

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

April 24, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Cypress Park Branch Library starting at 11:01 a.m. on the above-written date.

1. Roll Call:

Present:	President	Valerie Lynne Shaw
	Vice President	Linda Blank
	Commissioner	Kelly Besser
	Commissioner	Hiram Sims
	Commissioner	Mayra Valadez

Absent: None

Also present: City Librarian John F. Szabo, Asst. City Librarian Susan Broman; Deputy City Attorney Vanessa D. Atkins; Administrative staff, Cypress Park staff, and members of the public.

2. Opening Remarks: Board President Shaw welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. Approval of the Minutes: Regular Meeting - February 27, 2025.

It was moved by Vice President Blank and seconded by Commissioner Sims to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 27, 2025. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Besser/Blank/Sims/Shaw/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 0.

4. Public Comments on Matters
Within the Board's Jurisdiction: None.

5. Staff Recognition: Service Pins for 40+ Years of Service

The Board presented certificates of appreciation to Keith Dasala (42 years), and to Pearl Yonezawa (51 years). Francisca Arreguin (45 years), Gilda Henry (50 years), and Patricia Walker (50 years), who were not in attendance. The Board congratulated them and thanked them for their contributions to the Library.

6. Branch Presentation: Cypress Park Branch Library

Joyce Cooper, Director of Branch Library Services, introduced Kian Diazadeh, Northeast Area Manager, who reported on the 13 branch libraries he oversees in the area.

Patrick Xavier, Senior Librarian and Branch Manager of the Cypress Park Branch, introduced staff members: Children's Librarian Kenneth Nolasco; Administrative Clerks Karol Becerra, Janine Benavidez, and Jesse Olivarez; and Messenger Clerk Isaac Plummer. He shared highlights of the branch's diverse programs, which celebrate Chicano literature and art and include an annual Día de los Muertos procession in partnership with Mujeres de la Tierra.

The branch has also hosted community groups such as the Brown Berets, a local social justice organization founded in 1967.

Mr. Xavier highlighted a mural in the community room depicting the Los Angeles River by artist Cynthia Reyes Aponte. He noted city plans to restore the river's natural environment, reflecting the mural's vision. A new bridge across from the library has helped bring in visitors from Elysian Valley. The branch benefits from strong community support, including the Friends of the Cypress Park Branch, the Greater Cypress Park Neighborhood Council, and Councilmember Eunice Hernandez of Council District 1.

He also reported on the branch's recent grand reopening after an eight-month closure for Phase 1 of the city's decarbonization project. Along with new carpeting and paint, the branch now features full building electrification, a smart management system, all-electric appliances, LED lighting, and heat-reducing window film and roof coating. Phase 2 will add solar panels and energy storage, with a video display at the entrance showing real-time energy use and generation.

7. Presentation: Cypress Park Branch Library Decarbonization Project

Presented by: Rose Stein-Wendt, Civil Engineering Associate Project Manager of Decarbonization Implementation Projects at the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering

Joyce Cooper, Director of Branch Library Service introduced Rose Stein-Wendt, Project Manager for the Decarbonization Project implementation and historical renovation. Ms. Cooper stated that the Cypress Park Library was building the first facility the city worked on to fully decarbonize.

Rose Stein-Wendt reported that multiple City Council motions passed in 2021 and 2022 require the decarbonization of various municipal buildings. The Cypress Park Branch Library was selected as one of eight pilot sites, alongside fire stations, libraries, and schools. The initiative involves fully electrifying building systems—eliminating fossil fuel-based equipment—and installing solar panels with metered energy tracking and battery storage to reduce costs, conserve energy, and promote environmental leadership in the community. She noted that Cypress Park was the first pilot project to launch, leading the shift toward greener infrastructure, with Silver Lake and Benjamin Franklin branch libraries scheduled to begin construction in 2025.

For Phase 2, Stein-Wendt said the project will add battery storage and solar panel installations and is currently in the permitting phase. The General Services Department, responsible for the design-build, is awaiting final approval. She acknowledged that supply backorders and staff shortages may cause delays but emphasized their commitment to saving money and delivering the best outcomes for the community.

Discussion

Board President Shaw asked how this particular facility had become part of the pilot project. Ms. Stein-Wendt replied that buildings were chosen based on immediate infrastructure needs and equipment that has reached end of life.

Vice President Blank asked if there was a concern that General Services wouldn't be able to complete the project due to the city's budget. Ms. Stein-Wendt said they are doing everything possible to save money. For example, the Library chose to pay for the carpet and the paint, which saved money that can be used for the next phase. She said they are also applying for incentives based on the different green projects they are working on. City Librarian

John F. Szabo expressed concern about GSD's capacity for this project, as well as other projects in Phase 2.

