide. This list would be shared at the Retreat for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for possible implementation.

Although it is likely we will get some "unworkable ideas" let's start with putting everything on the table for discussion.

Also discuss with your staff and come prepared to discuss:

1. What are the Core Services that your Department should provide?
2. What are the Core Services that the County should provide?
3. What Services are most legally restrictive and which provide some latitude?
4. What services should the County no longer provide, or have delivered by another provider?
5. What are the areas where Contra Costa County can improve delivery of these essential services?
6. Are there areas in which Departments or services should be consolidated? And if so, where and how?
7. Are there areas in which we could do a better job of coordinating services between Departments?
8. Are we maximizing use of Federal, State, and Grant dollars in the best interest of the County? As opposed to chasing after money that does not meet the core needs of the County.
9. What uses of Technology would enable your Department to provide services more efficiently or at a lower cost?
10. What uses of Technology would enable the County as a whole to provide services more efficiently or at a lower cost?
11. What should County Business models look like for the 21st Century?
12. Are there ways to improve communications between Departments?
13. Other ideas

Please provide your answers to these questions to me by January 21, 2009 so that they can be put into a format for discussion at the Retreat.

> Other voices

It's easy to find the fat; what's hard is getting rid of it

President-elect Barack Obama proudly introduced his new budget director, Peter R. Orszag, with what he meant as a supreme compliment: "Peter doesn't need a map to tell him where the bodies are buried in the federal budget." It takes nothing away from the exceedingly capable Orszag, or the rest of Obama's exceedingly capable economic team, to say that this isn't much of a trick.

Politicians across the political spectrum are involved in an endless snipe hunt for waste, fraud and abuse in the federal budget. The point isn't that the waste, etc., doesn't exist. It does. The trick to this hunt is not in spotting the prey but in eradicating it. One politician's waste is another's worthy investment, every program

has a constituency. Yet there are billions of dollars in cuts to be made if politicians could summon the political will to do so over the inevitable objections of entrenched interests.

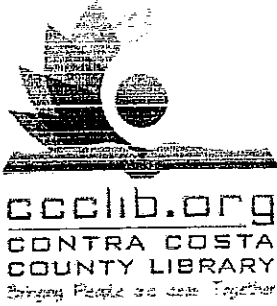
Even more, as Obama surely understands, it's not simply a matter of ferreting out what works and what doesn't, what is worthy of our precious tax dollars and what is not. Cutting the porkiest, least functional items would be a good start but would make only a small dent in the federal budget. The real task is making difficult choices among worthy competing programs. And the most daunting fiscal challenge, putting brakes on entitlement spending, will require paring back unaffordable promises about retirement benefits

and medical care. Getting a handle on rising health care costs is necessary — and Obama's choice of Orszag signals his understanding of that important fact — but it is not, unfortunately, sufficient.

In fact, there is the kind of map that Obama mentioned: The Congressional Budget Office, which Orszag headed until he was tapped by the president-elect, puts out a volume, mildly entitled "Budget Options" that sets out some of these potential cuts and tradeoffs. The latest presented a few hundred such options, ranging from cutting specific defense programs to curbing crop subsidies to raising the Social Security retirement age and imposing a carbon tax. Any takers?

In other words, as Office of Management and Budget director, even Lt. Columbo — indeed, Inspector Clouseau — could find the bodies. It will take an exceedingly skillful and resolute president to dispose of them.

— Washington Post



Budget Input

View other's suggestions [here](#)

All sections must be completed



In anticipation of a very difficult budget year ahead, we would like to ask for your suggestions now about what the library could do to save money, operate more efficiently, or increase revenue.



1 * What can we do to reduce costs, be more efficient or generate revenue?



2 * In what category does this solution belong?
(select one)

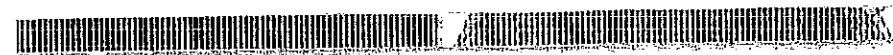
- Collections
- Community Relations
- Facilities
- Human Resources
- Public Services
- Revenue Generation
- Technology
- Other, please specify



3 * Please provide your First Name:



4 * Please provide your Last Name:



5 * Please provide your Email address
(@ccclib.org):

News

COUNTY REVIEWING LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP

By *Zachary K. Johnson* December 17, 2008 Record Staff Writer

STOCKTON - City cutbacks to the library had county policymakers Tuesday rethinking the partnership behind the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library system.

Stockton's efforts to address a \$23.5million budget deficit included adopting employee furloughs. But because city employees work in libraries throughout the county, branches outside of Stockton were closed on furlough days around the Thanksgiving holiday and will be closed from Dec. 24 through Jan. 4.

The Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library includes 13 branches in cities and communities throughout the county, except in Lodi, which has its own public library.

