

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

JANUARY 29, 2009

A Regular meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Central Library, 630 West Fifth Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071, convening at 11:04 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT: VICE PRESIDENT JULIE A. MENDOZA
COMMISSIONER ROBERT A. CHICK
COMMISSIONER NELLIE RIOS-PARRA
COMMISSIONER RITA WALTERS

EXCUSED
ABSENT: PRESIDENT TYREE WIEDER

ALSO PRESENT: Cecilia Riddle, Director of Branch Library Services; Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankowski; Shannon Lawrence, Policy Analyst, Mayor's Office; Roy Stone, Librarians' Guild; and staff.

The Vice President acknowledged Cecilia Riddle, Director of Branch Library Services, who would be assisting with the Board meeting on behalf of the Library in the absence of Interim City Librarian Kris Morita, who was ill.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 1/15/09

MOVED by Commissioner Chick, seconded by Commissioner Rios-Parra, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the regular meeting held January 15, 2009, be approved as submitted.

CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

MOVED by Commissioner Chick, seconded by Commissioner Walters and unanimously carried that the following resolution be adopted:

Recommended Acceptance of Gift

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-6 (C-2)

RESOLVED that the gift in the amount of \$1,250.00 for the “Hot Off The Press” program be accepted from the Friends of the Sherman Oaks Library; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that a letter of appreciation be sent to the Friends Group expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board of Library Commissioners for their generous contribution.

RECOMMENDED SUPPORT TO
CONTINUE THE CENTRAL LIBRARY
PARKING VALIDATION PROGRAM

Cecilia Riddle, Director of Branch Library Services, introduced Kyle Millager, Business Manager, who would be presenting the report on the Central Library Parking Validation Program.

Kyle Millager reported that in 1995 a Motion introduced by then Councilmember Rita Walters was approved by City Council establishing the Central Library Parking Validation Program. The Validation Program was enacted in order to make the Central Library more accessible to the thousands of library patrons who visit each month--last year approximately 89,000 people used this service. The program discounts the parking rate paid by patrons from \$4 to \$1 for the first hour. The validated rate of \$1 is also provided for all patrons entering on weekdays after 3 p.m. and for those parking all day Saturday or Sunday.

Ms. Millager informed the Board that in response to a Motion (Greuel - Parks) the Chief Legislative Analyst and City Administrative Officer released a joint report on January 14, 2009, instructing City departments to cease further expenditures of all funds for parking validation and recommending discontinuance of the Central Library Parking Validation Program. In recommending the termination of the Validation Program, the report cited the availability of more public transit options available to Central Library patrons and indicated Central Library resources and services are accessible 24/7 through the Internet.

The Business Manager stated she along with Interim City Librarian Morita and Commissioner Walters attended the Budget and Finance Committee on January 26, 2009. They provided testimony that while there may be more transit options in the downtown area than in 1995 when the program was implemented, that is not the case for patrons coming from outlying communities. Additionally, the Committee was also advised that contrary to the CLA/CAO report, Central Library has more than 2.7 million books and resources of which half are reference materials that can only be used at the

Central Library and are not available through the Internet. Ms. Millager reported that at the conclusion of the discussion, the Budget and Finance Committee voted to delete the recommendation to discontinue the Central Library Parking Validation Program, and the Library was instructed to survey the patrons requesting validation to determine how often they visit the library, where they are coming from and for what purpose they are visiting. Library staff was requested to report to Committee within 30 days.

Ms. Millager said the Report before the Board seeks support for the continuance of the Central Library Parking Validation Program.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Chick thanked Commissioner Walters for presenting testimony during the Committee hearing. He said, for too many people, even the reduced rate is significant. The Commissioner emphasized the Board should take a strong position in support of making public access affordable and convey to the City Council that discontinuing the Central Library Parking Validation Program is not good for our patrons. He encouraged discussion to provide clear direction to staff on the Board's position.

Commissioner Walters said she introduced the Council Motion when the Central Library reopened in 1993 after being closed for a number of years. The reopening sparked an enormous amount of interest with people coming to downtown, and she wanted that to continue. Commissioner Walters concurred with Commissioner Chick indicating it can be a luxury for many patrons to pay even the reduced amount. She spoke of the Central Library as a wonderful resource that is beloved throughout the City and how the Library Department is in the front line with law enforcement, playing an important role in penetrating gang activity and diverting young people from activities that are not wholesome. The Commissioner urged the Board to send a strong message to the members of the City Council to maintain this consideration for our library patrons and continue the Central Library Parking Validation Program.

