



# CITY OF EL SEGUNDO LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

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MEETING DATE: November 12, 2019  
MEETING TIME: 7:00 p.m.  
MEETING PLACE: El Segundo Public Library  
Rose Garden Room  
111 W. Mariposa Avenue  
El Segundo, CA 90245

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The Board of Trustees, with certain statutory exceptions, can only take action upon properly posted and listed agenda items.

Unless otherwise noted in the Agenda, the public can only comment on City-related business that is within the Board of Trustees' subject-matter jurisdiction and items listed on the Agenda during the Public Communications portion of the meeting. The time limit for comments is generally limited to five minutes per person.

*Before speaking to the Board of Trustees, please come to the podium and state: Your name and residence and the organization you represent, if desired. Please respect the time limits. While all comments are welcome, the Board of Trustees may not take action on any matter not on this Agenda. Board of Trustees members may respond to comments after Public Communications is closed.*

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**In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk (310) 524-2305. Notification 48 hours before the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

**B. ROLL CALL**

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carol Ericson | <input type="checkbox"/> Kristie Sherrill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> David Jonta   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sara Whelan      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Janice Merva  |   |

**C. PRESENTATIONS — NONE**

**D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Related to City Business only and for which the Advisory Committee is responsible – 5 minutes per person; 30 minutes total).**

**E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES for September 10, 2019**

**F. SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS — NONE**

**G. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Macmillan Publishers eBooks Policy versus #eBooksForAll**

Librarian Kristina Kora-Beckman describes Macmillan Publishers' recent decision to refuse to sell more than one copy of any new eBook to public libraries for the first eight weeks after a book's release and require libraries to repurchase eBooks every two years as well as the American Library Association and other stakeholders' coordinated response.

**Recommendation:**

1. Discussion and possible action.

**H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – NONE**

**I. REPORTS — LIBRARY DIRECTOR (No Board Action Required)**

1. **Discussion of Library Programs, Services, Budget, Material Collections, Facility Maintenance, Personnel Changes, and Other Items Related to the Administration of the El Segundo Public Library.**

**J. REPORTS — SCHOOL DISTRICT (No Board Action Required)**

1. **Report on the School Libraries, including those at El Segundo High School, Center Street School, Richmond Street School, and El Segundo Middle School.**
  - a. **Library Director's Report**
  - b. **School District Librarian's Report**

**K. REPORTS — PRESIDENT, FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (No Board Action Required)**

1. **Report on Book Sales, Donations, Historical Committee Activities, Special Events and Other Items Related to Friends of the Library Business.**
  - b. **President's Report**
  - c. **History Committee Report**

**L. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS —**

**M. ADJOURNMENT —**

## Item G1 – Macmillan Publishers eBooks Policy versus #eBooksForAll

### Attachments:

- **How a publisher is punishing library users with eBooks limit**  
Michael Lambert
- **Public Letter to the Library Community**  
Macmillan Publishers CEO John Sargent
- **Sample Letter to Macmillan Publishers CEO John Sargent**  
American Library Association

### Links:

- **#eBooksForAll**  
American Library Association  
<https://ebooksforall.org/>
- **Fair E-Book and E-Audiobook Lending for Libraries**  
**Urban Libraries Council**  
<https://www.urbanlibraries.org/member-resources/fair-e-book-and-e-audiobook-lending-for-libraries>
- **ALA Responds to Macmillan Letter**  
**American Library Association**  
<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/ala-responds-to-macmillan-letter/>

Opinion // Open Forum

# How a publisher is punishing library users with eBooks limit

By Michael Lambert Oct. 30, 2019  
Comments



Macmillan Publishers' new policy on eBooks for libraries is drawing criticism from librarians across the country.

Photo: Mark Lemihan / Associated Press

Right now, there are 450 holds at San Francisco Public Library on an eBook that currently tops the bestseller list. That's despite the fact that the library carries 100 copies of this particular popular title in a digital format.

Now, imagine what might happen if the publisher did not allow the public library to buy multiple copies of this book to satisfy library patrons' requests? That's the situation being faced by libraries across the country as of Nov. 1, when Macmillan Publishers starts "embargoing" libraries' ability to purchase new eBooks.

This policy amounts to a new form of censorship for library users. Limiting access to new titles for libraries is limiting access for readers like you.

