

# **MINUTES**

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

**December 9, 2021**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held via teleconference at 11:03 a.m. on the above-written date.

**1. Roll Call:**

<b>Present:</b>	President	<b>Bích Ngọc Cao</b>
	Vice-President	<b>Kathryn Eidmann</b>
	Commissioner	<b>Arianne Edmonds</b>
	Commissioner	<b>Dale Franzen</b>
	Commissioner	<b>Josefa Salinas</b>

**Absent:** None

**Also present via teleconference:** City Librarian John F. Szabo; Asst. City Librarian Susan Broman; Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankowski; Library staff and members of the public.

**2. Opening Remarks:** Poet Laureate Lynne Thompson opened the meeting with a reading from "Small Mad Planets."

**3. Approval of the Minutes:** Regular Meeting - October 14, 2021: APPROVED  
(Taken out order)

It was moved by Commissioner Salinas and seconded by Vice President Eidmann to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on October 14, 2021. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Edmonds, Eidmann and Salinas). Abstained: 2 (Cao and Franzen) Absent: 0.

**4. Public Comments on Matters  
Within the Board's Jurisdiction:**

The Board heard (1) one General Comment in support of maintaining security at libraries along with the alternative methods in order to maintain a safe environment for patrons and staff; and one (1) comment from the Librarians' Guild on Item D (Internet Use Policy) requesting that efforts be made to ensure CIPA compliance does not censor important information.

**5. City Librarian's Comments  
and Announcements:** City Librarian John F. Szabo reported the following:

- **California State Librarian Greg Lucas made a surprise visit to the Sylmar Branch Library** in November. Staff gave him a tour of the library and discussed the variety of resources and programs offered to the community over the past year, including Neighborhood Science, Tech2Go and Library To Go as well as Adult

Literacy, Career Online High School, E-media, LA Made, Street Fleet, Student Success and so much more.

- **New Teens Leading Change Cycle** launched eight exciting new projects for its sixth cycle of Teens Leading Change (TLC), a program that empowers teens to make positive changes within their local communities. The new TLC projects include: Learning Disabilities at Chatsworth Branch; Environmental Racism at Palisades Branch; School-to-Prison Pipeline at Robertson Branch; Food Insecurity at Lake View Terrace Branch; Housing Crisis at Silver Lake and Echo Park Branches; Financial Literacy at Pico Union and Angeles Mesa Branches; Food Waste at Chinatown Branch, and Neighborhood Beautification at Pio Pico-Koreatown Branch. Mr. Szabo said he was looking forward to seeing these projects come to life, and that he was impressed by the thoughtful, important topics being tackled by the teens.
- **Winter Reading Challenge:** The Winter Reading Challenge is now underway, and will last from December 6 to January 8. This year's theme is the Enchantment of Books. Patrons can register for the challenge at Beanstack online or with the BeanStack App. Registrants are eligible for prize drawings and free books. More than 700 people have already registered to participate.
- **Thankful for Our Heroes Luncheon:** Councilmember Kevin de León (CD-7) recently recognized Librarian Vi Ha of the Octavia Lab at the "Thankful for Our Heroes Luncheon." She was recognized for leading the Library's effort to fabricate face shields at a time of critical need for healthcare workers and hospitals. He shared these words on social media, "Today during our Thankful for Our Heroes Luncheon, we celebrated and honored our working class heroes who have gone above and beyond during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are people who work day in and day out, rain or shine. They deserve to be recognized as heroes and as essential workers..." Vi was honored with about a dozen other Angelenos.
- **COVID-19 Community Archive:** To recognize the community's collective experience during the pandemic, Mayor Garcetti invited Angelenos to come together virtually for Strength and Love, the City of Angels' COVID-19 Memorial event. LAPL was an active participant. In November, LAPL reopened its Los Angeles COVID-19 Community Archive for submissions and invited all Angelenos to participate through the end of that month. The archive has received more than 4,000 submissions to date. The Central Library was illuminated with blue lights during the three-day event.
- **Jené Brown Is New President of California Library Association:** Jené Brown, LAPL's Racial Equity Officer and the Director of the Emerging Technologies and Collections Division, is now also the new President of the California Library Association.
- **Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs :** The most recent newsletter of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) recognized the Library and It mentioned LAPL's New Americans Initiative's partnerships and programs as well as the REFORMA's National Conference Presentation on Language Access featuring Madeline Peña as one of the key panelists and an LA Made virtual tamale making workshop.

