

## **MINUTES**

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

**October 23, 2025**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Woodland Hills Branch Library starting at 11:05 a.m. on the above-written date.

**1. Roll Call:**

|                 |                |                           |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Present:</b> | President      | <b>Mayra Valadez</b>      |
|                 | Vice President | <b>Linda Blank</b>        |
|                 | Commissioner   | <b>Kelly Besser</b>       |
| <b>Absent:</b>  | Commissioner   | <b>Valerie Lynne Shaw</b> |

**Also present:** City Librarian John F. Szabo, Asst. City Librarian Susan Broman; Deputy City Attorney Josh Templet; Administrative staff; Woodland Hills Branch Library staff, Area managers; members of the Friends of the Woodland Hills Branch Library and members of the public.

**2. Opening Remarks:** Board President Valadez welcomed everyone to the Woodland Hills Branch Library located in the Valley Area.

**3. Approval of the Minutes:**

a. Regular Meeting - September 11, 2025.

It was moved by Vice President Blank and seconded by Commissioner Besser to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on September 11, 2025. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Besser/Blank/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 1 (Shaw).

b. Regular Meeting - September 25, 2025

It was moved by Commissioner Besser and seconded by Vice President Blank to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on September 25, 2025. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Besser/Blank/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 1 (Shaw).

**4. Staff Recognition:** Service Pins for 40+ Years of Service

The Board presented certificates of appreciation to Roger Bradley (42 years), Dana Eklund (40 years), Kurt Osterheldt (40 years), Sherie Sanford (46 years). Tanya Cain and Guillermina Rodriguez were not able to attend. The Board congratulated and thanked the recipients for their contributions to the Library and city.

**5. Branch Manager: Woodland Hills Branch Library**

Joyce Cooper, Director of Branch Library Services, introduced Shirley Ashe, West Valley Area Manager, who reported on the 10 branch libraries she oversees and about

the accomplishments of staff serving throughout the West Valley Area. She highlighted that the area has two regional branch libraries, the West Valley Regional Branch Library and the Mid-Valley Regional Branch Library and introduced branch managers in attendance: Chrissy Carr from Canoga Park, Shayera Tangri from Porter Ranch, Kevin Hasely from West Valley Regional, Toki Gholami from Northridge, Asif Khan from Encino-Tarzana.

Kathryn Ross, Senior Librarian, Woodland Hills Branch Manager introduced staff and provided an overview of the history of the branch and the wide variety of programs and services offered. She highlighted the success of its Drought Tolerant and Vegetable Garden project that was started in 2015 with an LAPL IDEAS mini-grant she secured to establish a drought-tolerant and vegetable garden on the patio.

Ms. Ross introduced the Friends of the Woodland Hills Branch Library: Ginny Gibbs, Ruth Huberman, Myrna Gordon, Dennis Zine, Shannon Eichberg, Ellen Whelan, Jeff Wulkan, Faith Stout, and Lynna Dunn. She reported that the Friends had recently celebrated their 50th Anniversary with a grand celebration on October 11th, noting that their support funds many outstanding programs for the community, including a six-week Nowruz Dance Program.

## **6. Public Comments on Matters**

**Within the Board's Jurisdiction:** The Board heard one public comment from Salva Keynezhad, a patron who expressed heartfelt appreciation to the Library for offering programs that are inclusive of the various immigrant communities, pointing out that the Nowruz programming offered at the library not only made her feel included but also provided a great sense of community.

## **7. City Librarian's Comments**

**and Announcements:** City Librarian John Szabo reported on past and upcoming Library events. President Valadez thanked Mr. Szabo for the report and stated that the Library serves everybody at every corner of the city with services and diverse programming.

## **8. City Librarian's Reports:**

### **Discussion Items**

#### **a. Acceptance of Gifts**

It was moved by Commissioner Besser and seconded by Vice President Blank to approve the following resolution. The motion passed unanimously with 3 Ayes (Blank/Besser/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 1 (Shaw).

