



Monterey County

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Board Report

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Matter Type: General Agenda Item

Approve amending the scheduled hours of operation for the Monterey County Free Libraries effective September 2, 2017.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

Approve amending the scheduled hours of operation for the Monterey County Free Libraries effective September 2, 2017.

SUMMARY:

The Board of Supervisors, as the governing body of the Monterey County Free Libraries system, is empowered to establish the County Library's operating policies, including the hours of service. The County Library has experienced an increase in the gap between operating expenses and revenues. The requested modification of open hours will improve efficiency, overall service to the public, and improve sustainability of the level of services.

DISCUSSION:

The Monterey County Free Libraries system regularly evaluates the public service hours at its branches to ensure continued balance between efficient use of library resources and provision of excellent service to the community. The County Library has experienced an increase in operating costs associated with delivery of services, personnel costs and other operating costs. In addition, the staff workload varies from branch to branch based on the number of library users using the premises, attending programs, checking out books, and using the computers and numerous library services, and staffing levels may be reevaluated based on these variations.

Between December 2016 and January 2017, the library conducted an extensive survey to solicit public input regarding scheduled public service hours. The new schedules were formulated based on the results of the survey and other considerations including the following:

- Efficient public service hours designed around peak use and staffing constraints
- Balancing community service needs and budget limitations
- Equity in service hours between mid-sized branches, small branches and regional branches
- Equity and efficiency in staffing levels at branches
- Catering to various schedules, providing weekend, weekday, morning and evening hours
- Providing time for staff to complete behind the scenes tasks, attend staff meeting, etc.

- Long term and synchronized plans to minimize effort and limit costly changes to library brochures, building signs, etc.

The adjustments in the number of library public service hours are as follows:

- The Seaside regional branch will remain open six (6) days a week, but public service hours have been reduced by eight (8) hours from 54 hours to 46 hours a week.
- The King City and Prunedale regional branches will remain open five (5) days a week, and the public service hours will be increased from 36 hours to 38 hours a week at each branch.
- The mid-sized Buena Vista branch will remain open five (5) days a week, and the public service hours will be increased from 36 hours to 37 hours a week.
- The mid-sized Carmel Valley, Castroville, Gonzales, Greenfield, Marina, and Soledad branches will remain open five (5) days a week, and the public service hours will be increased from 36 hours to 38 hours a week at each branch.
- The small-sized Aromas branch will remain open four (4) days a week, but the public service hours will be reduced from 20 hours to 18 hours.
- The small-sized Big Sur, Pajaro, San Ardo, and San Lucas branches will remain open four (4) days a week, and the number of public service hours will be remain at 18 hours at each branch.
- The Bradley branch, which closed in June of 2017 due to the loss of the MCFL lease, and Parkfield branch, which closed in January of 2011 dues to the deterioration of the facility, will remain closed until further notice. These communities are currently being served by bookmobile, Library-by-Mail, and online services.

The overall change in public service hours at the 15 branches is from 470 hours to 477 hours, a net increase of 7 public service hours.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The proposed Library open hours schedule has been reviewed by County Counsel.

FINANCING:

There is no impact on the General Fund.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

The County Library regularly evaluates the public service hours at its branches to ensure continued balance between efficient use of library resources and provision of excellent service to the community.

Check the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives:

- Economic Development
- Administration
- Health & Human Services
- Public Safety

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Jacqueline C. Bleisch
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Attachments:

Library Branch hours - Current and proposed

Library Proposed Branch hours