

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

August 9, 2012

A Regular meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library, 2920 Overland Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90064, convening at 11:07 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT: PRESIDENT MARSHA HIRANO-NAKANISHI
 COMMISSIONER RITA WALTERS
 COMMISSIONER TYREE WIEDER

EXCUSED

ABSENT: VICE PRESIDENT PAULA MADISON
 COMMISSIONER EDUARDO TINOCO

ALSO PRESENT: Kris Morita, Asst. General Manager; Councilmember Paul H. Koretz, Fifth District; David Giron, Legislative Deputy, Fifth Council District; Friends of the Palms-Rancho Park Library; members of the Westside Village Homeowners Association; members of the Westwood Gardens Civic Association; members of the Palms Neighborhood Council; members of the Tract No. 7260 Association, Inc.; Members of the Westside Neighborhood Council; Jeff Brown, Chairman, Board of Directors, Library Foundation of Los Angeles; and staff.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 7/12/12

MOVED by Commissioner Wieder, seconded by Commissioner Walters and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held July 12, 2012, be approved as submitted.

REMARKS BY THE WESTERN AREA MANAGER
AND THE PALMS-RANCHO PARK BRANCH LIBRARIAN

Western Area Manager

Jene Brown, Acting Western Area Manager, welcomed the Board to the Palms-Rancho Park Branch, one of 12 libraries located in the Western Area. She reported the Area, which covers four council districts, has slightly over 100 librarians, clerks, and messenger clerks; circulated 1.8 million items in Fiscal Year 2011/12; and received approximately 160,000 visitors in the last month, with Mar Vista, Westwood, and Palms-Rancho Park being the busiest branches in the region. She noted that circulation increased at the Palms-Rancho Park Branch over the last fiscal year.

Ms. Brown informed the Board that the Summer Reading and Student Success were very successful summer reading programs for children and teens and experienced a dramatic enrollment increase this summer. She stated that through incentives and creative programming, library staff performed well to help prevent summer reading loss for the youth of Los Angeles. She said that Library staff was also gearing up for back to school since the Western Area serves and collaborates with approximately 102 elementary schools and 64 middle and high schools.

Ms. Brown shared news that the region was the recipient of two grants. First, the Venice Branch received a \$20,000 grant from Google to increase technology and to support student success. The grant funded a technology staff member, equipment, and other resources for student use. The second grant was awarded to the Hyde Park-Miriam Matthews Branch for \$5,000 from AT&T to fund books and resources to assist with homework help and job searching.

Ms. Brown also reported that the dedicated work of approximately 430 volunteers was acknowledged in May with an appreciation breakfast where members of the friends group and tutors were among the attendees. Lastly, Ms. Brown relayed that each branch in the region has a friends group and expressed her appreciation for their continued support of the branches with their tremendous generosity.

Senior Branch Librarian

Maggie Johnson, Senior Librarian, welcomed the Board, Administrative staff and the community at large and provided a brief history of the branch. She said the branch first opened in 1916 in the home of a volunteer in the Palms Community; and after moving to several locations and expanding, it was moved to the current location in 1964, serving and combining the two communities of Palms and Rancho Park. Then, in 2002 another chapter was added to the history of the branch with the construction of the new building. She indicated that plans were underway to celebrate the 10th year anniversary of the branch in November with an open house. Ray Bradbury had been scheduled to be the guest speaker.

Ms. Johnson also provided information about the branch collection, which offers materials in English, Farsi, Spanish, and Chinese. She underscored the remarkable support of the community with a very active Friends of the Library group and three neighborhood councils (Westside, Palms, and the Westside Village). She introduced the staff and thanked them for all their hard work and acknowledged the volunteers who assist with shelving books. She stated that the community had come to the rescue to assist the branch, since the branch messenger clerks were reduced from six to three. She introduced children librarians Jennifer Murphy and Michele Robinson and asked them to share some of the activities they provide for the children and young adult programs.

