

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

AUGUST 27, 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 11:05 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT: PRESIDENT TYREE WIEDER
COMMISSIONER ROBERT A. CHICK
COMMISSIONER MARSHA HIRANO-NAKANISHI
COMMISSIONER RITA WALTERS

EXCUSED

ABSENT: VICE PRESIDENT JULIE A. MENDOZA

ALSO PRESENT: Patricia Kiefer, Assistant City Librarian; Basia Jankowski, Deputy City Attorney; Verdel Flores, Executive Vice President, Librarians' Guild; and staff.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 7/30/09

MOVED by Commissioner Hirano-Nakanishi, seconded by Commissioner Chick, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the regular meeting held July 30, 2009, be approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS

WITHIN THE BOARD'S JURISDICTION: NONE

CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

MOVED by Commissioner Hirano-Nakanishi, seconded by Commissioner Chick and unanimously carried that the following resolutions be adopted:

Recommended Acceptance of Gifts

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-44 (C-34)

WHEREAS, Hugh W. Kennedy, a resident of the Echo Park community who frequented the Atwater Village and Cahuenga Branch Libraries, had a profound desire for knowledge and appreciated how branch libraries enriched their surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kennedy passed away on December 29, 2008, leaving the Los Angeles Public Library bequests from his estate:

RESOLVED that the bequests be accepted and deposited in Library Trust Fund 831 as follows:

\$50,000	Account No. 266 “Hugh W. Kennedy-Trust Estate, Atwater”
\$50,000	Account No. 267 “Hugh W. Kennedy-Trust Estate, Cahuenga”

FURTHER RESOLVED that a letter of thanks be sent to the executor of his estate expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board of Library Commissioners for the generous gift.

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-45

RESOLVED that the gifts of 5 laptop computers, 1 wireless printer, 1 projector and an external DVD drive, valued at \$3,000, from the Greater Echo Park Elysian Neighborhood Council via the Edendale Library Friends Society be accepted to establish an information literacy program for teen patrons at the Edendale Branch Library; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that letters of thanks be sent to The Greater Echo Park Elysian Neighborhood Council and the Edendale Library Friends Society expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board of Library Commissioners for the generous gifts.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE DESIGN
DEVELOPMENT (FINAL) PLAN OF THE PUBLIC
ART PROJECT FOR THE FAIRFAX BRANCH LIBRARY

Pat Kiefer, Assistant City Librarian, recommended to the Board that approval be given to an art project that will supplement the existing artwork at the Fairfax Branch. She said the proposed artwork would go in two locations, a blank niche above a small bench in the entryway, and in the Teen’s Area located around the corner from the circulation desk. Ms. Kiefer said that the proposed artwork was presented to the community at a Friends of the Fairfax Branch Library meeting on August 11, 2009 and was enthusiastically supported.

Juliana Cheng, Library Facilities Director, reported that Julio Sims is the artist selected for the proposed art project and he was specifically asked to focus on those two aforementioned areas. Ms. Cheng said that presently, the niche layout at the entry area, right above the bench, needs something to have a finished look. She said the other artwork in the Young Adult area, located right behind the circulation desk, is needed to draw attention to that area. She emphasized that the additional artwork will help energize both spaces, especially the Teen's Area which is dark and often overlooked.

Ms. Cheng pointed out that Julio Sims presented this art project to the Cultural Affairs Commission and was approved at its last meeting. She introduced Ms. Dee McMillin with the Public Arts Division of the Cultural Affairs Department, and Julio Sims, the project artist.

Presentation of Art Project

Artist Julio Sims said he proposes an artwork that integrates with both the architecture of the space and the function of the building. He indicated the two artworks symbolize the library's mission of information and inspiration and as catalyst for self-pursuit of knowledge and global understanding:

Entry bench niche: The image consists of two hands lifting fabric that has a pattern inspired by local Native American basketry designs and will be made of ceramic tile. It will be located just above the bench and will cover an area of approximately 4 feet high and 8 feet wide. He said the artwork sets the tone for crossing a threshold and an unveiling element that refers to the history and the function of the library, as a place to acquire knowledge and self-awareness.

Young Adult Area: Image of a spider's web that extends along the back wall with the phrase, "you are the thread". He said the imagery alludes to the current use of the space for Internet access to the "world wide web". The mural will be digitally printed on vinyl and covered in matte UV laminate.

Artist Julio Sims concluded by stating he wanted both of his artworks to be not only beautiful to look at but something that would provoke action, and suggest the path of knowledge is not a direct line from point A to B but it has its twist and turns and that the library can provide that unveiling.

President Wieder thanked Mr. Sims for his presentation and asked what his thought process was for the proposed artwork.

