

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

A Regular meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Angeles Mesa Branch Library, 2700 West 52nd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90043, starting at the scheduled time of 11:30 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT: PRESIDENT TYREE WIEDER
VICE PRESIDENT JULIE A. MENDOZA
COMMISSIONER ROBERT A. CHICK
COMMISSIONER RITA WALTERS

EXCUSED

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER MARSHA HIRANO-NAKANISHI

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Gomez, City Librarian; Kris Morita, Assistant General Manager; Patricia Kiefer, Assistant City Librarian; Councilmember Bernard Parks; Paul Habib, Council District 14; Josh Rohmer, CRA/LA; Basia Jankowski, Deputy City Attorney; Roy Stone, President, Librarian's Guild; and staff.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 8/27/09

MOVED by Commissioner Chick, seconded by Commissioner Walters and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the regular meeting held August 27, 2009, be approved as submitted.

REMARKS BY THE CENTRAL SOUTHERN AREA MANAGER
AND THE ANGELES MESA BRANCH LIBRARIAN

Central Southern Area Manager

Cheryl Collins, Central Southern Area Manager, welcomed the Board and guests to the Open House celebrating completion of improvements at the Angeles Mesa Branch Library. She reported that the region is served by 13 community branches and all are open except for the Vermont Square Branch, which is closed for renovations and repairs. She indicated the Central Southern Area covers a wide geographic area with two regional branches, the Exposition Park and San Pedro Regional Branch Libraries.

Ms. Collins said the area branches have been very busy this summer with a large influx of patrons. Some of the programs and services offered include Summer Reading Clubs, computer classes, and workshops in conjunction with Social Security Administration, Alzheimer Association of California, Wells Fargo Bank, and health film series by Charles Drew Medical School. Moreover, with the school year starting, librarians would once again be conducting outreach efforts with the school population including the six schools located in the Central Southern region under the Mayor's Partnership for School program. Student Smart Classes will be offered year round.

Senior Branch Librarian

Ken Blum, Senior Librarian, Angeles Mesa Branch, reported that this is their 81st year serving the community, and last year the highlight of their 80th Anniversary celebration was a visit by an 80-year old patron who used the library as a child from 1933-1939. Mr. Blum spoke of the recent renovations that would allow more patrons to access the Internet, offer additional study space and provide a larger open area for library patrons to browse materials. In terms of programming, the library will offer computer classes, weekly Storytime, weekly board games, and much more. Lastly, he introduced his staff who were present: Kyan Daizadeh, Young Adult Librarian; Bronislav Meyler, Adult Librarian; Ruth Culpepper and Sandra Bogan, Clerk Typists; and LaNita Broadous, Messenger Clerk.

Following presentation by staff, Commissioner Walters requested a status report at an upcoming Board meeting on the renovations of the Vermont Square site.

A brief dialogue ensued concerning the history of libraries in the City of Los Angeles. The President asked that discussion take place at a future meeting relative to the feasibility of having a written history prepared thereon.

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

CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

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

Recommended Acceptance of Grant
For Addition of an Adult Literacy Center

At the direction of the City Librarian, the Assistant General Manager reported on the Congressionally Directed Grant Award. Ms. Morita stated that in Spring of 2008, the Mayor's office expressed interest in the Library Department submitting a federal grant application to add adult literacy centers. Following grant submittal, which was supported by Congressman Xavier Becerra, the Library Department was awarded an IMLS Congressional Directed Grant Award of \$43,000 to open an adult literacy center at the Pico Union Branch Library. Ms. Morita noted this would be LAPL's 21st adult literacy center.

Questions arose about the cost to maintain the literacy center and what funding would be used to sustain it since the term of the grant award is from August 1, 2008 to July 31, 2010. Ms. Morita informed the Board that annual funding for staffing is approximately \$25,000 per center and the Library Foundation of Los Angeles has been financially supportive of the literacy centers.

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-48 (C-37)

WHEREAS, on August 17, 2009, the Institute of Museum of Library Services announced that the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) was awarded a Congressionally Directed Grant of \$43,000 to open a new adult literacy center in the Pico Union Branch Library. The term of the grant award is August 1, 2009 to July 31, 2010:

RESOLVED that the Los Angeles Public Library accept an IMLS Congressional Directed Grant Award of \$43,000 to be deposited in Library Trust Fund 419, Department 44, Account Code 268 to open an adult literacy center in the Pico Union Branch Library.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO
CONTRACT NO. 749 WITH DETECTION LOGIC, INC.

