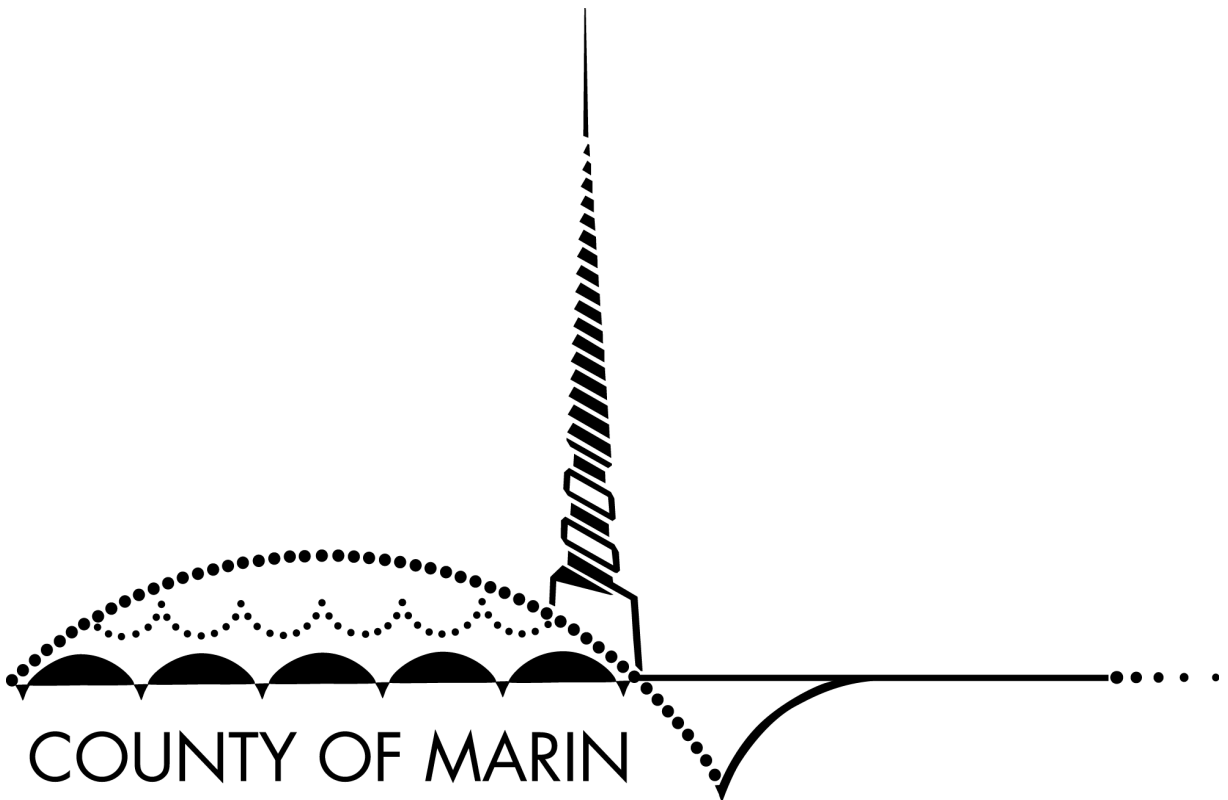
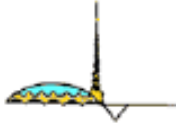


2012/2013 MARIN COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY

Libraries Aren't Just for Books Anymore

Report Date - April 29, 2013
Public Release Date - May 3, 2013





LIBRARIES AREN'T JUST FOR BOOKS ANYMORE



SUMMARY

Libraries used to provide a quiet place to sit and read papers, magazines and books. A library was also a place to go to for a study date, to cram for an exam or to do research on the lost tribes of Indonesia for your Geography seminar. You could rely on the Reference Librarian to help you find the best sources for your information.

Fast Forward to 2013. We have seen a sea change of choices for obtaining information. We now expect librarians to be computer proficient, able to assist a diverse population - young and old, computer-savvy and novice keyboard newbie, multi-lingual and multi-cultural patrons. Computers and Internet accessibility at every library means that librarians have to be ready to guide a variety of patrons through the many choices of the information gathering process.

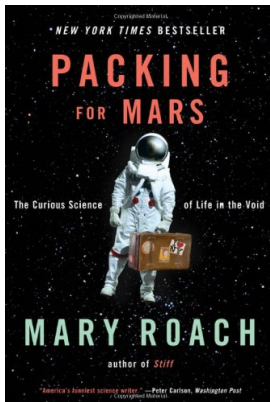
Our library is connected to a huge network of libraries throughout the State. Today, library patrons can download eBooks from different libraries, and request esoteric texts on a variety of subjects from libraries across the country and, indeed, around the world.

