



City of Sebastopol

**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: April 7, 2026**

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
Requestor: Councilmember Zollman
Responsible Department: Interim City Manager Mary Gourley
Subject: Authorize the opening of a recruitment process to fill the upcoming term for the City of Sebastopol’s representative on the Sonoma County Library Commission and approve the Requirements for City Appointed Position to the Sonoma County Library Commission.

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RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the opening of a recruitment process to fill the upcoming term for the City of Sebastopol’s representative on the Sonoma County Library Commission and approve the Requirements for City Appointed Position to the Sonoma County Library Commission. The current representative, Fred Engbarth, has a term ending July 31, 2026. Following completion of the recruitment, City Council will interview and consider appointment for a new four-year term ending July 31, 2030 at a future City Council meeting.

PROCESS OF AGENDA ITEM:

1. If the item remains on the Consent Calendar, no presentation is required and the item will be approved as part of the Consent Calendar.
2. If the item is removed from the Consent Calendar, it will be heard as a regular agenda item, at the time determined by the Mayor, and will proceed as follows: a. Presentation of the item by the Requestor or responsible staff b. Council questions and discussion c. Public comment d. Council deliberation and action

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The City of Sebastopol appoints one voting representative to the Sonoma County Library Commission, the governing body of the Sonoma County Library system. The current Sebastopol-appointed commissioner’s term expires on July 31, 2026. This item seeks City Council authorization to initiate a public recruitment process to solicit applications and prepare for appointment of a commissioner to serve the next four-year term ending July 31, 2030. This item will also request approval of additional requirements for the selected representative.

BACKGROUND: The Sonoma County Library was established in 1975 pursuant to a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA). In 2014, a JPA Review Committee—comprised of representatives from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and each incorporated city within Sonoma County—completed a two-year



City of Sebastopol

review and approved the First Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement governing the countywide provision of library services.

Each of the city councils of Cloverdale, Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Windsor appoints one library commissioner. The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors appoints one commissioner, and the County and the City of Santa Rosa jointly appoint one additional commissioner, for a total of eleven members on the Sonoma County Library Commission (Commission).

The Commission serves as the governing and administrative body of the Sonoma County Library. It is responsible for operating, managing, and administering the integrated free public library system throughout Sonoma County. The Commission is authorized to exercise all powers granted to the County Library under the JPA and applicable law, including the appointment and evaluation of the Library Director, who is responsible for the day-to-day operation and management of the Library system.

DISCUSSION: The Sebastopol-appointed library commissioner serves as a full voting member of the Commission. Applicants are not required to be residents of the City of Sebastopol; eligible candidates may reside within the City, the greater Sebastopol area, or elsewhere within Sonoma County. This item recommends that applicants indicate their understanding of the priorities of this City representative position to advocate for and focus on the needs, priorities, and interests of the City of Sebastopol within the context of countywide library services.

The Commission typically meets monthly, with additional special meetings held as needed. Each commissioner also serves as a liaison to a Library Advisory Board (LAB), attending LAB meetings and participating in an ex officio capacity. Commissioners may be asked by the Commission Chair to serve on standing or ad hoc committees, such as advocacy, finance, or Library Director evaluation. Committees generally meet monthly and provide policy recommendations to the full Commission. Commissioners are encouraged to maintain regular communication with their appointing authority and to provide periodic or annual updates to the City Council regarding Commission activities.

In addition to the standard Sonoma County Library Commissioner job description (attached), the following Sebastopol-specific requirements are recommended and must be acknowledged by applicants in their submissions:

- The Commissioner shall prioritize and actively advocate for the City of Sebastopol's unique interests and needs within the countywide library system, including but not limited to:



City of Sebastopol

- Serving as a dedicated liaison and primary advocate for the Sebastopol Regional Library, elevating its specific priorities such as facility expansion or modernization (to address current inadequacies in space and functionality), enhanced staffing levels, improved programming tailored to Sebastopol residents, greater accessibility for diverse populations, equity in resource allocation, and long-term sustainability of local library services.
- Acting as an effective information conduit by regularly communicating policy discussions, operational updates, strategic initiatives, and funding opportunities between the Sonoma County Library system and the City of Sebastopol; proactively raising Sebastopol-specific community concerns, feedback from the Sebastopol Library Advisory Board (LAB), and local data/trends to the full Commission.
- Fostering strong intergovernmental collaboration by providing timely, periodic updates (at least annually, or as requested) to the Sebastopol City Council on Commission activities, decisions, and their potential impacts on Sebastopol, ensuring alignment with adopted City policies, goals, and community needs.
- Participating fully in county-level deliberations and decision-making while maintaining a clear focus on how system-wide policies and budgets affect Sebastopol residents, including advocating for equitable distribution of resources that support the Sebastopol branch's role as a vital community hub for education, literacy, cultural programming, and public services.

STAFF ANALYSIS: Authorizing a recruitment process at this time allows the City to proactively plan for representation on the Sonoma County Library Commission. Recruitments reinforce transparency and public engagement in the City's appointment process.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS / PRIORITIES / GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY: This action supports the City Council's goals and priorities, including: • Goal 4: High-Performance Organization • Restoring public trust through transparent and inclusive appointment processes • Improving public communications and community engagement

PUBLIC COMMENT: As of the preparation of this staff report, staff received public comments (attached to this report). Any written public comments received after publication of this report will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials prior to or at the meeting. Members of the public may also provide oral comments during the public comment portion of the agenda item.

PUBLIC NOTICE: This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was made available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.



City of Sebastopol

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact associated with authorizing the recruitment process for this appointment. Costs for advertisement are contained within the current City budget.

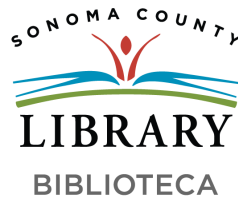
RESTATED RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the opening of a recruitment process to fill the upcoming term for the City of Sebastopol's representative on the Sonoma County Library Commission, with the interview(s) and appointment to be considered by the City Council at a future meeting and add the additional Sebastopol-specific requirements.

OPTIONS:

1. Provide alternative direction regarding the timing or process for recruitment.
2. Decline to open the recruitment process at this time.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Sonoma County Library Job Description
2. City of Sebastopol Governance Memo
3. City of Sebastopol Library FAQs
4. City of Sebastopol Application
5. Public Comment Received



Sonoma County Library Commissioner Job Description

Summary

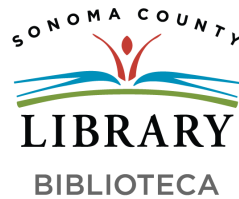
Provides governance for the Sonoma County Library; lends expertise and experience to the organization; establishes policy; sets goals and objectives; hires and evaluates the director; establishes and monitors the annual budget; exercises such other powers, consistent with the law to foster the effective use and management of the library.