Jennifer Murphy, Children's Librarian III, spoke on behalf of the young adult librarian who could not be present and informed the Board that there are about 40 teens on the teen council and introduced teen council president Henry Reed who was in the audience. She said this summer the teens made art projects for the Little Tokyo

Tanabata Festival and worked with LACMA in the Healing Hands project, which is an art display for the UCLA Mattel Children's Hospital. For adults, she said the branch offers quilting, two book clubs, and a philosophy discussion. For children, the branch offers separate baby, toddler, and preschool story time, as well as two children book clubs. She pointed out that children enrollment in the Summer Reading Club nearly doubled from last year and teen enrollment increased also. Furthermore, the branch had a children's chess tournament this summer and thanked the Friends group who paid for the craft supplies, refreshments, guest speakers, and medals for winners.

Michele Robinson, Children's Librarian II, discussed two special programs offered recently. The first was BARK, which consists of bringing dogs to the library so children can read to them. She informed the Board that she was the first person to bring the BARK program into the LAPL library system and is now offered in 12 branches. She said this program encourages kids to read out loud in a nonjudgmental way and is very popular and fun. The second program was a four-week intensive make-a-book program where each week the kids met different volunteer presenters, consisting of a professional photographer, two artists, three children's book authors, and a professional binder. She passed around some of the books made by the children so the Board Members and staff could see the creative works that resulted from the program. She said each child received a certificate for participating.

Ms. Johnson concluded the presentation by thanking the staff for their hard work, and the Westside Neighborhood Council and Councilman Koretz for bringing their dedication request to the Board. Lastly, she acknowledged Ms. Marie Wallace, who was the first President of the Friends of the Palms-Rancho Park and responsible for dedicating the room and terrace to Ray Bradbury.

Commissioner Wieder asked how often they bring the dogs for the BARK program. Ms. Robinson replied that four to six dogs come every two months as part of the book club and the children can go from station to station reading to different dogs.

In response to Commissioner Wieder's inquiry about the Ray Bradbury books in the branch's collection, Ms. Johnson responded that the branch has his books in the regular collection, but funds are needed in order to have a special separate collection, which is what the community really wants.

Commissioner Wieder stated that if the Branch is dedicated to Ray Bradbury, it would be nice to also have a special collection of his books.

President Hirano-Nakanishi thanked the Friends of Palms-Rancho Park Branch for being so active and helpful to the branch.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS

WITHIN THE BOARD'S JURISDICTION: None.

CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORTSRecommended Acceptance of Gift

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2012-36

RESOLVED, that the Friends' gift consisting of three tables, valued at \$2,269.40, for the community room at the Encino Tarzana Branch Library be accepted; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that a letter of appreciation be sent to the Friends of the Encino-Tarzana Branch Library expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board of Library Commissioners and staff for their generous donation.

INITIATE PROCESS TO CONSIDER DEDICATION
OF PALMS-RANCHO PARK BRANCH LIBRARY
IN HONOR OF AUTHOR RAY BRADBURY _____ (*Out of Order*)

Assistant General Manager Kris Morita stated that, in accordance with Board Policy, staff recommends to initiate the process to consider the dedication of the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library in recognition of Ray Bradbury. She said this recommendation is in response to requests received by the Board of Library Commissioners from Councilman Paul H. Koretz of the Fifth Council District and from the Westside Neighborhood Council, who were present at the meeting to address the Board regarding this request.

Ms. Morita reported that in 2007, the Board approved the request from the Friends of the Palms-Rancho Park Library and homeowners association to name the meeting room and terrace after Ray Bradbury. She stated that soon after his passing on June 5, 2012, requests were received urging to dedicate the branch in his honor, citing that he was a world known author, a longtime resident of Cheviot Hills, and fervent supporter of the Library Department. She explained that the criteria for recognition in branch facilities is stated in Board Policy 1:312, which she read:

- A. *The Board of Library Commissioners may dedicate a branch library in memory of an individual and approve the design and placement of a plaque within the library with the individual's name. Recommendations for the dedication of a branch library may be accepted and processed in accordance with the following requirements:*
- 1. A written recommendation must be submitted to the Board of Library Commissioners to include a justification for the proposed dedication.*
 - 2. The justification shall include the person's prominent contributions to humanity, to the city, to the library, or to the community, and should demonstrate that the character and achievements of the individual set standards of excellence, served as a role model, and reflected the principles and ideals of American democracy, its diversity and plurality.*

