

# MINUTES

## **BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES**

**MARCH 26, 2009**

A Regular meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Van Nuys Branch Library, 6250 Sylmar Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91401, convening at 11:05 a.m. on the above-written date.

<b>PRESENT:</b>	PRESIDENT	TYREE WIEDER
	VICE PRESIDENT	JULIE A. MENDOZA
	COMMISSIONER	ROBERT A. CHICK
	COMMISSIONER	RITA WALTERS

**EXCUSED**

**ABSENT:** NONE

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kris Morita, Interim City Librarian; Patricia Kiefer, Assistant City Librarian; Basia Jankowski, Deputy City Attorney; Verdel Flores, Vice President, Librarian's Guild; and staff.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 3/12/09

MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Vice President Mendoza and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the regular meeting held March 12, 2009, be approved as submitted.

REMARKS BY THE EAST VALLEY AREA MANAGER  
AND THE VAN NUYS SENIOR BRANCH LIBRARIAN

East Valley Area Manager

Ruth Seid, East Valley Area Manager, reported that in the past year circulation in the region has increased 10% due in large part to patrons using the library computers for searching new jobs, submitting resumes on-line and applying for unemployment benefits. In addition, parents are finding that libraries provide free programming for their children so attendance has increased. She informed of outreach efforts for schools in the East Valley region spearheaded by Kelly Tyler, the Van Nuys Branch Young Adult Librarian III, who coordinates team visits to schools by young adult librarians. They target one school at a time

visiting as many classrooms as possible. Lastly, Ms. Seid commended Guadalupe Canales, Senior Librarian, Sun Valley Branch, for having represented the Los Angeles Public Library so well on the NBC Nightly News segment, "Increase in Library Usage".

#### Senior Branch Librarian

Janet Metzler, Van Nuys Branch Senior Librarian, applauded her staff for their team effort in increasing patron library usage. She said the materials circulation had risen 18% at the Van Nuys Branch since this past January. Ms. Metzler stated the programs for children are greatly enhanced by the creativity and enthusiasm of Mona Gilbert, the Children's Librarian. Ms. Gilbert recruited three community partners to be part of the Early Learning with Families (ELF) grant program at the Van Nuys Branch. She also spoke of the very successful teen volunteer program under the direction of Kelly Tyler, Young Adult Librarian. In addition to the current employees, a Clerk and a Bilingual Librarian will be joining the staff and will be performing outreach for adults and rendering assistance to the Latino community.

Ms. Metzler pointed out that the Branch is located in the Van Nuys Civic Center complex and improvements to the front entrance have occurred as a result of being situated in this government center. She indicated the Farmers' Market held every Thursday along the Civic Center complex was a cooperative effort between Council District Six and the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council with whom she would continue to develop a close-working relationship.

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At the request of Commissioner Walters, Ms. Metzler spoke about the weekly visits by teenage girls from a local school/shelter. They are associated with Children of the Night, a privately funded non-profit organization dedicated to assisting teenage girls at risk. Ms. Metzler indicated Peter Mann, former Young Adult Librarian at the Van Nuys Branch, won the 2006 New York Times Librarian of the Year Award for his work with Children of the Night. Commissioner Walters said the organization started in Hollywood, and she is delighted they have expanded their efforts to other communities.

President Wieder thanked Ruth Seid and Jan Metzler for their informative presentation. She said it is advantageous that the Van Nuys Branch Library is in the government center so that our public officials can easily visit and see the outstanding service provided to our citizens.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS  
WITHIN THE BOARD'S JURISDICTION:

**(In accordance with Board Policy, a total of 15 minutes shall be allocated for public comment not to exceed three (3) minutes per speaker. Items arising during the public comment portion of the meeting shall be referred by the President to the staff or Board Committee for appropriate action or report back thereon to the Board.)**

(1)

Lilavati Sharma stated she is a frequent user of the Los Angeles Public Library and is speaking on behalf of elderly patrons. She is requesting that a uniform policy be implemented when a book is considered late indicating this is important since library fines have increased substantially. Ms. Sharma said some branches allow for placing the material in the book drop the next day after the material is due, prior to the library opening, without a fine being placed. She informed of an inconsistency in the policy because that is not an option at some branches. Ms. Sharma asked that patrons have notification of the policy.

The President said it is helpful when the public provides testimony dealing with library issues and thanked Ms. Sharma for attending. She referred this matter to the Interim City Librarian for follow-up.

RECOMMENDED RECEIVE AND  
FILE REPORT ON LIBRARY  
MATERIALS SELECTION PROCESS

Anne Connor, Director, Central Library Services, reported that the Materials Selection Policy, Gifts Policy, Library Bill of Rights, and Freedom to Read statement are used as a basis for all materials selection. At the request of Commissioner Chick, Ms. Connor explained the process used to select books for branch libraries:

- The offices of Adult, Children, and Young Adult Services in the Central Library create order lists based on community demand, format, author, price, etc., that are generated monthly or bimonthly depending on the age level.
- Staff selects materials from either the lead copy purchased by the Central Library or gift copies sent by juvenile and young adult publishing companies.