Thousands of San Francisco library users read eBooks as their preferred — sometimes only — access to books. We are lucky to have a robust collections budget that allows us to maintain a low holds queue for books of all kinds and provide a large collection of eBooks through three different free apps: Libby (Overdrive), Axis360 and SimplyE. But Macmillan will refuse to sell more than one copy of any new eBooks to public libraries for the first eight weeks after a book's release. After that, libraries can purchase multiple copies but will need to repurchase the same books every two years.

At San Francisco Public Library, we circulated more than 2 million eBooks last year, and eBooks alone account for nearly 28% of all books checked out from San Francisco libraries, a number that continues to grow yearly. Macmillan Publishers' embargo will make it difficult for libraries to fulfill our central mission: ensuring access to information and content for all.

For some, these eBooks are more than just a convenience. The Macmillan policy harms library patrons with disabilities or learning issues. Many visually impaired people use eBooks because they can easily be formatted in a larger print. Many of our eBook readers tell us that this allows them to keep reading new titles at publication date, rather than waiting months for a large print copy to be available. Most eBook readers also offer options that make reading easier for people with dyslexia.

In fact, San Francisco Mayor London Breed has recognized the urgency of this situation, signing on to the Urban Libraries Council's statement on equitable public access to eBooks. As the statement mentions: "These restrictions will be most harmful for populations who already face significant barriers to equitable knowledge and information access in our communities, including youth, people living with disabilities and those with limited financial means."

Cities like San Francisco will be especially hurt by the Macmillan embargo. A large library system like ours that serves hundreds of thousands of library users will be allowed to purchase the same number of copies — one! — as a small rural library. In some instances, this embargo will force readers to wait a year or more to borrow a popular title in eBook format.

The Macmillan policy also punishes authors. San Francisco Public Library, along with other public libraries, is an important part of the discovery tool for our city of readers. We want to purchase multiple copies of books that users want to read, even though libraries already pay as much as four

times the cover price for most eBooks. And we know that people who borrow books from the library are also frequent book buyers, supporting our local booksellers.

Ultimately, this policy hurts the reading public, at a time when we should be encouraging more people to read, not fewer by limiting access. Public libraries boost knowledge, creativity, literacy, ideas and imagination. Libraries are allies, not adversaries, to our readers, authors, publishers and booksellers.

Macmillan's embargo is an outlier in the publishing industry. None of the other large publishers are embargoing library purchases or creating inequitable reader access. There is no data to support the idea that every copy borrowed from a library means a sale lost to a publisher.

San Francisco Public Library is joining libraries across the country in asking Macmillan to reverse its new policy. Thousands of readers have added their names to a petition launched by the American Library Association at [ebooksforall.org](http://ebooksforall.org).

We hope to convince Macmillan to edit this chapter of their publishing model and continue to let library patrons read all the eBooks they want.

*Michael Lambert is the city librarian for San Francisco Public Library.*

Dear Librarians,

Many of you have written to me over the last weeks about our terms change announcement. Responding to each of you is a daunting prospect, so I thought I would try to reach you all at once. Thanks for writing, and for the frank (and occasionally brutal) feedback. A special thank-you to the plain ole regular guy extraordinaire from Florida; I appreciate your original approach.

First, I would like to apologize. It is clear to me that I should have written to all of you directly with our terms change. I meant no disrespect. Also, please know that this change was well considered and deeply discussed with over 35 library systems, with your suppliers, and with the ALA. We shared the analysis we performed and the data we collected.

In our talks, many of you asked for perpetual access, so we gave you that for the first copy of each e-book. We wanted to address your concerns about the breadth of your collections and the extra work of renewals. You also asked us to drop the price, so we cut the price in half for the first copy ordered. According to our calculations, 26% of libraries will save more than 40% on their Macmillan e-books. For those smaller libraries we have given a substantial price cut and perpetual access across our entire front list.

And now to address the windowing. We believe the very rapid increase in the reading of borrowed e-books decreases the perceived economic value of a book. I know that you pay us for these e-books, but to the reader, they are free. In the pre-digital world reading for free from libraries was part of the business model. To borrow a book in those days required transportation, returning the book, and paying those pesky fines when you forgot to get them back on time. In today's digital world there is no such friction in the market. As the development of apps and extensions continues, and as libraries extend their reach statewide as well as nationally, it is becoming ever easier to borrow rather than buy. This is causing book-buying customers to change habits, and they are fueling the tremendous growth in e-book lending.