- **CicLAvia:** Last weekend, the library was represented at CicLAvia South LA. Outreach staff as well as staff from the Vernon Branch were stationed at the Central Hub to share information about the library and give away free books and promotional materials, offered a StoryWalk for children to follow, Los Angeles Poet Laureate Lynne Thompson wrote custom poems for patrons for two hours and the Book Bike was on hand.
- **Alive Features Holiday List:** Alive!, the publication for the Employees Club of California, featured prominently an article about holiday reading and viewing suggestions from Central Library staff. The article highlights books for children, teens and adults as well as a couple of films. Stories about Christmas are joined by other seasonal offerings celebrating Kwanza, Hanukkah and the Winter Solstice.
- **Vermont Square Branch Dedication:** The Library will dedicate the Vermont Square Branch library in honor of Rita Walters tomorrow at 2 p.m. Those attending include the Mayor, Councilmember Curren Price, Rita's daughter, Susan, and other family members. Commission President Cao will speak on behalf of the Commission, and Commissioners Salinas and Edmonds will also be attending. We are looking forward to a wonderful event.
- **Holiday Tree:** The holiday tree has been installed in the Rotunda and many of the ornaments on the tree were designed and printed at the Octavia Lab. A video of staff decorating the tree will be uploaded. Many of the decorations were designed and printed 3D in the Octavia Lab with the goal of inspiring community members to imagine, design, and create their own projects and to tinker in the Lab with all the great technology. Vi Ha develops a new design scheme for the tree each year; and this year, a new 3D printed ornament of the LAPL book logo in a globe has been debuted.

## 6. City Librarian's Reports:

### Consent Item(s)

It was moved by Commissioner Salinas and seconded by Commissioner Franzen to approve Consent Items a and b. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Cao, Edmonds, Eidmann, Franzen, and Salinas). Noes: 0. Absent: 0.

#### a. **Approval of Findings to Continue**

**Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to AB 361:** APPROVED.

*(Public Hearing was held at the Regular Meeting of October 14, 2021.)*

Determination in accordance with AB 361 Section 3 (e)(3) that, while the state of emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as originally proclaimed by the Governor on March 4, 2020, remains active and/or state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing, this legislative body has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency and that the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person and/or state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.

- b. **Recommendation to Approve Acceptance of gift from the Friends of the Chatsworth Library for the benefit of the Chatsworth Branch Library:** APPROVED.

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2021-32 (C-26)

RESOLVED, That a gift of \$8,945.00 received from the Friends of the Chatsworth Library, for the benefit of the Chatsworth Branch Library to be accepted; and deposited in Trust Fund 831 Account No. 340; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a letter of thanks be sent to The Friends of the Chatsworth Library expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board and staff for the generous gift.

Discussion Items

- c. **Recommendation to approve Memorandum of Agreement between the Library Department and the Department of Public Works - Bureau of Engineering and the Department of Recreation and Parks for the Joint Use of a portion of the Pio Pico Koreatown Branch Library property located at 694 South Oxford Avenue for recreational and library purposes.**

This item was withdrawn.

- d. **Recommendation to Adopt the Internet Use Policy**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended adoption of the Internet Use Policy for the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL). He said this is a policy that all internet users acknowledge when they log in into LAPL public computers. He noted that this Library policy had not been adopted by the Board previously; however, it was important that the policy be adopted by the Board and pointed out that this proposed revised policy would make Los Angeles Public Library compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), a federal legislation that was passed in 2000. He stated that LAPL will also begin using filtering software, which is a requirement to be CIPA compliant. Mr. Szabo said this compliance was necessary in order to qualify for federal funding that the LAPL didn't qualify for in the past.

Mr. Szabo said that the conversation about filtering public internet access in public libraries has been a topic familiar to librarians for the last three decades. He noted that the technology and software filtering has evolved over the years and the direction staff is recommending is not unusual or unique in any way. Many libraries across the country, small and large are already being CIPA compliant and many of them took this approach many years ago and they include Los Angeles County Public Library, New York Public Library, Queens and Brooklyn Public libraries, Boston Public Library, Multnomah County Public Library, Portland Public Library and San Diego Public Library, and many others.

Mr. Szabo stated that LAPL has chosen to filter just one category and staff has spent considerable time looking at a variety of software products to determine what would be the best and it has tested many products to determine the best approach for the Los Angeles Public Library, staff and users. He asked Assistant City Librarian Susan Broman to provide an overview of the software.

Susan Broman, Asst. City Librarian, reported that the proposed revised Internet Use Policy is an Internet safety policy using technology protection measures, which is filtering, and a public notice or hearing, which is being done today. She said this policy would apply to general use computers that will filter websites with sexually explicit images. The chosen category for filtering is pornography. She said that to make sure adults have access to constitutionally protected speech, a code would be required to bypass the filter to access a blocked website. She said staff is cognizant that filters are not 100% perfect and they work on the basis of categories; however, there are sites that miscategorize content.

Ms. Broman stated that the Library would provide a process for patrons to notify staff when sites are miscategorized, and staff is continually assessing the products, filters and categories to make sure it meets patron needs as well as testing the product before implementing it.

Ms. Broman said that for children and teens, the Library offers Kid's Path, which is a curated list of websites that is maintained by the library staff making sure it is updated and adding to it as needed, but there is a strong need to teach children how to use the Internet, how to search, how to evaluate, and by adding filters it allows a more open access to the Internet with some filter protection.

### **Discussion**

Commissioner Salinas asked if the children's computers would filter beyond pornography sites and if staff decides which sites kids can access. Ms. Broman replied that currently the Library provides a list of curated websites and as filters are implemented, staff will determine what categories the filter will block on children's computers, including sites with extreme violence.

