

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

August 13, 2020

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:

Present:	President	Bích Ngọc Cao
	Vice-President	Kathryn Eidmann
	Commissioner	Dale Franzen
	Commissioner	Mai Lassiter

Absent:	Commissioner	Josefa Salinas
----------------	--------------	-----------------------

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: Board President Cao welcomed everyone.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular Meeting – May 28, 2020

It was moved by Vice President Eidmann and seconded by Commissioner Lassiter to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on May 28, 2020. The motion passed with the following votes: 4 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen, Lassiter) Noes: 0. Absent: Salinas.

b. Regular Meeting – June 25, 2020

It was moved by Commissioner Franzen and seconded by Board President Cao to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on June 25, 2020. The motion passed with the following votes: 4 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen, Lassiter) Noes: 0. Absent: Salinas.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS WITHIN THE BOARD'S JURISDICTION

There were four (4) Public Comments on non-agenda items.

5. CITY LIBRARIAN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Librarian John F. Szabo reported the following:

Former Commissioner Rita Walters' Memorial Service was held virtually last weekend. Mr. Szabo said he felt honored to speak about Commissioner Walters and her relationship with the Los Angeles Public Library. Mayor Garcetti, Congresswoman Karen Bass, and Board President Cao and several LAPL staff members were in attendance to pay tribute to Commissioner Walters, who passed away in February.

New Acting Director for Branch Library Services: Joyce Cooper, who is currently the Principal Librarian managing Programming and Outreach at the Central Library, will be serving as Acting Director of Branch Library Services.

Ray Bradbury Centennial Celebration Read-A-Thon: Libraries across the nation will celebrate Ray Bradbury's 100th Birthday with readings of his book, *Fahrenheit 451*, that will be streamed on August 22, which will include the Librarian of Congress and notable authors.. A Centennial webpage with reading lists and images of Bradbury from LAPL's digital collection will be featured on LAPL's website. The Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library, dedicated to Ray Bradbury, will host several activities celebrating Bradbury, including a program with Marlon James, winner of the inaugural Los Angeles Times' Ray Bradbury Award.

LA Times Article Featured Library Staff Who are Working as Contact Tracers: Senior Librarians Lupie Leyva and Denice Nossett were interviewed about their work in contact tracing while assigned as Disaster Service Workers (DSW). *Yahoo News* also published an article on this work mentioning LAPL and painted a picture of how dedicated librarians are and the diverse ways they are making contributions during these times. Ms. Leyva also did a video for the city that will be featured in the Mayor's social media.

Career Online High School (COHS) Enrollment Increases: To-date, 424 students have graduated and 473 are currently enrolled in the program.

The Library's Translation Team is in high demand: Anna Avalos, representative for the Translation Team, is working with the Mayor's Office staff to develop a plan to provide translation support for citywide COVID-19 signage from the City's Emergency Operations Center for reopening buildings. The signs are being translated into Armenian, Chinese, Korean and Spanish to make public health information more equitable.

Short Story Contest: The LAPL is inviting Angelenos to submit their short stories of any genre, which can be fictional or deal with historical or biographical topics in a literary manner. The winning story will be added to a permanent library collection alongside Dickens, Lewis Carroll, and Virginia Woolf via LAPL's Short Story Portal online at lapl.org. The stories can be printed via the dispenser at Central Library when it reopens. The submission deadline is August 31, 2020.

1924 Painting at Eagle Rock Branch Library Gets Restored: The 4'x9' painting titled, "The Eagle Rock" by Jennie C. Brayton, donated to the Eagle Rock Historical Society in 1980 and dedicated to the new Eagle Rock Branch at its opening in 1981, was in need of restoration after 40 years of being in close proximity to crowds. Eloisa Sarao, Facilities

Director, led this effort and the artwork is back on display behind the circulation desk for all to enjoy.

Library to Go: Library to Go continues to be extremely popular with patrons at the 20 hub libraries. Staff has filled 109,000 holds through this service.

Board President Cao commented that Commissioner Walters' memorial was very inspiring. She was an incredible person and we were so lucky to have had her at the Library. She also thanked staff for all of the many different ways they are providing services and for finding new ways to contribute during this time.

6. CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORTS

Consent Items

a. **Acceptance of Gift from the Center for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature: APPROVED**

Mr. Szabo thanked Dr. Claudette McLinn for her ongoing support of the Library.

It was moved by Commissioner Lassiter and seconded by Vice President Eidmann to approve the following resolution. The motion passed with the following votes: 4 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen, Lassiter). Noes: 0. Absent: Salinas.

LIBRARY RESOLUTION 2020-27 (C-15)

RESOLVED, That a gift of library materials for the Los Angeles Public Library valued at \$2,435 received from the Center for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature, earmarked for the Los Angeles Public Library's "Read While You Wait" program, a community-based literacy initiative be accepted; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a letter of thanks be sent to the Center for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature, expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board and staff for the generous gift.

b. **Library Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21: APPROVED AS AMENDED** (Continued from June 25, 2020 Board Meeting)

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended the Board approve the Library Department's Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget in the amount of \$205,334,363. The Budget includes the recommendation to allocate undesignated funds in the amounts of \$278,017 and \$75,000 into the Alterations and Improvements account for the Central Library.

Mr. Szabo pointed out that this budget includes a \$1 million increase in library materials; however, at \$3.51 per capita, this is an area where LAPL does not compare well with other libraries. The budget includes funds for information technology (IT) infrastructure and providing new IT equipment. He stated that the total related costs

for services provided by other departments for FY 2020-21 is \$79,724,896 and represents 38.86% of the total Library budget. This amount has hovered around 40%.

Mr. Szabo stated that also included in the budget are \$2 million dollars for which an account has been established titled, "Reimagining Safety Initiative," as directed by the Board at the June 25 Board Meeting to move a minimum of \$2 million dollars from LAPD Security Services to be used for alternative approaches to security.

Mr. Szabo reported that Kren Malone, Director of Central Library Services, is leading the Reimagining Safety Initiative Project for Fiscal Year 2020-21. Staff and members of the Safety and Security Project (S&SP) have begun meeting to determine how this effort will move forward. He said initial priorities are likely to build on the history of work led by the Engagement and Learning Division's Lifelong Learning Team and S&SP recommendations relating to training, mental health and homelessness response resources and determining how to best use these \$2 million dollars. He said he would provide more information during the discussion of the Library Security Memo on this agenda.

Mr. Szabo recommended adoption of the Library Department's FY 2020-21 Budget in the amount of \$205,334,363.

Board President Cao asked for a motion to continue the discussion and voting on the budget until after items C and D are discussed. It was moved by Vice President Eidmann, seconded by Commissioner Franzen, and unanimously approved to continue this item.

7. BOARD DISCUSSION

c. Motion on Re-envision Safety at the Los Angeles Public Library *(From June 25, 2020 Board Meeting)*

Public Comments

The Board heard 20 public comments asking divestment from LAPD and encouraging alternative solutions to safety and security. There were six (6) from staff expressing concern about complete divestment from LAPD, stating that there are certain situations that are not for social workers to handle.

Board Discussion

Vice President Eidmann thanked everyone who had taken the time to write, call and speak to share their views. She said this motion before the Board is designed as a roadmap to create a sustainable shift for long term change. The motion also ensures that there is a process for dialogue and consensus building among stakeholders as well as ongoing accountability structure about the creation and implementation of this plan as well as underlying data regarding the budget and safety and conditions of the Los Angeles Public Library.

Commissioner Franzen said she was moved by all the comments, emails, letters, and calls from the public and staff. She stated that they have a cut of \$2 million on the table and asked whether they could go further.

Board President Cao replied that the purpose of this motion is to put into the record the Board asking Administration to work with the Board as they explore different safety measures. It takes time to hire people and approve agreements, and this amount is only the first step, and part of the existing project to involve staff, patrons, and commissioners in safety and security. She said that the pandemic affects what they would be able to do.

Commissioner Lassiter stated that the language should be measurable and action oriented. She inquired about how they had arrived at the \$2 million dollars.