Responsibilities

- Hires, sets salary, evaluates and supervises a qualified Library Director to implement commission decisions and directions and to carry out day-to-day operation of the library and its programs and services
- Determines and adopts written policies to govern the operation and services of the library
- Works with the director to establish short and long range goals for the library
- Attends all regular and special meetings of the Commission and participates in subcommittees as necessary
- Attends appropriate library functions including Library Advisory Board meetings, fundraisers, special events and other activities
- Sets an annual budget and approves expenditure of funds; monitors budget and expenses throughout the year
- Represents the interests and needs of the community; advocates for the countywide library system
- Reports activities to local officials; acts as liaison to inform the public of library services and needs
- Sets parameters and authority level for library management's labor negotiations with the Union; adopts MOU contract; serves as the employer to library staff
- Has an interest in library issues, laws, and trends, and their implications for library use
- Is familiar with the Joint Powers Agreement governing the Library; understands the Brown Act and public meeting requirements

Qualifications

- Interested in the Library and its services; understands and subscribes to Sonoma County Library mission and values
- Has the willingness and ability to devote time and energy to the role
- Is able to represent varied needs and interests of the community and of the Library
- Has strong interpersonal, listening, and communication skills



- Knows how to build partnerships with governing bodies, agencies, elected officials, library staff and members of the public
- Has the ability to handle opposition and make decisions in the interest of library service
- Demonstrates common sense and sound judgment
- Can work with diverse groups and ideas in a constructive way
- Understands effective decision making processes; can be decisive and comfortable with large-scale decisions
- Values collaboration; works to build consensus

Desired Experience

- Familiarity with the Sonoma County Library
- Experience working in diverse communities, education, literacy, information technology, finance, human resources, fundraising, public relations, or other relevant field

Time Commitment

- The commission meets monthly at a time convenient for members. (Currently, meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm). Meetings can last up to four hours, and considerable preparation time is typical prior to each meeting.
- It has been common practice for the Commission to devote 1-2 half-day workshop meetings to budget planning.
- Commissioners may serve on one or more subcommittees or ad hoc task forces in addition to their regular duties.
- Commissioners are expected to attend Library Advisory Board (LAB) meetings of the community they represent and be in communication with LAB chairs and branch managers.
- Under terms of the Joint Powers Agreement, trustees shall hold their office for four years from the date of appointment and until their successors are appointed.
- Special meetings or committee meetings may be called as necessary at times that are convenient to members and that comply with the open public meeting law.



409 13th Street, Suite 600
 Oakland, California 94612
 tel (916) 307-1522
 www.redwoodpubliclaw.com

Alex Mog
 Alex.mog@redwoodpubliclaw.com

MEMORANDUM
Public Copy

DATE: November 12, 2024
TO: Honorable Mayor & City Council
 City of Sebastopol
CC: Don Schwartz, City Manager
 Mary Gourley, Assistant City Manager
FROM: Alex Mog, City Attorney
RE: **Sebastopol Regional Library Governance**

The Sebastopol Regional Library (“Sebastopol Library”) is the public library serving residents of the City of Sebastopol (“City”) and surrounding areas. The Sebastopol Library is a branch of the Sonoma County Library (“County Library”). This memorandum provides a brief overview of the governance structures of the libraries.

Discussion

In 2014, the City, Sonoma County, and all other cities within the County, executed the First Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement for the County-Wide Provision of Library Services (“Library JPA”). The Library JPA replaced a prior agreement between Sonoma County and some, but not all, of the cities in the County related to library services. Joint powers agreements are agreements executed between public agencies to jointly exercise common powers to provide identified services¹. Additionally, joint powers agreements may create new independent legal entities to provide such services.

The Library JPA specifies that it establishes the County Library as a public agency.² Importantly, the County Library is an independent public entity, and not a department of Sonoma County, and is not governed by the Board of Supervisors. Rather, the County Library is governed by the Library Commission, which is established by the Library JPA.³ The governing body of each member of the Library JPA, including the Sebastopol City Council, is entitled to appoint one

¹ See the Joint Exercise of Powers Act, Gov. Code § 6500 *et seq.*

² Library JPA § I.B. Technically, the County Library was first formed by the prior joint powers agreement, and is continued in existence by the Library JPA.

³ See Library JPA § VI.

representative to sit on the Library Commission as a voting member. In addition, Sonoma County and Santa Rosa are entitled to jointly appoint one additional member. There are 11 individuals on the Library Commission, each of whom serves a four-year term.

The County Library is responsible for “operating, managing, and administering the integrated free public library system in the County of Sonoma”.⁴ The Library Commission is the governing board of the County Library, and authorized to exercise all of the powers held by County Library. One of these powers is the authority to appoint the Library Director, who is responsible for the day-to-day operation, administration, and management of the County Library.⁵ The Library Commission’s role and authority over the County Library are equivalent to the City Council’s role and authority over the City. The Library Director is equivalent to the City Manager.

In addition to the Library Commission, the County Library has a Library Advisory Board (“LAB”) for each regional branch.⁶ Each LAB is comprised of residents from the service area of the regional branch. The purpose of each LAB is “to provide information and make recommendations to the Commission and the Library Director on matters affecting library service based on input from their respective service areas.”⁷ Each LAB may also appoint one of its member to act as a liaison to the Library Commission. However, the LABs have no decision-making authority, and are serve a purely advisory role. The Sebastopol Regional Library Advisory Board serves as the LAB for the Sebastopol Library.

The County Library is operated pursuant to an annual budget adopted by the Library Commission. The County Library is required to “distribute its personnel, financial and technological resources among the various regional library branches in an equitable fashion”.⁸ As part of this requirement, all branches of the County Library are required to be open for the same baseline number of hours, with the exception of the Central Branch. While branch libraries are allowed to accept gifts or donations to benefit that particular branch, such gifts or donations cannot be used to expand the operating hours of that branch.

The branch libraries are operated in buildings that are either owned by the County Library, or by the city in which the branch is located. For example, the City owns the building in which the Sebastopol Library is located. When the breach building is owned by a city, the County Library leases the building from the City. The Library JPA provides that the County Library and members shall “work together to plan for the provision and payment of capital improvements and capital repairs to facilities operated by the Library, including but not limited to major repair and replacement of building structures, HVAC systems, plumbing, roofing, ADA improvements,

⁴ Library JPA § I.C

⁵ Library JPA § VIII.A

⁶ Library JPA § V.

⁷ Library JPA § V.B.

⁸ Library JPA § X.B. This requirement does not apply when distribution of a resources is restricted, such as when a gift is made to a specific library branch.



and other structural elements or external features such as parking lots.”⁹ Member cities are required to obtain approval from the Library Commission prior to expanding or remodeling a library branch building owned by the city.

Individual cities may withdraw from the Library JPA at the end of a fiscal year, with at least one year’s prior written notice.¹⁰ However, the withdrawing city is not entitled to receive a distribution of any of the County Library’s property or funds, including property located within a branch building owned by the withdrawing city. Additionally, the withdrawing city is responsible for satisfying its share of all outstanding debt and obligations for system-wide costs, as well as all costs related to the regional branch located in the withdrawing city, that exist at the time of withdraw.

