

Council Meeting of
March 1, 2011

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

Members of the Council:

**SUBJECT: Community Services – Accept donation from Friends of the
Torrance Library for creation of smartphone application
for Torrance Public Library.**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Community Services Director that City Council accept a donation of a two-year subscription to “Boopsie” from the Friends of the Torrance Library for the creation of a smartphone application for the Torrance Public Library.

Funding

Not applicable.

BACKGROUND

The Friends of the Torrance Library have long supported the technology needs of the Torrance Public Library by providing essential financial support for automated services, as well as materials and programs.

The Friends of the Torrance Library recognize that many individuals use smartphones to manage everything from their bank accounts to their social life. Currently, the Torrance Public Library's website is available online and therefore available through a smartphone based web browser. However, the Library's website is not formatted for smartphone use and is extremely difficult to read and use effectively on these devices.

Library staff investigated various means to deliver services to patrons via smartphones including creating their own mobile application which allows users to search their online catalog and renew materials. While feasible, these options are very expensive, time consuming, and labor intensive.

ANALYSIS

In December 2010, The Friends of the Torrance Library agreed to sponsor a two-year subscription to Boopsie at a cost not to exceed \$8,985. This gift will allow the Library to implement this service at no cost to the City. After the designated

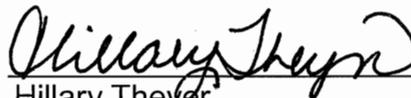
the Library to implement this service at no cost to the City. After the designated pilot period, the Library could renew the subscription if the application proves useful and beneficial to the community.

Boopsie will enable the Torrance Library to provide library services to individuals with smartphones by a downloadable application (app) branded specifically for libraries. This app will allow patrons to easily search a library's online catalog, reserve and renew materials, view an online-calendar specific to library events, find library hours and locations, and link to the library's blog and/or Facebook pages. Boopsie is compatible with all web-enabled phones. The application is free to library patrons.

Utilizing Boopsie, the Torrance Public Library will have a unique opportunity to deliver library services and better serve our patrons where they are and at times convenient for them. The addition of Boopsie to the Library's range of online services will also help the Library to expand communication and information distributed through online and electronic media.

Respectfully Submitted,

JOHN JONES
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

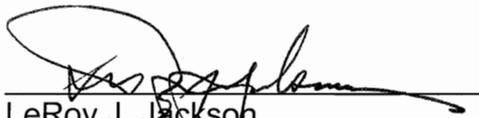


Hillary Theyer
Acting City Librarian

CONCUR:



John Jones
Community Services Director



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachment: A. Letter from the Friends of the Torrance Public Library

FRIENDS OF THE TORRANCE LIBRARY

January 27, 2011

Hillary Theyer
Acting City Librarian
Torrance Public Library

Dear Hillary:

The Friends of the Torrance Library have long supported the technology needs of the Torrance Public Library by providing essential financial support for automated services, as well as materials and programs. The Friends funded the Library's first public access computer center, the acquisition of the first DVD collection, and contributed to the Library's development of the ASSIST (Accessible Services for Seniors - Information, Systems, and Technology) program to serve older adults and others with sensory and physical/mobility disabilities. Each of these contributions was to aid the Library in funding emerging technologies to better serve the public.

With this in mind, the Friends would like to sponsor a subscription to "Boopsie" to enable the Torrance Public Library to provide library services to individuals with Smartphones. It is widely believed the Smartphone will soon overtake the personal home computer in ownership, as more individuals make it their primary device to access the Internet and communicate with others via text messaging, email, and voice calls. Boopsie offers a unique service for public libraries that includes a downloadable application (app) branded specifically for libraries. The app allows patrons to easily search a library's online catalog, reserve and renew materials, view an online-calendar specific to library events, find library hours and locations, and can link to the library's blog and/or Facebook pages. Boopsie is compatible with all web-enabled phones.

The Friends of the Torrance Library recognize the Torrance Public Library has limited resources to invest in the aforementioned emerging technology. At the same time, we understand the Library's need to deliver library services to patrons in a timely, expedient, and convenient manner. And, while the Library's website is available online and therefore accessible through a Smartphone based web browser, we are aware the Library's website is not formatted for Smartphone use and is difficult to read and use effectively. Therefore, the Friends are offering to sponsor a two-year subscription to Boopsie at a cost not to exceed \$8,985. This gift will allow the Library to implement this service at no cost to the City. After the designated period, the Library could renew the subscription if the application proves useful and beneficial to the community.

We hope the Library will accept this donation. We are proud that the Friends have provided the funding support to keep the Torrance Public Library at the forefront of technological change. The ability to provide easy access to the Library's vast resources through Smartphones will allow many more individuals, and particularly young people in the community, to use the Library more effectively.

Sincerely,



Helen Ball
President, Friends of the Torrance Library