### **LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025-31 (C-23)**

**RESOLVED**, That the following gifts be accepted and deposited in Trust Fund 831, Account 340:

- \$7,000 from The Friends of the Sherman Oaks Branch Library for the Sherman Oaks Branch Library Materials Book Budget.
- \$7,000 from The Friends of the Studio City Branch Library for the Studio City Branch Library Materials Book Budget.

Library Resolution  
2025-31 (C-23) Cont.

- \$3,000 from The Friends of the Van Nuys Branch Library for the Van Nuys Branch Library Materials Book Budget.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a letter of thanks be sent to the above Friends Groups expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board and staff for their generous gifts.

**b. Approval of publishing agreement between  
Stephen Gee and Angel City Press  
at the Los Angeles Public Library**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval of the publishing agreement between Stephen Gee and Angel City Press at the Los Angeles Public Library for the exclusive license in the copyright of the *Architects of the Metropolis: Los Angeles 1890–1930*.

Vice President Blank asked if any of these authors had worked with Angel City Press before it was transferred to LAPL. Mr. Szabo replied that Stephen Gee had authored other books before the transition of Angel City Press to the Library, one of them was a book about the Central Library.

It was moved by Vice President Blank and seconded by Commissioner Besser to approve the following resolution. The motion passed unanimously with 3 Ayes (Blank/Besser/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 1 (Shaw).

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025-32 (C-24)**

**WHEREAS**, On December 14, 2023, the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) approved a Gift Agreement to accept the Angel City Press publishing operation and committed to continuing the legacy of Angel City Press by publishing new books that amplify the voices of local authors and preserves the stories of Los Angeles and Southern California; and

**WHEREAS**, Staff will ensure that the required compliance documents are completed and submitted prior to the execution of the agreement. The publishing agreement has been reviewed by the City Attorney and is ready to be transmitted for processing:

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Board adopts the recommendations and findings of the City Librarian's Board Report, including approval of the award and execution of the publishing agreement with Stephen Gee for the exclusive license in the copyright of the *Architects of the Metropolis: Los Angeles 1890–1930*; 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.

c. **Approval of publishing agreement between  
Janna Ireland and Angel City Press  
At the Los Angeles Public Library**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval of the publishing agreement between Janna Ireland and Angel City Press at the Los Angeles Public Library for the exclusive license in the copyright of *Regarding R. Paul Williams: Expanded Edition*.

It was moved by Commissioner Besser and seconded by Vice President Blank to approve the following resolution. The motion passed unanimously with 3 Ayes (Blank/Besser/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 1 (Shaw).

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025-33 (C-25)**

**WHEREAS**, On December 14, 2023, the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) approved a Gift Agreement to accept the Angel City Press publishing operation and committed to continuing the legacy of Angel City Press by publishing new books that amplify the voices of local authors and preserves the stories of Los Angeles and Southern California; and

**WHEREAS**, Staff will ensure that the required compliance documents are completed and submitted prior to the execution of the agreement. The publishing agreement has been reviewed by the City Attorney and ready to be transmitted for processing:

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Board adopts the recommendations and findings of the City Librarian's Board Report, including approval of the award and execution of the publishing agreement with Janna Ireland for the exclusive license in the copyright of *Regarding R. Paul Williams: Expanded Edition*; 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.

d. **Approval of publishing agreement between  
Amanda Thompson and Angel City Press  
at the Los Angeles Public Library**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended the award of a publishing agreement between Amanda Thompson and Angel City Press at the Los Angeles Public Library for the exclusive license in the copyright of an untitled book of bird photography.

It was moved by Commissioner Besser and seconded by Vice President Blank to approve the following resolution. The motion passed unanimously with 3 Ayes (Blank/Besser/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 1 (Shaw).

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025-34 (C-26)**

**WHEREAS**, On December 14, 2023, the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) approved a Gift Agreement to accept the Angel City Press publishing operation and committed to continuing the legacy of Angel City Press by publishing new books that amplify the voices of local authors and preserves the stories of Los Angeles and Southern California; and

**WHEREAS**, Staff will ensure that the required compliance documents are completed and submitted prior to the execution of the agreement. The publishing agreement has been reviewed by the City Attorney and ready to be transmitted for processing:

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Board adopts the recommendations and findings of the City Librarian's Board Report, including approval of the award and execution of the publishing agreement with Amanda Thompson for the exclusive license in the copyright of an untitled book of bird photography; 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.

