



February 26, 2009

Sacramento Public Library Authority

Agenda Item 3.1 Internal Assessment Update

TO: Sacramento Public Library Authority Board Members

FROM: Phil Batchelor, Interim Library Director

RE: Internal Assessment Update

Introductory Note

An assessment of the personnel, fiscal, operational and organizational stabilization needs of the Sacramento Public Library Authority was presented to the Authority Board at its meeting of January 22, 2009. At that time, the Board approved proceeding with the 302 recommended actions items contained in the assessment and requested that monthly status reports be provided to indicate the progress of meeting the objectives. This report presents those items that were considered to be of a more routine nature and could be accepted in a single motion. Assessment items that were more substantive in nature are included in separate reports of this same Board agenda.

RECOMMENDATION: Accept this report that provides information on assessment tasks that were due to be completed by January 31, 2009, except for those included elsewhere on the agenda.

- 1. Establish a standing committee to provide direct financial oversight of Library operations (i.e. Budget-Audit Committee) (GJ 5; Library Board – Jan 2009). Recommendation 14**

Completed Tasks: In November, 2007 a Finance/Audit Committee was appointed by then-Chair Roger Dickinson for the purpose of reviewing the audit documents for FY 2005/06 and the Authority budget for FY 2008/09.

In view of the desire to establish stronger financial controls by the Board, a Standing Committee of the Board was appointed at the September 25, 2008 Authority Board meeting. This committee is charged with: reviewing and making recommendations related to budget, finance, and audit related issues; meeting at least twice annually; and authorizing the Board Chair to annually appoint not less than three and not more than five members of the Board to serve on the Budget-Audit Committee for a one year term. The following members were appointed to the committee: Linda Budge, Susan Peters, Sophia Scherman, Sandy Sheedy and Robbie Waters.

This committee met in their new capacity in November, 2008; and will be meeting again in late February/early March. Subsequent meetings will be scheduled on a quarterly basis for May, August, and November.



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2. **Develop a new communication vehicle entitled *The Director's Bulletin* in order to keep the members of the Board and all staff apprised of important decisions, actions and developments that impact the operations and organization of the Library (Batchelor, Haggard - Jan 2009). Recommendation 10**

Completed Tasks: The first edition of *The Director's Bulletin* was launched on January 6, 2009; another edition was issued on January 16th and a third edition was distributed on January 23rd.

Next Steps: These bulletins will be produced and distributed on a regular basis to members of the Board and to all staff in order to provide timely communications regarding pivotal issues affecting the Sacramento Public Library.

3. **Conduct a comprehensive functional evaluation, including a compliance audit of the Human Resources Department to determine if improvements can be made in its service delivery systems, and to determine necessary policy and procedure changes to comply with HR industry best practices (GJ 4; Library Board, Batchelor, Teichert, Landers - Jan 2009). Recommendation 12**

Completed Tasks: A review of the needs of the Human Resources function has been completed and as a result of this review, 45 recommended actions containing 55 tasks were identified for completion in the near future. Among the recommended actions are such tasks as redesigning the performance appraisal process; revising the training program for staff; developing specific, measurable, realistic goals for staff as part of the annual performance appraisal process; developing a recognition and rewards program to show appreciation and provide incentive for meritorious performance; developing a succession planning initiative; preparing a Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual; identifying ways to utilize the Internet and the intranet to receive, organize and disseminate human resources information; preparing a new Employee Orientation Handbook; and studying the feasibility of establishing system-wide wellness and safety initiatives.

Next Steps: As each of the 55 identified human resources tasks is completed, an update will be included in the monthly assessment progress report to the Board. Currently, 74% of these tasks are scheduled for completion on or before June 30, 2009.



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- 4. Improve the key control for all library access doors by limiting entry to electronic card swipe in order to eliminate access with metal keys to all branch exterior doors (Tucker, Dahlberg - Dec 2008). Recommendation 196b**

Completed Tasks: All branch exterior doors have been re-keyed except those at Franklin and North Natomas. Those two branches were not rekeyed because they are on school campuses. The seventeen branches with card swipe access can now only be entered by using the electronic key. A copy of the new metal keys will be controlled centrally for all branches. These metal keys will only be used in the event of a card system failure. The remaining eight branch locations were rekeyed with new metal keys and a complete key distribution list has been compiled.

Next Steps: The Facilities Department will conduct periodic spot checks of the branch access records through the card swipe system and will perform an evaluation of the reliability of this new system.

- 5. Publish the schedule of individual branch meetings to allow managers' attendance on an as-needed basis (Freeman, Dentan, Wilde - Jan 2009). Recommendation 256**

Completed Tasks: All branch supervisors have been instructed to use the calendar on the SPL Branch Services Sharepoint site to list all scheduled branch staff meetings on a quarterly basis.