3. *The recommendation shall be posted in the libraries and on the library Web site for three months for review and the opportunity for comments by the public.*
4. *Library staff will evaluate the recommendation and community input in a report to the Board of Library Commissioners for its consideration of the request.*

Public Hearing

(1)

Paul Koretz, Councilmember, Fifth District, stated that Ray Bradbury was one of the greatest American authors in the arena of Science Fiction/Fantasy, who did his writing in Los Angeles, at this library, at the downtown Library, and at UCLA. He said that it was remarkable how Ray managed to get around Los Angeles without doing a lot driving. He pointed out that the mystery writing Ray Bradbury did in the later years reflected all the ins and outs of Los Angeles and a lot of hidden places and history that other writers had not undertaken.

The Councilman mentioned that he had hoped that the library would be dedicated while Ray was still alive and that he was been working with family and friends to move this request forward. He shared that he has a stack of 20 of his favorite Ray Bradbury paperbacks on his desk at the City Council horseshoe and plans to keep them there until the Library gets named after Ray. He said that he looks forward to seeing this request happen and thanked the Board for having the meeting at the branch to emphasize the importance of the request, a place surrounded by Ray Bradbury's work. He remarked that it would be one of his high points in elected office to be able to make this request happen because this was the place where Ray did some of his great writings.

(2)

Terri Tippit, President of the Westside Neighborhood Council, spoke of Ray Bradbury being a fixture at the Palms-Rancho Park Branch and how he always made time to talk to the many library visitors who got to meet him. She said that the Westside Neighborhood Council feels that of all the libraries, the Palms-Rancho Park Branch is one that should be named or dedicated after him.

(3)

Richard S. Harmetz, Acting Secretary, Westside Neighborhood Council/Tract No. 7260 Association, Inc., read a resolution passed by the Tract No.7260 Association urging the Los Angeles Public Library change the name of the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library to the Ray Bradbury-Palms Rancho Park Branch Library. He said that he knew Ray personally and introduced him several times when he spoke at this branch library. He pointed out that the unique trait about Ray was that he never refused a free speech at a public library and he never gave a speech in which he did not proclaim his love for libraries. He stated that Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library in particular was his neighborhood Library and there is no better way of honoring Ray Bradbury than renaming this library in his honor.

(4)

Toni N. Todaro, President of the Greater Los Angeles Writers' Society and science fiction/fantasy author, thanked Senior Librarian Maggie Johnson and her staff for the great support they provide when the Society meets there. He stated that in February 2009, Ray Bradbury was presented at this library with awards from the City of Los Angeles and with the prestigious lifetime achievement award from the Greater Los Angeles Writers' Society.

Mr. Todaro shared that Ray Bradbury inspired him to write and that he would always be thankful for meeting Ray. He said Ray was not only a friend of libraries and advocate of the written word, but also was one of the most highly recognized literary authors. He thanked Councilman Koretz for the proposal, and on behalf of the over 3,000 members of the Greater Los Angeles Writers' Association, who highly endorse and respectfully recommend that the Board renamed the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library in honor of Ray Bradbury.

(5)

James Greenwood, President of the Friends of the Palms-Rancho Park Library, stated that the Friends of the Library support the dedication and believe that this is a fitting tribute to Ray. He commented that Ray was amazingly humble and gracious. He said Ray was so willing to give of himself and so unimpressed with himself. He stated that the Friends will be glad to contribute with funds for the dedication plaque.

(6)

Terri Ellen Robins, Board Member of the Palms Neighborhood Council, praised the librarians' hard work and said that they are the bones that hold the branch together to serve a vast community. She stated that the Palms-Rancho Park Branch provides a great reading program and the children are learning the importance of the Library, and with three communities coming to this branch, it would be highly appropriate for Ray Bradbury's name to be on this library because he was a famous, well-known respected writer. She said that it would be great to have the name of a writer on their community library.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Walters commented that she couldn't say that she knew Ray Bradbury personally, but she could say that she got to know him through the media and through his books. She mentioned that when she was member of the City Council, she had recommended that the Central library be renamed after him, and when he passed away, she felt that everyone had lost a close friend. She said she was pleased to hear all the positive things this community had to say about Ray Bradbury and that it would be her pleasure to vote for the dedication.

