



CITY OF FULLERTON

Fullerton Public Library Board of Trustees

Joshua Dale
President, Fullerton Public Library Board of Trustees
353 West Commonwealth Avenue
Fullerton, CA 92832

August 27, 2020

The Honorable Jennifer Fitzgerald
Mayor, City of Fullerton
303 West Commonwealth Avenue Fullerton, CA 92832

Dear Mayor Fitzgerald and Members of the City Council:

I am writing to report on the Fullerton Public Library's (FPL) condition as of June 30, 2020. This update fulfills the Board of Trustees' requirement to annually update the council per Fullerton Municipal Code 2.16.060.

The Fullerton Public Library serves the educational, cultural, business, and recreational needs of Fullerton's diverse communities through its collection of 201,426 physical materials in Korean, Spanish, Chinese, and Hindi, its ever increasing e-book and audiovisual materials, learning resources, and periodical subscriptions. The Library serves a population of over 140,000 residents of the City of Fullerton, which encompasses an area of 22.44 square miles.

The library staff and the supporting community continue to make excellent use of the library's annual appropriation. For the 2019-2020 fiscal year:

- Due to COVID-19 overall materials circulation was 326,410 – a decrease of 129,702.
- Due to COVID-19 overall Library attendance for the fiscal year was 360,586 – a decrease of 182,359.
- During the first three quarters of the fiscal year the Library continued to provide fun, exciting, and interactive programs that were meant to educate and inspire all Fullertonians. Programs included Read with the Dogs, Afternoon Live, various film programs, Anime Afternoons, Boardgame Empire, our Teen Advisory Group, Summer Reading programs for all ages and more.

Priorities, Changes & Transitions

2020-21 LIBRARY FEES SCHEDULE

Fullerton Public Library strives to provide equitable and barrier-free access to information and library services. Although fines and fees may be a source of library revenue, there is much debate concerning their effectiveness in encouraging the return of materials, and concerning their public relations effects. Research proves that monetary fines present an economic barrier to access of library materials and services, and there is mounting evidence that indicates eliminating fines and fees increases library card adoption and library usage. Acknowledging these consequences, the American Library Association passed a resolution (Attachment 1) in January 2019 in which it

THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY

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recognizes fines as "a form of social inequity" and calls on libraries nationwide to find a way to eliminate their fines.

In addition to being on a path to greater equity, the library also must respond with ways to protect library staff and patrons during the current COVID-19 pandemic. One of the areas of concern is the passing of cash. Striving to be cashless through the use of the library's current Self-Check Kiosks can go a long way to keep staff and patrons safe. Although the public is not currently in the library, it is possible that within the next budget year patrons will be allowed into the library to complete their library transactions. We also believe these monetary fines create the largest barrier in public relations, and absorb valuable staff time applying, collecting, and managing the fees that could be better spent providing our patrons with quality customer service. This is of increasing concern as we have eliminated staff to respond to our tightening City/Library budget.

As a first step towards the possible elimination of fines and fees and striving for cashless transactions at the Fullerton Public Library (FPL), the Board of Trustees have directed staff to begin a six month pilot project eliminating several of the libraries fines/fees. The most significant of these changes include the removal of the new DVD rental fee of \$1.00, and the removal of the extended use fee of \$5.00 per item when overdue or lost. While we estimate the cost of lost revenue from the elimination of late fees, lost processing fees/Extended Use Fees, and DVD rental fees is \$35,080, we believe the benefit to both the public and staff will more than prove its value.

Funding Opportunities

- The Library received its annual contribution from the Library Foundation in November 2019 for a total of \$38,484.
- The Library received the fourth of five installments of \$5,000 from Mr. Eric Greening, beneficiary of the Eric Greening Irrevocable Trust from the Library Foundation, which will be used to update equipment in the Local History Room.
- Due to COVID-19 the Friends of the Library Board was unable to meet and approve the annual donation to the Library this Spring. However, the Friends have been a generous supporter of the library for many years and we look forward to a time when their vital and continuing support can continue.
- In April, 2020 the Library received funding in the amount of \$5,000 from the California State Library for Crisis Collection funding to address the increased demand from the community for e-resources as people were practicing physical distancing and library buildings had been closed to the public.
- The Library also received \$7,984 from the Santiago Library System, a library cooperative of the CSL, for the purchase of e-books and e-Audiobooks.
- The Fullerton Sunrise Rotary donated \$2,400 to the Library for the purchase of Children's materials.

Library Operation Plans

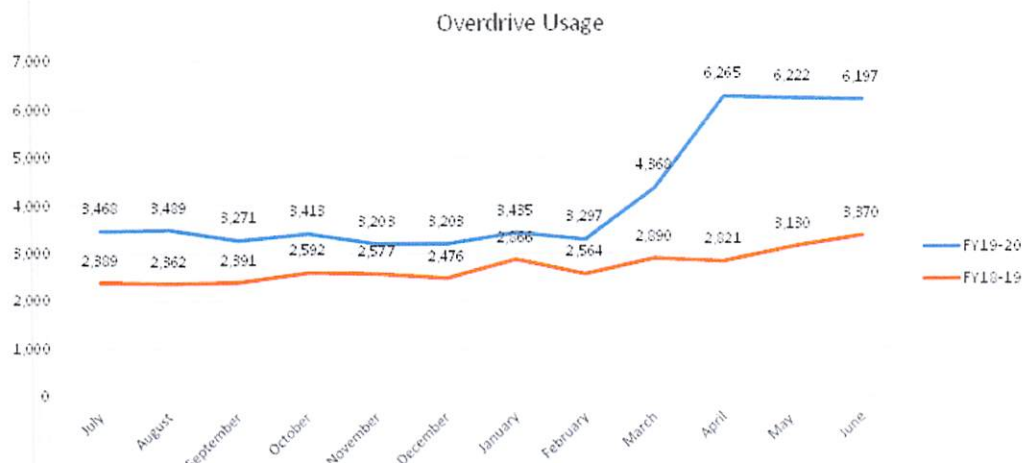
In response to COVID-19 and in preparation of a phased re-opening to the public, the Library department has re-evaluated its services and has developed an operational plan that will phase-in new Library programming levels from March 2020 through December 31, 2020.

