

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

January 23, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Central Library starting at 11:04 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, Assistant City Librarian Susan Broman; Deputy City Attorney Josh M. Templet; Administrative staff and members of the public.

2. Opening Remarks:

Board President Shaw congratulated City Librarian John F. Szabo for being selected as Librarian of the Year 2025 by the American Library Association.

President Shaw spoke about the tragic fires and loss of thousands of homes in the Palisades and Altadena communities, noting that 9 LAPL employees had lost their homes. She thanked library staff and the entire city family for their dedication to the LA residents and asked everyone to focus on helping those who are in need.

Vice President Blank stated that the Library has become such an important link for people who are homeless and for those who have lost everything, including their computers, their documents, etc. and the Library makes services accessible to everyone free of charge.

3. Approval of the Minutes:

a. Regular Meeting - November 14, 2024: APPROVED.

It was moved by Vice President Blank and seconded by Commissioner Valadez to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meetings held on November 14, 2024. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Besser/Blank/Shaw/Sims/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 0.

b. Regular Meeting - December 12, 2024: APPROVED

It was moved by Commissioner Valadez and seconded by Commissioner Besser to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meetings held on December 12, 2024. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Besser/Blank/Shaw/Sims/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 0.

4. Public Comments on Matters**Within the Board's Jurisdiction:** (1)

The Board heard one public comment from a patron who questioned the requirements for obtaining a library card.

5. City Librarian's Comments

and Announcements: City Librarian John F. Szabo reported on past and upcoming library events and provided the following update:

a. Library response to 2025 Fire and Wind Emergency

Mr. Szabo reported that Library staff was incredibly proactive in utilizing all of the Outreach Teams and Street Fleet vehicles to immediately serve communities affected by the fires. Staff have been providing services at the Disaster Recovery Center at the UCLA Research Park in Westwood daily, including weekends and holidays, to help connect people with services, making referrals, providing laptops and hotspots, and distributing power packs and cables. Staff brought the Street Fleet vehicles, outfitted with Wi-Fi, to the Recreation and Parks family camps and shelters, noting that at least one of the shelters did not have Wi-Fi access at all. Additionally, LAPL's social workers have been accompanying the Outreach Teams to provide assistance to shelters. In the early days of the fire, the Library mobilized to begin distributing N95 masks at every library location, working with the Mayor's Office and the Emergency Operations Center to rapidly deliver masks that had been in storage to each branch and Central.

Mr. Szabo stated that the Library has worked with the Mayor's Office to have a community service representative present at the Disaster Recovery Center, as they are skilled at working with people who are experiencing trauma, and they are able to refer people to a variety of social services. Library staff have been deployed to assist the Animal Services Department at the West LA Shelter to manage the influx of data and create a data dashboard to help with reporting. The Library has been in conversation with the Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs regarding communications with FEMA and relief funds for the city, with the loss of the Palisades Branch in the fire.

Mr. Szabo reported that a school that was destroyed by the Eaton fire was using the Arroyo Seco Branch Library in Highland Park as a place to bring students and families together. The Silver Lake Branch Library has provided space for non-profit organizations that were impacted by the fire. Palisades Branch Library staff are working at different libraries in the area. The Library has notified patrons that they won't be responsible for any library materials lost in the fire or as a result of evacuation.

The Library has been working with the Library Foundation of Los Angeles to set up two funds, one to support the Palisades Branch Library recovery, rebuilding, and services that may be necessary in the interim, and another fund to support Library staff that have been so severely impacted by the fires.

6. City Librarian's Reports:**Discussion Items****a. Approval to transfer the Sara Gordon Kay
Endowment to the Library Foundation of Los Angeles**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval to transfer the Sarah Gordon K. Endowment to the Library Foundation of Los Angeles and recommended that \$74,922.31 of the \$77,922.31 total endowment be transferred thus keeping \$3,000 in the Library's Fund to purchase children's books while the endowment is set up by the Library Foundation.

He stated that the endowment had been established back in 1988 from a gift received from Jack Kay, husband of Sarah Gordon Kay, which was before the Library Foundation had been established. The Kay family requested that endowment be used for the Children's Literature Department and for purchasing books for children. He pointed out that the Library Foundation has the ability to report back to the family on what the Endowment has done, and all it has a system in place since it already manages several other endowments.

