



# City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,  
Oceanside, California 92054

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 25-937

**Agenda Date:** 8/20/2025

**Agenda #:** 14.

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**DATE:** August 20, 2025

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

**FROM:** Library Department

**TITLE: ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS FROM NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS/ARTS MIDWEST FOR THE BIG READ PROGRAM**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council accept and appropriate \$20,000 in grant funds from the National Endowment for the Arts/Arts Midwest, awarded to the City for the 2025-2026 Big Read program.

### **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

On June 23, 2025, the City of Oceanside was selected to receive \$20,000 in grant funds for the Big Read program. This is the seventh time the Oceanside Public Library has been selected for this competitive nationwide opportunity. The Big Read, an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest, is designed to restore reading to American culture. The program brings together partners across the country to encourage reading for pleasure and enlightenment.

The Big Read program will provide funding for a series of public events designed to draw the community together as they read and discuss Diane Wilson's *The Seed Keeper*. The book is a multigenerational novel that follows Rosalie Iron Wing, a Dakhóta woman who, after being placed in foster care, embarks on a journey to reconnect with her heritage and the ancestral seeds that symbolize her people's resilience. The novel explores themes of cultural survival, environmental stewardship, and the enduring bonds between land, seeds, and identity. Activities inspired by the book have been developed to capture the interest of the community through interactive educational workshops led by local knowledge keepers and a special event featuring a conversation with the author. Additionally, oral histories, dynamic storytelling, and art and writing workshops will capture, showcase, and preserve the powerful generational stories and traditions of Oceanside and its people. Programming is scheduled to take place in March and April of 2026, over a period of six weeks.

The Library solicited community partners to widen the scope of the project and to engage a broader audience. Current partners include the San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians, Studio ACE, Buena Vista Audubon Society, Oceanside Historical Society, KOCT, Oceanside Museum of Art, and the Plants, People, Community organization. The Friends of the Oceanside Public Library, the Oceanside Public Library Foundation, and the Oceanside CA Cultural District are additional partners

serving as third party funders for a total amount of \$14,000.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Grant funds in the amount of \$20,000 received from California Arts Council will be deposited and appropriated as follows:

Description	Account	Amount
<b>Revenue</b>		
Big Read 2025 Federal Grant	900115800274.4382	\$20,000
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Professional Services	900115800274.5305	16,000
Supplies and Materials	900115800274.5355	4,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$20,000</b>

**COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Library Board of Trustees approved acceptance of the Big Read 2025 grant funds from the National Endowment for the Arts/Arts Midwest at its regular July 22, 2025 meeting.

**CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS**

Does not apply.

Prepared by: Marie Town, Library Division Manager  
Reviewed by: CJ Di Mento, Library & Cultural Arts Director  
Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Staff Report
2. Award Notification