These changes preserve the historical value of libraries as a cornerstone of a free society and we are the beneficiaries of their existence. According to Franklin D. Roosevelt, libraries are "...*the great symbols of the freedom of the mind...essential to the functioning of a democratic society.*" The Grand Jury believes libraries are essential and that community support is vital to the continued value and stability of these institutions.

Looking at the last 11 years

The last Grand Jury study of the Marin County Free Library (MCFL) system was in 2002, documented in the report *Marin County Free Library, May 10, 2002*. In reviewing the evolution of the MCFL during the 11 years following that report, we found positive growth, change and innovation.

We found a dedicated, knowledgeable staff. In addition to standard organizational duties, some are specialists in teen or children's literature. They provide many popular reading programs for young people as well as adults. MCFL has continued outreach programs and looked for ways to increase the number of people using the library's services. MCFL hosts and sponsors many community events, such as summer reading programs, lectures and workshops on a variety of subjects, tax preparation and job search assistance, and the *One Book One Marin* reading program. For over 20 years, MCFL has continued to support and expand the Marin Automated Resources and Information Network (MARINet) resource-sharing system to include other libraries outside the MCFL system, such as Dominican University in San Rafael.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

One Book One Marin takes the idea of a book club and expands it to cover the entire County, encouraging the community to read and discuss one book. The Library's goal of *One Book One Marin* is to build a stronger, enriched community through library utilization, community dialogue, and the exploration of literature and culture.

One Book One Marin is sponsored by MCFL, Dominican University, Book Passage, and other partners. These groups collaborate to bring the community interesting programming and events related to the book throughout a three-month period, February - April, each year. Anyone can participate. All events are free and open to the public.

However, the Grand Jury believes there are a few weak areas that need to be addressed in order to strengthen the MCFL so it can continue to thrive. The Grand Jury recommends that the following objectives be prioritized:

- Improve communication between and among staff and administration
- Redefine the purpose and direction of support groups such as the Library Foundation and the Library Commission
- Procure stable funding
- Strengthen communication with and representation in County government

BACKGROUND

A Brief History & Organization

On February 2, 1914, the Marin County Board of Supervisors (BOS) passed a resolution to establish a county library. Twelve years later, in August of 1926, the BOS established the MCFL. On February 14, 1927, the Central Branch of MCFL opened in the basement of the County Courthouse. Over the next 2 years, 5 more city libraries opened in hotels, firehouses, commercial buildings and schools. Bolinas even opened their library on a houseboat!

From 1928 to 1933, five more libraries opened. The desire to access knowledge and to enjoy the pleasure of books seemed nearly universal throughout the County. At that time, 11 small local libraries served a community of approximately 45,000 people. Marin County, as of the 2010 Census, had a population of 252,409, over 5 times the number in 1933.

We now have 10 branches of the countywide MCFL library system, located in Stinson Beach, Bolinas, Pt. Reyes Station, Inverness, Novato, South Novato, San Rafael Civic Center, Fairfax, Corte Madera, and Marin City. They currently employ 188 persons. Separately, there are five independently funded and managed

I think the health of our civilization, the depth of our awareness about the underpinnings of our culture, and our concern for the future, can all be tested by how well we support our libraries."
Carl Sagan

libraries, located in San Rafael, Mill Valley, Belvedere/Tiburon, San Anselmo, and Larkspur. Within Marin, there are 14 stand-alone library buildings, plus one at the Civic Center building, each with staff, books and equipment.

In addition, there are many schools with libraries of their own in the County. Elementary schools, private schools, middle schools, high schools and colleges also have libraries. Bottom line: we have lots of libraries!

Each library in Marin reflects the unique social and behavioral characteristics of the community it serves. The ability to be responsive to specific needs and wishes of branch patrons makes the concept of keeping local, neighborhood libraries attractive to citizens. However, funding these separate entities may be inefficient as the County duplicates efforts and budgets to try to stay current with local needs and new technology. MCFL needs to regularly review library locations, the changing needs of the community and funding sources. Plans for change need to be made with input from all stakeholders - Library Administration, Library Staff, BOS, local governmental agencies, and all interested community members.