Commissioner Salinas said she had concerns about limiting where kids and teens can go to research topics and papers because it could exclude subjects Rap music because someone may think rap music is negative; however, she supports blocking pornography and violence.

Mr. Szabo pointed out that currently children can only access sites that have been curated and selected by Library staff. Under the new approach, it would filter access under specific categories, but it would expand access to access more information and sites on the Internet. He said adults 18 and over would be able to lift the filter on their own by using a code and have access to Constitutionally protected speech.

Commissioner Franzen inquired on what the federal funding would provide. Ms. Broman replied that the federal legislation was passed in 2000 and in order to access federal funding that provides schools and libraries with discounted access to the Internet as well as computer equipment. One of the projects the Library is proposing for the current cycle is a recabling to provide faster connection to library computers and to provide universal power system and emergency backup disaster recovery system to ensure continuity of service in case of a disaster. Also, improve WiFi access points throughout the system. These are the types of projects that can be done with E-rate funding; however, in order to be eligible for the funding, the library needs to be CIPA Compliant.

Commissioner Edmonds asked whether the information on the filters could be presented to the Board and she also would like to discuss the process for the adults to bypass the filters and how long would the information they provide be kept for.

Ms. Broman replied that fields for personal information would be removed and no information would not be collected or kept. She said there are many privacy options on the software they are currently looking at, but the library does not keep any kind of records of what people look at or what site people go to.

Vice President Eidmann stated she supports having greater filtering on children's computers, but she was uncomfortable with the broad language, which says children will have more restricted access so she would like the approach to be that when additional filters are to be placed on children's computers that they be brought to the Board so there is at least a public hearing about it, and asked whether they could approve this item with her proposed amendment.

Ms. Broman stated that the Internet Use Policy does not refer to any specific type of filtering, and on the findings of the Board Policy they may refer to them, but the policy itself is about being CIPA compliant. As far as finding 8, which refers to "stronger protections implemented on children," is something they can bring forward at a later date.

Mr. Szabo recommended the Board approve the Policy today and staff could bring the filtering categories for discussion at a future meeting before proceeding with them, but it would not be editing the Policy because it is already general on that.

Board President Cao commented that teens would have access to children and general-use computers to access information they are looking for and they could use the adult computers, but would have no access to adult filtered sites.

Mr. Szabo spoke about the importance of parents supervising their children and helping them make decisions, because a 14 year-old is welcome to explore the entire stacks of the library and access all content.

Commissioner Edmonds asked whether less of a barrier could be created for teens in the TeenScape area for conversation about some content that may not need to be filtered.

Ms. Broman stated that throughout the implementation they will be making sure it is a streamlined and seamless process and address miscategorizations as quickly as possible.

Vice President Eidmann has questions about user data collection and whether a notice could be added stating that information entered is not required or kept and mention the data retention policy, or create data retention policy during the implementation process to protect the privacy of patrons. In regard to the wireless computers, she asked if patrons could ask via email for a code to unblock sites or have wireless users enter their library card number to have the same access as wired computer users.

Ms. Broman replied that they would not want to reduce the ability to general access, but staff could look at the possibility of opting into that as an option.

Vice President Eidmann asked Board President Cao to direct staff a report or a discussion at a future meeting on what the next steps would be in the implementation process addressing some of the issues discussed today.

Board President Cao asked for an update at a future meeting with the information requested by Vice President Eidmann as well as a timeline for implementation.

It was moved by Commissioner Edmonds and seconded by Vice President Eidmann to adopt the Internet Use Policy. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Cao, Edmonds, Eidmann, Franzen, and Salinas). Noes: 0. Absent: 0.

#### LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2021-33 (C-27)

WHEREAS, The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress in 2000 to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers; and

WHEREAS, Libraries must comply with CIPA if they would like to receive federal funding such as E-rate which provides discounts on internet access or eligible equipment, and Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants associated with computer and internet access; and

WHEREAS, In order to be CIPA compliant, libraries must have an Internet safety policy that includes technology protection measures. The protection measures must block or filter Internet access to pictures that are: (a) obscene; (b) child pornography; or (c) harmful to minors; and

WHEREAS, The Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) desires to be CIPA compliant to receive federal funding and grants; and

WHEREAS, LAPL users will have the ability to obtain access to websites via on-screen unblocking instructions or by reporting sites to [filtering@lapl.org](mailto:filtering@lapl.org); and

Library Resolution  
No. 2021-33 (C-27) Cont.

THEREFORE, RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) hereby approves and adopts the revised Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) Internet Use Policy; and

THEREFORE, FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board authorizes the City Librarian, or designee, to make technical corrections to the Internet Use Policy as necessary.

**7. Commissioners' Comments and Announcements**

Board President Cao announced that the Board will be holding a Special Meeting on December 16 at 11:00 a.m. via teleconference and noted that the Board Meeting schedule for January 20, 2022 - June 30, 2022 was now available on the website.

**8. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Bích Ngọc Cao  
President

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Raquel M. Borden  
Board Executive Assistant