

STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 29, 2012
TO: Library Joint Powers Board
FROM: Teresa Landers, Director of Libraries
RE: Revised Patron Conduct and Suspension Policy

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The LJPB adopt the attached Patron Conduct and Suspension Policy excluding the section on emotional support animals.
2. The Library engage in a four month pilot of allowing emotional support animals following the guidelines presented in the policy at Branciforte, La Selva Beach and Boulder Creek.

SUMMARY

This document is a reprint of the report presented in November. Supplemental materials regarding emotional support animals have been provided at the end of this document. The recommendation statement has been revised.

In order to more effectively deal with difficult situations, the City Attorney has advised the Library to revise its Patron Conduct and Suspension Policy. The areas primarily affected are:

- The suspension policy
- Sleeping
- Service animals

BACKGROUND

The Library's Code of Conduct was revised recently to reflect more positive language. Substantive changes affecting suspension, sleeping and service animals were not made.

The current policy requires a Temporary Restraining Order to deal with individuals who violate the Library's Code of Conduct beyond a 30 day suspension which any staff member can impose. This is a time consuming and expensive process that involves the City Attorney's office. Staff does not have any direct and immediate recourse available to them beyond the 30 day suspension.

The addition of a security guard to assist staff dealing with difficult situations at the Downtown Library resulted in a fresh look at the Code of Conduct and led to revisions that staff had been asking for. These include:

- a way to handle patrons who are repeat offenders of the Library's rules

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- a way to handle patrons who are using the Library for the purpose of sleeping
- clarification on the issue of service and emotional support animals

Supplemental Information

Since the November 5, 2012 LJPB meeting additional information has been gathered to assist the Board with its decision regarding emotional support animals.

1. A request was received as to what other libraries are doing about this issue. To date two libraries have responded that they do allow emotional support animals: San Francisco Public Library and Corona Public Library. The policy and procedures for San Francisco Public are very clear and are attached. Corona stated that they treat emotional support animals as service dogs.
2. A video was shared that shows how veterans are using animals for emotional support. The link to that video is

<http://www.cnn.com/2012/11/09/us/cnnheroes-ptsd-service-dogs/index.html>

A copy of the related article is attached.

Additional Recommendation

If the Board is still feeling uncomfortable about the issue of emotional support animals I recommend:

- the policy be adopted as is excepting the section on service animals
- the Library engage in a limited 4 month pilot of allowing emotional support animals following the procedures in the service animals section of the policy. This could be limited to 3 of the branches that have expressed particular concern over this issue. Branciforte, Boulder Creek and La Selva Beach have volunteered.

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