



Date: February 9, 2016
To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.M.W.*
From: Glenda Williams, Director of Library Services *G.Will*
For: Mayor and Members of the City Council
Subject: **Proposal to Rename North Branch Library**

On January 19, 2016, the City Council referred to the Housing and Neighborhoods Committee a proposal by Councilman Rex Richardson to consider naming the new North Branch Library the "Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library" in honor of her contributions to youth, education, literacy and the United States. Additionally, the City Council requested the Department of Library Services and the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine to conduct further outreach to engage youth and library patrons regarding the naming of the library. Four community outreach meetings were conducted to receive input from residents. The following is a summary and the recommendations resulting from these meetings:

- **Ninth District Community Meeting**

Councilmember Richardson, Library Services, and Parks, Recreation and Marine hosted a community meeting on Thursday, January 21 at Houghton Park. Approximately 150 residents attended. Attendees were asked if they agreed that the name of the new North Branch Library should inspire youth and the next generation, and if the First Lady's core initiatives align with the interests of the North Long Beach community. Attendees were also asked for alternative recommendations. A vote on proposed names was conducted and discussed, with the "Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library" garnering the most support with 72 percent of the votes.

- **Department of Library Services Community Meeting**

Library Services conducted a focus group meeting on Saturday, January 23 at the North Branch Library. Eleven (11) library patrons participated and were asked the same questions as above. A vote on proposed names was conducted with 6 of the 11 patrons voting to keep the name "North Branch Library." Two patrons voted for "Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library," and the remaining patrons each voted for other names, including "Historic North Branch Library," "Indira Hale Tucker Branch Library," "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch Library," and "Coretta Scott King Branch Library."

- **Housing and Neighborhood Committee Meeting**

On Tuesday, January 26, the City Council's Housing and Neighborhoods Committee met to discuss the City Council's referral. Seven (7) members of the public spoke on the subject, including representatives from the Long Beach Public Library Foundation. Six (6) speakers expressed support for the renaming. The Committee voted unanimously to support renaming the new North Branch Library the "Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library."

- **Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine Meeting**

On Wednesday, January 27, Parks, Recreation and Marine held a teen focus group at Houghton Park. Twenty (20) teens participated and were asked the same questions as the other groups. Fifteen (15) of the teens voted to rename the library the "Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library." Two teens voted to rename the library after Doris Topsy-Elvord, and one voted to rename the library "Brighter Futures."

If you have additional questions or comments, please contact Glenda Williams at 8-6016.

GW:SJ:ml

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