APPROACH

Grand Jury members:

- made unannounced visits to MCFL branches in Stinson Beach, Pt. Reyes Station, Inverness, Fairfax, Corte Madera, Novato, Marin City, and Civic Center
- visited the Bookmobile and the FLAGship - the MCFL literacy program's travelling bus
- interviewed MCFL Administrative staff, individual librarians and librarian assistants as well as long-term Extra-Hire employees
- attended meetings of the Library Commission and the Library Foundation
- interviewed several Library Commissioners and members of Library Friends groups
- read representative copies of Library Commission and Library Foundation meeting minutes
- interviewed County staff responsible for completing Measure A work
- made extensive use of the MCFL website

DISCUSSION

The Marin County Board of Supervisors (BOS) and the MCFL

The BOS functions as the authority for the MCFL and holds the ultimate responsibility for all MCFL services. The BOS appoints the Director of County Library Services and approves the MCFL budget. To aid in these duties, the BOS appoints members to the Library Commission, three from each of the five Supervisorial districts to act as advisors to the BOS and the Library Director on matters relating to library service.

Affecting Change

Two major events have affected change in the MCFL during the past few years. These are the passage of Library Measure A and a decision by MCFL to adopt a new service model/organizational structure for libraries called Single Point of Service (SPS).

Measure A (a special tax for the MCFL) was passed in June, 2010 by more than 74% voter approval to supplement the MCFL budget through a \$49 per year parcel tax for 5 years.

Measure A generates approximately \$2,475,000 per year for five years starting FY 2010-2011. As required by the Measure A resolution, an independent citizen committee was appointed by the BOS to oversee Measure A funding and projects. Instead of forming a new committee, the BOS added the Measure A oversight task to the existing Library Commission's other responsibilities.

As stated in Measure A, "...the special tax is for the purpose of bringing libraries up-to-date, preventing library closures, maintaining library hours, preserving educational and job-seeking resources for low-income residents and preventing staff layoffs, maintaining collections of books, CDs, DVDs, materials and services, providing ADA accessibility, and ensuring local funding that can't be taken by the State." About one fifth of the total amount collected through the Measure A parcel tax is being spent on physical changes to the MCFL. The other four fifths of the money is meant to maintain programs and services and prevent cuts in branch open hours.

Measure A Community Updates are posted on the MCFL website, and information on the use of Measure A funds, including information about the related remodel projects, can be found at:

<http://www.marinlibrary.org/about-the-library/measure-a#2012update>

The Community Updates presented on the website are general in nature, and appear to be appropriate for a brief on-line overview.

However, in its investigation, the Grand Jury could not find documentation of a separate, stand-alone work plan for Measure A. Tracking of funding is possible, but only by piecing together various line items from different sections of the overall Library budget. For instance, the budget contains a section for *Library Capital Improvements Fund*, but it is not possible to see how these funds relate to Measure A. Similarly, the Grand Jury obtained several individual project schedules from different sources, but did not find a single overall schedule to encompass the entirety of the Measure A-funded work.

According to the MCFL website, "*The passage of Measure A supplements the Library's budget through a \$49 per year parcel tax each of the next five years.*" Measure A has been successful in that branch hours have not been reduced, no branches have been closed, staff have not been let go, and programs and services have been maintained.

But less apparent is what *specific* jobs have been saved, what *specific* branches have remained open that would not be open without Measure A funds, and what *specific* programs and services are only available now because of Measure A. Line items for Measure A expenditures are not in the MCFL budget. Income from Measure A is displayed as a lump sum. The outflow seems to cover the entire budget deficit and not be assigned to specific accounts such as salaries, supplies or services.

The Grand Jury concludes that the MCFL needs to develop a comprehensive work plan showing detailed planning, budgeting and scheduling of all items funded by Measure A. This becomes particularly apparent as the Novato lobby remodel project nears completion. The Novato project is the first in a series of lobby remodels, and is the pilot project for those that follow. A March 13, 2013 article in the *Independent Journal* reports that the design costs for the MCFL lobby remodeling projects have escalated by almost 50%, and suggests that construction costs may rise as well, over initial budgets.

If MCFL will need to ask Marin voters for an extension of the Measure A tax in 2015, this comprehensive budget and work plan needs to be in place. The voters will want to

know how the initial Measure A tax money was spent and be assured that future funds will be well managed.

Single Point of Service (SPS) is a new service delivery model that is being adopted by many libraries around the country. Reference desks and circulation desks are merged to create a single service point for patrons. The idea is to make it easier for the library patrons to find what they are looking for and, in many cases, to take care of their own checkouts or other services. Implementing this new organization in the MCFL requires some physical changes to the front portion of the Civic Center, Corte Madera, Fairfax, Marin City and Novato Libraries. Money from Measure A is being used to accomplish these changes along with ADA accessibility upgrades.