Commissioner Rios-Parra underscored the Commissioners' comments about the hardship an additional expense would have for families struggling economically. She too acknowledged that the library walks hand in hand with the police force to prevent crime from rising by providing services to patrons of all ages. She hopes the Board takes a strong unified approach to countering the CAO/CLA recommendation because, if the rate were to be increased, it would deter patrons from using the Central Library.

The Vice President concurred with the Commissioners and thanked them for their comments. She called on Mr. Roy Stone with the Librarian's Guild to speak.

Public Comment

Roy Stone, President Librarian's Guild, said he agrees library access is extremely important. He added, while it looks like the difference between validated and non-validated fees may be only a few dollars, it makes a lot of difference to people and their families who are looking for jobs and need to use the library--every cent and dollar counts at this time. He emphasized they want to support and do what they can to allow access to the Central Library.

* * *

After further discussion, Commissioner Chick asked Deputy City Attorney Jankowski whether the Board can direct management to write a letter for the President's signature asking the City Council for their support to continue the Central Library Parking Validation Program. The letter's focus would be on the significant impact discontinuing the Validation Program would have on the public at a time of economic difficulties when access to the Central Library is needed more than ever.

Commissioner Walters stated she supports this request indicating the letter should include all the points mentioned as well as Mr. Stone's comments about people using the Central Library to find new leads on jobs.

The Deputy City Attorney advised that since there has been discussion about what to include in the letter, staff can prepare it for the President's signature on the Board's behalf. She noted, however, if changes or additions are needed, then the item need to be placed on an agenda for further discussion.

BOARD ACTION:

By unanimous consent, the Board directed staff to prepare a letter to the City Council for the President's signature urging them to vote in favor of continuing the Central Library Parking Validation Program.

Thereafter, the following resolution was adopted:

MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Chick and unanimously carried that the following resolution was adopted:

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-7

WHEREAS, in 1995, the City Council established the Central Library Parking Validation Program to make the Central Library more accessible for Library patrons; and

Board Resolution
No. 2009-7

WHEREAS, in response to a Council Motion, the Chief Legislative Analyst and Chief Administrative Officer released a joint report on January 2009 recommending departments to cease expenditures of all City funds for parking validations, including the discontinuance of the Central Library Parking Validation Program; and

WHEREAS, discontinuance of the Validation Program will have significant impact to the Central Library at a time of economic difficulties for many families. An average of 89,000 Library patrons currently benefit from the program on an annual basis:

RESOLVED that the Board of Library Commissioners support the continuance of the Central Library Parking Validation Program.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF A REVISION
TO THE BRANCH FACILITIES PLAN 2007

Juliana Cheng, Director of Facilities, stated staff is requesting a revision to the Branch Facilities Plan (2007) by adding a new branch library in the proposed NBC Universal Vision Plan development. She reported the Project site is located within two jurisdictions, with approximately 95 acres located within the City of Los Angeles and 296 acres located within the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County. The Project is seeking annexation of an overall net change of 43 acres from the County to the City. The development includes major construction of new studios, expansion to CityWalk, offices, a new hotel and a new residential area, which would include 3,000 residences and is expected to increase the population by about 6,500 people.

Ms. Cheng stated the estimated increase in population would have a huge impact on library services. The nearest library to this development is the Goldwyn Hollywood Regional Branch which already serves a population close to 90,000, the recommended population size in the Branch Facilities Plan, under the *Criteria for New Libraries*, for addition of a second branch library. As part of the mitigation measure, the developer is proposing to provide the library with 10,000 s.f. of free core and shell space for 50 years to house a new branch library with 20 parking spaces allotted. Ms. Cheng advised if the Library determines that it will not proceed with the lease of the space, the Developer shall pay to the City a mitigation fee of \$400 per dwelling unit, payable at the time of issuance of each building permit to be used for providing or enhancing the delivery of library services at another branch library in the vicinity of the development.

Board Discussion

Following consideration of addition to the Branch Facilities Plan, the Board agreed to continue the item following a request by Commissioner Chick that the Developer be present when the item is heard. Questions from the Commissioners and responses from Ms. Cheng (in italicize) are enumerated below:

