



Legislation Text

File #: 18-541, **Version:** 1

Authorize the Director of Library Services to accept, on behalf of the County, the donation of a bench as a tribute to Mary Bourguignon (Mary B) for her dedication and support of libraries, literacy and life-long learning; and Acknowledge the repurposing of the former rose garden to a sensory garden for children and families at the Fairfield Civic Center Library and a dedication ceremony to be held on August 18, 2018

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Library Services recommends that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Director of Library Services to accept, on behalf of the County, the donation of a bench as a tribute to Mary Bourguignon (Mary B) for her dedication and support of libraries, literacy and life-long learning; and
2. Acknowledge the repurposing of the former rose garden to a sensory garden for children and families at the Fairfield Civic Center Library, and dedication ceremony to be held on August 18, 2018.

SUMMARY:

Mary B passed away unexpectedly in March 2017. Her son, Brendan Wood, wanted a tribute to his mother. Mary B installed a love of reading to her son, in addition to showing him how important reading is. He approached the Library asking if he raised monies for a bench, would the Library have a place for it. At the time, the Library was repurposing the former rose garden into a sensory garden for children and families and staff felt that a bench would be an asset so that children and their families would have a place to sit and read and enjoy the garden.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no General Fund impact as the Library is funded with property and sales tax revenue. The money for the fabrication of the bench was raised by donations from Mary B's family and friends, and will be received at no cost to the County. The Solano County Community Foundation donated monies for the hardscape for the sensory garden. Additional funds of \$15,059 were paid to a contractor to complete the project which included drainage, irrigation, benches and planting and were paid for out of the Library's operating budget which has no impact on the General Fund. The planting of the sensory garden landscape was completed in FY2017/18 and included in the Library's FY2017/18 operating budget.

DISCUSSION:

Beginning in 1998, Mary B immersed herself in efforts to preserve, improve and expand public libraries within Solano County including Solano County Library, Benicia City Library, Dixon Public Library and the Vacaville Library District. She was the campaign manager for Solano County's Measure B, a successful 16 year, 1/8 cent countywide sales tax proposal passed by the voters in 1998 to provide funding for library operations in Solano County. The California Library Association recognized Mary's efforts with its President's Award that

year, given once annually for outstanding contributions, leadership and achievement in support of California libraries from a member of the public.

From 1998 to 2000, Mary B served as the executive Director of the Solano County Library Foundation. In that role, she championed the Foundation's efforts in support of the Library's pediatric literacy program, "Reach Out and Read." In 2012, Mary B again stepped up as campaign manager to support the Library's efforts to renew the 1/8 cent sales tax, which was to sunset in two years (October 1, 2014). The 2012 Measure L campaign was successful in no small part due to her experience and leadership, and the 1/8 cent sales tax continues to provide funding to support library services through 2030 when Measure L sunsets.

In addition to the Library, Mary was the grant coordinator for Slow Food Solano's school garden program and a perennial volunteer to run the kitchen for the Fairfield Host Lions Club crab feeds. She was also a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), a certified volunteer program supporting children under court supervision.

Mary's son, Brendan, wanted to let the community know how important reading was to his mother. She read to him every day without fail. Their two most favorite books to read were "Owl Babies" and "Harold and the Purple Crayon." These two books form the "sides" of the bench. Brendan knows how important reading was to his mom and how committed she was to helping other children and families prepare to navigate the work of school homework or job applications through reading. She wanted to make sure that children in Solano County had the same opportunities that she provided to her son.

When the Department was approached to see if the Library could find a place for the bench as a tribute to Mary, it seemed appropriate that we would provide a place where families could sit and read together.

A dedication of Mary's Bench will be held on Saturday, August 18th with Mary's family in attendance to pay tribute to Mary and her efforts to support libraries in Solano County.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board could choose not to accept the bench, however, this is not recommended as Mary B was a beloved member of the community who preserved, improved and expanded library services throughout the county by chairing both library sales tax measures, Measure B and Measure L.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Department has worked with both the Solano County Library Foundation and the Solano Community Foundation. In addition, the General Service Department, Capital Projects Division, has been involved to ensure that the bench and sensory garden meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION