MINUTES
BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
October 9, 2014

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Central Library, 630 West 5th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071, convening at 10:05 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT: PRESIDENT JOSEFA SALINAS
VICE PRESIDENT BICH NGOC CAO
COMMISSIONER GREGORY BETTINELLI
COMMISSIONER MAI LASSITER
COMMISSIONER RITA WALTERS

EXCUSED

ABSENT: NONE

ALSO PRESENT: John F. Szabo, City Librarian; Kris Morita, Assistant General Manager; Christine Jerian, City Services Manager, Mayor’s Office; Elaine Owens-Sanchez, Analyst, CAO’s Office; Basia Jankowski, Deputy City Attorney; Roy Stone, President, Librarians’ Guild; Harry Semerdjian, Legislative Deputy, Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell’s Office, Council District 13; and staff.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 8/28/14 Regular Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Vice President Cao, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held August 28, 2014, be approved as submitted.

CONTINUANCE APPROVAL – 9/11/14 Regular Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Bettinelli, seconded by Vice President Cao, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held September 11, 2014, be approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS WITHIN THE BOARD’S JURISDICTION: None.

CITY LIBRARIAN’S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Librarian John F. Szabo reported the following:
Library Hours Restored on October 2

On October 2, the Library added service hours at all locations, fully restoring the hours of operation. Mr. Szabo said this marked an important milestone for the Library in that it has met all of the promises of Measure L with the final expansion of library hours. Mr. Szabo noted that restoration of Sunday hours were achieved a year ahead of schedule and the Library is delivering these services to the people of Los Angeles as they expected when they went to the ballot box in March 2011.

Adult Literacy Program 30th Anniversary

This month, the Los Angeles Public Library is celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Adult Literacy Program and it has been honoring the work of volunteers, tutors and teachers as well as all of the adult learners who have participated in the program. Staff has been hearing a number of inspirational stories from our adult learners about what this program means to them. Mr. Szabo said that it is an incredible 30 years of contribution to the community.

Mobile Wireless Printing at Central Library

This month, the Library launched mobile wireless printing at the Central Library. Later in October, it will be offered at nine branch libraries. This service will allow individuals with their own mobile devices to print using Central Library printers. Mr. Szabo said that this was something that patrons were asking about and it was requested frequently. The Information Technology team was able to make this happen and the intent is to be able to roll it out to all branch libraries.

Launching of TechKiosk at Central Library

This month, the Library launched a TechKiosk at the Central Library located on Lower Level 3. The TechKiosk is essentially a vending machine for tablets and laptops. It only requires a library card to check out a laptop or tablet. This service is being tested with the idea that it would be offered at branch libraries where there is very limited space to put traditional PC’s. Mr. Szabo said the TechKiosk has been incredibly popular. In the first month, over 1,000 people checked out devices. He noted that a great video shows how to use it and promotes it.

Library Implements New Telephone System

This month, the Library is implementing a new VoIP telephone system across at all 73 library locations. Mr. Szabo noted that this project was made possible by Measure L funding.
Broadway comes to Chatsworth

The Chatsworth Branch presented "Broadway Comes to Chatsworth." This was a concert by the Center Stage Opera, based in the San Fernando Valley. They performed songs from various Broadway musicals. It was very well attended.

Literary Awards Dinner

The Library Foundation of Los Angeles hosted its Annual Literary Awards Dinner last month. Board President Josefa Salinas and Vice President Bich Ngoc Cao were in attendance. The event honored author Judith Krantz with the Light of Learning Award for her passionate support of the Los Angeles Public Library. Author Junot Diaz was presented with the Library's Literary Award. Diaz is winner of a Pulitzer Prize and teaches writing at MIT. Mr. Szabo said it was a wonderful to honor both authors and thanked the Library Foundation for that very successful event, which raised over a $1 million dollars.

L.A. Odyssey Project

This Library Foundation and the Library Department have partnered to present the "L.A. Odyssey Project" offering over 70 programs based on Homer's epic poem, The Odyssey. Mr. Szabo stated that some of the programs are very funny and whimsical, even Homer from the "Simpsons" is engaged in this initiative. He noted that branch librarians have done a wonderful job of creatively interpreting the project and programs in the communities they serve.

Mini-Grant Program - Book Bike

A Book Bike from the San Pedro Regional Branch Library was funded through a mini-grant program awarded to Ednita Kelly, a wonderful librarian from that branch. It is an adult tricycle with a very large container with books that is used as an outreach tool. Ednita has been taking the book bike to festivals and literacy fairs. Councilmember Buscaino and the Mayor Garcetti saw it at the Wilmington Literacy Festival. Mr. Szabo said it has been a wonderful outreach tool and it is a great way to promote the library.

Central Library Chandeliers

Mr. Szabo thanked Commissioner Walters for the suggestion to clean the three whimsical chandeliers in the Tom Bradley Atrium. They have been cleaned and all the light bulbs that were burned out have been replaced. They now look amazing.

Board President Salinas thanked Mr. Szabo for the information and commended staff at all library locations for the great programs offered for Latino Heritage Month, as well the upcoming planned programs for Dias de Los Muertos.
CITY LIBRARIAN’S REPORTS:

Recommendation to Accept Gift

Thereafter, it was MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter and unanimously carried that the following resolution be adopted:

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2014-36 (C-32)

RESOLVED, That the gift of $2,000 received from the Friends of the Woodland Hills Library, for the benefit of the Woodland Hills Branch Library be accepted; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a letter of thanks be sent to the Friends of the Woodland Hills Library, expressing the grateful appreciation of Board and staff for the generous gift.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF POET KHALIL GIBRAN SCULPTURE FOR PLACEMENT IN THE CENTRAL LIBRARY

City Librarian John F. Szabo stated that today is a day to celebrate poetry at the Los Angeles Public Library where Mayor Garcetti will announce the new Poet Laureate of Los Angeles; and he (City Librarian) has the great pleasure to present before the Board the acceptance of the sculpture of poet Khalil Gibran for placement at the Central Library.

Mr. Szabo reported that on January of 2013, the City Council approved a council motion introduced by then City Councilmembers Dennis Zine and Eric Garcetti to accept on behalf of City of Los Angeles a sculpture of Lebanese Khalil Gibran from the non-profit World Lebanese Cultural Union. He said representatives from that organization were in attendance today.

Mr. Szabo stated that Gibran is the third best selling poet of all time. His most notable work is The Prophet, translated into 40 languages, of which the Library has numerous copies. He indicated that a location has been selected in the International Languages Department in the Central Library for the placement of the sculpture. He reported that the sculpture by Victor Issa is made of bronze and weights 150 pounds.

Mr. Szabo stated that this item has already been approved by the Public Arts Committee of the Cultural Affairs Department and the next step is for the Library Commission to approve it. Upon their approval, it will also go for approval by the Cultural Affairs Commission.
Public Comments

(1)

Harry Semerdjian, Legislative Deputy, Councilmember Mitchell O'Farrell's Office, Council District 13, stated that on January 2013, the City Council accepted from the World Lebanese Cultural Union the donation of a bronze sculpture of world-renown author and poet Khalil Gibran. He stated that in December 2013, the organization approached Councilmember O'Farrell asking him to lead the project. As the Chair of the Arts, Parks, Health, Aging, River Committee, Councilmember O'Farrell agreed to facilitate the donation and find a home for the sculpture in the City. He said Councilmember O'Farrell deeply admires the works of Khalil Gibran and appreciates the devotion of the Lebanese American community to their cultural heritage of which Khalil is an integral part and commends their commitment to the City of Los Angeles.

Mr. Semerdjian stated that the Central Library was identified as an appropriate home for the sculpture given the background of Khalil Gibran as an author and poet. The Library also houses copies of the author's numerous works. Both, Council District 13th's Office and members of the Lebanese community are excited about the possibility of housing the sculpture in the Library. He said his office is committed to the completion of this project in the near future. He thanked Library representatives for their input and assistance.

(2)

Anise Garabet, representative for the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU), said that his organization is non-profit, non-political, and non-religious with chapters all over the world. He stated that they have a small but vibrant community and they are fortunate to have been accepted by the United Nations as an NGO, and they think globally but act locally. Also, they have been striving to work side by side with the UN to achieve the millennium goal, one of them is education.

Mr. Garabet said Khalil, an American Lebanese, left greatness and literature and poetry to the whole world. He indicated that their donation of Khalil's sculpture to the Library would be an incentive for others to follow, other communities, and other ethnic groups because we are all part of this great mosaic of this beautiful city. He concluded his comments by stating that Gibran is an inspiration and said that John F. Kennedy's speech of "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country" was taken from Khalil Gibran's book, The New Frontier, 1925.

(3)

Milad Oweijan, WLCU, thanked the Board for the opportunity to present this item and hopes they would will accept their gift. He said he would be happy to answer questions related to the statue.

Board President Salinas acknowledged an e-mail received from Mr. Garabet, which it said everything he had mentioned in his presentation.
Commissioner Walters said she was particularly delighted about this item because when she was a very young woman Mr. Gibran was everyone's favorite poet. She recalled that students where she attended school just loved him and they would read Gibran's work to each other. She said it was wonderful gift and she was just delighted because it brought back many memories.

Board President Salinas stated that it was a great suggestion and opportunity for the Library where more things like this happen, a place where people are celebrated.

