

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, March 9, 2026

4:00 PM

City Council Chamber, City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue and Zoom

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Braitman called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present (6) Commissioners Cullen, Doll, Crabtree-Kampe, Levitt, Vice Chair Chou, Chair Braitman

Absent: (1) Ferris

Others Present: Senior Recreation Supervisor (SRS) Kari Bell; Recreation Supervisor Kelsey Ransom, Recording Secretary Rosemary Lackow

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Library Commission Minutes, Adjourned regular meeting minutes: February 9, 2026

It was moved and seconded (Levitt/Crabtree-Kampe) to approve as submitted. Motion carried by hand vote:

Ayes: 6 (Cullen, Doll, Crabtree-Kampe, Levitt, Vice Chair Chou, Chair Braitman)

Absent: 1 (Ferris)

E. LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Library Manager Cassandra Sargent reviewed programming. In February the library celebrated black history month; kids learned about Garrett Morgan, inventor of the traffic signal and made “shrinky-dink” keychains, and teens made candy bobsleds recognizing African American contributions in the Winter Olympics. Kids also enjoyed a mobile Planetarium and making a mobile constellation. The Manhattan Beach branch is looking to book the planetarium again in November in time with the next Light Gate event. Adults enjoyed a balloon art workshop and families (80 attendees) participated in an Oreo cookie taste-off.

Library Manager Sargent previewed nine upcoming March (Women’s History Month) activities and two in early April. March events include craft/art and special such as a writing workshop for teens, a local expert discussion on space debris, a jigsaw puzzle competition, and Rubik’s cube club (teens). In early April: family firefighter story time, Thai cooking workshop, and a horse themed craft/art activity. There will be two author speaker events in May: 5/12, 5:30 pm: Regency Era inspired Book Vase and 5/18: 5:00 pm Queen Charlotte Book Club. For more info and reservations: <https://lacountylibrary.org/location/manhattan-beach-library/>

Library Manager Sargent updated February library data (2025-2026):

	February 2026	February 2025
No. of Programs	18 with 708 participants	17 with 660 participants
Visitors	16,861 (+ 3,000)	13,739
Circulation (non-digital)	18,817	14,515
Library cards issued	219	
Holds placed	4,367	

Library Manager Sargent introduced Melanie Beringer, new Children’s Librarian II. Chair Braitman welcomed Ms. Beringer; she looks forward to partnering with the city and expanding the children’s program.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Former Library Commissioner Janet Jones addressed the commission - her kindness book project resulted in \$6,000 worth of books (200-300 books) donated from several sources. She suggested that the Commission consider planning a Manhattan Beach “Kindness Day” event for November, National Kindness Month. She will be meeting with the principal at Pacific Elementary to discuss next week.

There were no others, in person or remote wishing to speak.

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

2. Library Commission Work Plan 2026/2027 (approved by City Council February 24, 2026).
 - a. Library Appreciation Events (Commissioners Cullen, Ferris)

Commissioner Cullen–updated: the library staff brunch was held February 19; was well attended and everything went very well. The school library appreciation event is coming up and under consideration is a second library “Thank you” appreciation event in summer or fall.

- b. Speaker Series (Commissioners Braitman, Chou, Levitt) Discuss approved funding for 2026 – 2027 Speaker Series.

Chair Braitman noted that the spring event is on Saturday, May 23rd at the Mira Costa auditorium; the speaker is Julia Quinn, best-selling romance novelist, author of the Bridgerton Series. Publicity is expected to start at the end of March, including various outlets. Library Manager Sargent will investigate using local newspapers for advertising. Typically, emails are sent to all library branch users, but the county marketing team may send out to a wider (whole county system) user group. It was agreed that the Commission will email their ideas for marketing the May event as well as suggestions for a fall speaker to SRS Bell.

Commissioner Levitt stated that the speaker she had suggested for the Spring, a Pulitzer Prize winner, will not be available for the Fall, as he was not contacted in a timely manner and will not be available at any time in the future. Discussion focused on how communication occurred in selecting the speakers. SRS Bell emphasized that she is a go-between (between LA County and City) and she relies on the Commission to bring ideas forward by email or at the monthly

meetings. If ideas do not come forward, she must rely on the County.

It was agreed that meetings should resume with the speaker series committee members and the county. Concept came out of conversations regarding how to use the library surplus with the understanding that the Commission's role was to advise but not having consent. However, the communication process has since gone silent. SRS Bell emphasized the importance of each commissioner monitoring and responding to emails coming from the city; she will check whether, when sending an email on the city email, staff can copy commissioners on a private account.

Commissioner Doll suggested that in the Fall a children's author be featured. It was noted that in the September 2025 meeting, several potential speakers were suggested to the Commission, including Julia Quinn.

SRS Bell will reach out to the County to possibly schedule a zoom meeting between the County and Commission Speaker series committee and ahead of that, the commission should email Kari with any marketing ideas, and suggestions for a Fall speaker.

c. StoryWalk (Commissioners Chou, Cullen, Crabtree-Kampe)

Vice Chair Chou noted that the committee will be making book selections for the rest of the year and proceedings.

d. Library Needs Assessment (Commissioners Braitman, Doll, Levitt)

SRS Bell reported that Grace Eng Nadel, County consultant, will make a presentation of the final report to the City Council at the April meeting; commissioners are encouraged to attend. The Commission will be informed if that date changes.

Commissioner Doll inquired as to whether it will be possible to add more children's books on the shelves; Library Manager Sargent responded that she has allotted more books to be purchased for children's section as some funding has been found to be available; and she believes that there will be shelf space for the donated kindness picture books. The library worked with Janet Jones on how the donated books will be handled.

H. STAFF ITEMS - None

I. COMMISSION ITEMS

Chair Braitman inquired to the HVAC replacement; Library Manager Sargent stated that the County capital project manager was present at a recent walk through and is searching for a permanent solution which unfortunately, will not be in place this summer. She noted recently one glass panel on the inside of the structure shattered, believed to be due to the high heat.

J. ADJOURNMENT

At 4:56 it was moved and seconded (Cullen/Levitt) to adjourn the meeting to April 13, 2026, at 4:00 pm; motion passed unanimously 6-0-1 (Ferris absent).