1. What funding source will be used to cover additional improvements LAPL will provide and what do they include? (*Tenant improvements include interior walls, built-ins such as circulation and reference desks, flooring, shelving and signage. Funding will need to come from the Capital Improvement Program, Branch Construction Program or a future bond measure.*)
2. What benchmark will be used to determine when construction of the building to house the library will commence given fluctuation of occupancy in the housing market? (*Once the 1,500th residence has achieved the Certificate of Occupancy, the Developer will start construction of the library building.*)
3. What is the 6-month clause? (*In the event the City ceases to use the leased space for a library for a period 6 months or more, the free lease may terminate and the Developer may use the space for other purposes.*)
4. Is there a timeline for the project to begin? (*There is no current published timeline. The project is huge so perhaps in ten to twenty years.*)
5. Considering it may be a decade or two for the development to commence, is there an escalator clause attached to the mitigation fee of \$400 per dwelling, and how many residential units does that cover? (*There is no escalator clause included at this time. However, staff will ask for one to be included. The \$400 payout covers only that portion of those units that are in City property; If annexation is approved, then all 3,000 residences will be situated within the City limits.*)
6. Why is the Developer providing these options to the Library Department? (*To mitigate the NBC Universal Vision Plan development's impact on library services. It is a requirement of the California Environmental Quality Act and will be included in the final Environmental Impact Report.*)
7. Is there a time limit to open the branch library once tenant improvement work has begun? (*There is no time designated and no penalty included.*)

Public Comment

(1)

Roy Stone, President, Librarian's Guild, asked the Commissioners to look at this recommendation very carefully keeping in mind staff support and book collection issues and why it's being done. He presented the following concerns:

- This large-size library will just be for the 6,500 residents living in this development because the community is not going to go to that facility given the limited parking in the area.
- The lease term is for 50 years – what are we leaving to the next group in the future?
- There should be more than 20 designated parking spaces because of the limited parking situation.
- Constructing a community room within two blocks of the library facility will not work well for providing library services, and it puts the library at risk.
- The Library Department needs to be part of the design process because it is critical for staff to clearly be able to view the inside of the library.

* * *

The Vice President asked Mr. Stone what he felt was an appropriate number of parking spaces for a development of this size, Mr. Stone responded that 25 spaces should be allotted at a minimum.

(2)

Perry Lee Funcless, resident of downtown, asked that the environment and people's health be taken care of when construction of the development begins.

The Vice President thanked Mr. Funcless for his comments but noted his concerns were not under the jurisdiction of the Board of Library Commissioners.

BOARD ACTION

Moved by Commissioner Chick and approved by unanimous consent that revision to the Branch Facilities Plan (2007) be continued until such time that the Developer or his designee be present.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE LIBRARY'S
FUNDING PRIORITIES FOR THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION
OF LOS ANGELES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009-2011**

The Director of Branch Library Services requested that this item be continued so the Interim City Librarian can be in attendance to present the report.

BOARD ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Chick and approved by unanimous consent that the Library's funding priorities for the Library Foundation of Los Angeles be continued.

**ORAL REPORT ON THE LIBRARY
FOUNDATION OF LOS ANGELES**

Vice President Mendoza stated Commissioner Chick would present a report on the Library Foundation of Los Angeles as he is one of our representatives on the Library Foundation Board of Directors.

After indicating that no one from the Library Foundation was in attendance, Commissioner Walters stated the Library Foundation should have a representative present when an item pertaining to them is on the Agenda as was similarly requested of the Developer for the NBC Universal Vision Plan development on today's Agenda.

Commissioner Chick indicated the Board would have an opportunity to request their presence when the funding priorities are discussed. He said as an agent for the Foundation Board it is important for the Commissioners to ask him questions, but he also thinks it is important for a representative from the Library Foundation to be present because, as an independent organization, they have to speak for themselves.

Discussions continued with Commissioner Chick reporting that he and President Wieder attended the quarterly meeting of the Library Foundation of Los Angeles. He said their endowment has shrunk like other non-profits during these difficult

economic times. When their endowment shrinks, their income shrinks, and it is difficult to predict what their fundraising ability is going to be. The Commissioner emphasized it is very important, when the Board takes up the issues of priorities, they send a very clear message to the Library Foundation that our highest priority is to continue programs that directly impact patrons versus spending any money on items that do not have a direct impact on users. The Commissioner reiterated on being vigilant in terms of getting the money going to the right place, keeping in mind that the Library Foundation is a non-profit corporation totally distinct and separate from the library.

Commissioner Walters stated she believes she raised the issue of the \$20 million in endowment funds the last time the Foundation was before the Board, and they wouldn't have lost it if they would have been spending it on the Library rather than building this large endowment. Referencing the list of funding priorities under *Marketing the "New" Los Angeles Public Library*, the Commissioner noted that the campaign's goal was to increase awareness of not only the Library but of also of the Foundation, their donors and members. She did not understand why the Library Foundation was going to raise the money in the Library's name to increase awareness about themselves. She said they are raising money in the name of the Library and would need to respond to that.

Commissioner Chick responded that the Foundation Board had approved a program for advocacy with promotion of the Foundation as part of it to which he spoke aggressively in opposition. It was later withdrawn with the money allocated for the program delayed. They went on the record that they would not spend any of those monies until they bring it back to the full Board and get approval.