Thereafter, it was MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter and unanimously carried that the following resolution be adopted:

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2014-37**

WHEREAS, on January 2013, the City Council approved Council Motion C.F. 13-0020 accepting on behalf of the City of Los Angeles a sculpture of Lebanese poet Khalil Gibran from the non-profit World Lebanese Cultural Union; and

WHEREAS, the bronze sculpture is 36"H X 24"W X 17"D and 150 lbs. will be attached to a granite base and installed in the Central Library International Languages Department. The sculpture is in commemoration of the 130th anniversary of Gibran's birth. His most notable work is The Prophet, which has never been out print and has been translated into more than forty languages:

RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners approve the sculpture of world renowned poet Khalil Gibran for placement in the Central Library.

**LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-19**

City Librarian John F. Szabo presented the "Creating Opportunity, Building Community, Inspiring Innovation: Los Angeles Public Library's Strategic Plan 2014-19." He said the plan includes the following goals that resulted from the significant input received from the community, best practices from other successful libraries and priorities outcomes in Mayor Garcetti's "Back to Basics" initiative:

- Cultivate and Inspire Young Readers
- Nurture Student Success
- Champion Literacy and Lifelong Learning
- Contribute to L.A.'s Economic Growth
- Stimulate the Imagination
- Strengthen Community Connections and Celebrate L.A.
Mr. Szabo stated that this plan first and foremost is incredibly responsive to the needs and desires of Angelenos. Over 11,000 pieces of information were received during the outreach for the Strategic Plan, and according to the consultants this volume of information exceeds what many other libraries do in the development of their strategic plans. He said the plan is the result of a great amount of input and provided some of the statistics that resulted from the survey. In the telephone survey, 86% said the library was important to them and their family; 73% said they were planning to visit the Library; 25% said they use the Library website at least once a month. He cited that collections, both print and online, are still core services and number one reason that patrons visit the library for. Responses also showed that there is a high likelihood for the people to visit the library when they learn about its services. These results point out the importance of outreach, promotion and marketing.

Mr. Szabo stated that this plan is built on the strength of the Los Angeles Public Library and the great work that staff have done for many years, and the support received from patrons and support groups. This plan will take the Library to the next level and is reflective of the Mayor's priorities. It also provides a framework for services and collections to move forward but it is not restrictive, but flexible to accommodate change. The landscape for technology in library services is changing very rapidly but the plan would allow the Library to adapt to those changes.

Mr. Szabo pointed out that it is important to remember that the Library is a very unique institution that on a daily basis serves everybody in person and virtually, it serves all ages and demographics and that is something to be proud of. Library services are tailored to the needs of each of the communities. He indicated that the challenge with the plan is how to build on all of successes and traditional services people love and continue to grow and innovate and reach more Angelenos. He said currently there 1.1 million library card holders. He wants that number to be four million. He wants everyone to see the library as an incredibly relevant institution.

Mr. Szabo also asked how could the leverage of the Library as a trusted and valued place in the community be used to make a difference in some of the bigger issues. He said the Library is already doing a lot of that, but the plan speaks about the Library not only as a learning place but also about immigration, how to bridge the digital divide, etc. He said that assisting with the plan, helping digest the information is a team of consultants from MIG Inc. and Carson Block Consulting, and June Garcia. He said Ms. Garcia is a library consultant who was an active librarian for over 40 years and currently she is managing a project for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation working with young librarians from 23 different countries to enhance their leadership and innovation skills.

Mr. Szabo said he would not review the goals individually because that information is in the plan, instead he spoke about the importance of foundational elements to the plan, such as facilities, marketing and promotion, staffing, technology (digital learning labs, mobile presence), and partnerships. He said metrics are important and critical to the plan and it has been discussed internally and with the Mayor's Office on how COMSTAT would be adapted to the Library to measure the initiatives and objectives, whether be circulation, summer meals, attendance at story time, etc.
Mr. Szabo concluded his introduction of the plan by stating that the plan is about opportunity, community and innovation; and as a theme for this discussion, the Library is about empowerment, equity and access. He said he looks forward to continuing the conversation.

**Board Discussion**

In response to Board President Salinas question regarding progress reports on the Strategic Plan to see how the goals are being achieved, Mr. Szabo stated that progress reports will be provided formally and informally during commission meetings, in terms of talking about the steps that are being taken to implement the programs and reports on metrics will be provided on the numbers. He said that going forward, outcome measurements are equally important as the outputs or hard numbers. Determining how many people were helped to get a job as opposed to just how many people went to the website to see job hunting and resume preparation.

Vice President Cao stated that she would like to see in the objectives more information on where the Library is now versus the goals that are being set, so they understand the context of the goals.

Commissioner Walters pointed out that the percentages stated in the plan needed to include an overall number of participants that took part in the survey. She said that the report is somewhat repetitive and redundant in various spots. Also, it was very difficult to read because of the very small print and light-colored background.

