

# **MINUTES**

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

**August 11, 2022**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held via teleconference at 11:05 a.m. on the above-written date.

**1. Roll Call:**

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

**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:** None

**3. Approval of the Minutes:** Regular Meeting - July 14, 2022: APPROVED

It was moved by Commissioner Franzen and seconded by Board President Cao to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 14, 2022. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Cao/Eidmann/Franzen). Noes: 0. Absent: 2 (Edmonds/Salinas).

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

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

**Alma Reaves-Woods 98th Birthday Celebration:** Staff welcomed Alma Reaves Woods and her family to the Alma Reaves Woods-Watts Branch Library for the celebration of her 98<sup>th</sup> birthday. The branch was named in her honor in 1996. She is a true community matriarch and has spent more than six decades promoting literacy, reading and library use in the Watts community, especially in the Nickerson Gardens public housing where she has resided for more than 35 years.

**2022 All-America City Award for Los Angeles:** The Library shared in the prestigious 2022 All-America City Award for Los Angeles from the National Civic League and the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), LAUSD and Starry Internet were partners in the award that recognized ten communities that "leverage civic engagement, collaboration, inclusiveness and innovation to successfully address local issues." LAPL's presentation to the jury panel

highlighted the Student Success Library Card, Tech2Go bundles and partnership with LAUSD.

**“Shades of L.A.: A Los Angeles Family Album” Exhibit:** The Library’s “Shades of L.A.” project collected photographs from community members during 1991-1997, amassing an archive of more than 7,000 photographs from more than 650 people. The goal of the collection was to better represent the historic diversity of families in Los Angeles. This new exhibit highlights 15 photo donors who also contributed oral histories and it is on display in the Annenberg Gallery through the end of 2022.

**Summer Reading Challenge:** The Library’s Summer Reading Challenge ended last weekend. Enrollment was up this year with 16,138 children, teens, and adults participating, a 46% increase over last summer. A total of 3,268 readers (20%) completed the challenge and surpassed LAPL’s goal of 3,600,000 minutes of reading, achieving 3,792,739. Book Review Moderators read and approved hundreds of reviews submitted by readers of all ages.

**LA City Youth Council:** Genevieve Chin has been a Teen Council member of the Chinatown Branch since 2019; and she was recently selected to be on the LA City Youth Council. She is one of only 30 students chosen from across the city. Genevieve is a student at UCLA majoring in Computer Science. She will work closely with civic leaders to learn about the inner workings of local government, drive special community projects and civic events, and make policy and budget recommendations to improve the well-being of young Angelenos.

**New Americans:** Two new partners, African Communities Public Health Coalition and the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles, have been added to expand access to immigration services in African languages and increase community impact and reach. In person services at New Americans Centers and pop-up sites will return soon.

**Indigenous Literature Conference:** The Central Library welcomed the return of the “Indigenous Literature Conference/*Comunidades Indígenas en Liderazgo* (CIELO)”, a non-profit founded in 2014 by two Zapotec women to promote Indigenous literature and to revitalize Indigenous languages, many in danger of becoming extinct. The International Languages Department and the Office of Civics and Community Services were co-sponsors of the conference.

**Central Library Docent Tours:** In person tours of the Central Library building, art and architecture are offered every Friday, Saturday and Sunday and tours of the gardens are offered the third Sunday of each month.

**STAR Volunteers:** STAR volunteers read with children individually, or in small groups, in branches across the system. About 75 STAR Readers have now verified that they have been vaccinated against COVID and are eligible to return and are already welcoming families back to help strengthen children’s literacy skills in their communities.

**6. City Librarian's Reports:****Consent Item(s)**

It was moved by Commissioner Franzen and seconded by Vice President Eidmann to approve Consent Items a and b. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Cao/Eidmann/Franzen). Noes: 0. Absent: 2 (Edmonds/Salinas).

**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. Acceptance of gift from the Friends of the Palms-Rancho Park Library for**

**the "Hot Off The Press" Bestseller Program:** APPROVED

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2022-27 (C-21)**

RESOLVED, That a gift of \$3,000 received from the Friends of the Palms-Rancho Park Public Library, for the benefit of the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library be accepted; and deposited in Trust Fund 831, Account 257; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a letter of thanks be sent to the Friends of the Palms-Rancho Park Public Library, expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board and staff for the generous gift.

**Discussion Items****c. Approval to accept extension of**

**LSTA Shared Vision Grant:** APPROVED

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval to accept an extension of the LSTA Shared Vision Grant to use remaining funds for the Los Angeles Public Library's Future Ready Teens: Safe Spaces program to be encumbered through August 31 2022.

Commissioner Franzen asked how the funds would be spent specifically.

