

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

November 14, 2024

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, Asst. City Librarian Susan Broman; Deputy City Attorney Josh M. Templet; Administrative staff and members of the public.

- 2. Opening Remarks:** Board President Shaw welcomed everyone to the meeting and spoke about her family history and the results of the Presidential elections.

3. Approval of the Minutes:

Regular Meeting - September 26, 2024

It was moved by Vice President Blank and seconded by Commissioner Besser to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held September 26, 2024. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Besser/Blank/Shaw/Sims/Valadez); Noes: 0. Absent: 0.

Regular Meeting - October 10, 2024

Commissioner Besser requested a correction to Commissioner Mayra Valadez' name on Page 1, which was missing her first name on the Roll Call.

It was moved by Commissioner Besser and seconded by Commissioner Valadez to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held October, 2024 as corrected. 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: None.

5. City Librarian's Comments

and Announcements: City Librarian John F. Szabo reported on past and upcoming events.

6. City Librarian's Reports:**Discussion Items****a. Approval of the Library Department
Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26 Budget**

City Librarian John F. Szabo provided an overview of the Library's Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Budget totaling \$269,765,136 and recommended approval. He stated that the Library's charter appropriation for Fiscal Year 2025-26 has increased by \$13,263,206 from the previous fiscal year.

Mr. Szabo noted that about 34% (\$93 million dollars) of the proposed budget is for related costs. He highlighted that \$17.1 million dollars is designated for alterations and improvements for branch libraries and Central Library for small but necessary capital projects, noting that there is significant deferred maintenance of library facilities. He pointed out that the Library is currently going through a facilities planning process. He continued with a review of new positions, budget packages, and the budget process.

Discussion

President Shaw asked whether any discussion had been had with the Mayor's Office regarding a bond program. Mr. Szabo replied that the Mayor's Office is aware that the Library is engaged in a facilities planning process, which is in its earlier stages, and said that there had been conversations about the source for the capital costs could be a bond program.

President Shaw said that she would like to move forward with the bond program idea and for that work they need to speed up the planning process so it can be placed on the next election. Mr. Szabo replied that there are still a couple years of work to be done and the conversation about the bond issue could take place within that time. He said libraries do well when it's a stand-alone bond. President Shaw stated that the Library bond should be a stand-alone bond.

Vice President Blank asked when the facility planning contract had begun. Ms. Broman replied that it had started in the middle of the pandemic and it had been an ongoing process. She said a pilot project had been done with gathered data from 12 libraries and had created a dashboard to display the data in order to get a robust tool that will help manage library facilities and planning in the long term, not just the term of this particular plan.

Vice President Blank asked if they could expedite that process. Ms. Broman replied that they would work with the contractor and staff on that.

President Shaw asked if there was anything in this proposed budget that takes the Library to the future and whether there were any major new programs getting funded. Mr. Szabo replied that the issue of adding something new is being able to sustain it in future budget years. He said that staff has developed the budget mindful of the fact that charter mandated appropriations could decrease. He noted that over the years, positions and funding have been added to expand programs and services.

Vice President Blank asked if the hiring of social workers for the Library Experience Office was a new expense. Mr. Szabo replied that seven social worker positions were already included in the budget and had also been funded in the previous budget; however, only two had been hired and the remaining positions are budgeted for in the current year's budget and in the proposed budget.

Vice President Blank asked if there's an item for the Library Trust Fund for endowments that is separate from the Foundation money. Mr. Szabo stated that those are funds that are outside of the budget that have been received and are designated for a specific purpose, or to deposit impact fees paid by a developer for library services. President Shaw requested a briefing on the trust funds at a future meeting.

Commissioner Valadez thanked staff and library leadership for putting this budget together and she pleased that there's an increase in funding for the capital improvement projects at branches, and increased funding for library materials because having a world class collection is at the top of her priority list. She also asked if the increase in salary costs growth based on new contracts for this budget had already been projected. Madeleine Rackley, Business Manager, stated that the city unions have negotiated contracts that extend for several years and that any increases approved by the city are included in the budget.

Commissioner Sims had asked for clarification about deletion of one time funding budget items. Ms. Rackley explained that from budget year to budget year when staff prepare the budget, they are usually dealing with two buckets of money, which is the base amount and one time or additional funding. She said the base amount stays the same every year, and the one time items are things that may vary from year to year because they were only funded for the single fiscal year so if the revenues vary, staff has some flexibility on what it is funded from year to year.

