

Minutes of the Solano County Law Library Board of Trustees (July 25, 2022)

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting of the Law Library Board of Trustees was called into order by Court Executive Officer Brian Taylor (Chairperson) at 4:11 p.m. at the Jury Assembly Room (located at the Old Solano Courthouse, 580 Texas Street—Lower Level, Fairfield, CA 94533).

ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

PRESENT: Court Executive Officer Brian Taylor (Chairperson); Judge Christine Carringer (Vice-Chairperson); Judge Wendy Getty; JoAnn I. Parker, Esq.; Suzanne Olawski, Director of Library Services for Solano County Library; Jonathan Watson, Law Librarian for Solano County Law Library

ABSENT Judge Daniel J. Healy; Supervisor John M. Vasquez; Oliver Ehlinger, Managing Attorney for Legal Services of Northern California [Vallejo]

CORRECTIONS TO MINUTES:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Moved: Judge Carringer moved that the minutes from the meeting of April 25, 2022, be accepted.

Seconded: Ms. Parker seconded the motion.

The motion was carried unanimously, and the minutes of the meeting were approved.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Moved: Ms. Parker moved that the agenda be accepted.

Seconded: Judge Carringer seconded the motion.

The motion was carried unanimously, and the agenda was approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. Budget update for Solano County Law Library (with attachments): Ms. Olawski presented the report entitled “FY2021/22 ACTUALS THROUGH May 31, 2022”. She stated that the figures for June 2022 will not be released until September 2022. At that time, Ms. Olawski will present a revised budget to the Board. Currently, there are invoices that were submitted at the end of FY 21/22 that are still being processed. It is anticipated that Solano County Law Library will be receiving approximately \$214,000.00 in one-time funding in late 2022.

b. Developing a vision for Solano County Law Library’s services:

- In keeping with the project of developing a vision for Solano County Law Library’s services, Mr. Watson has been working with Assistant Director Mike Eitner and Supervising Librarian Jason Agnew to develop goals that will be presented in the future to the Board. Mr. Taylor and Judge Getty confirmed that discussions for a new courthouse are still underway, and it is uncertain if Solano County Law Library will be included in such building plans. When more details about the building plans are revealed, Mr. Taylor requested that Mr. Watson agendaize the topic under “Old Business” for continued discussions.
- Ms. Parker reaffirmed her interest in serving as the chair of a committee to develop legal self-help guides for Solano County litigants. She contacted the Solano County Bar Association, and attorneys Lisette Shepard and Tiffany Andrews have expressed interest in joining the project. She also plans to contact Sarah Russo. Ms. Parker has explored Sacramento County Law Library’s family law videos to analyze their level of accessibility. Comparatively, Judge Carringer and Judge Getty have analyzed the self-help information posted on sites such as Alameda County Superior Courts.
- To ensure that such legal self-help information is readily available, Ms. Parker prefers not to develop a guide by scratch if there is a vital and comparative resource already developed by a California county law library or Superior Court of California that can be linked to on Solano County Law Library’s site.
- Ms. Parker and Mr. Watson plan to correspond by mid-August to discuss the project. In the meantime, Mr. Watson will be contacting the Director of Sacramento County Law Library to check if it would be permissible for Solano County Law Library to adapt any information contained in the legal self-help guides posted on the former’s website.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Lexis Digital Library (with attachments):

- Mr. Watson presented his proposal to the Board and clarified the cost breakdown in the report. In terms of cost, the bulk of the monies would come from the “Software & Licenses” budget item—which covers the database costs. The remainder of the monies would come from the “Books & Subscriptions” item, as there is a single cost for the print and e-book versions. The customers would not have to log in with a library card number,

as we are the ones who can provide them with database access. The total figures listed on the proposal not only reflected Lexis Digital Library's Overdrive annual fees but also subscription costs for LexisAdvance, WestlawNext and CEB OnLAW. Thus, the one-time funds apportioned by the Governor's Budget would be required to fulfill any deficit costs, as the maximum budget for the software item is \$80,000.00.

- Mr. Taylor liked the concept of providing remote access to Solano County Law Library's customers but opened discussions to the board members regarding their viewpoints about usability. The consensus was that attorneys, rather than laypersons, would be motivated to use Lexis Digital Library. Judge Getty analyzed the title listing, and believed that *California Forms of Pleading and Practice*, *California Points & Authorities* and *Hogan & Weber California Civil Discovery* might be the only titles with crossover appeal to pro per litigants. Other topics such as bankruptcy could potentially be appealing to laypersons whereas others like eminent domain may be underutilized.
- Ms. Parker had concerns that the public may require a library staff member to help them navigate Lexis Digital Library's holdings. Judge Carringer inquired if there is a high percentage of seasoned attorneys who have grown accustomed to print materials and require technical guidance on navigating Solano County Law Library's databases. Mr. Watson confirmed that there are such customers, but also mentioned there are others who fall on the other side of the spectrum that are new solo practitioners who would like remote access to digital materials. Regarding public libraries overall, Ms. Olawski stated that Solano County Library has experienced a surge in customer demand for e-books.
- The Board and Ms. Olawski asked Mr. Watson to pose the following questions to the Lexis Digital Library representative:
 - (1.) Can we select which titles that we want accessible via Lexis Digital Library or are the digital holdings locked as a packaged plan? If certain titles can be made available electronically, how would this affect the pricing?
 - (2.) Could other Lexis Digital Library titles be made available instead that Solano County Law Library does not subscribe to in print?
 - (3.) Would it be possible to have a free trial period that is accessible to Solano County Law Library customers?
 - (4.) Is a three-year contract standard practice or is it possible to begin with a one-year contract and then renew annually? If such an arrangement is possible, how will the cost be affected?
- Judge Carringer suggested surveying the Solano County Bar Association members to determine if they would be interested in Lexis Digital Library, as well as polling local government attorneys. Mr. Taylor will be working with Mr. Watson to develop a survey for distribution.
- If after careful analyses of Lexis Digital Library, it is determined that Solano County Law Library's one-time funds should be spent elsewhere, Judge Getty posed the alternative of incorporating the Rutter Guides as part of the reference collection at certain Solano County Library branches.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT:

To pinpoint what the most common customer needs are, Judge Getty asked Mr. Watson if statistical data is gathered about the types of legal reference questions received at Solano County

Law Library. Mr. Watson confirmed that such statistics are gathered periodically, but that it can start being done consistently soon. Judge Getty proposed that such data might not only be beneficial to the Lexis Digital Library discussions, but also to the larger project of developing a vision for Solano County Law Library's services.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Taylor announced that Mr. Ehlinger will no longer be serving as a board member. He plans to contact Supervisor Vasquez for a replacement member.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held on August 22, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Taylor at 4:47 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Jonathan Watson

**JONATHAN WATSON, SECRETARY,
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SOLANO COUNTY LAW LIBRARY**