

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### *El Dorado County Library, South Lake Tahoe Branch Library*

Citizen Complaint #C43-02/03

#### **Reason for the Report**

A citizen's complaint was received alleging that the South Lake Tahoe Branch Library is not providing receipts for payments of fines and miscellaneous fees.

#### **Scope of the Investigation**

The members of the Grand Jury

- Made an unannounced visit to the South Lake Tahoe Branch library;
- Interviewed the Branch Supervisor;
- Toured the Library;
- Reviewed the accounting and computer system at the Library.

#### **Background**

The library is staffed by five and one-half full-time employees, and two part-time. It is open 41 hours each week. The hours are Tuesday and Wednesday, 10am to 8pm, and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday 10am to 5pm.

The library has an excellent system to record all income. Receipts are give to patrons on request for small amounts such as 25¢ fines and copy charges. Patrons who make larger payments may request a receipt and a printout for all past activity. Receipts are prepared at the time a fine is paid for overdue books the library clerk updates the patron's computer records to reflect that payment.

The Branch Supervisor advised the members of the Grand Jury that a new computer system will be installed in mid April 2003.

#### **Findings**

- F1. Receipts are issued upon request for all fees paid. Larger fines and fees are tracked by the Library's computer system.

#### ***Response to F1: The respondent agrees with the finding.***

The Library's new software allows us to print a receipt for all fines and fees associated with circulation transactions. Meeting room fees and lost book fees are receipted with a county receipt. Any other transactions, such as copy machine fees, microfilm printing fees can be issued a receipt by library staff on an in-house form.

F2. The staff includes five and one-half full time and two part time employees.

***Response to F2: The respondent disagrees partially with the finding.***

The South Lake Tahoe Library staff consists of five and one-half permanent employees, to maintain services at four public points (children’s department, adult reference, computer lab and circulation desk). Two extra-help employees are regularly scheduled to do shelving and outreach. Other extra-help employees are scheduled to substitute for sick leave, vacations, and exceptionally busy times.

F3. The library is open 41 hours per week.

***Response to F3: The respondent agrees with the finding.***

### **Recommendations**

R1. The Library should post a notice that receipts are available for all amounts paid to the Library.

***Response to R1: The recommendation has been implemented.***

All branches of the El Dorado County Library have posted the following notice:  
“Upon request, receipts are available for all amounts paid to the Library.”

R2. Employees should be scheduled to allow for extended hours of operation.

***Response to R2: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is unreasonable.***

The Library has made every effort to be open to the public as many hours as possible. For the convenience of our patrons, the Library is open two evenings per week until 8 pm as well as all day Saturday. On Tuesday and Wednesday, when the library is open from 10 am to 8 pm, two “shifts” of employees are required to accommodate the extended day. All staff has duties in addition to their public desk assignments including giving story-times and other programs for children, teaching computer classes, providing Spanish language outreach visits, leading book discussion groups, ordering library materials, and administrative duties.

Given the current financial situation of the County and due to State budget deficits, no expansion of Library services and hours is possible in the near future.

### **Commendation**

The library staff should be commended for a well-run and clean facility.

### **Responses Required for Findings**

F1-F3 Supervisor, South Lake Tahoe Branch Library

**Responses Required for Recommendations**

R1 and R2

Supervisor, South Lake Tahoe Branch Library