Discussion

Vice President Blank asked if the funds were used to buy children's books for the Central Library only, or if it included branches as well. Mr. Szabo replied that the endowment is specifically for the Central Library.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025-1 (C-1)

WHEREAS, in 1988, the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) received \$5,000 from Jack Kay, Gordon's husband, to establish the Sara Gordon Kay Endowment for the Save-the-Books project to replace books lost or damaged in the Central Library fire. The request included a provision that once the fund reached \$25,000, the interest accrued would be used to acquire juvenile chapter fiction for the Central Library. The funds were deposited into the Library Trust Fund 831, Code 517; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the interest accrued has been used for the purchase of juvenile fiction books for the Central Library Children's Literature collection to celebrate Sara Gordon Kay's love of literature and the library, and the endowment continued to receive donations from Kay family members and other donors; and

WHEREAS, recently, the Library and the Kay family have discussed moving the fund to the management of the Library Foundation of Los Angeles (LFLA) to increase the return on their donation and LFLA is best equipped to manage endowments and provide financial documentation to donors. Once the funds are transferred, LFLA will manage the Sara Gordon Kay Endowment in accordance with the guidelines specified in the original Endowment agreement; and

Library Resolution
No. 2025-1 (C-1) Cont.

WHEREAS, as of November 30, 2024, the balance of the Sara Gordon Kay Endowment was \$77,922.31. Staff recommends the approval to transfer \$74,922.31, which will leave \$3,000 in the Library Trust Fund 831, Code 517, to purchase children's books until LFLA establishes the Sara Kay Gordon Endowment and begins to administer the funds:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board approves the recommendation to transfer \$74,922.31 from the Sara Gordon Kay Endowment, from the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL), Library Trust Fund 83, Code 517, to the Library Foundation of Los Angeles (LFLA).

**b. Approval of four publishing agreements for the
Angel City Press at Los Angeles Public Library**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval of four publishing agreements. He stated that these are the first new publishing agreements with authors for Angel City Press at the Los Angeles Public Library since Angel City Press was accepted in a gift agreement in December of 2023, which included existing author agreements.

Discussion

Commissioner Valadez asked how the Library funds the printing and publishing of all Angel City Press works, and how its ownership by the Library operates. Mr. Szabo replied that all of the financials go through LAPL's Business Office and it is part of the Library's budget, but the goal ultimately is to have the revenues produced by the book sales cover all of the costs of the press.

Commissioner Sims asked how it is determined who gets an advance and who doesn't. Mr. Szabo replied that advances depended on the needs of the book, and occasionally an author will waive the advance.

Assistant City Librarian Susan Broman added that when negotiating a contract with an author, the press has a standard amount for advance and for royalties, and there is a discussion on who does what to produce a book.

Commissioner Sims asked how authors are submitting their proposals to Angel City Press, and whether it was public or private. Ms. Broman replied that the submissions process is publicly available on the Library's website. She said a more full featured website for Angel City Press will be launched within the next two weeks.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2 (C-2)

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 recommends to award publishing agreements to the following four authors for the exclusive license in the copyright of the authors' works:

AUTHOR	TITLE
Samuel Lamontagne and Darol Kay	Pan Afrikan People's Arkestra
Robert Landau	Art Deco LA
Donald J. Waldie	Elements of Los Angeles
Oliver Wang	Cruising J-Town

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board approve the recommendations and findings in the City Librarian's Board Report for the award and execution of four publishing agreements for the exclusive license in the copyright of the authors' works; 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 four agreements; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, Staff recommends to authorize the Board President and the Board Secretary to execute the four agreements upon the completion of all required approvals.

**8. Commissioners' Comments
and Announcements**

- **Next Board Meeting Notice:** The next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, February 13, 2025, at 11:00 a.m., at the Central Library.

- 9. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:39 a.m. in memory of Nancy Nix, who was a librarian at the Ascot Branch Library with over 50 years of public service.

ATTEST:

Valerie Lynne Shaw
President

Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant

Approved: 2/13/2025