Council Meeting of
July 21, 2009

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

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Community Services — Accept and File the Library Commission's 2008-09 Annual Report

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Library Commission and the Community Services Director and that the City Council accept and file the Library Commission's Annual Report for 2008-09.

Funding
Not applicable.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The Library Commission Annual Report for the period July 2008 through June 2009 as prepared by the Library Commissioners is attached for the Council's information and review. The Commissioners approved the report at their July 13, 2009 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

LIBRARY COMMISSION

Jerome J. Haig, Chair – 2008-09

JOHN JONES
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

By
Paula J. Weiner, City Librarian

CONCUR:

John Jones, Community Services Director

NOTED:

LeRoy J. Jackson, City Manager

Attachment: A) 2008-09 Library Commission Annual Report

8B

CITY OF TORRANCE LIBRARY COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009

Vision Statement

The vision of the Torrance Library Commission is that all Torrance residents have access to quality library services in order to:

- Achieve their greatest potential
- Participate in a global society, and
- Enrich their daily lives

Mission Statement

The Torrance Library Commission is committed, through leadership, advocacy, and service to the Torrance Public Library system, to ensure that this community has a place to access information, to pursue lifelong learning, and to experience cultural heritage and enrichment.

Membership

The Torrance Library Commission was comprised of the following members:

Jerome J. Haig – Chairperson, July 2008 – June 2009 (term expires January 15, 2010)
Linda Grogan – Vice Chairperson, July 2008 – January 2009
Judith Gerber – Vice Chairperson, February 2009 – June 2009 (term expires January 2011)
Clarence Chappell (term expires January 15, 2012)
Harry Ross (term expires January 15, 2013)
Jim Sheldon (term expires January 15, 2013)
Flo Stapleton (term expires January 15, 2013)
Michael Wermers (term expires January 15, 2011)

Commissioners who resigned or with terms that expired during this fiscal year:

Botello (effective July 15, 2008)
Grogan (effective January 15, 2009)
Lang (effective January 15, 2009)
Wang (effective January 15, 2009)

Commissioners Sheldon, Stapleton, Ross, and Wermers were appointed by the City Council on January 16, 2009 and received orientation from Library Administrative staff on January 30, February 3, and February 24 respectively.

Meetings

The Commission meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m., usually at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library. In past years the Library Commission observed a custom of visiting each branch library once every year. However this year, the Commission met only at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library due to preparations for the planned refurbishments at the branches.

In addition to members of the Library Commission, regular attendees at the meetings included City Librarian Paula Weiner and Principal Librarian Hillary Theyer. On a less frequent basis, the Commission also welcomed Friends of the Torrance Library board member Teresa Covey and representatives from the Torrance Youth Council.

The Commission continued its tradition of an annual meeting with the City Council. The two bodies met at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library on March 24, 2009. During the meeting, Library staff provided updates on major activities and programs (Katy Geissert Civic Center Library first floor remodel, Branch Library refurbishment, Sunday hours of service, and homework assistance programs) with discussion and input from City Council members.

Subcommittees

The Library Commissioners served on the following subcommittees during 2008-2009:

Financial Literacy – Chappell, Wang, and Chairperson Haig
Joint Meeting with City Council – Chappell, Gerber, and Chairperson Haig
Water Conservation program – Gerber, Sheldon, Stapleton
Annual Part-time Employee Recognition Event – Ross, Stapleton, and Chairperson Haig

Significant Commission Actions

At the August 11, 2008 meeting, the Commission approved a recommendation that the City Council approve a contract to keep the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library open on 32 Sundays in FY 2008-09. City Council did so approve the open Sundays.

At the August 11, 2008 meeting, the Commission accepted the Library Commission Annual Report 2007-08.

At the October 13, 2008 meeting, the Commission accepted and filed the re-defined and re-focused Vision, Mission, and Values Statements for the Community Services Department.

At the October 13, 2008 meeting, the Commission approved a motion to move forward on a program for Financial Literacy in cooperation with the Library staff.

At the February 9, 2009 meeting, the Commission directed Library staff to approach the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation and the Water Commissions regarding co-sponsorship of a water conservation program in June.

At the March 9, 2009 meeting, the Commission approved June 24, 2009, as the date for the annual Library Part-Time Staff Recognition Event.

At the March 9, 2009 meeting, the Commission approved the agenda for the March 24, 2009, joint meeting with City Council.