Eva Mitnick, Director of Lifelong Learning, stated that the safe spaces grant is a two-year grant to improve teen spaces throughout the entire LAPL system and part of the process was to get input from teens to find out what their needs were, what would make them feel safe and welcome in the teen spaces and libraries. The funds are being spent on everything from comfortable furniture, rugs, activities,

posters or anything that would make being at teen space, a more enjoyable and collaborative experience.

Commissioner Franzen asked about the amount being accepted and if it benefits all libraries.

Ms. Mitnick replied that the remaining amount was about \$35,000 from a total of \$250,000 grant altogether and all LAPL libraries have received materials.

It was moved by Vice President Eidmann and seconded by Commissioner Franzen to approve the following resolution. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Cao/Eidmann/Franzen). Noes: 0. Absent: 2 (Edmonds/Salinas).

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2022-28 (C-22)

WHEREAS, On April 23, 2020, the Los Angeles Public Library Board of Library Commissioners accepted the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) Future Ready Teens: Safe Spaces program's \$250,000 grant funds from the California State Library to create additional teen-led programming and resources through revitalizing and enhancing teen areas in order to provide safe, welcoming and creative spaces for learning in all of our branches and Central Library; and

WHEREAS, This grant extension through August 31, 2022 must be accepted by the Board of Library Commissioners to continue spending out this award;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners accept the California State Library LSTA Shared Vision grant spending extension for the Los Angeles Public Library's Future Ready Teens: Safe Spaces program for Fiscal Year 2022/23; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the funds be deposited into Trust Fund 419, Account 356.

**d. Approval to release a Request for Proposals (RFP)  
for E-Rate Program Consulting Services: APPROVED**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval for the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to find a qualified and experienced organization to provide consulting services for the E-Rate program on an as-needed and as-requested basis.

**DISCUSSION**

Vice President Eidmann asked for more details about the E-Rate program.

Mr. Szabo said this service would allow the Library to access federal funding for a variety of projects and infrastructure. He asked Asst. City Librarian Susan Broman to provide an overview.

Ms. Broman stated that the RFP is to find a consultant to assist the Library in applying for projects. The Library is eligible for deep discounts via e-Rate on certain types of projects, such as replacing cabling in library buildings. The adoption

of the Internet Policy including CIPA compliance enables the library to apply for funds.

Mr. Szabo said that funding through the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Emergency Conductivity Fund allows LAPL to buy laptop/mobile hotspot bundles to circulate, a major part of our digital equity initiative and that grant most recently funded \$5.3 million, and having this assistance is extremely helpful and critical.

Board President Cao noted that this item had been revised and asked for a motion to approve it as revised.

It was moved by Vice President Eidmann and seconded by Commissioner Franzen to approve the following resolution. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Cao/Eidmann/Franzen). Noes: 0. Absent: 2 (Edmonds/Salinas).

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2022-29(C-23)

WHEREAS, The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) makes federal funds available to schools and libraries for telecommunications services through a program known as E-Rate; and

WHEREAS, The Library seeks an agreement with a qualified and experienced organization to provide consulting services for the E-Rate Program to the Library on an as-needed and as-requested basis; and

WHEREAS, On August 11, 2022, Library staff requested approval to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for E-Rate Consultant Services; and

WHEREAS, The term of the proposed contract resulting from the RFP will be for one (1) year with four (4) one-year options to renew at the sole discretion of the City Librarian, or designee; and an amount not to exceed \$150,000 per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30). No amount of work or compensation is guaranteed to the selected Contractor; and

WHEREAS, The proposals submitted in response to the RFP will be submitted electronically to the following: LAPLBidSubmissions@lapl.org; and

WHEREAS, Funds are available in the Library Contractual Services Account 3040 and Trust Fund 831 to compensate the selected Contractor for services in accordance with the proposed contract:

THEREFORE, RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) adopts the recommendations and findings of the City Librarian and authorizes the release of the RFP for E-Rate Consultant Services and to advertise and distribute the RFP to potential proposers; and

Library Resolution  
No. 2022-29 (C-23) Cont.

THEREFORE, FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board finds, in accordance with Charter Sections 371(e)(10) and 1022, and Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 10.15(a)(10), that the services to be provided are professional, expert, and technical services of a temporary and occasional nature, and that it is more economical and feasible to have this work performed by an independent contractor than by City employees; and

THEREFORE, FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board hereby authorizes the City Librarian and City Attorney to make technical corrections, if needed, to the RFP.