Staff and engineers from both the Marin County Public Works Department and an outside design group are in the midst of planning and/or constructing new entry areas. High-demand materials will be made available near to the entrance where they are easier to access, and computers will be available for patrons to self-check books in or out without a need for a Librarian or Library Assistant. These two positions require specialists in library science, and the Library would like to maximize their knowledge and service, freeing them to offer new models of service to patrons outside the physical library.

The Novato Library is undergoing the first remodel and will act as the test model for the new SPS system. General information and concept drawings for the MCFL remodel projects can be found on the MCFL Web link: <http://www.marinlibrary.org/about-the-library/library-remodel-projects#remodeliniv>

SPS requires additional training for staff members who will learn some of the skills formerly assigned to specific employee groups, e.g. Library Assistants will be able to answer questions about PC/WEB access for information. SPS also changes the responsibilities of the librarians and other staff members by initiating cross training for all skills. One of its goals is to free Librarians to get out on the floor or into the community to help patrons at their point of need. Library administration would like to see more community outreach from the staff, such as visiting retirement communities, schools and other organization.

Staff Feedback on Single Point of Service The Grand Jury heard opposing opinions regarding the changes brought on by SPS during its interviews with MCFL staff and administration. MCFL administration expressed enthusiasm and indicated that it is working hard to set up the new SPS model. Staff, however, expressed both hesitation and dismay.

One of the main concerns of staff we spoke with was the upcoming change in staff duties and responsibilities imposed by SPS. This change has generated concern from the professional staff since the decision for each element of public services remains unknown. Professional librarians and library staff associates have traditionally had

specific and different tasks based on their training and experience. These tasks have been formalized in their job descriptions and sanctioned by the Union in the past. There are unanswered functional and operational questions. Union representatives and staff are working with Library Administration to define new job descriptions and duties, but to date the uncertainty remains.

In addition, there is the question of the use of a substantial number of extra-hire positions on a regular and long-term basis in many of the branches. Marin County Administrative Regulation 11 states that extra-hire employees "*...shall be used to supplement the regular work force in meeting short-term, irregular needs.*" As a general rule, an extra-hire employee is limited to 1020 hours of employment per fiscal year. When an extra-hire appointment is made, the hiring department has thirty days in which to fill the position with a regular hire.

The Grand Jury found MCFL staff who had worked for more than 7 years as extra-hire employees. Since extra-hire personnel are basically temporary staff, they have no benefits nor do they have confidence in how long their services will be needed. Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff said that they are nervous and upset over the changes. They expressed that they felt left out of the planning process and were unsure about what is going to happen to their job descriptions.

According to staff interviewed, this major organizational change was decided upon with little input from library staff. They are concerned with how it will affect their patrons who do not wish to "serve themselves." Staff expressed a desire to be part of the process, to have their ideas solicited and to have more effective channels of communication both up and down the organization. Several also expressed their disappointment that outside consultants and "experts" were hired to prepare studies for the MCFL, and little input was solicited from staff who had considerable day-to-day experience to offer.

Outside the Library Walls

In addition to programs provided within the individual branches, MCFL offers several mobile services.

The Bookmobile



The Bookmobile has been in service since 1948. It currently operates 4 days a week; making stops at a variety of places. Its recently upgraded, hybrid version makes it more functional and safe for all. The staff is knowledgeable and dedicated. They serve not only the community in population centers, but also the underserved areas of the county in West Marin, as well as retirement communities and children who live in isolated areas. This is a program to be proud of and

should continue to be supported by the MCFL.

Library Beyond Walls Trained volunteers provide in-home delivery of library books, tapes, CDs, and other materials to Marin County Free Library patrons who have a permanent or temporary disability that prevents them from getting to a branch of the library system. Patrons receive deliveries at least once a month, and can check out materials for up to six weeks.

The FLAGship



FLAGship stands for Families Learning and Growing. It is a mobile learning center (bus) that is part of the Literacy Program supported by the MCFL. With its two bilingual staff, it travels to isolated and underserved areas to help families and children under five with school readiness activities. People they serve know they exist and look forward to working with them. FLAGship serves both adults and children who need English language skills in a supportive and flexible environment.

Literacy Programs

Marin County's population includes a diverse group of cultures and languages. Many citizens have very limited English comprehension, and need to make significant gains in their speaking, reading, and communication skills. These needs will be best served by a well-run literacy program. The Grand Jury believes that the Library is the logical place to coordinate and lead this program.

Some History

The Marin Literacy Program began in 1985 with a five-year, \$31,000 annual grant from the California State Library. Until June 2011, the MCFL partnered with the San Rafael Public Library in managing the Marin Literacy Program. During its active years, it assisted over 500 people annually, providing free tutoring in reading, writing and speaking to Marin County adults, children, families and prison inmates.