The county system's cost is split, roughly evenly, by Stockton and the county.

On Tuesday, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors directed its staff to revisit the agreement between the city and the county and to explore the feasibility of creating separate systems. Specific details, including whether the feasibility study would be carried out by county or library staff, remained undetermined.

"It looks to me what we have here is conjoined twins," Supervisor Larry Ruhstaller said. One of the twins is malnourished, and it looks as though the situation will be even worse next budget year, he said.

What's important is not squabbling about opening hours but looking, instead, to prepare for the library's future, he said.

For the rest of the budget year, the library's five Stockton branches will be open fewer hours, but there will be no reductions in hours at the eight branches serving other parts of the county, library Director Natalie Rencher said. The county and the cities will be reimbursed for the furlough days, she said.

Existing agreements with cities are vague and address little beyond operating hours, she said. "It doesn't take into consideration the economic impact we're facing now."

Almost all of the library's \$12.8million budget comes from contributions from Stockton and the county. In four of the past five years, Stockton provided more than 50 percent of those contributions, according to the library. For the budget year ending in June, Stockton's contribution dips below 50 percent, \$5.6million to the county's \$6.2million.

But the county's future contribution could suffer. Part of the library agreement includes the county contributing a percentage of property taxes, County Administrator Manuel Lopez said.

Economic conditions have the county predicting a reduction in revenue from property taxes. And tough economic times are when people need the library most, particularly for resources to look for jobs or connect to the Internet, Rencher said.

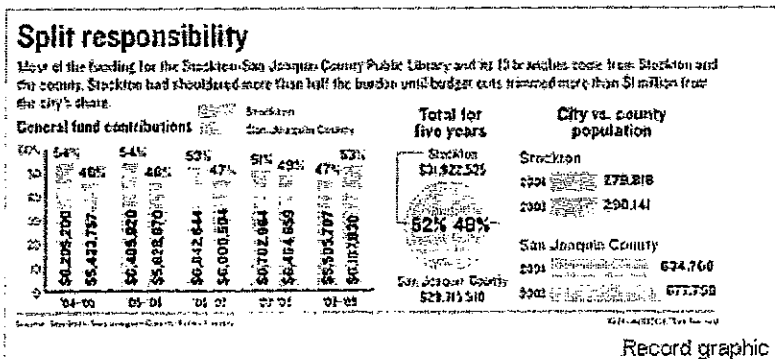
At Tuesday's meeting, supervisors stressed the importance of libraries to the community. They also expressed disapproval that Stockton's budget problems hit residents in other cities and communities.

"In this case, decisions were made without our knowledge, ... and I don't think that's the right approach," Supervisor Victor Mow said.

Stockton took it upon itself to cut \$1 million out of the library budget, Supervisor Leroy Ornellas said. "I find that kind of offensive," he said.

Now is a good time to see what could be achieved if the library system were split, he said. Undefined is what form such a division might take: a Stockton system and a countywide system; or separate systems in larger communities such as Manteca and Tracy.

"Certainly it's worth a study," Ornellas said. Contact reporter Zachary K. Johnson at (209) 546-8258 or zjohnson@recordnet.com.



As We See It: Limiting library hours best option

Posted: 01/14/2009 01:30:27 AM PST

With the announcement that local libraries are closing one day a week, voters who last year approved extending a quarter-cent sales-tax increase for the system may be wondering, "What exactly did we vote for?"

While such a reaction is understandable, we don't see a better option for the Santa Cruz city and county public library system to deal with a recession-fueled drop in revenues.

Monday night, the library system's joint powers board approved closing all branches on Fridays to deal with a deficit of \$625,000 in a \$13 million budget.

The decision to close one day a week is similar what cities have been doing recently to make deficits – requiring employees to take unpaid days off. In this case, the closing will amount to a four-hour a week furlough for library workers.

This decision, however, falls harder on people who have fewer choices than on people who may be able to adjust their visiting hours at local libraries. Library use, always high in Santa Cruz County, historically increases during tough economic times, as people use library resources to check job listings, peruse publications that can

help improve job skills, and take advantage of book lending instead of purchases.

We heard two options to the Friday closing, and both seem to have serious obstacles.

One would be to cut the budget elsewhere. But with three different jurisdictions still seeking, and raising money for, new branch buildings -- Felton, Scotts Valley and Capitola -- the system Watsonville runs its own libraries can ill-afford to fall even further into a deficit that could take years to overcome. Layoffs are not on the table for now, since the library system says it is already over-extended. Library board member Mike Rotkin, however, told union leaders Monday night that if concessions are not made on the current contract, layoffs may come.