- Within an allotted budget, the librarians from each agency select books based on their knowledge of interests for their particular community, number of book holds, reputation/qualification of the author, among other criteria.
- The Area Manager has a day or so to review those orders.
- The book requests are submitted to the Acquisitions Office where the orders are placed through vendors.

### **Board Discussion**

Questions raised by the Commissioners during the discussion and responses are enumerated below:

1. Indicating the possibility that the selection of materials might decrease because of the budget crisis, Commissioner Chick asked whether the method in use for purchasing books is the most efficient and cost effective.

*The Directors of Branches and Central Library Services agreed that, given the importance of meeting the needs of diverse communities, the book selection process allows for the selection of materials in the most efficient and expeditious manner possible.*

2. Commissioner Walters inquired if staff was satisfied that the process allows for the purchase of diverse material that reflect well on the history, past accomplishments and life experiences of both women and all racial minority groups.

*Ms. Connor stated she is and emphasized that one of the focuses of the library is to buy material that reflects diversity of experiences and all aspects of our communities.*

3. President Wieder asked whether there was a policy on purchasing self-published material.

*Ms. Connor indicated they tend not to purchase self-published books because the quality is generally poor.*

4. Commissioner Chick asked how publishers provide books to LAPL and whether any are sent cost free.

*Ms. Connor responded it is routine in youth publishing to send copies to major library systems at no cost of all titles published. Materials acquisition for Children and Teens has traditionally been dependent upon publisher gifts.*

*In so far as adult material, the librarians in the Central Library Subject Department purchase the first copy of most titles which are selected from a list provided by the book wholesaler Bro-Dart. The library staff provides the vendor with profiles on which they base their list such as how much to spend for titles, types of bindings needed, publishers of interest, etc.*

### **Public Comments**

Verdel Flores, Vice President, Librarians' Guild, stated the Guild fully endorses the Administration's report on the selection process of library materials. She said the process created by the library was designed to provide the best and most appropriate books to each community along with building a retrospective and permanent collection at the Central Library and it has always been the highest priority, even during times of budget crisis.

However, Ms. Flores indicated that the reduction in the book inspection process is one aspect in the materials selection process greatly affected during these difficult financial times. The Guild would like to see the book inspections re-instated to its former levels indicating it is critical that money not be wasted on ordering materials not seen. Lastly, she emphasized the book inspection process is absolutely the most critical part of the book selection process if professional librarians are to continue to meet the needs of a very diverse Los Angeles.

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During the discussion, Ms. Flores articulated that librarians should be able to review the books, for all levels, once a month rather than every other month.

Ms. Connor indicated that with the current budget situation, the Library has limited the number of book inspections to minimize the number of required trips by Librarians to the Central Library. This has resulted in a reduction of the mileage costs to the Library and gives staff more time in their agencies to provide services to the public.

### **BOARD ACTION**

MOVED by Commissioner Mendoza, seconded by Commissioner Chick and unanimously carried that the report on the Library Materials Selection Process be received and filed.

PRESENTATION: VIDEO TOUR OF  
LAPL ONLINE RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Steve Newcomer, Director of Information Technologies and Collections Division (ITC), reported in an effort to enhance public awareness of the electronic resources and services available, ITC has created a brief audio presentation on the Los Angeles Public Library's website under "What's New". Since it was created last month, it has already been accessed and viewed over 5,000 times and has proven to be a good marketing tool, not only for individuals but for schools and organizations.

Mr. Newcomer presented a powerpoint presentation highlighting some of the resources and services available:

The Gateway to Library Resources and Services:

- Access to over six million materials in 72 libraries
- Manage library account
- Search database of over 65,000 historic photos and other digitized collection
- Download e-Audio books and e-Books
- Podcasts and videos of library programs
- Spanish website
- Teen and Children's website
- Online Homework Help
- Literacy website for adults
- Public access computers and wi-fi at 72 libraries

The President thanked Mr. Newcomer for a very informative presentation. She said the audio presentation would help raise awareness of the library's resources.

VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS:

Received and filed letter from the Mayor announcing the appointment of Dr. Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi to the Board of Library Commissioners for the term ending June 30, 2011.

COMMISSIONERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MATTERS PENDING

New Exhibit

The opening of the *Paul Outerbridge: New color Photographs from Mexico and California, 1948-1955* exhibition will be held Saturday, March 28, 2009, at the

Central Library. Paul Outerbridge is one of the great pioneers of color photography, and his exhibition includes previously unseen color images of California and Mexico taken between 1943 and 1950. She said the exhibition received press coverage in Sunday's Los Angeles Times.

New President of the  
Library Foundation of Los Angeles

The Interim City Librarian announced that effective April 1, 2009, John F. Cooke will be the President of the Library Foundation of Los Angeles. Mr. Cooke was the founding member of the Library Foundation Board and was its Chairman for four years. He replaces Carolyn Wagner.

Commission President Visits Other Libraries

President Wieder reported she recently visited the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library. She met with Anne Coriston, Director of Branches, at the New York Public Library and Peter Young, Chief of the Asian Division with the Library of Congress who is interested in forming collaborations with the Los Angeles Public Library.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

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Tyree Wieder  
President

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Gladys L. Senac  
Board Executive Assistant

Date to be approved:

April 16, 2009