What Changed?

MCFL dropped out of the program after several deficit years and the cessation of State Literacy funds that had been providing needed financial support. In June 2011, the Marin Literacy Program broke away from the Library, and became a freestanding IRS non-profit section 501(c)(3) entity that, according to its charter, *"partners with libraries and other community organizations to provide literacy services throughout Marin County."* The Marin Literacy program now handles its own fund raising and administration.

The MCFL Literacy activities are now limited to the direct community outreach efforts of the FLAGship's mobile programs. Weekly English-writing classes and additional programs for children have begun in West Marin.

Between and among these three very different programs, there is neither agreement as to best practices, nor cooperation to obtain stable funding for all. The Grand Jury believes an organized Literacy program has important social value. There should be uniform programs across the county that are coordinated and led by an experienced administrator.

This important need in our community is a logical extension of traditional library services. Trained, qualified leaders can help citizens build literacy skills and prepare them to be citizens of today's world with such 21st century skills such as information, communications and technology literacy, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, civic literacy, and global awareness. The Library can have a major role in preparing people for life-long learning experiences around 21st century skills.

How Supportive are the Support Organizations?

There are three main MCFL support groups.

Friends of the Library (“Friends”):

According to their website, Friends are nonprofit groups of volunteers *"dedicated to making our library system and its programs the best that they can be."* Friends of the Marin County Free Library serve the entire MCFL and act as the umbrella organization for individual Chapter Friends who serve their local library branches. The Mission of the Friends, as outlined on the Friends page of the MCFL website, is to:

- focus public attention on and generate community support for library services, facilities, and other needs
- expand opportunities for the education and well-being of the community
- encourage literacy
- assist in obtaining financial support for the library

Umbrella funding for the County Friends comes from donations and fundraising events. The County Friends organization also receives a portion of any donation made directly to a Chapter Friend in the amount of 1/2 of the first \$25 collected. County Friends' funds offer system-wide support to MCFL and are typically used to provide materials and programs that would not be affordable within the normal MCFL budget. For example, the children's summer reading program and expensive subscriptions, such as the Tufts Medical Directory, are made possible by the County Friends.

THE BOOK PLACE is a used bookshop at 1608 Grant in Novato operated by the Friends of the Marin County Free Library. All proceeds are used for special programs, needs, and materials for the MCFL.

<http://marinlibraryfriends.marin.org/BookPlace.html>



Local branch libraries with separate Chapter Friends are Civic Center Library, Corte Madera Library, Fairfax Library, Marin City Library, and Novato Libraries. These

organizations are set up to support their local libraries in various ways. Chapter Friends funds are mostly used for facility upgrades. For instance, the Fairfax Friends purchased children's puppets, a projector screen and cabinets, and also created a special area for teens. Recently, the Friends of the Novato Library contributed \$13,000 towards the lobby carpet as part of the major upgrades to that library.

The Library Foundation:

The Mission of the Library Foundation, as stated on the Library Foundation page of the MCFL website is: *“to assure that the Marin County Free Library system will have sufficient financial resources to create and maintain a dynamic modern library system with excellent facilities and technology to service the needs of all Marin County residents.”*

Also on their website, the current goals of the Foundation are listed as:

1. Spearhead capital campaigns to fully meet the long-term needs of the MCFL
2. Encourage local community initiatives in support of the various libraries
3. Promote recognition and support of the MCFL system as a vital community resource

Foundations are typically formed to assist in getting long-term financial support, such as bequests for an organization. Goal 1 of the Library Foundation, listed above, to *“Spearhead capital campaigns to fully meet the long-term needs of the MCFL,”* indicates that the Library Foundation should be actively seeking this level of long-term financial support. The stated mission and goals of the Library Foundation are similar to those of the Friends. One of the main differences between the two organizations is the type and amount of funding sought by each. Friends groups seek funds at a grass-roots level, while the Library Foundation aims for larger amounts over a sustained time period.

The Grand Jury attended Library Foundation meetings, and reviewed past meeting minutes. We did not find evidence to show the Library Foundation is meeting its stated mission or goals, and based on the 2002 Grand Jury report, the Library Foundation also was not meeting its goals in 2002. Finding 2(1) in the 2002 Grand Jury Report states *“The MCFL Foundation has successfully attracted funds for specific causes such as the new Bookmobile. It has had virtually no success in soliciting endowment funds.”*

Fundraising efforts by the Library Foundation have sometimes even acted at cross-purposes with fundraising activities of the County Friends. For example, in one instance, a request for funds was sent out by both the Foundation and the Friends at the same time, essentially confusing potential donors and possibly diluting the impact of the request. Fundraising activities should be cooperative and complementary. The Grand Jury recommends better communication and collaboration to create a more professional approach to potential donors. The Grand Jury recommends that the Library Foundation develop and follow a plan to obtain long-term funding for the MCFL. In the absence of such a plan, the Grand Jury recommends that the Library Foundation consider merging with the Friends.