Challenges and Concerns

The Commission received updates on the status of the branch library refurbishments and the remodeling of the first floor of the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library. As has been mentioned in past years' annual reports, the Commission is concerned about the earthquake safety of shelving at all library locations, and the electrical wiring and power problems at two, if not more, of the branch libraries. The Southeast Branch refurbishment and the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library first floor remodel are complete and have addressed these issues. The Commission is eagerly awaiting the start, and eventual completion, of the remaining branch refurbishments.

Library staff gave the Commission ongoing updates on the status of the continuing Sunday service hours at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library. Commissioners visited on Sundays to avail themselves of the service and to gauge the community's response to open Sunday hours.

The Commission discussed various matters of concern including Live Homework Help, the annual Summer Reading Program, adult literacy outreach, and life-long learning opportunities for seniors.

Grants and Donations

The Commission received periodic updates from City Librarian Weiner and Principal Librarian Theyer regarding the status of various grant applications and donations. The Library was awarded the following grants this fiscal year:

- *Live Homework Help*, a grant administered by the California State Library, in the amount of $12,274 paid by the State Library and $8,363 paid by the Torrance Public Library Foundation, to fund a live, online tutoring service that is available to help students with their homework. This was the third and final year of this diminished-funding grant. Students continued to use Live Homework Help heavily with more than 5,000 log-ins recorded.

- *Transforming Life After 50* (Baby Boomer Initiative), a new California State Library Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant, which involved application for a three-day training institute in November 2007 to demonstrate interest, dedication, and capability. After completion of the institute, the Library

assessed the needs of the baby boomer generation in the community through focus groups and surveys and wrote a successful grant application receiving $14,800 from the State Library and $5,000 from the Friends of the Torrance Library in matching funds for a total of $19,800. The funds were used to develop enhanced services and programs targeted at Baby Boomers (LINK – Lifelong Information Networks and Knowledge). As an adjunct to the grant, Torrance Public Library was invited to serve as a model for recruiting and managing volunteers with a secondary initiative, *Get Involved: Boomer Volunteer Engagement*.

- The Friends of the Torrance Library donated $19,350 for Youth Services programming, outreach, and activities.

- The Friends of the Torrance Library donated $16,000 for the annual Summer Reading Program.

- The Friends of the Torrance Library donated $13,420 for adult programming.

- The Friends of the Torrance Library donated up to $75,000 for four new branch library service desks.

- The Friends of the Torrance Library donated up to $1,250 for branch library refurbishment completion Open Houses.

- The Friends of the Torrance Library, the Torrance Historical Society, and the City Council made $60,000 available for digitizing historic back issues of the Torrance Herald, the Torrance Press, and City directories.

- The Library received a Metropolitan Water District grant of $ 2,700 for purchasing materials to present a water conservation program and to add adjunct materials the Library's permanent collection.

Community Relations and Outreach

The Commission is dedicated to improving communication and outreach with residents in the Library's service area and seeks to disseminate information more effectively to Library patrons. As part of this effort, the Commission undertook the following activities:

- Chairperson Haig and Commissioners Chappell, Gerber, Sheldon, and Stapleton attended the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library main level grand opening on February 5, 2009.

- Commissioner Stapleton attended the March 9, 2009 Educational Council of Torrance (ECT) meeting.

- Commissioners Gerber, Sheldon, Stapleton, and Chairperson Haig attended the Pancake Breakfast at the ATTIC on April 4, 2009.

- On April 9, 2009, Commissioner Ross represented the Commission at the Youth Council "Beat the Odds" selection program.

- Commissioners Gerber, Sheldon, Wermers, former Commissioner Carrie Lang, and Chairperson Haig attended the Southeast Library open house on April 23, 2009.

- Commissioners Gerber and Sheldon attended various "Meet the Author" events at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library.

- Commissioner Sheldon attended the LINK Travel Fair on May 2, 2009.

- Chairperson Haig and Commissioner Sheldon attended the Library's financial literacy program "Making Sense of Investing" on May 6, 2009.

- Commissioner Sheldon is a volunteer for the Library's *Words-on-Wheels* (WOW) home delivery program.

- On June 23, Commissioner Stapleton promoted the June 27 Water Conservation Program at the Torrance Farmers' Market.

- On June 27, 2009, the Library Commission, in cooperation with the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation and Water Commissions, jointly sponsored a screening of a film documentary *The American Southwest: Are We Running Dry?* followed by guest speaker Charles Gale, Jr., Metropolitan Water District.