Kyle Millager, Business Manager, reported that on February 21, 2008, the Board authorized execution of a contract with Detection Logic, Inc. for replacement of the fire life safety system at the Central Library. The new fire life system must be interfaced to the smoke exhaust system. She indicated on July 2009, the Contractor and General Services Building Engineers performed a preliminary test on the exhaust system and some of the dampers failed to open due to mechanical failure. To resolve this

problem, the contract needs to be amended to allow the contractor to provide and install switches to the damper blades, thereby allowing the status of the damper to be reflected on the new fire life safety system panel. Ms. Millager noted that the additional scope of work would increase the contract amount by \$165,000 for a total contract amount of \$1.365 million. The system is anticipated to be installed and fully certified by the end of this calendar year and will have the latest state of the art control panels, smoke alarms and audible devices guaranteeing the highest level of safety attainable.

Commissioner Walters requested that in the future, Library Department Board Reports pertaining to contracts include the dollar amounts not only in the contract but also under "Findings" to make it easier to locate. The Commissioner emphasized she is very pleased the fire life safety system will be up to date by the end of the year.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-49 (C-38)

WHEREAS, on February 21, 2008, the Board of Library Commissioners approved a 3-year Contract No. 749 with Detection Logic, Inc., for the retrofit/replacement of the Fire Life Safety System for the Central Library; and

WHEREAS, on July 2009, the Contractor and General Services Building Engineers performed a preliminary test on the smoke exhaust system and some of the dampers failed to open due to mechanical failure. To resolve this problem, switches must be installed in direct contact with the damper blades, thereby allowing the status of the damper to be reflected on the new fire life safety system panel. This enhancement to the operations of the smoke exhaust system is critical for the safety of the public and staff; and

WHEREAS, sufficient funds are available for these services from the Library's Contractual Services Account:

RESOLVED that the Board of Library Commissioners approve Amendment 1 to Contract No. 749 Contract with Detection Logic, Inc., for the retrofit/replacement of the Fire Life Safety System for the Central Library; and

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

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF NEW
LANDSCAPING DESIGN PLAN FOR
THE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BRANCH LIBRARY

City Librarian Gomez introduced the proposed new landscaping design plan for the Benjamin Franklin Branch. In particular, he said library staff has been in discussion with City personnel about the fence that was erected around the entire site for security reasons. The City Librarian indicated Juliana Cheng, Director of Library Facilities, has been working closely with Councilmember Huizar's Office, in whose District the library is located, and the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA/LA).

Juliana Cheng provided a brief history of the Benjamin Franklin Branch noting it was the first branch library in the City of Los Angeles. The present facility was rebuilt in 1975 at the southeast corner of East 1st and Chicago Streets. She pointed out that in 2000 a fence was erected around the entire property because of complaints from the Los Angeles Police Department and at the urging of the Council Office. This helped with security issues, however it made the library look uninviting.

Ms. Cheng mentioned the intersection of East 1st Street and Chicago has changed dramatically since 2000. The new Hollenbeck Community Police Station has relocated to the northwest corner, the City purchased the historic Chicago Plaza Building in the southwest corner and is currently renovating it to become the Boyle Heights Constituent Services Center, the Ross Valencia Community Park occupies the remaining northeast corner and the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension runs along 1st Street and is scheduled to begin operation sometime in 2009. She said with all these positive changes, Councilmember Huizar wants to redesign the landscaping of the library to provide a more welcoming front to people visiting the 1st Street "civic plaza" area. He enlisted the CRA to help with this project and they contracted with Calvin Ahbe Landscape Architects to come up with a design solution and look for funding to complete the project. Ms. Cheng indicated staffs from the Department of Recreation and Parks and LA Police Department participated in reviewing the Plan. The scope of the project includes:

- New landscaping (including bougainvillea groundcover and olive trees) which mimics the landscaping at the new Hollenbeck Police Station.
- Removing the fence surrounding the building but leaving the parking lot fenced in so the back is still protected.
- Removing potential hiding spaces created by the concrete benches and removing dilapidated trellis on the 1st Street side and replacing with new landscaping.
- Removing potential graffiti wall spaces by adding green screens with climbing vegetation.
- Relocating the walkway to the library from Chicago Street to the corner of the intersection to make it more inviting and intuitive to the public visiting the "plaza" area.

Ms. Cheng introduced Paul Habib, Public Projects and Capital Infrastructure Manager, Council District 14, and Josh Rohmer, Assistant Project Manager, CRA/LA.

Paul Habib stated Councilmember Huizar is a strong proponent of libraries. He said the branch in its present form looks enclosed, but with new landscaping, the facility will look more open and inviting. Mr. Habib indicated the Council Office has been working with the Hollenbeck police to address safety concerns and CRA to identify funds and they have targeted AB 1290 funding as a revenue source. Mr. Habib stated the new civic area with a constituent service center, library, police station and park is a great resource for the constituents.

Josh Rohmer stated it has been a pleasure to work with the Library Department, Council Office and various City departments to make this facility more attractive overall. He underscored the library is an important anchor. Mr. Rohmer said the CRA would administer the potential \$175,000 for improvements in partnership with the Council Office. The Board of Commissioners of the CRA/LA is scheduled to vote on this matter October 1, 2009 and thereafter will proceed to City Council. Lastly he indicated if approval is secured, the Department of General Services would work on the project.

Board Discussion

The President spoke in support of the landscaping plan and said removing the fence will send a positive message to the public. She asked about the maintenance of the landscape. Ms. Cheng indicated the proposed vegetation had been reviewed by the Department of Recreation and Parks who currently and in the future will provide maintenance. She reiterated that the new landscaping mimics the landscaping plan at the new Hollenbeck Community Police Station.

As a follow up, Commissioner Walters stated since the Vernon – Leon H. Washington Jr. Memorial Branch Library was within a Redevelopment Project Area and looks very uninviting, she would like to request that discussion take place at a future Board meeting about the feasibility of using AB1290 CRA funding for this branch. The Commissioner thanked Councilmember Huizar for coming up with this idea and taking action.

The President suggested staff may want to look at other libraries that meet the criteria mentioned by Commissioner Walters.

President Wieder also thanked Councilmember Huizar for his leadership on this project and closely working with library staff. Additionally, she offered her gratitude to CRA for their support.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-50

WHEREAS, Councilmember Jose Huizar, District 14, enlisted the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to redesign the landscaping of the Benjamin Franklin Branch Library to provide a more welcoming front to people visiting the 1st Street “civic plaza” area; and

WHEREAS, the scope of the project includes new landscaping, removing potential graffiti wall spaces by adding green screens with climbing vegetation, removing the fence surrounding the building and relocating the walkway to the library from Chicago Street to the corner of the intersection to make the library more accessible and inviting to the public; and

WHEREAS, funds for the project are being actively being sought by the Council Office and the CRA:

RESOLVED that the Board of Library Commissioners hereby approves a new Landscaping Plan for the Benjamin Franklin Branch Library.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF A DONOR WALL
PLAQUE AT THE LOS FELIZ BRANCH LIBRARY

City Librarian Martin Gomez stated Library Administration worked very closely with the Friends of Los Feliz Library to come up with a design for a donor wall plaque at the Los Feliz Branch Library that met not only the Friends’ desires but also was in concert with the space itself. He advised the wall plaque would be installed in the meeting room. Mr. Gomez asked Cecilia Riddle, Director of Branches, to present the proposal.

Cecilia Riddle reported that the donor wall plaque would be placed inside the meeting room lobby entrance on the south facing wall. The “Helen Bernstein Community Room” sign currently in that location will be relocated to just outside the meeting room. She indicated the donor wall consists of four wood panels 36” by 12” with each panel holding 16 donor nameplates, and a header plaque with the name of the Friends group would be installed across the top. Additionally, the monetary levels of donation would match the categories according to Board Policy. Ms. Riddle stated the panel and installation of the donor wall plaque as well as removal and replacement of the meeting room sign would be paid for by the Friends. In conclusion, she emphasized the Friends of Los Feliz Library have been very successful in fundraising efforts since their inception.

In response to a question from Vice President Mendoza, Ms. Riddle stated that the donor wall can be expanded to accommodate more donors and the donation categories can also be adjusted.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2009-51

WHEREAS, the Friends of Los Feliz Library submitted a request to install a donor wall in the Helen Bernstein Community Meeting Room of the Los Feliz Branch Library for purpose of recognizing donors of \$1,000 or more to the Los Feliz Branch; and

WHEREAS, the plaque consists of four 36" by 12" wood panels, each panel will hold 16 donor nameplates and indicate the level of donation. The installation of the plaque will be paid by the Friends of Los Feliz Library:

RESOLVED that the Board of Library Commissioners hereby approves the design and installation of a new donor wall plaque in the Helen Bernstein Community Meeting Room at the Los Feliz Branch Library.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The City Librarian presented the following Announcements:

Congratulations on Appointment

Congratulations were extended to President Tyree Wieder on her appointment as Interim Chancellor of the Los Angeles Community College District. Mr. Gomez thanked Dr. Wieder for her service as President of our Board while she is serving in that capacity.

