

Council Meeting of
February 7, 2012

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

**SUBJECT: Community Services – Accept and Appropriate a Donation of \$21,070
from the Friends of the Torrance Library**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Community Services Director that City Council accept and appropriate a donation of \$21,070 from the Friends of the Torrance Library to fund the Summer Reading Program 2012 at the Torrance Public Library.

BACKGROUND

Each year the Torrance Public Library offers a Summer Reading Program to youth, from pre-readers through teens. This program is designed to keep kids reading during the summer months, arresting the “summer slide” when students lose skills when they are not in school. In addition, regular reading builds a habit that can last children throughout their lives.

In order to encourage and reward participation, each library offers weekly programs to draw families into regular library visits, along with an incentive given each time the child reads at least twenty minutes, and visits the library to tell us about what they have been reading. All events attract significant attendance, and parents tell us the experience of each child speaking directly with an adult about reading is one of the most valuable aspects of the program.

During our depressed economy, parents continue to turn to the Library for quality programs and reading support for their children. During summer 2011, participation in the youth program was up over 25% and in the teen program up over 11% from the previous year. Programs regularly draw over 100 attendees each, and the Library regularly receives positive feedback about this six week endeavor.

The Friends of the Torrance Library have traditionally supported the bulk of direct costs including the purchase of book bags for each participant, incentive prizes, performers, craft materials, and the like. Library Staff reminds participants that this enhanced program would not be possible without the Friends.

ANALYSYS

The Friends of the Torrance Library voted on January 18, 2012 to support costs for 2012 as follows:

- \$1,220 for book bags for each participant
- \$900 for decorations for all six libraries
- \$700 for craft materials for programs
- \$1,500 for a craft program at each library, presented by local artist Peggy Hasegawa
- \$8,050 for performers at all six libraries
- \$5,500 for incentives for youth
- \$3,000 for incentives for teens
- \$200 for promotional t-shirts for the Youth Services Librarians to wear when visiting schools

The Youth Services Supervisor and the City Librarian feel this donation will contribute significantly to a vibrant, effective, and successful Summer Reading Program for 2012. At a time when parents and caregivers are turning to the Torrance Public Library, continuing to offer effective reading promotion in a fun and encouraging atmosphere is essential, and the Friends of the Torrance Library make this high-level program possible.

Respectfully submitted,

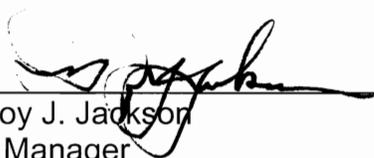
JOHN JONES
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

By 
Hillary Theyer
City Librarian

CONCUR:



John Jones
Community Services Director



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager