

City of Escondido – Outsourcing of Library Services

Fact Sheet

Background:

- City staff has completed the financial analysis of whether cost savings can be achieved by transferring the day-to-day operations of the Escondido Public Library to private employees. That analysis concludes that savings in excess of \$400,000 can be achieved each year. In addition to the \$400,000 savings, the Escondido Public Library could also remain open an additional day each week, so the Library is available to the public 7 days a week. Staff has prepared a summary sheet of these savings as well as a detailed analysis.
- There is only one company in the United States that provides these services, which is Library Systems and Services (“LS&S”). They have been providing library management services for over 35 years. Currently they provide these services to 83 library branches all over the country.
- In addition, staff is also analyzing the possibility of realizing cost savings through working with the County library system.

Core Principles in Consideration of Outsourcing:

- The library has been and will always remain a core public asset to the Escondido community. The library building, land, and collections (including the Pioneer Room) will remain under City ownership.
- The Library will continue to be named “The Escondido Public Library.”
- Measurable outcomes that are financially and fundamentally beneficial to our residents will be required.
- Employees careers should not be jeopardized by a transition to a public/private library partnership.
- Library services will remain a transparent and wise use of taxpayer money.
- The City should be well positioned to request voter support for a bond issue for a new library.

Current Status:

- LS&S has presented a final proposal. LS&S and City staff, including Escondido Public Library staff held a panel discussion on May 22, 2017.
- The potential of outsourcing was discussed during the budget presentation at the June 14, 2017 City Council meeting.
- The potential of outsourcing was also discussed in the context of the Council Action Plan on June 28, 2017.
- The Library Board of Trustees conducted a public session on the topic at its regular meeting on July 11, 2017 in the Turrentine Room. LS&S made a presentation and dozens of public speakers commented in opposition to further consideration of the idea.
- The Library Board of Trustees heard from many speakers and discussed this item at their regular meeting on August 8, 2017. The Board voted unanimously to recommend against a contract with LS&S.

Next Steps:

- Site visits to libraries that utilize LS&S may be conducted.
- A staff report discussing the issue will be prepared, as will a staff recommendation and both will be made available on the City's website.
- The City Council will consider the policy issues at a public meeting, hear from the public and make a decision. The anticipated date is August 23, 2017.
- If the City Council wishes to proceed, a contract will be executed and transition activities will be scheduled.