Vice President Blank asked if the city had already budgeted the funds in the current fiscal year for this project. Ms. Stein-Wendt replied that yes, the funds had already been allocated for this project.

Commissioner Valadez, noting that solar panels and battery storage technology generally changing frequently, asked if the battery storage components would need to be replaced in 10 years from now. Ms. Stein-Wendt replied that the battery energy storage system is the size of a trash can dumpster for this size building and its lifetime is 30 years.

8. City Librarian's Comments and Announcements:

City Librarian John Szabo reported on past and upcoming library events, and provided the following updates on the City Budget for FY 2025-26:

Budget Fiscal Year 2025-26: Mr. Szabo reported that the Library had answered many questions from the CAO and the Mayor's Budget Team during the budget process. He noted that the Library's Budget was intact in the Mayor's proposed budget; however, other city departments are dealing with some severe personnel cuts that might lead to layoffs, as well as cuts on capital projects and services, which could affect the services those departments provide to the Library. He pointed out that the Library may be asked to fill some of its vacant positions with employees from other city departments who are facing layoffs. He said the budget would be going next to the City Council Budget Committee hearings for all departments.

Discussion

President Shaw asked how many vacancies the Library had. Mr. Szabo replied that the Library doesn't have many vacancies and most of its vacant positions are for librarian and library assistant classifications, which don't exist in other city departments. He said the Personnel Department will implement a process mandated by City Charter, and MOU's, as well as meet with labor unions to determine the number of layoffs.

Commissioner Valadez asked about the length of time it takes to graduate from the Career Online High School. Mr. Szabo replied that generally it takes 12-18 months, and staff maintain communication with students encouraging them throughout the process until they earn their diploma.

7. City Librarian's Reports:

Discussion Items

a. Approval to extend Individual Placement Agreement (Contract No. C-143732) with FUSE Corps for the Advancing Digital Inclusion Across Los Angeles project

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval for the extension of the agreement with FUSE Corp for services associated with the Advancing Digital Inclusion across Los Angeles Project. He said Alia Brown is the Fellow working on this project with the Library.

It was moved by Commissioner Besser and seconded by Commissioner Valadez to approve the following resolution. The motion passed unanimously with 5 Ayes (Blank/Besser/Shaw/Sims/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 0.

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025-10 (C-7)

WHEREAS, FUSE Corps (FUSE) is a nonprofit organization that operates an executive fellowship program which is uniquely dedicated to partnering with local governments and communities to more effectively address pressing challenges facing local governments; and

WHEREAS, FUSE recruits and hires highly experienced professionals (Executive Fellows) who are enrolled in the FUSE Executive Fellowship Program (Program) and places them in governmental entities, where they work full-time for a period of at least one year; and

WHEREAS, in connection with the Program, the City, through its various departments, is able to accept the appointment of one or more FUSE Executive Fellows in order to advance the goals of a specifically defined Executive Fellowship Project (Project); and

WHEREAS, on July 13, 2023, the Master Service Agreement (MSA) between the City of Los Angeles and FUSE Corps (Contract No. C-143732) to provide a framework for City departments to undertake studies by FUSE fellows was executed; and

WHEREAS, on August 28, 2023, an Individual Placement Agreement (IPA) for the Library was executed in accordance with the MSA for the period of October 1, 2023 through April 19, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Executive Fellow Alia Brown was appointed to the Library's Advancing Digital Inclusion Across Los Angeles project in association with the IPA; and

WHEREAS, on April 9, 2024, the IPA was extended by one year, through April 19, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Alia Brown was on leave for three months of the extended one-year period:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board adopts the recommendations and findings of the City Librarian's Board Report, including approval of an extension for the time period of April 21, 2025 through July 25, 2025 of the IPA at no cost; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board hereby authorizes the City Librarian and the City Attorney to make technical and clerical corrections, if needed, to the agreement.

**8. Commissioners' Comments
and Announcements**

Commissioner Valadez reported that she had attended the Career Online High School Graduation at Central Library last week and commented that the graduates reflected our city, and it had been an honor to be there and address the graduates and their families. She said that she had also attended the Teens Leading Change showcase last Saturday and

thanked Phoebe Guiot, Associate Director/Principal Librarian, Youth Services Department and Candice Mack, Senior Librarian, Young Adult/Teen Services, for inviting her to speak at that event as well.

Commissioner Besser reported that she would be meeting in May with the Library's Human Resources Director and his team to learn about openings and the application process for librarian students at UCLA. She also mentioned that she would be meeting with Jene' Brown, Director of Emerging Technologies and Justin Sugiyama, Senior Librarian at the Hyde Park-Miriam Matthews Branch to discuss the Miriam Matthews collection at UCLA.

Next Board Meeting Notice: The next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, May 8, 2025, at 11:00 a.m., at the Central Library.

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:18 p.m.

ATTEST:

Valerie Lynne Shaw
President

Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant