MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

December 4, 2014

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Little Tokyo Branch Library, 203 S. Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, convening at 11:06 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT:  PRESIDENT  JOSEFA SALINAS
           COMMISSIONER  GREGORY BETTINELLI
           COMMISSIONER  MAI LASSITER
           COMMISSIONER  RITA WALTERS

EXCUSED

ABSENT:  VICE PRESIDENT  BICH NGOC CAO

ALSO PRESENT: John F. Szabo, City Librarian; Kris Morita, Assistant General Manager; Elaine Owens-Sanchez, Analyst, CAO’s Office; Terry Martin-Brown, Assistant City Attorney, General Counsel; Alois Phillips, Deputy City Attorney, General Counsel; Tom La Bonge, Councilmember, Council District 4th; and staff.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 11/20/14 Regular Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Bettinelli, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held November 20, 2014, be approved as submitted.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – 11/20/14 Special Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Bettinelli, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held November 20, 2014, be approved as submitted.

Recessed at 11:08 a.m. for Special Meeting. Reconvened Regular Meeting at 11:54 a.m.

REMARKS BY THE LITTLE TOKYO
BRANCH SENIOR LIBRARIAN

James Sherod, Senior Librarian, welcomed the Board to the Little Tokyo Branch Library, which was built nine years ago as part of the Los Angeles Public Library’s Branch Construction Project. He noted that the dedicated Friends group had lobbied for its establishment from a bookmobile stop in 1977, to a location in the Centenary Methodist Church, to an experimental branch in 1989, and finally to the current facility.
Mr. Sherod introduced the following branch staff: Adult Librarian Masako Yasui; Clerk Typist Gloria Wong; and Messenger Clerk Yoko Hata. Children's Librarian Kerry Lum was doing outreach at a school and unable to be present. He said the branch has a very enthusiastic and supportive Friends Group. He reported that 56% of the branch’s circulation is Japanese materials and people drive in from great distances to use this collection.

Mr. Sherod reported on the great programming offered for children, teens and adults and highlighted the following:

- A weekly Citizenship English class that prepares people for citizenship by giving them an opportunity to learn grammar and practice their conversational skills.
- Once a month for most of 2014, Attorney Mark Yoshida gave pro-bono advice to green card holders seeking citizenship.
- For 2014 summer outreach, the branch targeted School on Wheels in Skid Row, where staff went every other week to read to the youth and gave them information on library’s services. Free books were provided from a generous donation from the Friends Group. Also, he lined up Operation Hope to give a presentation there during the summer.
- Free film showings each Friday are popular with the homeless patrons.
- The Branch is offering a series of poetry workshops to help people express themselves in new ways. These classes will explore poetry as a way of coping with physical and emotional disasters in life.

Mr. Sherod also reported that he is working with a couple of high school students from the New Village Girls Academy to help them find real life experiences in their education and provide services for the patrons. One of them has been teaching a weekly Spanish class. The other has used Universal Class to study MS-Word and Excel and will be teaching a weekly computer class beginning in January.

Mr. Sherod also provided an overview on the numerous initiative-based programs the branch provides. Many of the programs have been presented with partners. Bienstar offered programs on Medicare and insurance enrollment under the Affordable Care Act; the U.S. Census Bureau presented a series of three workshops: Business Property Tax Statement Filing Seminar; Census Data for Businesses; Census Data for Grant Writing. Additional free financial programming was provided by community partners: Financial Problems for Japanese Nationals and Investing Workshop by Juan Villegas. In the area of health, Hypertension workshops, a Safely Surrendered Baby Law & Adoption, and a couple programs on the Great ShakeOut were presented.
Mr. Sherod concluded his presentation by stating that as an Illinois All State Choir alumnus, he shares his love of music by lining up various concerts. A series of USC Thornton School of Music concerts are held throughout the year, as well as Cameron O’Conner and the Japan American Chamber Ensemble. He said he is currently in the process of lining up a presentation in the spring by L.A. Opera Talks and is consulting with USC and Loyola Marymount University for presentations during February to celebrate Black History Month.

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

CITY LIBRARIAN’S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Librarian John F. Szabo reported the following:

- Councilwoman Nury Martinez will hold Gift of Reading Holiday Events at the Panorama City Branch (12/15), Van Nuys Branch (12/17) and at the Sun Valley Branch (12/18).
- Two exhibits from the LAPL’s collections are currently being featured at City Hall.
- Los Angeles Public Library’s Valley Times Photo Collection will be exhibited at Council Member Tom LaBonge’s Council District 4 Sherman Oaks Field Office.
- Discovery Science Center recently opened next to Lake View Terrace Branch
- Canoga Park Branch will present, “Treasures of Japan, Shin to the Power of 3.”
- Flu Clinics: 520 people took advantage of the flu clinics hosted at the Library in partnership with the County Department of Public Health and Community Health Councils.