The Library Commission:

Marin County set up a system of commissions with the intention that each commission represent and respond to the communities they serve. The Library Commission was established in 1983 by the BOS to advise on MCFL policy, budget and overall needs.

The Library Commission's Charter states that the purposes of The Commission are to:

- serve as a resource body and liaison to the Board of Supervisors, the Director of County Library Services, and the community
- find ways and means of enlisting public interest in supporting and improving Library services

In addition, in 2010, the BOS appointed the Commission to serve as the Measure A Advisory Committee to provide independent citizen oversight for Measure A, a special tax for the Marin County Free Library.

The Library Commission meets once a month, each month in a different branch library. The head Librarian of the branch they are visiting gives a presentation and update on that library. In this way, Library Commissioners are able to keep up with the current trends and learn more about each of the individual libraries.

We attended Library Commission meetings and reviewed previous meeting notes. Although the meetings were

interesting and informative, the Commissioners had virtually no discussion or dialogue on substantive issues. Presentations were made to the Library Commission, but Commissioners gave no feedback, offered no opinions, and had no open discussions of issues.

In forming the Library Commission, each Supervisor appoints 3 Commissioners to serve his/her District as his/her resource and liaison to the MCFL and the community. Interviews with several Commissioners revealed that some had never met with the Supervisor who had appointed them, and most had little or no direct communication with their Supervisor. In two districts, there have been vacancies extending over several months.

It is clear that Library Commissioners do not have a strong relationship with the BOS, their appointing elected officials.

In the 2002 Grand Jury report, Finding 2(h) states, *"The Library Commission, an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors and MCFL staff, does not seem to be a purposeful advocate in resolving problems facing MCFL, e.g., understaffing, funding,*

"The effectiveness of commissions is dependent on the commissioners maintaining a strong relationship with the appointing elected officials and government managers of public service areas falling within the scope of the commission's charge."

(from County of Marin Webpage
'About Boards and Commissions')

training, Civic Center Branch costs." In 2013, there continue to be many problems facing the MCFL. It is apparent from observation and interviews that the Library Commission and the BOS do not have an ongoing dialog, and that the Library Commission is not empowered to recommend solutions to the many long-lasting problems.

The Library Commission does have a budget subcommittee that reviews the Library budget before it is presented to the BOS. The Commission has the time and option to review and question the budget, but based on our interviews, seems to have no role in its preparation.

The Library Commission and Measure A

In its role as the Independent Citizen Oversight Committee for Measure A, the Library Commission receives Measure A updates at its monthly Library Commission meeting. It also meets twice yearly as the Measure A oversight committee by adjourning the Library Commission meeting and reconvening as the Measure A Citizen Oversight Committee. Updates at the monthly Library Commission meetings and the semi-annual oversight meetings are by way of presentations made to the committees. The committees do not provide input, discussion or direction.

The Grand Jury looked for, but did not find, a comprehensive plan for Measure A work. Information and details of the work, along with the budgets and schedules are found in various places and under various controls, but the information is not available as a comprehensive plan that would enable the Measure A Oversight Committee to see the whole picture, track progress and extend the support it is tasked to provide.

Statements by those involved in Measure A remodeling work are noted in the previously mentioned 3/30/13 Marin IJ article on cost overruns and point to the need for more advanced planning. A principal civil engineer for Marin County noted that, after consultants were hired, the library administration *"began to shift its focus on how the libraries would be remodeled...and they made some changes."*

The article also notes that, according to the Acting Head of Library Services, one of the causes of increasing costs is the need to reconsider the scope of work at two of the branches. There is a clear need for an inclusive plan that could serve to reduce project unknowns, changes, and cost overruns.

Many Changes

During the preparation of this report, the BOS is in the process of appointing a new Director of Library Services to take the MCFL forward. This new leader will face challenges. Funding is scarce. Some of the staff feel left out of the communication and decision-making loop. There will be disruption in service while branch remodels are underway.

A Marin County Free Library Services & Facilities Vision Plan was prepared in 2007. Conditions in the County and the library communities have changed since that report,

primarily due to the global economic downturn of 2008. Available funding decreased as the need for library services and facilities increased.

The Vision Plan has not been updated to reflect current conditions and provide the blueprint for going forward into the future. We encourage the new administration to update that Vision Plan and share it with staff.