⁹ Library JPA § X.C.2

¹⁰ Library JPA § XI



SEBASTOPOL REGIONAL LIBRARY FAQs (As of December 19, 2024)

A. THE SEBASTOPOL REGIONAL LIBRARY

What is the Sebastopol Regional Library? It is one of the many libraries managed by the Sonoma County Library. Sonoma County Library is a system of free libraries, a local public agency, and a special district as those terms are defined in California law. The Library is controlled by a Joint Powers Agreement created and updated by the Sonoma County cities with libraries.

What is the Sebastopol Library? The Sebastopol Regional Library (“Sebastopol Library”) is the public library serving residents of the City of Sebastopol (“City”) and surrounding areas. It is a branch of the Sonoma County Library (“County Library”).

If it is a county system, why is it the Sebastopol Library? The Sebastopol library has roots in the first parcel map of Sebastopol drafted in 1871. In Sebastopol there were numerous early social groups and at least one literary club by 1884, but no library or reading room.

A grant of \$7,500 from Carnegie was obtained in 1911, but the town had hoped to receive \$10,000. This was the period of more stringent Carnegie funding and with closer attention to simplicity of architectural style. The matter lapsed until 1914. In 1915, a proposed bond issue to finance a more impressive building received a negative response. In 1916 there was controversy about whether to remove a historic oak tree or Lincoln Hall, an early school and then a community center, to make room for the library; the tree was felled. Brainerd Jones scaled down his library plans to fit the \$7,500 budget. The very simple Classical Revival structure was dedicated January 4, 1917, and served until 1976.

The building which presently houses the Sebastopol Regional library was constructed in 1975, shortly after the establishment of the Sonoma County Library JPA.

In 1974 the *Joint Powers Agreement for Consolidation of Public Library Facilities Among Cities in the County of Sonoma and the County-Wide Provision of Library Services By The Sonoma County Library* was made effective.

The City of Sebastopol joined the 1974 JPA on January 27, 1975.

The 1975 JPA served the library system until 2014, when the *First Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement for the County-Wide Provision of Library Services by the Sonoma County Library* became effective.

Who owns the Sebastopol Library Building? The branch libraries are operated in buildings that are either owned by the County Library, or by the city in which the branch is located. For example, the City of Sebastopol owns the building in which the Sebastopol Library is located.

When the branch building is owned by a city, the County Library leases the building from the City. The Library JPA provides that the County Library and members shall “work together to plan for the provision and payment of capital improvements and capital repairs to facilities operated by the Library, including but not limited to major repair and replacement of building structures, HVAC systems, plumbing, roofing, ADA improvements, and other structural elements or external features such as parking lots.” Member cities are required to obtain approval from the Library Commission prior to expanding or remodeling a library branch building owned by the city.

B. JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT

What is the Joint Powers Agreement for the County-Wide Provision of Library Services by the Sonoma County Library Provision (JPA) and what does it mean to us? In 2014, the City, Sonoma County, and all other cities within the County, executed the First Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement for the County-Wide Provision of Library Services (“Library JPA”). This updated Library JPA replaced a prior agreement between Sonoma County and many of the cities in the County related to library services.

Joint powers agreements are agreements between public agencies to jointly exercise common powers to provide identified services. The joint powers agreement created a new independent legal entity, the Sonoma County Library.

Is the Sonoma County Library a department of the County of Sonoma? No.

The County Library is an independent public entity, not a department of Sonoma County, and is not governed by the Board of Supervisors. Rather, the County Library is governed by the Library Commission, which is established by the Library JPA. The governing body of each JPA Member, including the Sebastopol City Council, is entitled to appoint one commissioner. The JPA Members control the JPA agreement and can update it periodically to have the County Library reflect the wishes of the county library patrons.

Is the City of Sebastopol a JPA Member? Yes

What are the eligibility requirements for a JPA Member? To become a JPA member, the governing body of a city must (1) formally request membership in writing; (2) sign the JPA; and (3) present such documents to the Library Commission.

What are the City's responsibilities as a JPA Member? JPA Members, such as the City of Sebastopol, have agreed to collaborate and work cooperatively with one another and the Library in good faith to ensure the provision of library services to Sonoma County citizens across the regional county-wide library system.

Agencies that belong to the JPA ("Parties-Members") have a responsibility to monitor the terms of its agreement, enforce the agreement, and if needed update the JPA agreement to clarify the intent.

C. LIBRARY GOVERNANCE

What is the Library Commission? The Library Commission ("Commission") is the governing and administrative body of the Sonoma County Library. Generally, it is responsible for exercising the powers established by the JPA and applicable law to accomplish the purposes of the Library.

The County Library is responsible for “operating, managing, and administering the integrated free public library system in the County of Sonoma”.

The Library Commission is the governing board of the County Library and authorized to exercise all of the powers held by County Library. One of these powers is the authority to appoint the Library Director, who is responsible for the day-to-day operation, administration, and management of the County Library.

One of the Commissions specific responsibilities is to provide structure and direction for the operational, administrative, and fiscal oversight of the Library.

The Library Commission’s role and authority over the County Library are equivalent to the City Council’s role and authority over the City. The Library Director is equivalent to the City Manager.

Does the Library commission report to the board of supervisors? If not, who does the commission report to or how is it monitored? No. Under the terms of the JPA Agreement the Library Commission is charged with the duty to provide structure and direction "for operational, administrative and fiscal oversight of the Library.”

The agencies that belong to the JPA ("Parties-Members") have a responsibility to monitor the terms of its agreement. No state-level agency or local agency directly monitors or specifically oversees the JPA

A local LAFCO (Sonoma County Local Agency Formation Commission) has no direct control or oversight of the JPA, though under limited circumstances, it can conduct municipal service reviews.

The county civil grand jury is authorized to provide oversight of the JPA. “County civil grand juries function as civil watchdogs and may examine the records of JPAs operating in the county, while county auditors keep tabs on the financial reports of JPAs.”

California Government Code, Section 6505 requires accountability from JPAs, including audits. A JPA has options for who performs the audit. It can designate an outside CPA, an officer, or employee of one of the constituent members, who must post a bond. It can also designate the county auditor for this service (*California Government Code, Sections 6505. 5 and . 6*).

What is the role of council's appointed library commissioner? The appointed library commissioner sits on the Commission as a full-voting member.

Is there a Library Director? Yes. The Commission appoints a Library Director. The Library Director reports to the Commission and serves at its pleasure.

What are the Library Director’s responsibilities? In general, the Library Director is responsible for the day-to-day operation, administration, and management of the Library and performs duties as assigned by the Commission.

Decision of the Library Director regarding policies, facilities, and materials may be appealed to the Commission.

What is the role of our Library Advisory Board? In addition to the Library Commission, the County Library has a Library Advisory Board (“LAB”) for each regional branch.

Each LAB is comprised of residents from the service area of the regional branch. The purpose of each LAB is “to provide information and make recommendations to the Commission and the Library Director on matters affecting library service based on input from their respective service areas.”

Each LAB may also appoint one of its members to act as a liaison to the Library Commission. However, the LABs have no decision-making authority and serve a purely advisory role. The Sebastopol Regional Library Advisory Board serves as the LAB for the Sebastopol Library.

What is the role of Friends of the Sebastopol Library? Ten Friends of the Library groups support Sonoma County Library branches and patrons through advocacy, volunteerism, contributions, and book sales.

The Friends of the Sebastopol Library is a volunteer nonprofit organization that provides support to the Sebastopol Regional Library. While the Sebastopol Regional Library is a part of the Sonoma County Library system and is tax-supported, there are many items for which there are not enough tax dollars.

The Friends sponsor programs such as Summer Reading, music performances, and holiday events. Funds from the Friends’ book sales, membership dues, and donations enable the Friends to purchase books, equipment, and furnishings for the library.

The Friends contributed approximately a quarter of a million dollars toward the renovation and retrofitting of the Sebastopol Regional Library in 2012.

D. FUNDING

Generally, how is the Library funded? The County Library is operated pursuant to an annual budget adopted by the Library Commission. The County Library is required to “distribute its personnel, financial and technological resources among the various regional library branches in an equitable fashion”. As part of this requirement, all branches of the County Library are required to be open for the same baseline number of hours, with the exception of the Central Branch. While branch libraries are allowed to accept gifts or donations to benefit that particular

branch, such gifts or donations cannot be used to expand the operating hours of that branch because all branches must have roughly the same hours.

What are the funding sources for Library services? Public libraries are run and funded primarily by local governments. In California, local public libraries can be operated by counties, cities, special districts, or joint power authorities

The Sonoma County Library, a JPA, is funded predominantly by a parcel tax levied on properties within its jurisdiction. In November 2016, Sonoma County voters passed a 1/8 cent sales tax dedicated to funding the Sonoma County Library. Over 71% of the electorate approved the measure (Measure Y), which required a two-thirds majority to pass. The measure will be in effect for ten years.

Funding for Sonoma County Library is largely split between property taxes (60%) and sales taxes (40%). Sales tax funding has been crucial to the library's growth and success, allowing it to expand programs and services to all areas of the county and adding more hours.

There has been mention of a new expanded Sebastopol library building. County taxes could pay for a new library, but my roads need to be fixed. Which comes first, road repairs or expanded library? Road repair is an ongoing expense, it never ends. A new Library building can take many years of sustained funding to create. While it might seem counterintuitive to fund a new library when roads need repairs, both are important to the community, and allocating funds to both is typically what happens.

Key points to consider:

Community priorities: Local government officials should consider the needs of the entire community when budgeting, not just the most pressing issue at the moment;

Long-term benefits of a library: Libraries offer access to information, educational programs, community events, and can be vital for personal development, especially for children and students;

Funding mechanisms: Often, different funding streams can be allocated for different projects, meaning that road repairs could be funded separately from library construction; and,

Advocacy and engagement: If you feel strongly about prioritizing road repairs, actively engage with your local government to voice your concerns and suggest alternative funding solutions.

When money comes from our taxes thru a specific measure that supports the county wide library system, can that money be shifted to other things? California has a number of restrictions on the use of special tax and bond revenue, including:

Voter approval: local taxes require voter approval, with general taxes requiring a majority vote and special taxes requiring a two-thirds vote;

Purpose: the proceeds from bonds payable from special taxes can only be used for purposes approved by voters;

Special assessments: must be proportional to the benefits they provide and must be justified by the existence of those benefits; Property tax increases property taxes can only be increased with a two-thirds vote to fund a general obligation bond; Local property tax allocation. The Legislature controls how local property tax is allocated among cities, counties, special districts, and school districts within each county;

Fees: for the use of local agency facilities and services cannot exceed the reasonable cost of providing those facilities and services.

The proceeds of bonds payable from special taxes may be expended only for the purposes approved by voters, so care must be taken in developing bond and tax measures.

If the library is a county system does the money have to be approved by the County Board of Supervisors? No

E. FUNDING LIBRARY BUILDINGS

Who pays for what? When the cities and county explored alternative models for a County-Wide Library System one factor, under consideration, was how to distribute the costs of library buildings "so that each is funded by those persons which it serves, regardless of political boundaries. "

The JPA Agreement requires the Sonoma County Library to enter into leases with each JPA members which owns or controls branch library facilities

JPA Members are required maintain and repair: (i) the building shell, including exterior walls, roofs, doors, and major structural members, (ii) windows, if damage originated outside, and (iii) sidewalks, parking lots, parking lot lights, and flagpoles. In addition, Members shall be responsible for replacing any major components of the HVAC equipment and electrical service panel.

The underlying goals of such leases are to require JPA Members to provide facilities which are both habitable and appropriate for use as public libraries at no cost to the Library; in return, the Library is required to provide general maintenance and certain repair services for facility upkeep.

The Sonoma County Library is obligated to: (i) maintain and service the HVAC system at least biannually; (ii) furnish all fixtures and carpets; (iii) repair damage to windows if it originated inside; and (iv) maintain landscaping, unless it is part of a larger facility to be maintained by the Member.

The Library Commission is responsible for the adoption of a facilities maintenance plan at least once every three years and revise it as necessary.

The Library Director shall be responsible for causing such a plan to be prepared and presented to the Commission for discussion and adoption.

The JPA Agreement requires the Commission and affected JPA Members to work together and provide for capital improvement and repairs to ensure that facilities are maintained and improved

How much does it take to maintain our building and who pays for it? When the cities and county explored alternative models for a County-Wide Library System, one factor under consideration was how to distribute the costs of library buildings "so that each is funded by those persons which it serves, regardless of political boundaries."

The cities and the county have traditionally provided the buildings that house libraries in each community, and the library provides comprehensive services and outreach.

The JPA Agreement requires the Sonoma County Library to enter into leases with each JPA members which owns or controls branch library facilities.

The underlying goals of such leases are to require JPA Members to provide facilities which are both habitable and appropriate for use as public libraries at no cost to the Library; in return, the Library is required to provide general maintenance and certain repair services for facility upkeep.

F. OVERSIGHT

Who provides oversight for the Sonoma County Library?

The agencies that belong to the JPA ("Parties-Members") have a responsibility to monitor the terms of its agreement and to adjust them as needed. No state-level agency or local agency directly monitors or specifically oversees the JPA.

Under the terms of the JPA Agreement the Library Commission is charged with the duty to provide structure and direction "for operational, administrative and fiscal oversight of the Library."

"County civil grand juries function as civil watchdogs and may examine the records of JPAs operating in the county, while county auditors keep tabs on the financial reports of JPAs."

California Government Code, Section 6505 requires accountability from JPAs, including audits. A JPA has options for who performs the audit. It can designate an outside CPA, an officer, or employee of one of the constituent members, who must post a bond. It can also designate the county auditor for this service (*California Government Code, Sections 6505. 5 and . 6*).

G. COMMUNITY SERVICES HUB

What would a Community Services Hub look like? The Sebastopol Library Branch serves a much greater role in the community than as just a repository of books. Groups meet at the library to assist others in a large variety of services: sewing, legal aid, filling out government forms, gaming, 3D printing, art display, public reading for children, tech help, etc. The Library provides information and a place for the community to help each other. A bigger building is needed for more books as well as for more community services.