Mr. Sims responded that he wanted his artwork to complement the architecture of the building that the community clearly had chosen, therefore, he visited the Fairfax Branch to look at the actual spaces and met with Sr. Librarian Roy Stone, who was extremely helpful in determining what is important to the community.

During the discussion, Juliana Cheng noted that the Cultural Affairs Department had previously discussed about installing plaques that would name the art piece and the artist, but for now there is information available at each of the libraries so our patrons know about the artwork and the artists at their branch.

Thereafter, it was MOVED by Commissioner Hirano-Nakanishi, seconded by Commissioner Walters and unanimously carried that the following resolution be adopted:

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-46 (C-35)

WHEREAS, on July 10, 2003 an original public art project was approved by the Board of Library Commissioners for the Children's Area in the Fairfax Branch; and

WHEREAS, an additional art project is proposed to enhance and energize two locations in the branch: 1) A blank niche above a small bench in the entry way will display an image of two hands lifting fabric that has a pattern inspired by local Native American basketry designs and 2) a mural consisting of a spider web with the phrase "you are the thread" will be located in the Teens' Area; and

WHEREAS, funds are available to cover the cost of the art project from the 1998 Library Bond Program. The additional art project was approved by the Cultural Affairs Commission on August 20, 2009:

RESOLVED that the Board of Library Commissioners hereby give Design Development (Final) approval to the Public Art Project by Julio Sims for the Fairfax Branch Library.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL TO AMEND
CONTRACT NO. 744 FOR THE AFTER-HOURS
USE OF THE WOODLAND HILLS PARKING LOT

Pat Kiefer, Assistant City Librarian, recommended approval to amend the contract for after-hours use of the Woodland Hills Branch parking lot. She said Mr. John Makhani, owner of Via Piacere Restaurant, has requested more flexible hours due to the economic downturn. The proposed contract stipulates a rental fee payment of \$1,500 per month to use the lot during peak restaurant hours, for a period of one year with an option for two additional years.

President Wieder asked why the additional hours are being requested, since during an economic downturn, there would be a need for less hours. Kyle Millager, Business Manager, clarified that they are still allowed the same number of hours for the contract year but they will have the flexibility to use it at any time that the branch is closed, and currently they have strict hours.

Also, in response to an inquiry from Commissioner Walters, Ms. Millager said the rent is current as of this date, and Mr. Makhani will be establishing an automatic electronic transfer for payment to the Library for the monthly rental fee, as proposed in the July 29, 2009 letter from Mr. Makhani, Item No. 3.

At the request of Commissioner Walters, the Business Manager stated she will provide a status of the Makahni contract every six months.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-47 (C-36)

WHEREAS, on October 25, 2007, the Board of Library Commissioners approved Contract No. 744 with Makhani, Inc., owner of Villa Piacere Restaurant, for the after-hours use of the parking lot at the Woodland Hills Branch Library for a one-year period with an option for two additional years; and

WHEREAS, John Makhani, President, has expressed an interest in the renewal option with a proposal for the agreement to include more flexible hours due to the economic downturn:

RESOLVED that the Board of Library Commissioners approve Amendment 1 to Contract No. 744 revising specifications relative to the hours of operation, late fee charges, etc. for a term of one-year with an option for two additional years; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Attorney and City Librarian be authorized to make technical changes to the Agreement prior to execution.

ORAL REPORT ON THE INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND
LIBRARY SERVICES (IMLS) GRANT – “LIBRARIANS FOR LA”

Pat Kiefer asked Anne Connor, Director of Central Library Services, to speak about the Institute of Museum and Library Services/LA Scholars (IMLS), a grant awarded to Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) for the training and recruitment of librarians.

Ms. Connor provided an update on the IMLS program noting that the Library is about to embark on the final year of the 3-year grant. She said to date, 67 Library school students have attended the Reference Institutes, with the breakdown as follows:

- 36 clerical employees of LAPL have been admitted into the program and participated in the Reference Institute Program
- 13 employees have graduated
- 4 have been hired by LAPL as Librarians, others are caught in the hiring freeze
- 8 employees, recent Library School enrollees, are applying for this year's program.

Ms. Connor indicated all employees who successfully meet the requirements of the grant get full tuition reimbursement for their classes, which is a significant financial incentive. She said the purpose of the program when the Library applied for the grant was to support our clerical staff in their library studies and to recruit a diverse librarian pool. She informed that many of the Library education programs are online which means full-time library employees can get their education on their own time but these programs don't provide the hands-on practice students need. She said the Reference Institute Program fulfills the need for hands-on reference experience.