City Librarian John F. Szabo replied that the \$2 million specifically came from a direction the Board gave staff. He said the Board has discretion regarding the amount. He stated that the Library supports a broader strategy to alternative approaches to security and that is the reason social worker positions were included in the personnel resolution. He said that they are exploring how social workers, peer navigators, behavioral health specialists and de-escalation training can be implemented to create a safer, more secure, and welcoming environment.

Commissioner Lassiter asked for research on what best practices are happening around the country and in major cities that could be implemented locally.

Commissioner Franzen asked if the Library was relying on a citywide training for LAPD or if there was something the Library could do internally.

Mr. Szabo replied that the Library is not entirely reliant on LAPD training. He said the Library Security Memo mentions a designation of \$1 million dollars under security expenses, in part to provide customer service, de-escalation, and implicit bias training for library LAPD staff and contract security guards.

Commissioner Franzen asked about the process for how staff communicates with LAPD and whether there was ongoing communication between staff and LAPD to discuss the kinds of issues that have been brought up.

Mr. Szabo replied that there are ongoing meetings between LAPD and Staff regarding specific issues and incidents. They have regularly scheduled meetings as well as special meetings to talk about those issues.

Vice President Eidmann raised the question on whether there were any other proposed changes to the language before voting on Exhibit C.

The Board discussed and proposed the following amendments to the Directive:

1. Add **"and staff"** to the end of the first paragraph. (Cao)
2. Add a final sentence to the second paragraph: **"The plan should include study of any alternatives to policing implemented at large library systems around the country."** (Eidmann)

3. Add to the end of the last paragraph: “or if the plan can be implemented more expeditiously.” (Eidmann)

It was moved by Vice President Eidmann and seconded by Commissioner Lassiter to approve the following Directive as amended. The motion passed with the following votes: 4 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen, Lassiter). Noes: 0. Absent: Salinas.

DIRECTIVE

Development of a Multi-Year Plan to Re-envision Safety at the Los Angeles Public Library

The Board of Library Commissioners directs that the City Librarian and/or his designees develop a comprehensive, multi-year plan that re-envisions safety in the Los Angeles Public Library system by transitioning to an approach that does not rely primarily on law enforcement for security. The board seeks to ensure that the library is a safe and welcoming environment for all patrons and staff.

The plan should identify and create a process for development of alternative approaches to traditional law enforcement that provide services and support for library patrons, staff, and the community, including hiring or contracting with service providers to provide services, training, and support in areas such as social work, mental health, crisis intervention, and de-escalation, and community liaisons. The plans should include any alternatives to policing that have been implemented in large library systems across the country.

The plan should seek to reduce to the maximum extent possible the expenditure of funds on law enforcement, traditional contract security, and the presence of uniformed officers throughout the library system.

The plan should include a process for engaging stakeholders including staff, patrons, and the broader community.

The board acknowledges that the library has already engaged consultants for related projects, including consulting on 1) developing a framework for staff at all levels to participate in developing solutions for LAPL safety and security and 2) assisting library staff in developing training guidelines for helping patrons with mental health issues.

The plan should be designed to be fully implemented over the course of three years, or, in the alternative, propose an alternative, specific timeline for implementation if three years is determined to be infeasible, or if the plan can be implemented more expeditiously.

d. Received and Filed Report: Creating a Safe and Welcoming Library

Public Comments

The Board heard 11 Public Comments during the meeting about the budget allocation for LAPD services and suggestions for alternative solutions to security.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Franzen asked whether training could be done in-house as much as possible. Mr. Szabo stated that security expenses on Page 6 are not only for training, but for other things as well.

Vice President Eidmann stated that the item on the table is only to accept the report for the record.

Commissioner Franzen stated that she wanted to be clear that the issues brought up will continue to be discussed.

Board President Cao stated that discussions will continue throughout the process and asked for a motion to receive and file the report on Creating a Safe and Welcoming Library.

It was moved by Vice President Eidmann and seconded by Commissioner Franzen to Receive and File the Report on Creating a Safe and Welcoming Library. The motion passed with the following votes: 4 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen, Lassiter). Noes: 0. Absent: Salinas.