Commissioner Sims also asked when during that budget cycle the department heads would make requests for increases to specific line items for the next fiscal year if they wanted to add a program, or expand one. Ms. Rackley replied that staff do make requests throughout the year for additional items, programs, staffing, etc.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2024-37 (C-33)

WHEREAS, On November 14, 2024, the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) approved the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Library Budget in the amount of \$269,765,136 to fund existing and enhanced Library services and programs:

THEREFORE RESOLVED, That the Board approves for further consideration by the Mayor's Office the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Library Budget in the amount of \$269,765,136 to fund existing and enhanced Library services and programs; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board authorizes the City Librarian to make any necessary technical revisions to the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Library Budget and advise the Board and the Mayor of any such changes.

**b. Approval to release Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
for the acquisition of Library Materials and Services**

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval to release a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) to find qualified entities to provide physical materials in a variety of formats, as well as added services, such as cataloging, stamping, barcoding, and making the materials shelf ready. He pointed out that this RFQ only applies to acquisition of physical materials, not online materials.

Discussion

Commissioner Valadez asked if this Request for Qualifications would be used to create a bench contract to go to specific vendors based on their expertise. Mr. Szabo affirmed, and stated that historically the Library has done business with multiple providers, recognizing that there isn't a single vendor that can provide everything for the Library.

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

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2024-38 (C-34)

WHEREAS, the Library requires the services of qualified entities to ensure the timely acquisition of books, non-book materials, and audio/visual materials for adults, young adults and children. The Library also requires qualified entities to provide a wide range of cost-effective services, as well as a selection of tools, physical processing, cataloging and other value-added services;

WHEREAS, on June 14, 2018, the Board of Library Commissioners (Board) approved the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to find qualified entities to provide library materials and services. On November 8, 2018, the Board approved the award of contracts to five companies for a term of one year with two one-year options to renew. All five contracts were set to expire in March 2022;

WHEREAS, on August 21, 2021, the Board approved amendments for five library materials acquisition contracts to extend the term by one year with two one-year options to renew as the Library develops and goes through the competitive bid process;

WHEREAS, Library staff has completed a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit proposals from qualified entities to enter into contracts for the acquisition of library materials and services; and

WHEREAS, the term of the proposed contracts will be for three years with an annual contract limit of \$3,000,000 per contract. No minimum amount of work or compensation is guaranteed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board adopts the recommendations and findings of the City Librarian's Board Report and authorizes the release of the RFQ for the Acquisition of Library Materials and Services; and

Library Resolution
No. 2024-38 (C-34) Cont.

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

**7. Commissioners' Comments
and Announcements**

- Vice President Blank reported that she had attended a concert at the Westwood Library. She said that the Westwood Library offers free monthly concerts sponsored by the Friends Group, in partnership with the LA Music Festival.
- Vice President Blank mentioned an *LA Times* article about Todd Lerew from the Library Foundation that discussed the current exhibit at the Central Library that he curated and his new book about all sorts of little unknown museums in Los Angeles, which was published by Angel City Press.
- Commissioner Besser commended Librarian Yvette Cabrera for her work on the Songs of the Earth program, which was beautiful and had an incredible turnout.
- Commissioner Besser commented that she, along with Margie Lee, a UCLA's Librarian and archivist for the Asian American Studies Center met with Eugene from the Chinese Historical Society and Young Adult Librarian Lynn Nguyen at the LAPL Chinatown Branch, where they heard from Lynne about the branch's Teen Council project during COVID for which they activated food distribution to seniors in the neighborhood.
- Commissioner Besser reported that during a tour of the Chinatown Library she had found out that the plaque with the history of the branch was not there anymore. She said she hopes that there are funds in the budget to replace plaques that have been stolen from libraries.
- Commissioner Sims reported that he had attended the Library Foundation's Gala and commended Stacey Lieberman and her team for their continued support of the Library.
- Next Board Meeting Notice: The next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 11:00 a.m., will be held at the Central Library.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:21 p.m

ATTEST:

Valerie Lynne Shaw
President

Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant

Approved: 1/23/2025