Financial Information

MCFL falls under the County Community Services Service Area of the County and accounts for 60% of the Community Services budget.

Funding to support MCFL comes primarily from its share of property taxes. Supplemental funding also comes from the \$49 /year parcel tax from Library Measure A, passed by the voters in June 2010.

MCFL’s total baseline budget for FY 2012-2013 is \$16,077,441. Approximately 14% of this total (\$2,475,000) is generated from Measure A each year for five years. And out of the Measure A five-year total, \$2.5 Million has been allocated for capital improvement projects.

MCFL Accounts for 60% of the Community Services Budget

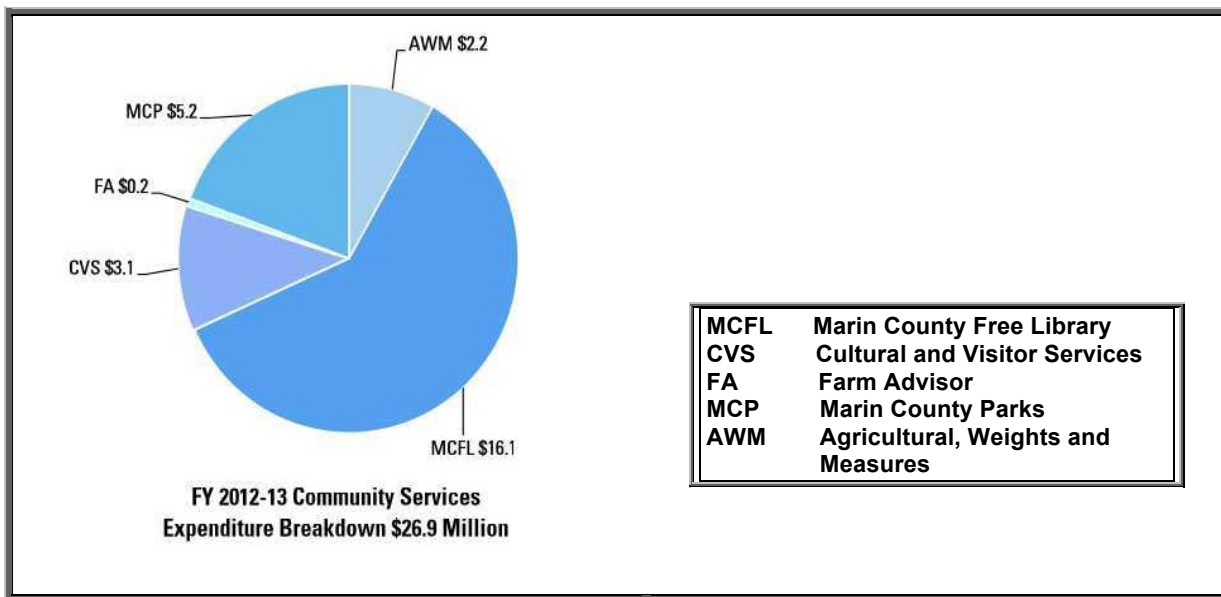


Figure above is from the County of Marin Proposed Budget 2012-2013, Health and Human Services section.

From a review of the budget and discussions with staff, it is apparent to the Grand Jury that in order to maintain the current level of services, MCFL will need replacement funding when Measure A sunsets in 2015. Funds will be needed to supplement the budget, either by an extension of the Measure A tax, or some other means. If no funding is found, MCFL will need to cut back services enough to reduce its budget by approximately 10 to 15 percent.

