



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: January 10, 2012

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

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

Subject: Request by Councilmember Mirisch to Examine Restoring and Expanding Library Operating Hours

INTRODUCTION

In response to a request from Councilmember Mirisch, staff seeks Council direction on the possibility of restoring weekday library hours until 9 p.m. (Monday thru Thursday) and opening the library at 9 a.m. (Monday thru Saturday).

DISCUSSION

During fiscal year 2009/10 library hours were reduced Monday – Wednesday from 9 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 p.m. to 6 p.m. as part of the citywide budget cuts. Due to a recent reorganization of the Community Services Department, Thursday evening hours were restored from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at no additional cost to the City. This report requests Council's direction on the request by Councilmember Mirisch to:

- restore Library hours Monday thru Thursday to 9 p.m. and
- add the additional hours of 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. Monday thru Saturday

During the fiscal year 09/10 budget process, staff evaluated patron checkout data to determine the hours of least usage of the Library during the week. Other data such as gate count per hours, etc. were not available at that time. Patron checkout data from April 2008 – March 2009 indicated that on average the 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. hour had 1/3 the usage of the busiest hours which were 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. Additionally, at that time the Municipal Employee Association (MEA) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) stated that if full time staff members worked 4 hours past 5 p.m., they were entitled to a 3% shift differential bonus for every hour that was worked in a week. As a result, the 8 p.m.

- 9 p.m. hour extension was more costly in terms of staffing than other hours of the day. Due to the lower usage statistics and the cost involved, the 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. hour was recommended as a potential budget reduction. It should be noted that in the more recent MEA MOU, the language was re-written so that full time staff members who work the 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. hour would receive shift differential only for the day in which the evening hours are worked, so long as their start time remains the same on the other days of the week.

Regarding the 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. extension, it is difficult to say what the usage of the Library would be without further research. Should this be a direction that Council would like to pursue, staff can survey other California libraries that open at 9 a.m. to see what their usage is in the first hour of the day. Additionally, staff can conduct a visitor intercept survey where patrons are asked about their potential usage of the library 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. A survey of this type would not be statistically sound, but would provide some qualitative feedback to help inform Council's decision.

It should also be noted that the budget figure listed below to restore the 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. hour is an estimate based on current library staff schedules. At this time all library staff work a 5/40 schedule and a change in schedule may be necessary to accommodate the additional hours. It should be noted that any change in schedule would likely need to be negotiated with the appropriate bargaining units.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact to restore the 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. hour Monday thru Thursday would be approximately \$89,000.

Depending on the work schedule, the fiscal impact to restore the 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. hour Monday thru Saturday is expected to be approximately \$82,000.

RECOMMENDATION

That City Council provide direction on whether to pursue restoring the 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. hour Monday thru Thursday and the 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. hour Monday thru Saturday at the Library.



Nancy Hunt-Coffey
Approved By