In March, the Library began re-imagining how Library services could continue to meet the needs of the community, and quickly mobilized to make all of its digital resources available via a Library E-

Card, increase the number of e-books and e-audiobooks available in its collection, and began the creation and filming of virtual programming.

The Library has seen a significant increase in the number of electronic materials checked-out by Library patrons. For example, although the Library has seen a steady increase in Overdrive usage over last year, checkouts since March have increased immensely.

	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
FY19-20	3,468	3,489	3,271	3,413	3,203	3,203	3,435	3,297	4,368	6,265	6,222	6,197
FY18-19	2,389	2,362	2,391	2,592	2,577	2,476	2,866	2,564	2,890	2,821	3,130	3,370



Although the library building has remained closed to the public, library staff have been available during the hours of 11 AM to 4 PM to answer calls and emails from the public. Staff have been able to take advantage of the closure by working on a much needed inventory of all of the library materials in the collection. Staff continue to work on collection development, program development, virtual programming, social media, and other duties. Webinars are attended for in depth learning of library resources, customer service improvements, and collaborating with library colleagues in the industry for best practices in challenging times. Additionally, through the financial support of the Friends of the Library, Library staff were able to continue their professional development by virtually attending the American Library Association virtual conference in June 2020. Sessions discussed pre-Covid library operations while also discussing the challenges of providing library services during the current pandemic.

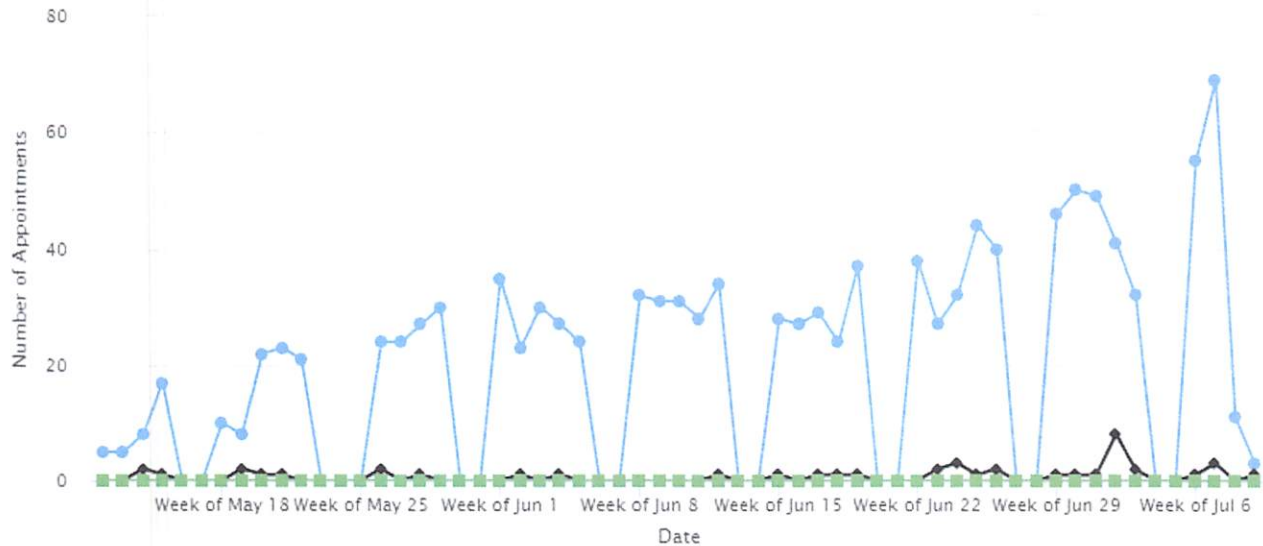
Virtual Programming

While in-person programs were cancelled, the Library focused on creating virtual programming. The Library's current virtual programs post to the website and social media outlets in weekly installments and include: Book Clubs, Reader's Advisory Services, *Read with Dogs—Homestyle*, in partnership with therapy dogs and handlers from the Pet Prescription Team; *Story Break*, a video read aloud series aimed at our 3-6 year old patrons; *Little Spoonfuls*, a program of short videos modeling early learning fun for babies and toddlers and their caregivers; and *Puppet Posts*, featuring our famous puppet stories and characters for preschool and primary grade children to

enjoy. The Summer Reading Program has also returned in a convenient online format which began on June 1 and will run through August 8 for all ages.

Curbside Pick-up Service

On May 11, the Library began its no-contact curbside pickup and returns service as Phase 1A of its phased re-opening to the public. Residents can set up appointments with FPL staff by phone or email and pick-up their items during an agreed upon pick-up time. As of 7/8/2020 Library staff have completed 1,173 appointments, checking out 6,068 physical items.



In coming months, the Library will continue to provide engaging, educational, and entertaining virtual programming while providing contactless pick-up service.

The Board of Trustees is pleased to be included in the future development of the Hunt Library. The Library Board's representation offers continued participation and community transparency in the plans and goals being developed by Heritage Future and Arts Orange County.

Although the Foundation's sale of the Bastanchury Property was final on July 31, 2020, just outside of the reporting period of this Report to Council, it is an important and welcome accomplishment by our Library Foundation.

As always, thank you for your support of our free and public library.

Sincerely,

Joshua Dale