The Board President thanked Mr. Szabo for the information and mentioned that her friend Actor and Author Eriq La Salle would be at the Central Library on December 14 for a book signing and conversation.

CITY LIBRARIAN’S REPORTS:

Recommended Acceptance of Gifts

It was MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter and unanimously carried that the following resolutions be adopted:

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2014-49 (C-43)**

RESOLVED, that the donation in the amount of $3,000 to the “Hot Off The Press” Bestseller Program from the Friends of the Studio City Branch Library be accepted; and
FURTHER RESOLVED, That a letter of appreciation be sent to the Friends of the Studio City Branch Library expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board of Library Commissioners and staff for the generous gift.

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LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2014-50

WHEREAS, the Lake View Terrace Branch Library was chosen as a location for the gift of a “R.HERO” Dalmatian puppy sculpture, which is based on a character in a children’s picture book that teaches children about heroism, community partnerships, and the value of working together; and

WHEREAS, the aluminum sculpture is 6’2"H X 3’7"D X 6’10"W, weighs approximately 150 pounds, and will be bolted down with anchors:

RESOLVED, That the gift of a “R.HERO” sculpture valued at $16,000 received from Bunni and Rick Benaron to be placed at the Lake View Terrace Branch Library be accepted; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a letter of thanks be sent to Bunni and Rick Benaron, expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board and staff for the generous gift.

RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE LIBRARY DEPARTMENT PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-16

City Librarian John Szabo recommended that the Library’s Proposed Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2015/2016, totaling $151,973,777, be approved for transmittal to the Mayor’s Office. He indicated that as a result of Measure L, the Library’s Charter-mandated appropriation for FY 2015-16 will increase by $8,222,438. He stated that among the requests included in the proposed budget are the following:

- Request of 47 new FTE positions to enhance library public services, outreach and marketing, and support staff.
- Funding for security to enhance public safety.
- Funds for Central Library and Branch Library maintenance.
- Funding to continue to bridge the digital divide by providing two positions to staff the digital learning labs/Makerspaces
- Funds to add IT staff for the library’s growing information technology infrastructure.
Mr. Szabo informed the Board that the Library is working with the Department of Recreation and Parks to contract out services for the maintenance of landscaping of library facilities.

**Board Discussion**

Commissioner Walters had questions in regards to the Building Maintenance Package Request; particularly, the escalator upgrades and repairs and furniture replacement. Assistant Business Manager Eloisa Sarao responded that some of the escalators on the main floor and lower levels need to be upgraded because they have parts that are obsolete and can’t be repaired. In regard to the furniture, she said it has been heavily used for 20 years and the wear and tear is evident even though it is cleaned daily.

After discussing various areas of the budget, the Board Members indicated that they had additional questions that would necessitate a continuance of the discussion on the budget to the next Board Meeting.

Commissioner Bettinelli asked staff to make sure that no surprises come up that would affect the budget, as it happened last year with the inclusion of MICLA debt. Mr. Szabo responded that Library staff has met with budget staff from the Office of the Mayor and CAO and have received assurances that communications of any significant budget changes would be transparent.

**BOARD ACTION**

It was moved by Commissioner Bettinelli, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter, and unanimously carried that the Proposed Library Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-16 be continued to the Next Board Meeting.

**VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS & REVIEW OF MATTERS PENDING:**

Councilman LaBonge visited library in Tokyo, Japan

Tom LaBonge, Councilmember, District 4, attended the Board Meeting to report on his trip to sister city Tokyo, Japan, where he visited one of their libraries. He informed the Board that he had given as gift to the library in Tokyo 10 books about the City of Los Angeles for its collection. He showed and donated the photos he took with the library staff in Japan. He concluded by thanking the Board for their service to the Library, one of the greatest institutions of our city.
Marketing Plan Process

Commissioner Lassiter asked about the status of the marketing plan. Mr. Szabo stated that at her request, the marketing plan would be discussed at the December 18th Board Meeting and the Board will have an opportunity to discuss this subject and provide their expectations.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

ATTEST: ________________

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Josefa Salinas             Raquel M. Borden
President                  Board Executive Assistant

Approved: December 18, 2014