

City of Escondido – Outsourcing of Library Services

Fact Sheet

Message from the City Manager:

Let's make sure we know the facts regarding the Escondido Public Library! It is merely a rumor that we are exploring making the Escondido Public Library "private." What we are exploring is whether or not there are cost savings associated with transferring the day to day operations from public employees to employees of a private company. The Escondido Public Library is and will always be a public library, as will the building, the land, and the collections.

As of late June, our exploration of the type of employees to use for library operations is focusing sharply on the cost savings issue. The City Council makes the final decisions on our Library, and without substantial cost savings, it would be very hard to recommend any changes. But whether or not we make changes in the type of employees operating the Library, a review is always a great idea for optimizing operations.

Background:

- With City Council direction, staff has been exploring whether or not day to day services at the Library can be performed for less cost by employees of a private company rather than public employees.
- There is only one company in the United States that provides these services, which is Library Systems and Services. They have been providing library management services for over 35 years. Currently they provide these services to 83 library branches all over the country.

Core Principles in Consideration of Outsourcing:

- The library has been and will always remain a core public asset to the Escondido community.
- No changes will be made to this public service without a cost/benefit analysis.
- Measurable outcomes that are financially and fundamentally beneficial to our residents will be required.
- Employees careers will not be jeopardized by a transition to a public/private library partnership.
- Library services will remain a transparent and wise use of taxpayer money.

Current Status:

- City staff has reviewed the proposal and held a panel discussion between Library Systems and Services and Library staff.
- Two meetings have been held with Library Systems and Services to discuss the proposal.
- The potential of a partnership was discussed during the budget presentation at the June 14, 2017 City Council meeting.

Next Steps:

- A presentation will be given by Library Systems and Services to the Library Board of Trustees at their meeting in July.
- Cost comparison analysis will be performed by City staff
- If substantial savings could be achieved, site visits to libraries that utilize Library Systems and Services may be conducted.
- And again, if substantial savings could be achieved, a public comment period will be held to gain insight from the Escondido community.