Next Steps: The Branch Services office assistant will send quarterly reminders to all branch supervisors reminding them of the need to post all scheduled branch staff meetings on the SPL Branch Services Sharepoint site calendar.

- 6. Develop a comprehensive review of the Collection Management department in order to improve productivity and efficiency by discontinuing the practice of putting gift tags in gift books and offering less labor-intensive options to branches (Rokke, Welsch - Jan 2009). Recommendation 271h**

Completed Tasks: Gift "tags" are no longer placed inside the gift books in the Collection Management department during processing because the tags were often lost before the books reached the branches. Instructions were distributed to all public service supervisors on how to request information that identifies gift books in order for branch staff to add bookplates appropriately. The new practice was implemented on February 2, 2009.



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Next Steps: This procedure has been reviewed and discussed at the Branch Supervisors and the Circulation Supervisors meetings and potential concerns were addressed.

- 7. Examine the Homebound Books-by-Mail (HBBM) service as to cost effectiveness, and consider the potential for providing service in an alternative way (Cantin, Feuling - Jan 2009). Recommendation 286**

Completed Tasks: An analysis of the Homebound Books-by-Mail service was completed that included a review of potential options available for the recipients of the service. No alternative options are available for the majority of the program recipients at this time. The program in place is currently the most cost effective service model for customers who are unable to access books and materials by visiting a library or bookmobile. The program will be reviewed during the budget planning for FY 2009/10 using data gathered during this analysis.

Next Steps:

- Review cost of service as FY 2009/10 budgets are finalized
- Continue to seek alternative service solutions both internally and externally
- Review criteria for customers participating in HBBM

- 8. Conduct a feasibility study to determine the most efficient and effective way to reorganize the operations, service points and facilities in order to best implement the new Model for Service in the Central Library by completing the third floor redesign that includes placement of all public internet computers for adults on the third floor, creating a Technology Lab from the former microfilm reader room using grant funds from the Gates Foundation, reducing the size of the large Periodicals Desk to develop a single-point periodical service area (Biddle, Tucker, Calderon - Jan 2009); Recommendation 296a**

Completed Tasks: The public Internet terminals have successfully been relocated to the third floor, centering all Internet-related activity in one main area for greater staff and operational efficiency; the microfilm machines were relocated to the periodicals area. Computer tables, a pull-down screen, a locking mobile cart with a projector and laptop have also been installed. The necessary electrical wiring and data cabling have been completed, and staff has begun using the Technology Lab to teach classes to the public. The periodicals desk has been redesigned and made smaller, to create space for the microfilm reader/printers. The periodicals area is now functioning as a single service point and



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allows staff to better assist customers using microfilm machines while also monitoring the needs of all periodicals customers.

Next Steps: Staff will continue to monitor the third floor operations for six months to ensure that staffing and service levels are adequate and effective.

9. Improve customer service through enhancements to the Millennium customer database software. (Calderon, Smith- Jan 2009) Recommendation 126

Completed Tasks: The online catalog has been enhanced with a number of features to help library users find materials more quickly. These features include:

- Search results now display the selected title's cover art and provide the customer with an option to read reviews about the title. Reviews are included from a number of professional journals.
- The "Spell Check" feature offers alternate search options or terms for customers to refine material searches.
- The "My Lists" feature allows customers to create multiple lists of titles they want to read or watch. For example, one can have a list of DVDs, a list of cookbooks, and another list for a paper they're writing, etc.
- The "Community Reviews" feature allows customers to write a review for any book title in the collection. Customers are required to sign in to write reviews. Reviews are moderated by library staff.
- The "My Account RSS Feeds" feature alerts subscribed customers when an item is ready for pickup, due soon, due today, or overdue, and when a new fine is accrued.

The above features are now available only to staff, as public service managers requested a 30 day period for staff to become familiar with these new features before being made available to the public on March 1, 2009.

Next Steps: A new search interface leveraging Web 2.0 technology will give customers the option to search the online catalog for materials. The interface is more intuitive and dynamic, and includes social-network concepts such as community tagging. The new interface will be presented to staff on February 11, with an introduction to the public planned for March 1, 2009.

10. Utilize the staff intranet more effectively to communicate Information Technology department related information. (PA 3-7; Calderon – Jan 2009). Recommendation 135



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Completed Tasks: The Information Technology Section of the staff intranet has been updated to provide current information about the department, staff and descriptions of the various roles and duties performed by members of the department. The site includes helpful tips, how-to's, service hours and priorities as well as monthly metrics. Information about current technology projects is also included.

