

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

Monday, September 8, 2025

4:00 PM

Location: City Council Chambers, 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 Doll, Cullen, Crabtree-Kampe, Vice Chair Chou, Chair Braitman, Ferris

Absent (1): Levitt

Others Present: Senior Recreation Supervisor (SRS) Kari Bell; Senior Management Analyst (SMA) Linda Robb

Chair Braitman welcomed new Commissioner Ferris who gave a brief self-introduction.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 9, 2025

It was moved and seconded (Doll/Chou) to approve, no changes. Motion carried 6-0-1 (Levitt absent).

E. LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Chair Braitman welcomed new Library Manager Cassandra Sargent, who gave a brief introduction, noting she comes from Orange County libraries, most recently, she was branch manager at the Los Alamitos Rossmoor library.

Manager Sargent reported on library usage: Door Counts: (July over 15,000; August just under 15,000) Circulation (physical books): just over 21,000 in July, and about 20,500 in August; Holds: over 5,000 on the hold-shelf, and 306 library cards issued (both, August). Manager Sargent reported on several enrichment activities and special events programmed from August to early October targeted to a range of ages, from tots and toddlers to elementary school aged children, teens and adults.

All events are publicized on the library's social media outlets and on the library calendar which can be viewed at: <https://lacountylibrary.org/location/manhattan-beach-library/> The librarians have informed local schools about upcoming programming.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Braitman invited public comments, none received.

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

2. 024/2025 Work Plan Discussion

a. Speaker Series (Commissioners Braitman, Chou, Levitt) Chair Braitman updated: branch program librarian, Christina McTighe has chosen Nic Stone, a bestselling young adult author, essayist, and podcaster to headline the next speaker event. The event will be on Saturday, October 25, 2:00 pm at the library with a focus on Ms. Stone's four Dear Martin novels; Ms. Stone will receive a \$17k honorarium. There will be a book signing with refreshments; the library is discussing having the event outdoors (with canopies) on the patio/grassy area to provide more space to accommodate desired activities and targeted audience. Manager Sargent discussed with the Commission various ways that the library plans to connect with and market the event to the schools (school flyers, announcements including targeting specific classes and teachers etc.). Student commissioner Cullen will assist with outreach at Mira Costa.

Planning has started for the spring event which will be a larger targeted audience with a higher honorarium. Chair Braitman named potential dates as May 9, 16, 23 and some potential speakers are Billie Jean King, Priscilla Presley, Eric Larson, Hampton Sides, Siddhartha Mukherjee, Michelle Young, Susan Lieu, Kate Anderson Brower (The Residence), and Dav Pilky (Dog Man). Manager Sargent noted others include Julia Quinn (Bridgerton series), and Taylor Jenkins Reid (NYT bestselling novelist). Commissioner Doll noted that she felt the way Roy Choi had discussed his life journey was very engaging and possibly the next speaker can also bring some personal experiences to the presentation. Manager Sargent invited the Commission to give the County team input as they move forward.

b. Library Appreciation Events (Commissioners Cullen, Ferris)

Chair Braitman provided a summary of past events in the fall (library staff appreciation with a meal brought in from Caffè Altamura) and spring (seven school librarians given a gift delivered to each school by commissioners (last year – copies of Roy Choi book). The committee will work with Library Manager Sargent who indicated that a Thursday would be good for library staff.

c. Library Needs Assessment (Braitman, Doll, Levitt) Chair Braitman reminded of the project timeline: a survey (went out August 13), focus groups (4 in June) and workshop have been held. An action plan will be developed, a site spatial assessment conducted and another workshop will be held in October, after which there will be a final report. Chair Braitman reported that in a focus group he attended there was significant input that more adult programming is needed. Additional progress reports will be forthcoming; hopefully consultant Grace Nadel will be able to attend the next Commission meeting.

d. StoryWalk (Commissioners Chou, Cullen, Crabtree-Kampe) Commissioner Chou reported that "Pete the Cat" from Janet Jones' Kindness for Kids program (September being a kindness month) will be the next book with installation assistance from a Boy Scout troop. The next change out will be in January, 2026; the book will likely again be chosen from the Kindness for Kids books. In June it is expected that a book related to Juneteenth will be requested; this may require changing out the book in the second quarter of 2026 a little early. It was noted that the panels have been soiled by bird droppings; new Plexiglas panels have been ordered and the scout troop has agreed to maintain the screens once replaced.

Chair Braitman asked if there were any public commentators; there were none.

H. STAFF ITEMS – SRS Bell

SRS Bell reminded the Commission to: 1) set time aside to meet in sub-committees following each meeting so that updates can be provided monthly; and 2) regularly check their city emails weekly for important information coming from staff. Parks and Rec will be very busy with the speaker series and emails requesting assistance may be sent to the Commission. Commissioner Doll suggested that the commissioners might contact each other in a sort of phone tree if something urgent like a meeting date change, especially to a sooner day.

I. COMMISSION ITEMS –

Commissioner Chou inquired and Amy Crowe, LA County Library Assistant Regional Administrator, West Region responded: $\frac{3}{4}$ of the new furniture has been ordered and awaiting delivery; she is working on ordering the children's furniture, a more complicated process. The library will share a timeline when they become aware of the schedule; the goal is to install in the library with minimal disruption.

Further, the air conditioning system replacement is an ongoing project and unfortunately problems have necessitated closing the library on occasion (today) The County is working on a temporary fix to allow the building to re-open. The mechanical assessments are being done by the County Internal Services Department for a full replacement system and the portable units that were being used on the second floor are no longer in service.

Library Manager Sargent noted that the flyer for the fall speaker event will soon be sent to SRS Bell who will distribute to the Commission.

SMA Robb announced that at the next (October 14) Commission meeting, all commissioners should arrive at 3:30 to receive Vote Cast training.

J. ADJOURNMENT

At 4:38 it was moved and seconded (Crabtree-Kampe/Chou) to adjourn the meeting to October 14 at 4:00 p.m.; motion passed 6-1 (Levitt absent).