Additionally, he continued to report that the Foundation was looking closer than ever on reducing their cost and there seemed to be a higher level of concern on the Director's part as to the issue of budget operations and how they can raise more money in terms of replacing money they will not be getting. The Commissioner commented that when you look at what that Foundation means in terms of programs in this library, our focus has to be on sending the message to them not to go into the funding dollars for running their organization.

Commissioner Chick concluded by emphasizing that these donors and members are people who care very deeply about the library and their commitment greatly benefits the Los Angeles Public Library. He said our goal is to make sure that they know what our priorities are and we are well informed of how they are operating.

Vice President Mendoza and Commissioner Rios-Parra thanked Commissioner Chick for his report and concurred that a representative of the Foundation should be present when items related to them are discussed.

(TAKEN OUT OF ORDER)

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS
WITHIN THE BOARD'S JURISDICTION: NONE

VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Map Exhibit

Director Cecilia Riddle reported that the wonderful map exhibit showcasing in the Getty Gallery would be extended for another month because of its popularity.

Farewell presentation to
Commissioner Nellie Rios-Parra

Commissioner Chick announced that Commissioner Nellie Rios-Parra is leaving the Library Commission after three years of exceptional service as a Library Commissioner. He thanked her for taking her job seriously and for her extremely insightful ability to ask questions that needed to be asked and doing her homework prior to the meetings. He indicated that in his 22 years of experience in commission assignments, he believes she really has been a star as a commissioner. He emphasized that Commissioner Rios-Parra has been an extraordinary addition to the Library Commission and acknowledged her sacrifices and ability to handle a full time job, a family as well as attending Board Meetings every other Thursday. He pointed out that she has done everything in an exceptional and extraordinary manner over the years she has been on the commission. Commissioner Chick thanked her on behalf of the City and said she will be greatly missed by the Library.

Vice President Mendoza addressed Commissioner Rios-Parra by saying that it had been a real pleasure and honor to work with her as a peer and a colleague. She commended the Commissioner for the balance she brought on the issues of education and her extraordinary expertise of early childhood development and reading. The Vice President said that personally she will miss the Commissioner and thanked her for her service to the citizens of Los Angeles and all Library users.

Commissioner Walters stated that she has also enjoyed working with Commissioner Rios-Parra and one of the things that she shall always remember is

the Commissioner's gentle approach to things—she has that quality and shares it willingly. She said she is appreciative of Commissioner Rios-Parra's exemplary qualities that have been so commendable in her service to the Library. Commissioner Walters wished Ms. Rios-Parra the very best as she moves on in her work in the field of education as it is her opinion that there is no greater field in which to engage one's life.

Roy Stone, President, Librarian's Guild, expressed appreciation to Commissioner Rios-Parra on behalf of the Guild's members and members of the public for her service and advocacy for providing excellent public service.

Cecilia Riddle, Director, Branch Library Services, thanked Ms. Nellie Rios-Parra on behalf of the Library Administration and all the employees for her dedicated and outstanding service to the Library system during her three-year tenure. She added that many have greatly benefited from the very thoughtful and constructive approach that she brought to her position as a Commissioner. Furthermore, Ms. Riddle stated that Commissioner Rios-Parra's understanding of the role of the Library and her passion for the Library have been evident by her use of the libraries, attending programs and observing Library activities for children and families. Ms. Riddle expressed to the Commissioner that it has been a wonderful experience for all to have a person like her who has contributed to the success of the Library. Particularly, Ms. Riddle attributed Commissioner Rios-Parra's background as an educator and literacy advocate as very valuable in the Library's role in helping students and their families succeed. Ms. Riddle told the Commissioner that we all will miss her but we know that she will continue to be an advocate for the Library and is greatly appreciated, "Thank you very much, Nellie."

Commissioner Nellie Rios-Parra opened her farewell message by stating that she will continue to use her library card and thanked everyone in the Library for all the work they do day-in and day-out and to the Commissioners for greatly contributing as a Board and really putting their hearts and passion into everything they do. The Commissioner said that her love for books and education and everything she talked about during Board discussions came from years of watching others, taking the best, and running with it, and she sees that in them. She will continue to applaud their efforts and cheer them on. She concluded by saying that she will stay involved because it is what makes the world a better place.

Vice President Mendoza presented Commissioner Rios-Parra with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the Board for her service, and Director Cecilia Riddle presented her with a gift from Staff.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

ATTEST: _____

Tyree Wieder
President

Gladys L. Senac
Board Executive Assistant

Date to be approved:

February 12, 2009