Next Steps: Although the Information Technology Department will continue to use the intranet to promote new services and provide information about projects and other events that have an impact on library services or operations, the intranet is currently under reconstruction in order to make it more user friendly.

- 11. Perform an analysis of the new green server technology (VMWare) as part of the server refresh in an effort to consolidate equipment and reduce costs. (Calderon – Jan 2009). Recommendation 139**

Completed Tasks: An analysis of the new green server technology (VMWare) has been completed and the preliminary findings indicate that it may be possible to consolidate SPL's 30 servers by using new multiprocessor servers, mass storage devices and virtualization technology.

The benefits that could be derived from this process include a potential reduction of approximately \$47,000 in the cost of electricity due to decreased consumption of electrical power and air conditioning over a three year period. Floor space needs are also reduced. If these technological changes are made, it would also provide for redundancy of business continuity through virtualization of software applications, databases and files.

The next steps in this process would be to determine the cost of acquiring this new technology and the length of time that would be required to recapture this investment. It will then be necessary to determine when and if these changes can be accommodated within the parameters of the existing budgetary constraints.

- 12. Reformat the Bib-level pick list (Millennium) to improve readability for staff. (Calderon, Smith, public services – Dec 2008) Recommendation 148**

Completed Tasks: The Information Technology Department consulted with branch staff to understand their problem. Information Technology staff adjusted the workstation setup for the correct settings and helped



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branch staff select an alternate printing option that met their needs. IT staff also contacted the software developer to request that additional options be provided to improve functionality.

Next Steps: Follow-up with the software developer to determine when the requested enhancement will be released.

- 13. Explore the feasibility of adjusting schedules to enhance Library outreach of the bookmobiles to make them available to attend community events and activities on weekends. (Cantin, Denton, Lewis - Jan 2009). Recommendation 288**

Completed Tasks: Bookmobile services were evaluated to assess the impact on existing services if driver schedules were changed to Tuesday through Saturday to allow them to be used at weekend events. It was determined that it would be possible to continue serving existing customers as well as provide outreach on weekends. This change in schedule has been implemented.

- 14. Hire a permanent accounting position to replace the dependence on temporary help agency staffing in the Finance Department (Johnson, Bagdassari - Jan 2009). Recommendation 38**

Completed Tasks: The Board approved the addition of an Accounting Specialist position in January 2009 that was financed by deleting a vacant position from the Marketing Department. Recruitment to fill this position is currently underway.

- 15. Perform a survey among the employees in the Finance Department to determine their training needs and then develop a regular training plan and schedule for staff (Johnson - Jan 2009). Recommendation 66**

Completed Tasks: An assessment of the training needs of the staff members of the Finance Department was performed during the annual appraisal process. This information was used to develop a training program for staff that will provide a minimum of two formal training sessions per employee annually. In addition to this formal training, supplemental courses will also be offered as needed.

- 16. Recruit, hire and train an individual to serve in the Accountant/Budget Analyst position in the Finance Department (GJ 12; PA 1-3A; Johnson - Jan 2009). Recommendation 36**



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Completed Tasks: An individual has been hired to fill the Accountant/Budget Analyst position and has received formal instruction associated with the Eden Budget Module, Eden Position Budgeting, Eden Reporting, Library budgeting processes, general ledger transactions, etc. He has been assigned to assist in the budget preparation process for FY 2009/10 and will be working on developing documentation of the internal control procedures.

17. Review and revise finance job classification titles and descriptions (Johnson - Jan 2009). Recommendation 37

Completed Tasks: A review of the job classifications and descriptions in the Finance Department has been completed. After consultation with Local 39 it was agreed that two of the job classifications should be consolidated into one classification with the understanding that there would be separate functional duty statements for each position. The revised position descriptions will be presented to the Board at the regular March 2009 meeting.

18. Provide monthly revenue and expenditure variance reports to management and the Authority Board and establish a process to ensure they are reviewed with the Executive Management Team each month. (PA1-2A; ML4; Johnson, Espinoza - Jan 2009). Recommendation 59

Completed Tasks: In July 2008, a process was implemented to provide monthly revenue and expenditure variance reports to the Authority Board. These reports have been reformatted and instructions developed on how best to analyze and understand the data contained in these reports. The Executive Management Team has established a schedule to ensure these reports are analyzed on monthly basis and that appropriate steps are taken to deal with any significant variances.

19. Establish a process for regular allocation of postage expense (Johnson - Jan 2009). Recommendation 27b

Completed Tasks: Desk procedures have been developed to allocate postage expenses to individual business units by recognizing direct postage costs charged to established department account codes in the postage machine, and to recognize automatic cash payments made by the Authority to the machine vendor through electronic bank withdrawals. Finance has coordinated with General Services to receive summarized monthly account information in order to allocate these costs appropriately.