*Reconsideration of Exhibit B:***b. Library Department****Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21: APPROVED**

(Continued from June 25, 2020 Board Meeting)

Public Comments

The Board heard 14 Public Comments during the meeting about the budget allocation for LAPD services and suggestions for alternative solutions to security.

Board Discussion

Vice President Eidmann asked how the \$1 million dollars for implicit bias training would work within the budget, and whether there were options to alter that in some way.

Szabo pointed out that on page 6 of the memo, one of the items on the list is the training for which the Library would provide to LAPD and contract security. He said the commissioners could decide that they do not want that money to be used for that purpose.

Commissioner Franzen stated that she did not support giving money to LAPD for training and that it is part of the project to look at the best options.

Commissioner Lassiter requested that if the training funds are going to be spent that the Library shall have oversight, and that the opportunity be given to contractors that are diverse.

Mr. Szabo stated if the Commission wishes for this particular training to be provided by the Library there are many factors on how this might be done and whether they would rely on existing contracts or by procuring a new contract. He said that with respect to the Mayor's Executive Directive, which requires implicit bias training, the city is working on training for all departments.

Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankowski stated that there are procedural requirements and charter provisions involving contracts.

Commissioner Franzen moved to adopt the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget with an amendment that no dollars be provided to LAPD for training that was indicated in the City Librarian's memo."

It was moved by Commissioner Franzen and seconded by Commissioner Lassiter to adopt the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget with an amendment that no dollars be provided to LAPD for training indicated in the City Librarian's memo. The motion passed with the following votes: 4 Ayes (Cao, Eidmann, Franzen, Lassiter). Noes: 0. Absent: Salinas.

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2020-28 (C-16)

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles City Charter provides that the Board of Library Commissioners shall control, appropriate, and expend all Library Funds for the purposes of the Department; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Library Commissioners approved the Library Department Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 on December 12, 2019, in the amount of \$205,334,363 (Library Resolution Number 2019-52 [C-40]); and

WHEREAS, the Library recommends the adoption of the Library Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 as approved by the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the Library recommends the appropriation of non-designated funds in the amount of \$278,817 included in the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Adopted Budget to the Contractual Services Account 3040, Fund 300, Department 44, for Central Library Alterations and Improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Library recommends the appropriation of non-designated funds in the amount of \$75,001 included in the Various Special Account 9510 to the Contractual Services Account 3040, Fund 300, Department 44, for Central Library Alterations and Improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Library recommends the transfer of funds in the amount of \$2 million within the Various Special Account 9510 from LAPD Security Services to a newly created line item to be titled as "Reimagining Safety Initiative" within the Fiscal Year 2020-21 budget, Fund 300, Department 44:

THEREFORE, RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners hereby adopts and certifies the Adopted Library Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 in the amount of \$205,334,363, approved by the Mayor and amended by the Board.

Library Resolution
No. 2020-28 (C-16) Cont.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners hereby approves the appropriation of \$278,817 of non-designed funds included in the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Adopted Budget to the Contractual Services Account 3040, Fund 300, Department 44, for Central Library Alterations and Improvements; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners hereby approves the appropriation of \$75,001 of non-designed funds included in the Various Special Account 9510 to the Contractual Services Account 3040, Fund 300, Department 44, for Central Library Alterations and Improvements; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners hereby approves the transfer of funds in the amount of \$2 million within the Various Special Account 9510 from LAPD Security Services to a newly created line item to be titled as "Reimagining Safety Initiative" within the Library's Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget Fund 300, Department 44.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners hereby determines that funds in the amount of \$1 million proposed for de-escalation, customer service and implicit bias training for Security Service Division, contract security guards, and LAPD overtime patrols be managed by and within the Los Angeles Public Library.

8. VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS: None.

9. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS & REVIEW OF MATTERS PENDING:

Follow up Reports:

- Commissioner Lassiter requested follow up reports on the status from today's actionable items and discussions.
- Board President Cao asked that a timeline be provided for a plan in terms of deliverables.

Next Meeting:

Board President Cao announced that the next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, August 27, 2020, at 11:00 a.m. via Teleconference

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

ATTEST:

Bích Ngọc Cao
President

Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant

Approved: 9/24/20