Commissioner Wieder thanks Councilman Paul H. Koretz and everyone present for taking time to come to speak before the board.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2012-37

WHEREAS, Ray Bradbury, was a world famous author of such popular classics as “Fahrenheit 451,” “The Martian Chronicles,” ”Something Wicked This Way Comes,” and many other well-known and beloved books; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bradbury was a Cheviot Hills resident for many years, a strong and vocal supporter of libraries including Los Angeles Public Library, and supported the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library where he gave readings and often met with fans and admirers; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Library Commissioners received letters from City Councilmember Paul Koretz, Council District 5, and the Westside Neighborhood Council requesting that the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library be dedicated to Ray Bradbury:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED That the Board of Library Commissioners initiate, in accordance with Board Policy 1:312, the process to consider dedicating the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library in recognition of writer and Cheviot Hills resident Ray Bradbury.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF MEMORANDUM
OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE
LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE
LIBRARY FOUNDATION OF LOS ANGELES

Assistant General Manager Kris Morita stated that Interim City Librarian Susan Kent and Foundation Executive Board members had worked diligently on a new MOU and agreed to revisions that clarified its intent. She reported that the Library Foundation Board approved the MOU at their July 26 Board of Directors Meeting, and that it had also been reviewed by the Deputy City Attorney and City Risk Manager.

Commissioner Walters thanked both parties for working on clarifying the language regarding *Indemnification* in Section 6. Related to that, she stated that the last sentence in the second paragraph states that, “*the Foundation will verify the existence of Liquor Liability Insurance.*” However, it is not specified how it will be verified and suggested that it would be helpful to be more specific about the verification process.

Ms. Morita responded that the language could be revised (in bold type) to read: “*the **Library** will verify the existence of Liquor Liability Insurance.*”

Commissioner Walters stated that she appreciates the work put into changing the MOU; however, she still has concerns about the process by which people are appointed to the Foundation Board. She also asked how would the Foundation’s Board of Directors make sure that its diversity continues beyond the service time of current members.

Commissioner Wieder responded that she is a member of the Board of the Library Foundation of Los Angeles and she would look in the bylaws for that information. She said that because their bylaws can be changed if a new Board decides to do it, the diversity and selection of Board members has to be a goal of the Foundation and it has to commit to do it.

Commissioner Walters said she would like to know if such a goal had been stated by the Foundation, and asked Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankowski if she could request that a report on the Foundation bylaws be placed on the agenda.

Ms. Jankowski responded that the Library Foundation is a private non-profit organization; however, the Board can request them to come before the Board and explain their bylaws.

Review of the MOU continued and Commissioner Wieder referred to Section 3, wherein states that, "*On an annual basis, the Library will supply the Foundation with an accounting of the in-kind financial support it provides to the Foundation,*" and asked that this item be added to the agenda calendar.

Commissioner Wieder requested that to clarify which Board is being referred to in the fourth line of Section 8-Funding Requests shall read:

"Library Department's request for funding priorities from the Foundation for the next fiscal year is approved by the Board of **Library Commissioners**, which the Board of Directors of the Foundation shall take into account in determining the use of the Foundation's assets."

Deputy City Basia Jankowski concurred with the edits.

Thereafter, it was MOVED by Commissioner Wieder, seconded by Commissioner Walters and unanimously carried that the two (2) amendments to the MOU be approved and the following resolution be adopted:

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2012-38 (C-29)

WHEREAS, The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Contract No. 753, between the City of Los Angeles Public Library and the Library Foundation of Los Angeles expires October 31, 2012:

RESOLVED That the Board of Library Commissioners hereby approves the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Los Angeles Public Library and the Library Foundation of Los Angeles. The agreement is for a term of three (3) years, to be effective from November 1, 2012 through October 31, 2015.

Commissioner Wieder thanked Interim City Librarian Susan Kent and Jeff Brown, Chairman of the Library Foundation Board for working on the MOU.

VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Assistant General Manager Kris Morita announced that staff is eagerly awaiting the arrival of new City Librarian John F. Szabo and that a reception would be held on September 5 to meet and greet him.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

ATTEST: _____

Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi
President

Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant

Date to be approved:
September 13, 2012