This causes a problem across the publishing ecosystem (authors, illustrators, agents, publishers, libraries, retailers, and readers). We are trying to find a solution. Many of you have asked to talk further about the issue. We are talking with the ALA and the COSLA. And we will talk to as many of you as we can. To make these discussions easier, I will be coming to Philadelphia in January with other senior execs from Macmillan.

We decided to change our terms after a year of talking, listening, testing, and analyzing. We looked at two separate issues: 1) the difference in the revenue we get between a lend and a sale and 2) the perceived value of a book upon publication (when its value is highest).

We have two variables we can adjust to address the problem: price and availability. You have been adamant with us on the issue of price, and when we looked at it we understood why. In the long run, we felt ever-increasing prices to libraries would be detrimental and would not address the perceived value issue in any case. So we decided on the other variable, availability. In our tests, it seemed to work and the response from some of you seemed understanding. So we announced an eight-week window (along with the first copy price drop and perpetual access for that copy). And there was no change in policy for school libraries.

I realize the lack of availability in the first eight weeks will frustrate some e-book patrons, and that will make your jobs more difficult. Your patrons would be happy if they could get any book they wanted instantly and seamlessly, but that would be severely debilitating for authors, publishers, and retailers. We are trying to find a middle ground.

We are not trying to hurt libraries; we are trying to balance the needs of the system in a new and complex world. We believe windowing for eight weeks is the best way to do that. I am the first to admit we may be wrong. But we need to try to address this issue. We look forward to talking with many of you in the weeks and months ahead as we all begin to understand the effects of our new policy.

Finally, let me say that we are great believers in libraries. We have supported library programs for decades. We realize the role libraries play in discovery, in literacy, and in building readers. We have given away millions of books to people who are learning to read or can't afford to buy. We have long stated that we will offer e-books at radically low prices or even free if a library can provide a means test. We delivered on that promise as a founding publisher of Open eBooks, and would be delighted to continue down that path with you.

Thanks again for writing.

With respect,

John

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# ALA American Library Association

**NOTE: Text may be customized by state library chapters, library boards, and other library leaders as a resolution, public statement, or letter to be sent directly to:**

*Mr. John Sargent  
Chief Executive Officer  
Macmillan Publishing  
120 Broadway  
New York, NY 10271*

## **[[NAME]] Calls for Macmillan to Reverse Library eBook Embargo**

On July 25, Macmillan Publishers announced it would become the only major (Big 5) publisher to limit eBook lending for U.S. libraries. Under its new licensing model, scheduled to begin November 1, 2019, a library may purchase one copy upon release of a new title in eBook format, after which the publisher will impose an eight-week embargo on additional copies of that title sold to libraries.

As American Library Association (ALA) President Wanda Brown asserted that same day, “Macmillan Publishers’ new model for library eBook lending will make it difficult for libraries to fulfill our central mission: ensuring access to information for all. Macmillan’s new policy is unacceptable.”

And Public Library Association (PLA) President Ramiro Salazar stated, “Access to digital content in libraries is more than a financial issue: it is an equity issue. We encourage Macmillan Publishers to reverse course before libraries and the people they serve are harmed.”

Millions of people now use digital content as their preferred or only access to books, music, and movies. Digital content is portable, accessible to people with print disabilities, available anywhere 24/7, and brokered by libraries to provide diverse options to our diverse communities.

Libraries not only pay for books; they market them. Lost marketing means lost publicity and sales for publishers and authors.

[[NAME]] joins the ALA in denouncing this measure and calling for Macmillan Publishers to cancel the embargo and restore full access to its complete eBook catalog upon release to the public.

**#eBooksForAll**

# ALA American Library Association

[Furthermore, [[NAME]] affirms the principles that:

- All published works must be available for libraries to purchase and lend to library users.
- Access to and use of eBooks must equitably balance the rights and privileges of readers, authors and publishers.
- Digital content must be accessible to all people, regardless of physical or reading disability.
- Library patrons must be able to access digital content on the device of their choosing.
- Reading records must remain private in the digital age.]

**#eBooksForAll**

POSTED BY: J. J. [Signature]  
DATE: 11/7/19  
TIME: 3:49 p.m.