The other option, which has been discussed for a while, would have been to stagger the closings. But library officials say this would be an administrative headache and lead to confusion about how to make referrals between branches. In addition, Friday is already a limited day for many branches, which open later and close earlier than other days. Also, many K-12 students use the branches Mondays through Thursdays after school; the libraries are a place to study and access school-related publications. Far fewer young people use the branches on Fridays after school.

The recession is cutting deeply in Santa Cruz County, and library access is another victim of a miserable recession, a relative dearth of strong revenue alternatives and generators and an

increased demand for services. The board had little choice but to act as it did in approving the Friday closings.

The Mercury News

MercuryNews.com

County libraries to close Fridays to save money

By Genevieve Bookwalter - Sentinel staff writer

Posted: 01/13/2009 01:30:20 AM PST

SANTA CRUZ – Library patrons need to reschedule their Friday visits, as county library directors voted late Monday to close all branches one day a week to cut the system's swelling budget deficit.

"I didn't go into this to close libraries," acting Director Susan Elgin said while presenting details of the library system's budget picture to the Santa Cruz Public Libraries joint powers board. However, she added, dwindling revenues make the closures necessary, along with other cost-saving measures.

The drastic move, set to take effect on Fridays beginning Feb. 6, comes as the district faces a nearly \$625,000 deficit on its \$13 million budget. A \$190,000 cut to the new-book budget and an increase in fees and fines also were approved.

Friday was considered the best day to close, Elgin said, because most of the system's branches already are closed Friday mornings, and many close early that evening, too.

"It's the least trauma to the system," Santa Cruz Mayor and library board member Cynthia Mathews said to the 60 members of the public who packed the small conference room at the Central Branch in downtown Santa Cruz waiting to hear the decision.

The Santa Cruz Public Libraries city/county system, which includes all county libraries except those in Watsonville, is suffering as sales and property tax receipts plummet countywide. The two taxes make up the bulk of the library system's budget.

Although county residents last year voted to continue an existing quarter-cent sales tax measure to pay for libraries, the tax does not bring in any new revenue, and libraries continue to take a hit as tax totals slide.

So Monday board members considered closing all branches on Fridays, increasing penalties for those with long-overdue items, and raising fees for community room rentals and proctoring, among other items.

The closures come despite a historical trend of library use rising during hard economic times, as many residents stop in to search for a new job or save money by checking out books instead of buying them.

On Monday, Santa Cruz resident and watercolor painter Jan Castro, 64, said she stops by downtown's Central Branch every day to research her craft and look at other artists' work.

Friday closures "would upset my schedule," Castro said. "I would have to rethink my day."

The system is just the latest public agency around the Central Coast making cuts and considering closures during the ongoing recession. The Santa Cruz City Council is expected to decide today whether the city can afford to keep its museums, pool and community centers open. UC Santa Cruz's Shakespeare Santa Cruz was forced to raise \$300,000 last month to continue this year's summer festival. And Watsonville libraries, which are governed by their own city board, closed for two weeks over the holidays to save cash. The city of Capitola is also considering mandatory employee furloughs.

Contact Genevieve Bookwalter at 706-3286or gbookwalter@santacruzsentinel.com.

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Santa Cruz Sentinel

County libraries looking to make cuts

Genevieve Bookwalter - Sentinel staff writer
Article Launched: 12/16/2008 12:00:00 AM PST

Libraries around the county could close their doors on Fridays and shelve fewer new books as leaders grapple with the same economic crisis that forced the city of Santa Cruz to close its museums, pool and a community center earlier this week.

The library's Joint Powers Board will decide next month whether to close all branches on Fridays, cut worker hours and buy fewer books, among other possible measures, as they seek to slash almost \$600,000 from the City/County Public Library System's nearly \$13 million budget, said Library Director Anne Turner. Libraries countywide, with the exception of Watsonville, would be affected. Watsonville libraries are governed by their own board of trustees.

Turner said Friday would be the preferred day to close "because eight out of 10 branches are closed on Friday morning, and none are open on Friday night. Friday is also the least busy day of the week," Turner said.

Half of the library system's funding comes from a quarter-cent sales tax, which residents voted to make permanent earlier this year. But with sales tax revenue down, library system leaders are joining local governments around the county in making difficult decisions on what they can afford.

Like the Santa Cruz City Council, the library board also will be talking with unions about renegotiating salary benefits, and has asked employees to pass on any other cost-saving ideas they might have, Turner said.

Mike Rotkin, who sits on both the library board and the City Council, said he did not run for public office to cut programs residents love. However, "where are we going if we don't negotiate something else?" he said.

Turner, who retires at the end of this month, said that before she leaves, she will prepare the information board members will need in January to make their decision.