Impact of Station Fire

Both the Lakeview Terrace and Sun Valley Branch Libraries were modestly impacted by the Station Fire. The Lakeview Terrace Branch was closed for one day and the grounds were used by the Police and Fire Departments. The Sun Valley facility was on alert for closure.

System Maintenance

On Sunday, October 11, 2009 and Monday, October 12 (Columbus Day Holiday) patrons will not be able to access online services due to significant system maintenance. The Central Library and all Regional Branches will be closed that Sunday. The public will be made aware well in advance through a press release, signs posted at libraries, a notice on the LAPL's home web page and notification to Council Offices. In addition, the due date for materials will be adjusted to reflect this interruption.

Budget Information

The City Council's Budget and Finance Committee will meet on Monday, September 14, 2009 relative to the Early Retirement Incentive Program (EIRP), and on Tuesday, a Special Council Meeting is scheduled to discuss the Committee's recommendation and other related budget issues. The City Librarian stated there should be some clarity in the next few days on the impact to City services, more significantly to the Library Department. With respect to the librarian ranks, there is a maximum cap applied on how many can take advantage of the ERIP.

(The City Attorney advised that if the Board wished to discuss development of this item, it should be placed on the next Agenda)

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTSVisitor

Commissioner Chick introduced his son, Andrew Chick, who was visiting that day. The previous time Andrew attended a Commission meeting was in 1977 when Commissioner Chick also served on a City Commission.

ITEMS PENDING

The following pending items were reviewed by President Wieder:

Book Budget Generating Ideas

Status report at the next meeting

System for Buying Books More Efficiently

Report in October or November 2009

Various Proposals from the Friends of the Pio Pico-Koreatown Library
Status report at the next meeting

Plans to be Implemented Relative to the 2010 Census
Report in January 2010

SPECIAL APPEARANCE

The City Librarian welcomed Councilmember Bernard Parks, Eighth District, to the Open House for the newly renovated Angeles Mesa Branch Library. The City Librarian recognized the hard work of Library staff and the leadership of Councilmember Parks that helped accomplish this renovation which includes a newly renovated community room with 14 new public access computers, refurbished bathroom, new paint, new landscaping, restained beautiful front oak doors, and new fence installed around the perimeter of the building to allow for more space.

Councilmember Parks extended a special greeting to Commissioner Walters. He said the “Rita D. Walters Learning Complex” is located in his Council District. The Councilmember stated it is a major plus that all the libraries in his Eighth Council District have been refurbished or newly built and emphasized that due to the great management of the Library Department, a new Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library was constructed. He emphasized a top priority was to make sure the Angeles Mesa Branch was upgraded. Councilmember Parks asserted this branch is very well used all the time, and it will give students from nearby schools an opportunity to be a block away from a major library. He thanked the Commissioners, Kris Morita and Juliana Cheng for their hard work and indicated he is very pleased with the results.

In conclusion, the Councilmember spoke of an upcoming Council motion asking the Library Commission and its management to begin looking at technology to make library services more serviceable to the community and save money in the process. In addition, he mentioned he needs the support of the Board and management in making sure that the Library Department’s Charter appropriation from the general fund of property tax revenues not be negatively impacted, as was done in this Fiscal Year’s Budget when the Library had to pay for its own utilities. He said that was done for one specific purpose, to move their money into the general fund to be reused; thereby depleting funding that could be used for library programs. He commented that it is not fair that no other department, other than Recreation and Parks, is paying for its own utilities. He underscored this is an important issue the Commissioners and the General Manager need to fight before it gets to the next Budget Committee.

Commissioner Walters thanked Councilmember Bernard Parks for his stalwart support of the Library during budget time. She said she appreciates all he does to support the Library and see that it has funding for its operation and to expand to offer more services. The Councilmember and Commissioner articulated that investing in libraries is the greatest crime prevention money we can spend.

President Wieder expressed her gratitude to the Councilmember for working very closely with Library Administration on this project. She said support of our elected officials and their hands-on involvement really makes a difference. The President concluded by stating that they are aware of his support not only for this library for all the branches.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:38 p.m.

ATTEST: _____

Tyree Wieder
President

Gladys L. Senac
Board Executive Assistant

Date to be approved:

September 24, 2009