Board President Salinas stated that it was important to increase the number of new Library patrons and getting them in the door. She asked how many of the surveyed participants were not current library users. Mr. Szabo replied that the numbers were known for those who participated in the telephonic survey and that he would see if the online and print questionnaires included this question.

Commissioner Lassiter asked if increasing membership was one of the goals because she did not see it stated in the report. Mr. Szabo replied that it should probably be explicitly stated in the report as a goal.

Board President Salinas requested a copy of the survey and its breakdown by area, population, age, gender, etc. She said the data will assist in targeting demographics and in determining where to focus marketing. Mr. Szabo said he would provide that information.

Commissioner Lassiter stated that the strategic plan and marketing plan are being treated separately but they need to be integrated because the strategic plan can not omit marketing. She also stated that the Strategic Plan is missing a visionary piece.
Commissioner Bettinelli stated that the Library of the future should look very different five years from now, changing the role it plays. He would imagine that every household in Los Angeles would be interacting with the library through technology and augment their experience by visiting the library, providing library services where they are needed for specific groups, such as the homeless on Skid Row. Equally important is to use the leverage libraries have as focal place in the communities to form partnerships with other city entities to augment services.

In regard to library service in Skid Row, Commissioner Walters commented that the Little Tokyo Branch is located in that area and is heavily used by the homeless, but there is also a lot of senior housing in that area and the seniors may not feel comfortable or safe coming in, so it might be helpful to them if the Library was to bring a library to their senior housing community.

Commissioner Bettinelli said that with the use of technology it is easier to embrace the needs of various groups.

Commissioner Walters stated that she has listened to the City Librarian speak with enthusiasm and understanding about the Library’s role and that is something that is missing in the Strategic Plan. She said the plan needs an attention grabber and it needs to convey a message to the people. She also stated that preparing children to read for academic success is good but to cultivate the love of reading was missing as an objective from Goal 2.

Commissioner Lassiter suggested that the plan include collaboration of best practices and standardization of key programs among branch libraries; for example, having a set date and time where story time is offered at all locations, instead of every branch doing the program at different times or dates. The Board President concurred that there should some programs that need to be standardized across the system.

The Board President ask about the locations where the SAT practice sessions and other Student Smart programs would be offered and inquired whether it would be expanded and offered online. Commissioner Lassiter asked which branches are offering it and asked about the length of the program. Mr. Szabo said that he will provide that information.

Commissioner Bettinelli stated that the Library plays a role in a very complex political situation and as an institution it should take a leadership role in breaking down barriers and developing partnerships to work with other city institutions and neighboring cities whether it be city, county or school district, or a city department as Recreation and Parks to better serve the people of Los Angeles.

Board President Salinas and Commissioner Bettinelli spoke about the need for establishing a formal partnership with LAUSD to get library cards in the hands of all students. She commented that she made this suggestion at a City Council Committee meeting she attended a few months ago and she received a positive response from the councilmembers who were in attendance.
Commissioner Lassiter pointed out that a partnership with LAUSD was mentioned in the 2007-10 Strategic Plan.

City Librarian John F. Szabo stated that the Library works with the LAUSD and the librarians do a great deal of work visiting public and private schools and promoting library services, but there is not a leadership level partnership. He reported that he has met with the LAUSD Superintendent to discuss this issue.

Board President Salinas said she would also like the Catholic schools to be included in the partnership. Commissioner Lassiter suggested that the California Association of Independent Schools be contacted to involve the private schools as well.

The Board President stated that the goal for the Library should be to make sure that library card applications are included in the packets given to students on the first day back to school.

Commissioner Bettinelli stated that as commissioners they could assist with leverage among institutions to effectuate and implement partnerships. He asked how they could get a library day established at schools so that library cards are issued to students.

Vice President Cao suggested that Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell could take the lead as well as Councilmember Nury Martinez, who is a former school board member, to assist in establishing the partnership with LAUSD.

Commissioner Lassiter requested a list of current partnerships.

Board President Salinas asked if a new website would be created. Mr. Szabo replied that the Library is planning to have a greater mobile and online presence.

Board President Salinas stated she would like to receive a detailed report in six months after the plan is implemented so see how goals are being achieved.

**BOARD ACTION**

Board President Salinas requested that the Board Report be revised to read "review and approve" the Strategic Plan instead of "receive and file." Thereafter, it was unanimously approved to continue discussion on the Strategic Plan 2014-19 to next the Board meeting.

**VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS & REVIEW OF MATTERS PENDING:** None.
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

ATTEST: ____________________

____________________________  _______________________
Josefa Salinas                 Raquel M. Borden
President                      Board Executive Assistant

To be approved: October 30, 2014