Ms. Connor noted that each Reference Institute is a 4-week series of training either at Central for reference training or in a branch or subject department. To date, the Reference Institute has presented 43 training sessions by 34 librarians on a variety of topics.

Ms. Connor said that a Stipend Program is available for non-employees of the library as part of the recruiting effort. Students can participate in the program and learn more about LAPL. She reported that so far 31 students have participated, including two coming from northern California, testifying to the value of the program and relevance to their professional growth.

Ms. Connor commented that the IMLS/LA Scholars has been a very successful program, but it has been hindered now by the inability to hire new graduates. She is hopeful that when we can finally hire, a well-trained and diverse pool of candidates will be available that know and value the Los Angeles Public Library and its services.

Ms. Connor concluded by introducing Principal Librarian Linda Moussa who is in charge of Reference Services at Central Library and Director of the program, and Senior Librarian Bob Timmermann, in charge of InfoNow and coordinator of the Reference Institute Program.

President Wieder thanked Ms. Connor for the update and said she is glad the Library is moving along with the clerical employees having an opportunity for career advancement.

ORAL REPORT ON THE INFONOW
UNIT OF THE CENTRAL LIBRARY

Bob Timmermann, Senior Librarian for the LAPL's InfoNow Unit informed that the InfoNow Unit is the Library's principal telephone contact for all questions from library patrons and its telephone number is on the back of every library card. He reported that on an average day, an InfoNow librarian may handle between 80-120 phone calls about all matters dealing with the Central Library and all of the branches, including reference and circulation services, library programs, as well as help navigating the library's website. Their Unit answers questions in English and Spanish, and various other languages.

He stated that InfoNow staff communicates with patrons via telephone, e-mail, Instant Messaging (IM), and through the AskNow Reference Cooperative. Per day, 50-100 questions are received by e-mail via the LAPL's web page; like the phone calls, they can cover just about any topic. Also, approximately 80 inquiries are received per month through our IM service and LAPL has accounts with Yahoo, AOL, and Hotmail and its IM handle is "*asklapl*."

Additionally, Mr. Timmermann stated that the InfoNow staff handles reference inquiries through the reference cooperative called "AskNow." This nationwide cooperative of librarians has staff available 24/7 to handle questions from all over the country. He said that when a question is identified as needing follow up by LAPL, it is referred to him and he assigns it to a staff person from the InfoNow Unit or a Central Library subject department librarian for response. He noted that LAPL is also used as an expert backup nationwide in certain fields, in particular local history and genealogy.

He informed the Board that the InfoNow Unit staff also operates the First Source Reference Center and Document Delivery Service with funding from an LSTA grant from the State Library. The LAPL serves as a resource for libraries from all over California to obtain hard to find items, such as rare journals or sheet music.

In addition to their work, Mr. Timmermann said that all of the Librarians in InfoNow have regular assignments in the Subject Departments and rotate through the Subject Departments getting specialized training and experience in the subjects covered, and serve as a pool for the reference desks in all of the departments of Central Library.

In conclusion, Bob Timmermann added that when the InfoNow staff is not assisting the public, they work on special projects for the subject departments in Central such as inventorying and mapping the Rare Books collections, developing an organized archive of the history of the Los Angeles Public Library, and assisting with locating and ordering photographs from the library's historic collection. Also, the Librarians in InfoNow are on the Electronic Resources Training team teaching patrons how to make better use of the technology that the library offers.

Mr. Timmermann pointed out he has one library assistant, Claudia de Leon, who manages the library computer center overseeing 63 computer terminals and manages tuition reimbursement for the IMLS program.

Commissioner Walters said that this presentation brought to mind an article many years ago in *L.A. Times* about “ask a librarian” and it was a 24/7 service you called and an actual person would give an answer to your question. Mr. Timmermann responded that this is how InfoNow actually works, in which a staff person answers.

President Wieder thanked Mr. Timmermann for his very informative presentation and spoke of the importance of keeping patrons continually informed of the services available.

VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS: None.

COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

2010 Census Participation

In response to Commissioner Hirano-Nakanishi’s inquiry about the Library’s participation in the 2010 Census, Assistant City Librarian Pat Kiefer stated that the Library has been contacted by the Mayor’s office for the Library to work with the Census workers. She said the Library is going to make Census information available at the reference circulation desks for the public and staff, and provide space, should they need it.

Commissioner Hirano-Nakanishi said she hopes at some point we would have more information from the city because there may be ways for the non-profits, the libraries and colleges to work together.

President Wieder requested a status report within the next couple of months, specifically how many branches are involved, etc.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

ATTEST: _____

Tyree Wieder
President

Raquel M. Borden
Acting Board Executive Assistant

Date to be approved: September 10, 2009