Why was the Ad Hoc Library Committee created? Sonoma County Library Erika Thibault wrote the Sebastopol City Council in April of 2023, “As you are aware, library leaders have discussed the facility issue many times over the past few years with various Sebastopol Library Commissioners, City Councilmembers, and community members. I urge you to consider our shared responsibility as part of the JPA to provide comprehensive library services to the community with adequate branch facilities, and let’s produce a practical plan together which expands or replaces this well-loved, yet inadequate branch facility for all of our library lovers.”

The city council responded to this letter by creating the Ad Hoc Library Committee and appointing Vice Mayor Stephen Zollman to the committee. That committee has spent the last year studying the library issue and plans to present their report to the city council at the May 21, 2024, city council meeting.

The 28-page report has four sections: an argument for the importance of the library, a brief history of the library, a visioning section on what kind of services the new library could offer, and a section on possible funding mechanisms. See the complete report at <https://www.cityofsebastopol.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Agenda-Item-Number-12-Library-Ad-Hoc-Committee-Report.pdf>

What is a Community Hub? The City's Ad Hoc Library Committee has proposed the building of a community hub with the library as the "anchor" tenant.

A community hub is a public space where community members can access services, resources, and each other. Hubs can be physical locations or online spaces, and they can range in size from small to large.

Community hubs can:

Provide services: Offer a variety of services, such as health services, education, employment services, childcare, social services, and cultural and recreational activities;

Improve community access: Increase access to government and non-government services and support;

Build social cohesion: Encourage social gatherings and interaction among community members;

Develop local projects: Act as a catalyst for local projects, activities, and businesses;

Create local jobs: Provide a base for local jobs and services

Community hubs can be designed to meet the unique needs of their communities.

A Community Hub is a public space that brings several community agencies and neighborhood groups together to offer a range of activities, programs and services. They are created to make better use of public spaces by offering multiple services under one roof that meet the needs of a specific community or neighborhood. Community hubs also encourage social gatherings.

There are different services offered at each location like: Health services; Education; Employment services; Childcare services; Social services; and, Cultural.

Many community hubs can help new arrivals for whom English is a second language to integrate into their new life by taking ESL classes, and to get health and job-seeking services all in the same place. It is also a good way for people of similar cultural backgrounds that speak the same language, to meet.

Why does Sebastopol need to relocate its Library? The current single story library building cannot be expanded, there is no room. The current library building cannot have a second or third story added to it, need a new foundation, thus it would have to be demolished, and a new building built in its place. The existing building is structurally fine, and the City administrative staff next door needs more square footage. An expanded library would have to be located somewhere else, preferably close services downtown.

However, it is time. Our community needs a new building to meet the evolving needs of Sebastopol and the West County, adapt to new technologies, and provide more space for materials and patrons:

Community building: The building which houses our library can be a hub for connecting people and facilitating community gathering. A new building, with the Library as the master tenant, can be designed to be flexible and adaptable, with a variety of seating and spatial configurations; New technologies: Libraries need to be able to accommodate new technologies and the increased demand for library services;

Space: This building does not have enough space for materials, new technology, or patrons;

Infrastructure: Our 1970s library building doesn't have the same infrastructure that a new building would have;

Efficiency: Our library building is not up to modern standards of efficiency.

How will the square footage of our branch expand? The proposed Community Hub / Library would range from 20,000-30,000 sq. ft. Existing building is 10,000 sq. ft.

H. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How can community members contribute towards the expansion of our branch building and the services that of branch offers? It's critically important for individuals who receive services from the Sonoma County Library, as well as the City of Sebastopol, to have a voice in informing the policies and practices that govern the services they receive. This ensures policies, practices, services, supports, activities, research agendas and protocols, and other systems-level initiatives are community centered and equitable.

Though these factors may seem out of your control, the voice of the people has a surprising amount of sway over the actions of local public agencies.

If you want to support your local library, try one of these three approaches and see what happens.

Attend Meetings of the Library Commission, City Council, and Sebastopol LAB meetings. The majority of important library decisions are made at library commission and city council meetings. Naturally, [getting involved](#) in these meetings is the most direct

way to help. Attend regularly, make your voice heard, and encourage others to do the same.

Run for the office yourself While this is more of a commitment, it allows you to take a very hands-on role in protecting your local library. If you run and get elected, you'll have a bit more influence with the city council and can use that influence to fight against book bans, budget cuts, and more.

Raise awareness. Even if you aren't in a position to involve yourself with the board, you can still help just by raising awareness. Post about it on social media; direct fellow citizens to information, resources, and ways to help; and work to keep the library in the public discourse. This keeps issues threatening the library from growing without the public's knowledge and encourages the community to take a more active role in protecting the library.

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT
TO SERVE ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
MARIN/SONOMA MOSQUITO & VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

City Boards, Commissions, and Committees

The City Council appoints members to various boards, committees, and commissions as listed below:

- Planning Commission
- Design Review Board
- Public Arts Committee
- Other Miscellaneous Boards/Committees/Commission as Approved by the City Council

The bodies are comprised of community members who volunteer for service and are appointed by the City Council. All committee members serve at the pleasure of the City Council. The primary responsibility of the committees is to implement adopted City policy and advise and make recommendations to the City Council. The adoption of policies, the issuance of proclamations, and the approval of agreements and other official acts of the City are the responsibility of the City Council. The City Manager designates as official staff liaison to each committee.

Application Process

When a vacancy on a board, committee or commission occurs, the City Clerk prepares a press release that is distributed to local media, including the Sonoma West County Times and News. The vacancy is also announced at City Hall and on the City of Sebastopol's web site <http://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/>

Applications for vacancies are obtained from the City Clerk's office and completed applications are submitted to the City Clerk's office. Three to four weeks after the vacancy announcement, the completed applications are forwarded to the City Council in a regular agenda packet for public review. The City Council interviews all applicants at a meeting open to the public. The official appointment of Commission, Board or Committee members is made at a City Council meeting.

Description

The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the District, with 24 seats available, although it is rare for all the seats to be filled at any given time. The Board sets policy and retains a Manager who oversees the District's operations. Additionally, the Board retains a General Counsel, who works on a contract basis.

The CA Health and Safety Code is the District's main governing law and it specifies that each member of the Board appointed by the governing body of a City or Town shall be an elector of the City or Town from which he/she is appointed, and a resident of that portion of the city/town which is in the District. Each member appointed from a County or portion of a County must be an elector of the county and a resident of that portion of the county which is in the District. Trustees are required to file a Statement of Economic Interest with the State of California, Fair Political Practices Commission, within (30) thirty days after assuming office (and each subsequent year). The District assists trustees by providing the necessary paperwork. Expert assistance in completing the form is also available from the Fair Political Practices Commission staff.

Each Trustee is sworn in, and he or she signs a Loyalty Oath.

Board Meetings

Regular meetings of the Board are held on the second Wednesday of the month, generally at 6:00 p.m., (Minutes 10/9/24) at the District Headquarters 595 Helman Lane Cotati. A light supper and beverages are usually provided just prior to the meeting to assist Trustees who must travel to the meeting during mealtime. On average, Board meetings occur about 8 to 9 times each year. During years when a lot of business has to be addressed, such as the MOU negotiations process, more meetings may be held. Occasionally, when needs dictate, the Board may hold a Special Meeting.