**e. Appointment of Acting  
Secretary to the Board**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval to appoint Executive Administrative Assistant II Lynda Achi, as acting Secretary to the Board in the absence of the Secretary to the Board.

Board President Valadez thanked Raquel Borden for her service to the Board of Library Commissioners and support provided to the Board members.

It was moved by Vice President Blank and seconded by Commissioner Besser to approve the following resolution as amended. The motion passed unanimously with 3 Ayes (Blank/Besser/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 1 (Shaw).

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025-35 (C-27)**

**WHEREAS**, A staff member from the Library Department needs to be appointed by the Board as Commission Executive Assistant authorizing that employee to sign resolutions, minutes, contracts, letters, and legal documents when the Commission Executive Assistant is absent due to illness, vacation, jury duty, etc.; and

**WHEREAS**, Designating a staff member as Commission Executive Assistant ensures that the Board Office is properly staffed for Board Meetings and for processing documents prior and after the meetings:

**RESOLVED**, the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) authorizes Lynda Achi, Executive Administrative Assistant II, Library Administration to serve as Commission Executive Assistant during the absence of the Commission Executive Assistant.

**9. Staff Presentation: Bilingual Outreach Librarians**

Madeline Peña, Associate Director of Community Engagement and Outreach, introduced Bilingual Librarians Alicia Reyes, Bilingual Outreach Librarian for the East Valley and Tatiana Ortiz Cordonero, Community Outreach Manager who provided an overview of the mission, activities and accomplishments of the Outreach Team which include Digital Literacy workshops, Community Bookshelf, book stops, book clubs at senior centers, job readiness workshops, creative writing, performers at community sites and summer pop-ups.

The presenters stated that the Community Outreach Team supports the Library's mission by bringing library services and resources to the community through direct engagement and collaborative partnerships. They prioritize outreach to underserved communities and groups facing barriers to access. The Bilingual Outreach Team helps increase library visibility in Spanish-speaking communities through participation in local events and services outside traditional library spaces to reduce linguistic and cultural barriers, and to build trust with Spanish-speaking individuals and organizations to support long-term access. Digital Literacy activities are offered at HACLA housing communities, senior centers, Union Rescue Mission and Rampart Police Station; Community Bookshelves at 21 sites such as laundromats, barbershops, community clinics, drop-in centers, and senior centers.

**Discussion**

Commissioner Besser commented that she loves to stumble into community bookshelves and asked where she could find a list of their locations. Ms. Cordonero stated that locations of community bookshelves can be found on the Library's website.

Commissioner Besser also asked how the team helps individuals who do not speak English or Spanish and people who are homebound. They replied that they connect with other library staff who can assist and they also print materials in different languages. For people who are homebound, they can add someone to their account to pick up and drop off books for them.

President Valadez thanked the presenters for the incredible work they do to engage with the community, and appreciates how strategic they are in their delivery of services collaborating with community organizations and city agencies to meet people where they are at, and for using data resources to adequately distribute services.

**10. Commissioners' Comments and Announcements**

- President Valadez thanked the Friends of the Woodland Hills Branch Library for attending the meeting and for their support to the branch. She also thanked Branch Manager Kathryn Ross and her staff for hosting the meeting.
- Commissioner Besser reported that she had attended a convening of commissioners with Mayor Bass at the Pico House last week.
- Vice President Blank reported that she had visited the Venice Branch and the Mar Vista Branch libraries.
- President Valadez reported that the Board had received a letter dated September 29, 2025, from Mayor Karen Bass to the City Council regarding the appointment of Fabian Renee Wesson to the Board of Library Commissioners for the term ending June 30, 2027.
- **January - July 2026 Board Meeting Schedule:** The Board President asked fellow Board members to review the schedule for the upcoming year.
- **Next Board Meeting Notice**  
The next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, **November 13, 2025**, at **11:00 a.m.**, at the Central Library.

**10. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

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MAYRA VALADEZ  
President

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Raquel M. Borden  
Commission Executive Assistant