

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

September 27, 2012

A Regular meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Central Library, 630 West 5th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071, convening at 11:01 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT: VICE PRESIDENT PAULA MADISON
COMMISSIONER EDUARDO TINOCO
COMMISSIONER RITA WALTERS
COMMISSIONER TYREE WIEDER

EXCUSED

ABSENT: PRESIDENT MARSHA HIRANO-NAKANISHI

ALSO PRESENT: John F. Szabo, City Librarian; Kris Morita, Asst. General Manager; Roy Stone, President, Librarians' Guild; Henry Gambill, Executive Vice President, Librarians' Guild; Basia Jankowski, Deputy City Attorney; Ken Brecher, President, Library Foundation of Los Angeles; and staff.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 8/9/12 Regular Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Tinoco, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held August 9, 2012, be approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS

WITHIN THE BOARD'S JURISDICTION: None.

**CITY LIBRARIAN'S COMMENTS
AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The City Librarian announced that this new section on the agenda has been added with the purpose of providing the Board with highlights of activities and events happening at the Library. He stated this section is for information purposes only and it is not intended to ask for approval or any decisions. He proceeded to make the following announcements:

Citizenship Initiative

Mr. Szabo spoke about the Citizenship Initiative, which is a partnership with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCI). He said a press conference was held on Wednesday, September 19 at the Central Library regarding LAPL's new role in helping immigrants gain citizenship; then it was

followed at 11 a.m. by a swearing-in ceremony for about 50 children. Mayor Villaraigosa and other dignitaries and officials were in attendance.

The City Librarian said the program provides an opportunity for the Library to be a place where people can find information about citizenship through the materials available at all LAPL branch libraries and Central Library. He stated training by USCI was provided for about 100 librarians and that staff had done a wonderful job in highlighting this service with Citizenship Path posters and making informational materials available.

He pointed out that the Library was asked to participate in this initiative and USCI is interested in replicating this initiative throughout the country.

Library Foundation of Angeles Awards Dinner

Mr. Szabo congratulated the Library Foundation of Los Angeles for a very successful 20th Anniversary Awards Dinner held on Sunday, September 23, and thanked them for all the great work they do for the Library.

ALOUD Program-Salman Rushdie

Mr. Szabo reported that the Salman Rushdie event presented by the ALOUD Program on Monday, September 24, was very well attended and received a lot of coverage by the local press.

Central Library Green Roofing Project

The City Librarian informed the Board that the Library has been working with other city departments on putting a new green roof for the Central Library and other green elements in the building, such as automatic lighting and other additions. He said the Mayor would be highlighting this project at a press conference on October 4th at the Central Library. Plans for the press conference are still being developed and additional information will be provided when it becomes available.

Financial Literacy Workshops

Mr. Szabo announced that a Financial Planning Day would be held at the Central Library from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on October 13th. The event is a partnership with the United States Conference of Mayors, the Certified Financial Planning Board, Community Development Department, and Financial Planning Association. He said residents will have the opportunity to attend the workshops on retirement planning, general financial planning, personal budgeting, and investment basics, and will have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with a financial planner. He pointed out this event is an example of what the Library is doing with its goal of financial literacy programs.

Vice President Madison thanked the City Librarian for the information he provided and said she is glad that he will be able to keep the Board informed on a regular basis under this new section on the agenda.

Commissioner Walters stated that the City Librarian announcements section was a much-needed addition to the agenda because it certainly will strengthen their relationship with the Library.

CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORTS

It was MOVED by Commissioner Tinoco, seconded by Commissioner Wieder, and unanimously carried that the following resolutions be adopted:

Recommendation to Accept Gift

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2012-41 (C-31)

RESOLVED, That a gift of \$5,000 from Estate of Gerald Polevoi to the Frances Howard Goldwyn Hollywood Branch Library be accepted and deposited into Library Trust Fund 831, Account 287; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a letter of appreciation be sent to Ms. Estelle Markovitz, executor of the estate, expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board of Library Commissioners and staff for the generous gift.

Recommendation to Approve Authority for Document Signing

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2012-42 (C-32)

WHEREAS, John F. Szabo was confirmed by City Council on July 27, 2012, as the permanent City Librarian for the Los Angeles Public Library:

RESOLVED That the Board of Library Commissioners hereby authorizes John F. Szabo to sign documents as the City Librarian.

RECEIVE & FILE STATUS REPORT ON THE RESTORATION OF ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE HOURS

City Librarian John Szabo informed the Board that he was extremely pleased to announce that with the new Measure L funds the Library will be able to restore additional public service hours starting Monday, October 15, 2012. He said a press conference will be held at the Central Library on that date.

Mr. Szabo reported that this is the second year of Measure L funding to gradually restore library services to the 2009-10 fiscal year levels. He said the first year funding provided for restoration of Monday service beginning July 18, 2011 at all 73 libraries; and the second year funding will provide for restoration of service on Monday and Wednesday nights and Friday mornings at all libraries beginning October 15, 2012.

The City Librarian also informed the Board that just under 200 exempt, as-needed messenger clerks had already been hired and would be assigned to the various libraries during the next two weeks; and staff has been working with the City Personnel Department to hire employees through the civil service exam process for the positions of clerk typist, librarian, senior librarian, principal librarian and division librarians. He said that a few of the civil service exam processes have not been completed by the City's Personnel Department yet, which has delayed the hiring process. Therefore, a combination of existing staff, substitute staff, and as-needed messenger clerks will be used to staff the additional hours until new staff is hired.

Mr. Szabo noted that the Library Department offered civil service employment to the 24 full time civil service employees that were laid off in 2010; 13 accepted employment and the other 11 individuals either declined or failed to respond. Furthermore, of the 116 laid off exempt employees, 9 were rehired, but most of them chose to apply for the civil service clerk typist exam conducted on September 15, 2012.

Mr. Szabo stated that he is very interested in how the usage numbers in all areas of library services and programs change after October 15, due to the increase in service hours by 15% at the regional branch libraries and Central Library, and 20% at the branch libraries.

Public Comments

(1)

Roy Stone, President of the Librarians' Guild, welcomed the new City Librarian and stated that the Guild is looking forward to extended hours because it will be good for the public, but the Guild is concerned that there would not be enough staff available by October 15th. He said that even though there is a delay on the clerk typist list, the Librarian interviews and scoring have been completed and they could be hired now to assign them to branch libraries where there would not sufficient staff by October 15.

(2)

Henry Gambill, Executive Vice President, Librarians' Guild, also expressed concerns about extending hours with present staff and the use of substitute employees. He said that substitutes are not the answer because they are not always available to work certain dates or at certain locations. He commented that many times he had requested a messenger clerk substitute but he doesn't always get one. He said that it would be challenging for staff if there were not enough employees available by October 15th.

Commissioner Wieder asked for clarification on the substitutes and asked if they were trained employees. The City Librarian responded that 200 exempt, as needed part time employees have been hired during the last month and they will be assigned to various libraries within the next two weeks.

Commissioner Walters asked how many of the 200 exempt employees that were hired were prior employees of the library.

Michael Bolokowicz, Personnel Director, stated that at least half of the new hires were previously employed by the Library Department. He believes that a significant number of them decided to take the clerk typist exam to be hired under the civil service process.

Commissioner Walters said she would like to know the actual number of the messenger clerks that passed the test and were rehired as clerk typists, once the process is completed.

In response to Commissioner Walters' inquiry about the Library being able to keep all the new hired personnel beyond the fifth year of Measure L, the City Librarian replied that the funding from measure L depends on the assessed valuation of property values. He said that when Measure L passed it increased the percentage of the current charter appropriation that the Library receives from .0175% to .0300% on each 100 dollars of assess tax of real or personal property within the City. If property values are maintained or get higher then funding increases and services are sustained. He underscored that the .0300% charter appropriation does continue after the fifth year.

Commissioner Wieder asked that if the 200 exempt employees that had been hired would receive some type of training and orientation prior to October 15. The City Librarian stated that the employees would receive training at their assigned work location and clarified that the new employees would not be used to staff exclusively or predominantly the extended hours; they will be incorporated into broader branch regular staff and working side by side with the current employees, and only in time they will become knowledgeable with their tasks and experienced in delivering the services.

In reply to Commissioner Wieder's question on how staff would be shifted to fill the positions with the employees hired through civil service process, Mr. Michael Bolokowicz stated that in addition to the librarian exam, the Personnel Department had also conducted promotional exams for senior librarian, division and principal librarians to be able to fill in positions through internal promotions that will be done over the next six months.

Public Comments (cont.)

Mr. Stone contended that it shouldn't take six months to hire new employees and to make new appointments. He said the issue is that there are many acting employees in interim senior librarian and principal librarians positions. If those employees don't score high enough or are not

selected to a permanent position, they have the option to revert back to their previous position. He stated the Guild would continue discussing this issue with management, because L.A. County Public Library and other library systems are also hiring and if the city hires slowly, the Library might lose those people on the list.

Commissioner Wieder asked if the Guild's concern was attaching the employees to the LA Public Library before losing them to other library systems.

Mr. Stone replied that was one concern in addition to filling vacancies where staff is needed. He said substitute time was limited and it was not the full amount of time needed and it depended on availability.

Commissioner Tinoco stated that it seemed to him that the Library had been doing all it can to assist the Personnel Department in expediting the hiring process and asked the Guild to be patient and understand that the employees will be hired as soon as the Library is able to do it. He said the City Librarian is in charge and it is his responsibility to determine if there was sufficient staff to open on October 15th. Additionally, the new employees will be working side by side with experienced staff.

The City Librarian stated that Administration also has the sense of urgency on bringing the new staff aboard and to expedite the process.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walters, Mr. Bolokowicz stated that for several budget cycles the Personnel Department had not been able to fill positions and many of their positions were eliminated due to the early retirement program. He said the Personnel Department doesn't have sufficient staff available, which has created delays in the hiring of library staff.

Commissioner Walters expressed concern with the difficulty the Library is having with the hiring process. She said that historically the City has had such long procedures for hiring police officers that many of them ultimately were hired by other cities while waiting to be hired by City of Los Angeles. She would not like that to happen to the Library.

Vice President Madison asked the City Librarian to provide monthly reports on the filling of positions.

BOARD ACTION

It was **MOVED** by Commissioner Walters and seconded by Commissioner Wieder, and unanimously carried that the Measure L Year 2 – Restoration of Additional Public Service Hours Report be received and filed.

RECEIVE AND FILE REPORT ON
THE CYBERNAUTS/COMPUTER
AIDES PROGRAM

(Report requested by Commissioner Walters on July 12, 2012.)

City Librarian John Szabo stated that this report was in response to a request made by the Board in regard to the priority placement of computer aides/cybernauts at the branch libraries. He provided background on the computer aid program that started as a pilot program in the mid-1990's to assist patrons with the newly installed public Internet computers. He said that in recent years, the term "computer aide" was changed to "cybernaut".

Mr. Szabo reported that cybernauts are recruited from the local community, have basic computer knowledge and excellent interpersonal skills. They are assigned to areas where they are most needed to assist patrons on computer basics, how to use various software programs, and how to access the library's e-resources; direct patrons to library staff when patrons need more assistance; and do basic computer troubleshooting and maintain statistics.

Mr. Szabo pointed out that the program is mainly funded by private donations through the Library Foundation of Los Angeles, but some are funded by the Friends of the Library groups. He stated that currently there is only funding, through private sources, to employ twenty-three (23) cybernauts at 23 branch libraries. However, the Library Foundation has recently been awarded a new grant from the Weingart Foundation to fund six (6) more cybernaut positions for the branches for over an eight-month period, starting November 2012. He acknowledged the staff at the Library Foundation of Los Angeles who continue to approach donors to funds this worthwhile program.

Mr. Szabo explained that Branch Library Services had compiled a priority list of branch libraries where cybernauts are needed and have designated the branches by categories of "Highest Priority", "High Priority" and "Priority" (Refer to Exhibit "D" September 27, 2012 Board Report presented to the Board of Library Commissioners on this topic).

Board Discussion

Commissioner Walters commented that she was pleased to see the prioritized list for assigning cybernauts. She asked whether there was any possibility of hiring them through the Library budget. The City Librarian stated that option was worth examining.

Commissioner Walters said that the computerization in the work place has moved in a very fast pace and the aides provide a very valuable service to the adults and children in the community, so if at all possible she would hope to find some way of funding to get more positions in the libraries. She appreciates the good job that staff has done on the prioritization of those positions and looks forward to more of those positions being filled.

Vice President Madison asked what the funding amount was for the 23 current positions plus the additional six; and if it was possible for a donor to designate donations specifically to this program.

The City Librarian replied that donors could designate their donation to this program and that he will provide her with the funding information.

BOARD ACTION

It was **MOVED** by Commissioner Walters and seconded by Commissioner Wieder, and unanimously carried that the report on the Cybersnauts/Computer Aides Program be received and filed.

VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS: None.

**COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS &
REVIEW OF MATTERS PENDING**

Bruckman RareBook Friends

Commissioner Wieder mentioned that the Bruckman Rare Book Friends will present a program and book signing on October 6, 2012 titled, *Metaphorically Mapping the City*.

The City Librarian stated that the Bruckman Rare Book Friends are one of the friends groups at the Central Library that raise funds to provide support for the Rare Book Collection and to fund special purchases in the subject departments and other resources.

Giovanna Mannino, Acting Director, Central stated that the event is not a fundraiser and from time to time the departments hold program of all different types put on by library staff. She said this Friends group also participates on the monthly book sales along with three other Friends groups of other departments here at the Central Library.

Commissioner Wieder said she is glad that the Bruckman Rare Book Friends is getting some publicity and recognition.

Commissioner Walters stated that she noticed that in the letter she received from them, it made reference to needing help in raising funds to supplement the budget for library materials and asked the City Librarian to take this under consideration.

The City Librarian responded he would look at the dollars spent on the library collections in this particular area.

Commissioner Walters asked if there was a criteria for deciding what is a rare book and how books are selected to be placed in the shelving of the Rare Books Room.

The City Attorney reminded all present that this section is for comments and announcements only. She advised that this item be placed on the agenda if the Board wants a report related to the rare books collection.

Vice President Madison requested that this item be placed on agenda.

Foundation Event

Commissioner Wieder reported that the Library Foundation Awards Dinner was a sold-out event and it brought new awareness to those who attended. She commented that she spoke to some of the attendees who were delighted to be here at the Central Library and was their first time visiting the Library. She said the event brought recognition and potential donors for the Library and congratulated the Foundation staff for the great job in putting the together the event.

ADJOURNMENT

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

ATTEST: _____

Paula Madison
Vice President

Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant

Date to be approved:

October 11, 2012