Expenses

In lieu of itemized travel or other expenses, an allowance of \$100 (one hundred) per month per member will be paid for expenses incurred in attending regular meetings. Payment of \$25 per meeting is made to Trustees serving on a Board committee, provided that the \$100 maximum is not exceeded in any month. (Minutes 3/09/05)

As a California Special District, the agency strives to serve as one of the best and most responsive forms of local government and operates in the interest of the District residents and visitors. Operating under a cooperative agreement with the CA Dept. of Public Health, the District directly serves the entire population of Marin and Sonoma counties, and maintains close working relationships with other state, federal and local agencies. Much more information about the District can be found on its web site at www.msamosquito.org

Mission Statement:

During 2016, the Board held a public workshop, at which it adopted the following mission statement:

“The Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District, founded in 1915, protects the health and welfare of the communities it serves from mosquitoes and vector-borne diseases by utilizing cost-effective, environmentally responsible, integrated vector management practices.

Board Policy

In 2016, the Board approved a new Board Policy Manual.

Board Committees

Early each year the Board considers and approves a list of committee assignments and charges. Standing Committees include Executive, Finance & Policy. Meetings of these committees are agendaized and noticed in accordance with Brown Act (Open Meeting law) requirements. Ad hoc committees may be appointed to deal with specific subject matter for a limited term. The President may appoint members to committees.

Terms of Office

Board, commission, and committee members generally serve two, three, or four-year overlapping terms. There is no monetary compensation or benefits for board, commission, or committee members.

The City Council may reappoint incumbent members or fill vacancies with new appointees. Some bodies limit the number of consecutive terms an individual may serve.

Members are expected to serve their full terms of office; however, when a member must resign, due to personal or professional circumstances, he/she should send a letter to the City Council stating the effective date of the resignation. A member may be removed from office:

- At the pleasure of the City Council, without cause, by a majority of the City Council; or
- Automatically, if he/she fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Commission, in which case a vacancy shall be deemed to have occurred unless a showing of good cause is presented to the City Council. The City Council shall be the sole judge as to whether good cause is shown.

General Responsibilities of Boards, Commissions, and Committees

City boards, commissions, and committees shall have the following general powers, duties and responsibilities in addition to those set forth in the Sebastopol Municipal Code and various Resolutions:

- To establish rules and regulations governing the election of their officers, the holding of meetings and the conduct of business for these meetings.
- To use all appropriate techniques in crystallizing and testing public sentiment on major public issues in their respective fields.
- To hold official hearings as required by law or requested by the City Council.

- To advise and recommend on City policies and procedures pertinent to their respective activities and functions.
- To support and adhere to all City policies promulgated by the City Council and to establish needed interim policies in the absence of the same.
- To provide information and promote good public relations between the City and the general public.
- To perform such other related functions as may be assigned to them by the City Council.

Desirable Characteristics in Applicants for Boards, Commissions, and Committees

While membership on City boards, committees and commissions requires no specific qualifications, with the exception of some seats on the Design Review Board and the Public Arts Committee, there are desirable characteristics for which the Council will be looking as they review applications:

- Familiarity with Community
The Council would require appointees to be familiar with the physical, social, and economic make-up of the City. Applicants should have demonstrated an active interest and involvement in the community.

Familiarity with Major Issues

While it will be assumed that applicants are familiar with the specific issues that are being addressed by the board, committee or commission for which they are applying, it is also expected that applicants be aware of issues which will impact all sectors of City programs and services.

Knowledge of the Board, Commission or Committee

During the application process, applicants should become familiar with the responsibilities and role in the City's policy-making structure of the board, committee or commission for which they are applying.

Commitment to Serve

When appointed, members are expected to serve their term of office. While personal or professional circumstances might prompt an unexpected resignation, applicants who are aware of any reasons why they may not be able to complete a full term or attend regularly scheduled meetings, should indicate this on the application. While time commitments will vary depending upon schedules and workload, members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings. In addition to attending scheduled meetings, members may be expected to participate in study sessions or serve on subcommittees.

Relationship with the Community

As a member of a City board, committee or commission, your actions will reflect on the City of Sebastopol and you are required to relate to the community with impartiality and courtesy.

Commitment to City Policy:

The City Council has adopted ordinances and policies following an appropriate public process. As an appointed board, committee or commission member, your duty is to abide by such policies rather than implement personal preferences.

Tips for Applying for a City Board, Commission, or Committee

Type or neatly print your application. Due to the quantity of applications the Council must review, a neat application is appreciated.

Answer all questions on the application. Council reviews your application to gain an understanding of your background and experience, and what skills and talents you believe you could bring to a particular board, committee or commission. Don't forget to sign and date your application.

Attend one or two meetings of the board, committee or commission for which you are applying. Find out what the current issues are, and what issues may be coming in the future. Review the minutes of past meetings, available on the City web site or at City Hall depending on the appointment being applied for.

Talk to a current member. Current members can share with you their experience, they can give you an estimate of the time commitment involved, and they can discuss with you what they see as current and future issues for the City.

If you have questions about the function and role of members, talk with the City staff liaison to the board, committee

or commission you are applying for. The City Clerk can provide contact information for City staff members who are assigned to work with the boards, committees and commissions. It is important to note that City staff members cannot and do not recommend or lobby for any applicant.

Find out City Council's priorities and interests. Attend City Council meetings and review meeting minutes. Council meeting videos are archived on the City's website <http://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/> and are available for purchase on DVD from the City Clerk's Office.

Review the Code of Ethics for Appointed and Elected Officials (the Brown Act), available by request from the City Clerk's Office and understand that if you are appointed to a board, committee or commission, you will be required to abide by it.

Prepare for the interview. Although we do not know what specific questions Council will ask, we suggest that you clarify for yourself why you are applying for a specific board, committee or commission, understand its role and function, and be familiar with the current issues it is examining.

Treat the interview with City Council as a business or job interview. Understand that the City Council is not only considering what experience, skills and talents you bring, they are interested in how you will represent the City.

APPLICATION FOR CITY OF SEBASTOPOL BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Contact Information

Administrative Technician
7120 Bodega Avenue
Sebastopol, CA 95473
zhiggins@cityofsebastopol.gov

phone: 707-823-1153

fax: 707-823-1135

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday - 7:00 am - 5:30 pm (closed 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm for lunch) Closed every Friday

Instructions:

Use this form to apply to serve on any of the City of Sebastopol's Boards, Committees or Commissions. Please complete the entire form and either print and mail it to the address above, or email your completed application to zhiggins@cityofsebastopol.gov. If a question does not apply, please note as not applicable. Please deliver completed form, by the date and time due, to the City Clerk. All applications will be reviewed by the City Council. If appointed, you have a choice whether you wish to have your contact information visible to the public; however, your information may be made public upon request by (a) member(s) of the public.

Name: _____

Home Address, City, State and Zip Code:

Phone Number: _____

If appointed, do you want this number to be visible to the public?

Yes No

Work Phone Number: _____

If appointed, do you want this number to be visible to the public?

Yes No

E-Mail Address: _____

If appointed, do you want this address to be visible to the public?

