



Councilmember

ROBERTO URANGA

Long Beach, Seventh District



Date: March 7, 2017

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Roberto Uranga, Seventh District (10)
Councilwoman Suzie Price, Third District
Councilmember Stacy Mungo, Fifth District SM

Subject: Library Overdue Fines Amnesty Program

RECOMMENDATION:

Request the City Manager establish a one month Long Beach Public Library Overdue Fines Amnesty Program from April 1, 2017 to April 30, 2017 that will support the recovery of circulation materials and provide the opportunity for patrons to return overdue books, thus restoring their library borrowing privileges at the twelve branches of the Long Beach Public Library system.

BACKGROUND:

The Long Beach Public Library has 797,776 circulating items, including books, eBooks, audiobooks, magazines and DVDs that support literacy and education for our residents.

In 2016, the Long Beach Public Library processed more than 1.2 million check outs and over 1.2 million visits. However, each year, materials are not returned to the library and will not be recovered. Many items are still in the possession of the borrowers and could be returned to the library for use by other patrons. The current Long Beach Public Library overdue fine is 35 cents per item per day, up to a maximum of \$5.60 as established by the City's Master Fee Schedule. Once the overdue fine reaches the maximum, the fine is changed to the full replacement cost of the item. To maintain full borrowing privileges, Long Beach Public Library patrons are required to keep their accrued fines and fees at \$20.00 or less. Although library fines are intended to encourage borrowers to return library materials in a timely manner, some library users accumulate substantial fines that discourage them from paying and lead them to simply forfeit their library privileges.

Last year, the City Council approved an overdue fine amnesty program as part of the Long Beach Public Library's annual celebration of National Library Month in April 2016. The response to the program was overwhelming and the feedback from patrons was extremely positive with 4,055 patrons participating and returning 10,103 items with an estimated value of \$181,854. Also, 3,220 items previously considered lost were returned with an estimated value of \$57,960. Additionally, the library received 2,911 new donated books to add to its collection. The Library Overdue Fines Amnesty Program will continue to assist with the recovery of overdue materials, thereby increasing the availability of materials for circulation, reducing material replacement cost, and increasing the number of library patrons with full borrowing privileges.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The potential decrease in revenue due to the Overdue Fines Amnesty Program is expected to be offset fully by the potential recapture of a substantial amount of City property, as evidenced by last year's amnesty program. The Long Beach Public Library has approximately 16,712 library items overdue and not available for circulation, which represents approximately \$284,688 in City property.