FINDINGS

- F1. MCFL staff feel they are not included in the planning process. They feel uninformed, out of the loop and that big decisions "come down to them" from the Administration, already fully formed. This affects morale negatively and lessens the potential for "buy-in" by staff to support change and could stifle the very improvements the planning process seeks to introduce.
- F2. MCFL uses a large number of "extra-hire" employees. There are often long employment times filled by extra-hires in temporary status while waiting for an opportunity to move to an FTE status. Staff have expressed that this serves to lower employee morale, which results in a potentially stressful working climate.
- F3. The Library Commission was originally created by the BOS to act as advisor to both the BOS and Library administration on Library issues. The BOS also appointed the Library Commission in 2010 as the Measure A Independent Citizen Oversight Committee. The Library Commission's input on Measure A has been limited to twice-yearly reports from Library Administration. The Commission's limited input and apparent lack of involvement leaves an unfilled gap in what should be proactive support for advocating needed service support for Library objectives.
- F4. There is insufficient contact and communication between the Library Commission and the BOS. There have been 2 vacant positions on the Library Commission unfilled for some months, and some of the Commissioners have never met the Supervisor who appointed them. This further negatively affects the effectiveness and usefulness of what should be supportive Commission advocacy for the Library programs and objectives.
- F5. The Library Foundation has drifted away from its primary role to find ways to support the library financially. The Grand Jury in 2002 and this Grand Jury find a lack of understanding in this body as to ways and means of producing needed, sustainable financial support for the MCFL system.
- F6. Friends of the Library have been valuable partners. They provide an avenue for enthusiastic volunteers to be involved with and support their community libraries in a variety of ways. Their efforts and contributions---both financial and supportive---we found warrant commendation and recognition.
- F7. Expenditures of Measure A funds are difficult to track. The MCFL budget does not show separate line items for Measure A expenditures. An improved, focused presentation of Measure A inflows and outflows should be established and reviewed by the Library Commission and be reported by the Commission to the BOS, at least yearly, and preferably more frequently.
- F8. There is insufficient long-range Library facility and services planning. The 2007 Vision Plan is out of date with the current funding situation and rapidly changing service needs of the MCFL. A new Long-Range Plan should be a high priority of the Library Commission and should be targeted for completion within the 2013-14 Fiscal Year, and preferably early in that period so that it can be reflected in the

County's 2013-14 Annual Budgeting cycle and part of any new or extended solicitation of additional tax funds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Grand Jury recommends that:

- R1. The new MCFL Director of Library Services make improved communication a priority and include all affected groups and stakeholders early in any new MCFL planning process to get feedback and input from Staff. Leadership needs to encourage staff input in contemplating major changes. Participation could include tasking staff to do research and reports in-house during the planning process.
- R2. The MCFL administration develop a well-defined and reasonably short path to permanent hire status for those (especially "extra hires") who want to pursue a career in Library service.
- R3. MCFL prepare progress reports and audit of expenditures on Measure A spending and that Library Commissioners, in their capacity as the Independent Citizen Oversight Committee for Measure A, review the status monthly. Both the BOS and Library Commissioners to meet a minimum of twice yearly to discuss and provide guidance on current issues and long term plans for the MCFL, including feedback to the BOS.
- R4. The BOS appoint commissioners to the two vacant positions in District 4 and District 5, and that the BOS make it a policy to promptly find and replace commissioners when needed. When a new commissioner comes to his or her first meeting, the appointing Supervisor should attend and introduce the person to the Commission.
- R5. The Library Foundation develop a plan to further its stated goals of spear-heading community enthusiasm and financial support for the MCFL. The Library Foundation investigate ways to increase long-term, consistent funding for the MCFL that can be relied on for continuing library services, such as the FLAGship and the Bookmobile. If such a plan is not forthcoming, the Grand Jury recommends that the Library Foundation consider a merger with the Friends.
- R6. MCFL and BOS support Friends with information and recognition! MCFL and BOS should encourage collaboration between the Friends and the Foundation to share ideas and coordinate fund-raising efforts and possibly events.
- R7. MCFL develop a comprehensive work plan including scope, schedule and budget for all work funded through Measure A and make the status of Measure A projects a discussion item at each Library Commission meeting.
- R8. MCFL revisit and update its 2007 Vision Plan, with staff and community participation.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal code section 933.05, the grand jury requests responses as follows:

From the following individuals:

- Director of Library Services, to all Findings and Recommendations

From the following governing bodies:

- BOS to F2, F3, F4, F6, F7, F8 and R2, R3, R4, R6, R7, R8
- Library Commission to all Findings and Recommendations
- Library Foundation to F5, R5 and R6

The governing bodies indicated above should be aware that the comment or response of the governing body must be conducted subject to the notice, agenda and open meeting requirements of the Brown Act.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- **Friends of the Marin County Free Library**
<http://marinlibraryfriends.marin.org/>
- **Institute of Museum and Library Services** national initiative *Museums, Libraries and 21st Century Skills*
http://www.ims.gov/about/21st_century_skills_list.aspx
- **Marin County Free Library Services & Facilities Vision Plan 2007 Report, August 2007** <http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/lb/main/plan/2007report.pdf>
- **Marin County Free library FY 201202013 Approved Baseline Budget, 7/1/2012**
- **Marin County Grand Jury Report, *Marin County Free Library*, May 10, 2002**
- **MCFL Commission WEB link**
<http://www.marinlibrary.org/about-the-library/library-commission>
- **MCFL Foundation WEB link**
<http://www.marinlibrary.org/about-the-library/library-foundation>
- **MCFL WEB link** <http://www.marinlibrary.org/>

Reports issued by the Civil Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code Section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Civil Grand Jury.
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