Yes No

Are you a registered voter in Sebastopol?

Yes No

If so, for how long? _____

Do you hold a current business license from the City of Sebastopol?

Yes No

If so, for how long? _____

Have you attended a meeting of this body? When?

Have you served on, interviewed for, or applied for this body previously?

Yes No

If so, when? _____

Present Employer: _____

Job Title: _____

Have you previously served on any governmental bodies or held elected office? If so please list position held and dates:

Please list civic or charitable organization to which you belong or have belonged:

Have you been an officer in any of these organizations? If so, please list position held and dates:

What special interests, skills and talents would you bring to this board, commission, or committee?

Please list any college, professional or vocational schools you have attended with major subject studied, dates and any earned degrees:

Please list any special awards or recognition you have received:

Please state why you would like to become a member of this board, commission or Committee, including what specific objectives you would be working toward as a member of this body:

Are you associated with any organization/employment that might be deemed a conflict of interest in performing your duties if appointed to this position?

Yes No

If yes, please state name of organization/employment: _____

City policy directs all appointed, advisory body members not to vote on matters where there exists a potential conflict of interest such as property ownership near a project, or a financial relationship with the applicant. Would you be willing to abstain from voting if such a conflict arises?

Yes No

How did you hear about this opening?

Is there any other information that you feel would be useful to the City Council in reviewing your application and materials provided with the application?

What do you think qualifies you to be appointed to this board/committee/commission?

Are there particular issues you think the board/committee/commission should concentrate on?

How should community comments be integrated into the board/committee/commission decision-making process?

If appointed, how would you handle it if another board/committee/commission member vehemently disagrees with your comments on a regular basis?

How would you handle a situation where a proposal comes before your board/committee/commission that the City staff finds consistent with City policies and standards, but that you personally do not support?

I certify that I have thoroughly read and understand all material in this application.

Applicant's Signature : _____

Applicant's Name (PLEASE PRINT): _____

Date: _____

03-31-2026

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TO: THE SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL
 RE: APRIL 7, 2026, MEETING:PUBLIC COMMENTS
 PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS CITY'S REPRESENTATIVE TO
 THE SONOMA COUNTY LIBRARY
 COMMISSION
 FROM: FRED ENGBARTH

Based upon my experience with the Sonoma County Library (JPA), I feel that the following points merit attention in the preparation of the position description and recruitment of the City of Sebastopol's representative to the Sonoma County Library Commission to the Sonoma County Library Commission:

A. BRIEF HISTORY

In Sebastopol there were numerous early social groups and at least one literary club **by 1884**, but no library or reading room. A grant of \$7,500 from Carnegie was obtained in 1911, but the town had hoped to receive \$10,000. This was the period of more stringent Carnegie funding and closer attention to simplicity of architectural style. The matter lapsed until 1914. In 1915, a proposed bond issue to finance a more impressive building received a negative response. In 1916 there was controversy about whether to remove an historic oak tree or Lincoln Hall, an early school and then a community center, to make room for the library: the tree was felled. Brainerd Jones scaled down his library plans to fit the \$7,500 budget. The very simple Classical Revival structure was dedicated January 4, 1917, and served until 1976.

A county library system had been established in Sonoma County and a new regional library was planned. The Carnegie building was demolished and the new library built on the same site.

The Sonoma County Library is a countywide system, encompassing all nine cities and the unincorporated areas. A Joint Powers Agreement created in 1975, and revised in 2014, established the library as a separate public agency. Today, the library serves half a million county residents, at 12 regional libraries, two rural stations, three special collections, and a wide variety of digital resources. A countywide library system is a good investment for the people of Sonoma County – it provides the community access to the rich resources of every library in the county, and beyond through inter-library lending programs. The cities and the county provide the buildings that house libraries in each community, and the library provides comprehensive services and outreach.

B. PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

REPRESENTING THE PUBLIC GOOD: In California, the higher duty for a public agency—including its governing board and administration—is the *public good (the public interest)*.

All public servants, whether elected (governing board), appointed, or hired (administration), are considered fiduciaries who owe their primary loyalty to the citizens and the public interest, not to personal interests or the perpetuation of the agency itself : (A) *The Public Good/Interest*: As stated in the Brown Act (Gov. Code §54950), public agencies exist to aid in the conduct of the "people's business". Public officials are tasked to put the public's interest first, which is the core of public service ethics; (B) *Governing Board*: The board has the ultimate responsibility for setting policy and directing the agency to serve the public good, but its authority is derived from and subordinate to that public purpose; and, (C) *Agency Administration (Staff)*: The administration has the duty to carry out the directives of the board (within the bounds of the law) and act as stewards of public resources to serve the public good.

WHAT IS THE SONOMA COUNTY LIBRARY? The Sonoma County Library is the creation of the formal written Joint Powers Agreement by the Joint Powers Agreement. The specific powers are defined and authorized by the terms of the agreement itself.

JOINT POWERS: A term used to describe government agencies that have *voluntarily agreed* to combine the powers and resources to work on their *common problems*. Joint powers agreements (JPAs) offer another way for governments to deliver services, but sometimes the public does not understand JPAs.

WHY A JPA? Agencies create JPAs to deliver more cost-effective services, eliminate duplicative efforts and consolidate services into a single agency. Here the counties, of Sonoma along with its cities and unincorporated parts of the county cities a formed a JPA to provide a county-wide library system.

FORMATION: The formation of a JPA begins when public officials negotiate a

formal agreement that spells out *the member agencies' intentions, the powers that they will share*, and other mutually acceptable conditions that define the intergovernmental arrangement. Each member agency's governing body then approves the joint powers agreement

JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT (JPA): A formal, legal agreement between two or more *public agencies* that share a common power and want to jointly implement programs, build facilities, or deliver services. Officials from those public agencies formally approve a *cooperative governing arrangement*.

WHAT IS A MEMBER AGENCY? A member agency in a California Joint Powers Authority (JPA) is a public entity-such as the City of Sebastopol-that signs the formal agreement to *jointly exercise common powers with other public agencies*. They are the participants that pool resources, risks, or authority to operate more efficiently, such as a county-wide library system.

The Member Agencies, through the Joint Powers Agreement, *created and provide oversee* the Sonoma County Library as a JPA.

WHO OVERSEES THE JPA? *The public agencies that set up JPA have a continuing responsibility to monitor their creations.*

AUTHORITY WITHIN THE JPA: Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) holds higher legal authority than an agency's by-laws. The JPA is *the binding contract* that creates the legal entity under state law, whereas by-laws are internal operating rules, meaning by-laws cannot contradict or override the foundational authority defined in the agreement.

- **JPA Superiority:** The Joint Powers Agreement acts as the constitution ("governing document") of the new entity, Sonoma County Library, defining its legal powers, purpose, and governance structure.
- **By-Laws Function:** By-laws are adopted by the JPA board to guide its internal procedures (e.g., meeting times, officer duties) but are subordinate to the JPA.
- **Authority Source:** The JPA is created by state legislation (e.g., California Government Code §6500), *giving it superior authority to the internal policies or by-laws adopted later by the governing board,*

CASTING VOTES: A representative to the Sonoma County Library Commission representatives **may** cast votes which are inconsistent with positions taken by the agencies they represent. A Member's representative to the Sonoma County Library Commission will usually vote in accordance with the position taken by his or her appointing agency, but in the instance where a representative fails to do so; *it is left up to the appointing power to "ensure compliance with its wishes."* While a contrary vote may result in removal of the joint powers authority representative by the appointing authority, it will not affect the validity of the vote itself.