**7. Oral Update from the Ad Hoc Committee on Re-imagining Safety & Security**

Board President Cao provided an update on what she had learned about the coding of calls received by LAPD. She reported that early in the pandemic LAPD downgraded the coding of calls from the Library; and Library Management and the Librarians' Guild learned of this downgrade at the same time on July 27 during a meeting of the Safety and Security Committee, which is not the same as the Board's Ad Hoc Committee. She said Library management followed up and learned a day later that the issue had been resolved and that LAPD had changed the coding of calls back to what had been before the pandemic, which was Code 2 for a call from the Library and Code 3 for the panic button. She noted that shortly before the Board Meeting on July 28, Library management sent an email notifying staff that this issue had been resolved, and the callers may not have known that the issue had been resolved.

President Cao stated that she would like to see resolved in the near future the communication lapse between LAPD and the Library. She has asked library management to speak with LAPD to ensure that they are aware of any important changes that may occur in the future.

President Cao stated that the Board's work on safety and security is not directly related to LAPD's coding of calls; however, the Board takes the safety and security of library staff seriously and they are aware that librarians have taken on important work in very public spaces, where anyone and everyone is welcome. That means that staff have a lot of great interactions with the public, but it also means that they will, at times, encounter folks who may be disruptive and/or violent. This is why the Board has asked Library Management to work on a comprehensive plan for safety and security, which has been underway for quite some time and is very close to being implemented.

City Librarian John F. Szabo stated that, although he had not been present at the July 28th Board Meeting, he had been briefed on the issues and he wanted to acknowledge all of the serious incidents and experiences that staff shared with the Board at the last meeting. He said the Library does have serious security issues and the conversations about safety and security have been ongoing. He noted that the solutions that are being implemented in relation to the Library Experience Office have their roots with staff participation. He said this is important because staff know these issues better than anyone else, as they are experiencing them on the front line and their voices are important in developing the solutions.

Mr. Szabo stated he had met with LAPD to discuss panic buttons and response times. He said Administration and LAPD Security Services look at incident data to determine how best to deploy resources and prioritizes high incident locations as needed. In reviewing incidents data system wide for the last 12 months (August 1, 2021 - July 31, 2022), the Library had 1,151 incident reports; most classified as disorderly conduct, which covers a variety of incidents, followed by criminal threats, property damage, theft, ect. The last full year of data to compare it to was 2019, which had 1,220. The mask requirement for city facilities can be a point of conflict.

Mr. Szabo stated that Library staff meets regularly with LAPD and Labor leadership to discuss concerns about issues that impact security. He said it is standard practice for LAPD to provide a high priority response when a panic button is activated at any library and 911 calls from libraries receive a higher level of priority. He noted that the Library recently learned that for a period of two and a half months when the interiors of libraries were closed to the public, LAPD's protocol was not to have elevated priority response level, but a normal response level; however, it was not communicated to the Library when it began and when it ended, which is an area of concern.

Mr. Szabo said these are tough issues that all public-serving institutions and service organizations are dealing with and it is a topic of conversation among libraries of all sizes across the country. He said the alternative solutions that the Library is putting in place with the Library Experience Office are solutions that other libraries are looking at, or have already implemented. The Library is on the cusp of real solutions being implemented with the hiring of the Library Experience Ambassadors and social workers. Pending contracts from the RFP for mental health and social services, will also help mitigate some of the behavior in libraries. However, there are very serious issues, a number of which rise to the level of criminal activity, and the Library appreciates the assistance of contract security and other security.

Vice President Eidmann said she asked if there had been a conversation with LAPD about ensuring that there's never any kind of change in coding, response, or the panic button in the future that is done without the knowledge of Library management.

Mr. Szabo replied that management has communicated to all staff about the situation with the panic buttons and it has been communicated to LAPD about the expectation that any and all changes should involve the Library prior to making any changes. He said he was concerned about not being notified, but he thinks LAPD realized that it was not in keeping with the agreement they had with them regarding the elevated priority response for those calls and panic button activation.

### **Discussion**

Vice President Eidmann said she wanted to reemphasize President Cao's and Mr. Szabo's statement about all the comments and emails received, which they read and take seriously, and they recognize how challenging these issues are and they have enormous respect and honor for the Librarians who are doing such tough work on the front lines. She said they take these matters seriously, and at every Commission Ad Hoc Committee meeting, they ask about progress on hiring and contracts, because they recognize the urgency for additional resources on the ground.

**8. Commissioners' Comments and Announcements****a. Election of Officers for Fiscal Year 2022-23**

It was moved by Vice President Eidmann and seconded by Commissioner Franzen to postpone the Election of Officers until all members are present. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Cao/Eidmann/Franzen). Noes: 0. Absent: 2 (Edmonds/Salinas).

**b. Next Board Meeting Notice**

The next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, August 25, 2022, at 11:00 a.m., tentatively via Teleconference.

**9. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

ATTEST:

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Bích Ngọc Cao  
President

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Raquel M. Borden  
Board Executive Assistant

Approved: 9/22/2022