Events, Honors, and Memberships

Commission members were routinely involved in several local boards, committees, and agencies. Among the Commissioners who were involved in organizations and functions related to the Torrance Public Library were:

- Commissioner Wermers periodically attended meetings of the Torrance Public Library Foundation.

- Commissioner Stapleton periodically represented the Commission at the Torrance Unified School District Educational Council of Torrance (ECT) meetings.

- Commissioner Sheldon began representing the Commission as a Metropolitan Cooperative Library System (MCLS) Advisory Board delegate, talking over for departing Commissioner Wang.

- Chairperson Haig is on the executive committee of the Board of Managers of the South Bay/Torrance YMCA.

- Chairperson Haig's children successfully completed the 2008 Summer Reading Program at the El Retiro Library.
-

- Commissioner Gerber made a presentation of her book Farming in Torrance and the South Bay on September 24, 2008.

- Commissioner Gerber was interviewed on the KCRW radio program "Good Food."

- Commissioner Gerber prepares the City of Torrance volunteer newsletter.

- Commissioner Gerber was appointed volunteer coordinator for the Torrance Historical Society and serves as an off-board member of the League of Women Voters, South Bay Chapter.

- Commissioner Wermers was appointed to the oversight committee for the Torrance Unified School District (TUSD) Board.

Commissioner Activities for the Benefit of the Library

- Commissioner Gerber visited State Senator Oropeza's office on January 30 to promote library services, specifically requesting preservation of funding for libraries.

- Commissioner Haig and former Commissioner Carrie Lang attended the California Library Association "Day in the District" at Assemblyman Ted Lieu's field office on February 6.

- Commissioners Chappell, Gerber, Sheldon, and Stapleton attended the California Association of Library Trustees and Commissioners (CALTAC) Southern Workshop hosted by Torrance Public Library on March 14, 2009.

- Chairperson Haig and Commissioners, Gerber, Sheldon, and Stapleton accepted the National Library Week Proclamation at the April 7, 2009 City Council meeting.

- Chairperson Haig attended the California Library Association (CLA) Legislative Day in Sacramento on April 15, 2009.

- Commissioners Gerber and Stapleton served as Library team members for the *Get Involved: Boomer Volunteer Engagement* initiative and Commissioner Gerber attended the *Get Involved Institute* in San Francisco, on May 4-6, 2009.

- On June 9, 2009, Commissioners Chappell, Sheldon, and Stapleton attended the City's budget workshop. Commissioner Sheldon spoke for the entire Commission in support of Library programs.

- On June 24, 2009, the Commission held its annual Library Part-Time Staff Recognition Event. City officials, Commissioners, Senior Library Management, and Library staff members were present to honor 12 Library employees for achieving a 5-year increment of service during the previous fiscal year.

- On June 27, 2009, Commissioners Gerber, Sheldon, and Stapleton attended the water conservation program co-sponsored by the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission and the Water Commission.

Partnerships

The Torrance Library Commission remains committed to strengthening its relationships with key partners in the community. Both the Friends of the Torrance Library and the Torrance Public Library Foundation have enabled the Library to enhance its current operations through fundraising and donations. The Library Commission is working toward facilitating a joint meeting with these two entities in the upcoming year.

Similar to past years, the Friends of the Library continued its generous underwriting of enhanced adult and youth programming, purchase of equipment and materials, and other needs not covered by the City of Torrance's budget, including funding public relations materials for the Torrance Public Library LINK grant, extending funding of Saturday "musical mornings" programming for children, and portable audio equipment for the Words-on-Wheels program. This year, the Torrance Public Library Foundation covered the matching portion of the Live Homework Help on-line tutoring service for students and the new Circulation/Service Desk for the refurbished Southeast Library.

The Library Commission was kept apprised of a unique three-way partnership between the Torrance Historical Society, the Friends of the Torrance Library, and the City of Torrance to digitize deteriorating historic newspapers and City directories in the Library's collection and make these resources available through the Library's website.

As members of the *Get Involved* team, Library Commissioners participated in training and outreach activities with City partners from the Recreation and Cultural Services Divisions of the Community Services Department, as well as personnel from the Civil Service Department, and RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program).

Library Staff

The Torrance Library Commission wishes to thank the dedicated staff at all Library locations for the insight and assistance given it during the past fiscal year. The Commission commends the efforts and accomplishments of the entire staff of the Library as they provide a wide array of quality programs and services to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

TORRANCE LIBRARY COMMISSION

By _____
Jerome J. Haig
Chairperson – 2008-09