WHAT IS AN APPOINTING AUTHORITY? Here the appointing authority or appointing power is the City of Sebastopol's City which has the power to make personnel decisions, such as hiring, firing, or promoting appointees within a government or

organizational structure.

WHAT IS A GOVERNING BOARD? The Sonoma County Library Commission, A governing board is the *highest* decision-making authority within an organization, such as the Sonoma County Library (JPA), , comprising a small group of directors who establish policies and provide strategic guidance to steer the organization's operations.

The Joint Powers Agreement ensures the wise and prudent delivery of education, a critical local and state resource, on behalf of the people in their communities. They are guardians of and stewards for the public's interests. The Library Commission as a governing board, ensure that the Sonoma County Library fulfills its responsibility to lead and serve its ever-changing communities.

JPA's ARE HARD TO UNDERSTAND: JPAs can be hard to understand. Some people see JPAs as an additional and unnecessary layer of government, even when that may not be the case. Local residents may ask why they must call the JPA instead of a local office for answers to them questions. When agencies combine forces or create a separate agency to provide a service, the visibility and accountability of the JPA may not be readily apparent.

In my personal opinion, a no other, I feel most of the points reviewed above have, over the years, been minimized to the detriment of the public good and the community's interest in a county- wide library system as expressed in the current Joint Powers Agreement.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours respectfully,

Fred Engbarth

ATTACHMENT 1:

**DISCUSSION DRAFT: CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SONOMA COUNTY
LIBRARY (JPA) COMMISSION ("Library
Commissioner")**

***Please Note:** An Ad Hoc a Sub-Committee of the Sonoma County Library Commission is in the process of conducting a review of the duties and responsibilities of a member of the Commission.*

DISCUSSION DRAFT
**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SONOMA COUNTY
LIBRARY(JPA) COMMISSION
("Library Commissioner")**

Position Title: City of Sebastopol's Representative to the Sonoma County Library Commission (Library Commissioner)

Appointing Agency: City of Sebastopol-City Council

Reports To: Sebastopol's City Council through the City Manager

JPA Entity: Sonoma County Library, a California Joint Powers Authority

POSITION SUMMARY

The Sonoma County Library is a California Joint Powers Authority (JPA). Its governing document is *The First Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement for the County-Wide Provision of Library Services by the Sonoma County Library*.¹

JPA Part VI, Governance, Section A of the Agreement provides that the Commission is the governing and administrative body of the Sonoma County Library and outlines its responsibilities. The member agencies agreed to protect their respective interests in the JPA through the direct appointment of library commissioners. (See *JPA Agreement, VI, Section B*)

The Library Commission By-Laws provides internal norms for the efficient operation of the Commission.²

The City's representative to the Library Commission is an important volunteer position of public trust which represents the interests of the City of Sebastopol and the community to ensure that the county-wide library system complies with the JPA Agreement and community needs while maintaining legal, ethical, and fiscal accountability.

In general, the duties of the Library Commissioner include providing accountability, governance, and oversight in the implementation of the JPA. This includes monitoring the performance of the Library's Director; library operations; financial management;

¹ <https://sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/about/JPA2014.pdf>

² https://new.sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/commission/Bylaws7_6_22.pdf

and compliance with laws and regulations including, but not limited to, California's JPA laws in *Government Code §6500 et seq.*, and related laws regarding open meetings and transparency; access to public records laws and financial audits.

This position requires balancing the regional goals of the Sonoma County Library (JPA) as set forth in the JPA Agreement, with the specific needs and policies of the City of Sebastopol and the interests the public.

The Library Commissioner's term of office appointment is four years serving at the will of the Sebastopol City Council, its appointing power.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Policy Development:** Creating and updating policies to govern library operations, ensuring compliance with state and local laws (e.g., open meeting laws).
- **Fiduciary Duty:** Approving and monitoring the annual budget, overseeing tax levies, and ensuring the library has adequate funding.
- **Strategic Planning:** Setting long-term goals and planning for the future of the library.
- **Hiring/Evaluating the Director:** Selecting, hiring, and annually evaluating the Executive Director, who manages daily operations.
- **Advocacy:** Acting as a liaison between the library and the public, promoting library services to government officials and taxpayers.
- **Reporting:** Provide regular updates to the City Council. And, along with the City Council's liaison, an annual report regarding the Sonoma County Library's (JPA) financial condition, operational achievements, strategic goals and community impact.
- **Intellectual Freedom:** Protecting the freedom of expression and the right to information, including supporting the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights.

CORE COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS

- **Commitment:** Dedication to serving the community and high-quality library services. Strong commitment to fiduciary duty and public service.
- **Intellectual curiosity:** A deep, persistent desire to learn, understand, and explore new ideas
- **Legal Knowledge:** A basic familiarity with library laws, policies, and regulations.
- **Communication:** Ability to work cooperatively, listen to community concerns, and advocate for the library.
- **Critical Thinking:** The process of actively analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information to form objective, well-reasoned judgments.
- **Financial Literacy:** A general understanding of budgeting and fiscal management.

TIME COMMITMENT AND TERM

- **Term:** Usually a 4-year term serving at the will of the appointing power

- **Meetings:** Attendance at monthly commission board meetings, committee meetings, and special events is required. Attendance at Library Advisory Board meetings.
- **Expectation:** Typically, 10 -15 hours per month.

ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS

The Library Commissioner holds a fiduciary duty to act in the best interests of the Joint Powers Agreement while ensuring compliance with the JPA and with the specific needs and policies of the City of Sebastopol and the interests of the public good with the following duties:

- **Duty of Care:** Acting with the same care a prudent person would in similar circumstances.
- **Duty of Loyalty:** Putting the library’s interests above personal or professional interests.
- **Duty of Obedience:** Ensuring the library complies with all applicable laws and its own mission.
- **Conflicts of Interest:** Avoiding any personal, tangible, or intangible gain from dealings with the library.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE APPLICANT:

- **Legal Standing:** A California Joint Powers Authority (JPA) agency representative acts on behalf of their constituent member agency but possesses no individual legal authority outside of that specifically delegated by the JPA governing board. They hold authority to govern through a board, established by California Government Code §6500 et seq., to jointly exercise common powers, such as contracting, issuing bonds, or providing services.
- **Dual Loyalty:** On occasion, appointee may face a conflict if the JPA's interests diverge from the city's interests. The legal duty is to the public trust and the JPA entity itself.

For more information, *Sonoma County Library* at <https://sonomalibrary.org>; and, *California Public Library Trustees Toolkit* at <https://www.library.ca.gov/services/to-libraries/trustees/>; and, *California Library Laws 2026* at <https://www.library.ca.gov/services/to-libraries/library-laws/>