



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: April 6, 2010

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

From: Nancy Hunt-Coffey, Assistant Director of Community Services/City Librarian

Subject: Request to waive overdue fines as part of National Library Week celebration

Attachments: List of canned foods needed by Westside Food Bank

INTRODUCTION

The City Council is asked to consider waiving overdue fines as part of the Library's celebration of National Library Week. For children, overdue fines would be waived, and for adults, fines would be waived in lieu of a donation of canned goods to the Westside Food Bank. Lost books and processing fees would not be waived as part of this program. While there is some loss in revenues from this type of program, it is anticipated that the Library would be able to recover Library materials which otherwise might never have been returned.

DISCUSSION

April 11-17 is National Library Week this year and the theme is "Communities thrive @ your Library." As part of the National Library Week Celebration, the Library seeks Council's permission to waive overdue fines for patrons. For children, overdue fines would be waived without condition. For adults, canned goods would be accepted in lieu of overdue fines. At a minimum, adult patrons would need to donate one can of food for every \$5 in fines owed. Lost book fees and processing fees for lost books would not be waived as part of this program.

While this type of program will likely result in a loss of some revenues, it has been very successful in other communities for a few reasons. Firstly, patrons are more likely to return overdue library materials if they do not have to pay fines. In many communities, this type of program has resulted in the return of Library materials which are valued at an amount that well exceeds the overdue fines that are waived. Secondly, it is not uncommon for patrons to stop using the Library because they have overdue fines. Thus, overdue fines sometimes impact the segments of our community which need Library service the most, such as children, people who are searching for work or seniors on fixed incomes. This small window of opportunity gives patrons an opportunity to have a

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fresh start with using the Library's collection again, while at the same time collecting needed food supplies for a good cause

The Library is suggesting that adult patrons be required to donate canned foods in order to have their fines waived. While this is an unusual provision of this type of program, the hope would be that as the City waives fines to help people reestablish their library privileges, so too would these patrons be helping those who are less fortunate by donating canned food goods to the Westside Food Bank. With the downturn in the economy, the demands on our local food banks are severe. This program would help to address that shortfall.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approximately \$2,700 in fines would be lost during National Library Week. Additionally, another unspecified amount of "back fines" would be lost. However, it is difficult to determine whether "back fines" would ever be recovered. It is estimated that the value of the Library materials that will be returned as part of this program will well exceed the loss in overdue fines.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council consider approving a fine free program as part of National Library Week in April, 2010.



Nancy Hunt-Coffey

Approved By

F O O D D R I V E

THE FOLLOWING NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS ARE NEEDED AT LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY FOOD PROGRAMS THAT ASSIST HUNGRY PEOPLE:

Cans of:

- Tuna
- Vegetables
- Soup
- Fruits
- Pork & Beans
- Stews & Other Meats
- Fruit Juices
- Spaghetti or Ravioli

Also:

- Peanut Butter
- Dry Pasta
- Pinto Beans / Lentils
- Energy bars / Snacks
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Instant Soups, Noodles
- Hot and Cold Cereals
- Dry or packaged milks

-Whole-grain, low-fat or reduced sodium foods welcome!-

-Baby foods are also very useful-

(For baby food, glass jars are OK; otherwise no glass, please.)

THESE FOODS WILL REACH, CHILDREN IN NEED, LOW-INCOME FAMILIES, UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS, THE ELDERLY, HOMELESS PEOPLE, AND OTHERS IN NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY