MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

December 18, 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 11:07 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT: VICE PRESIDENT BICH NGOC CAO
COMMISSIONER MAI LASSITER
COMMISSIONER RITA WALTERS

EXCUSED

ABSENT: PRESIDENT JOSEFA SALINAS
COMMISSIONER GREGORY BETTINELLI

ALSO PRESENT: John F. Szabo, City Librarian; Kris Morita, Assistant General Manager; Elaine Owens-Sanchez, Analyst, CAO’s Office; Alois Phillips, Deputy City Attorney, General Counsel; Roy Stone, President, Librarians’ Guild; and staff.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL: 12/4/14 Special Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Special Meeting held December 4, 2014, be approved as submitted.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL: 12/4/14 Regular Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held December 4, 2014, be approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS
WITHIN THE BOARD’S JURISDICTION

Roy Stone, President, Librarians’ Guild, stated that this would be the last Board meeting for Business Manager Kyle Millager since she is retiring soon. He said Ms. Millager has dedicated herself to a lot of important services for the Los Angeles Public Library and her multiple efforts from facility improvements and safety issues to the difficult Library budget had resulted in untold improvements for library services. He presented Ms. Millager with a flower bouquet on behalf of the librarians and clerical staff as well as members of the public because they have also benefitted.
Mr. Stone, on behalf of the Librarians’ Guild, wished everyone happy holidays and a great New Year.

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Commissioner Walters expressed her appreciation to Kyle Millager for doing a marvelous work when providing information and explaining complex budget issues. She said that as a Commissioner, she truly appreciated Ms. Millager’s work and very pleasant attitude and commended her for being receptive to the public, to the Commissioners and staff. She said it has been a pleasure working with her and wished her the very best.

CITY LIBRARIAN’S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Retirement of Business Manager Kyle Millager

Mr. Szabo announced that Business Manager Kyle Millager would be retiring this month. He spoke about her ability to explain complex information and her knowledge of Measure L as well as being an incredible steward of the Library’s budget. He thanked Ms. Millager for all of her contributions to the Library and said she would be missed tremendously by all at LAPL. He thanked Roy Stone from the Librarians’ Guild and Commissioner Walters for their comments and expression of gratitude to Kyle.

Author Program Featured Eriq La Salle

Mr. Szabo reported that he had the great opportunity to interview Eriq La Salle, actor, director, producer and now author of a trilogy of thriller books. He said that Board President Josefa Salinas knows Eriq personally and gave a wonderful introduction of him. La Salle’s latest book, Laws of Wrath, is indeed as James Patterson said on the cover, “a real page turner and a thriller.”

Khalil Gibran Sculpture Unveiled

Mr. Szabo reported that the unveiling and dedication of Khalil Gibran sculpture at the Central Library had an enormous turnout. Attendees included representatives from The World Lebanese Cultural Union, numerous individuals from the Lebanese American community in Los Angeles, Councilmember Mitchell O’Farrell, former Councilmember Dennis Zine, new Sheriff Jim McDonnell, and a member from the Lebanese Parliament was present as well. The sculpture is located in the International Languages Department.

Garden Sustainability

The Wilshire Branch is hosting a series of programs on container gardening. Attendees learn about gardening, plants and sustainability. He mentioned that the Library is working with the Mayor’s Office on Sustainability on identifying branch libraries that can accommodate an urban garden, particularly in areas of the City where access to fresh produce is limited.
CITY LIBRARIAN’S REPORTS:

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

Recommendation to Accept Gift

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2014-51

RESOLVED, That a gift of an island display with end panels in honor and memory of former Woodland Hills Adult Librarian Marie Bougetz, valued at $1,221.35, received from The Friends of the Woodland Hills Branch Library to be utilized by the Woodland Hills Branch Library, be accepted;

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

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Recommendation to Accept of CLLS Baseline Grant for Adult Literacy Services

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2014-52 (C-44)

WHEREAS, On December 1, 2014, the California State Library announced that the Los Angeles Public Library Adult Literacy Services Program’s final payment of the total grant allocation for 2014/15 fiscal year is $155,701; and

WHEREAS, The Los Angeles Public Library and the Library Foundation of Los Angeles provide matching funds to become eligible for the grant; and

WHEREAS, The funds must be accepted by the Board of Library Commissioners to activate this award:

RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners accepts the California Library Literacy Services (CLLS) baseline grant of $155,701 for the Los Angeles Public Library’s Adult Literacy Services for Fiscal Year 2014/2015; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the funds be deposited in Trust Fund 419, Account 309 (CLLS FY 2014-2015).
Commissioner Walters stated that L.A. Unified School District used to have an extensive adult education program but most of those programs don’t exist anymore, so she would like to see the number of people that are served by this program as well as by the distribution of materials. She requested a list of where these grant funds have been expended in the past and where they will continue to be expended.

City Librarian John F. Szabo replied that the funds are used for materials for the literacy centers, which currently has about 1,500 students that are actively enrolled in LAPL’s literacy programs. He mentioned that at a meeting he attended for adult education providers around the L.A. area, included community colleges, school districts, etc. They discussed that there is demand for these services but the number of individuals they are able to serve has decreased. He said he believes that literacy programs are so important, and programs like “Career On Line High School Diploma” offered at LAPL are really essential.

Commissioner Walters said that it is a wonderful role the Library plays in providing those services.

Recommendation to Approve “African American Military Portraits from the American Civil War” Exhibition Agreement

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2014-53

WHEREAS, The Los Angeles Public Library is working with the California African American Museum (CAAM) to present at the Central Library’s Getty Gallery the exhibition: “African American Military Portraits from the American Civil War”; and

WHEREAS, The exhibition will be on view from January 20, 2015 to April 4, 2015, and it will consists of images from the Library of Congress collection:

RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners authorize the City Librarian to enter into an agreement with the California African American Museum to present the exhibition “African American Military Portraits from the American Civil War”; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Attorney and City Librarian be authorized to make any necessary technical changes to the agreement prior to execution.

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Commissioner Lassiter noted that this exhibit falls within Black History Month and asked how visitors would be attracted to this exhibit.

Mr. Szabo replied that the exhibit is going to be promoted in partnership with the California African American Museum, using social media, through all branch libraries, and by sending information to schools.
RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE
LIBRARY DEPARTMENT PROPOSED
BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-16
(Continued from 12/4/14 Board Meeting)

City Librarian John Szabo stated that at the last meeting he had provided some of the proposed budget highlights in terms of deliverable services, positions, and each of the budget packages. At that meeting, the Board had inquiries regarding the City timeline around the budget, about staffing, and the effect of contracting landscaping services, particularly, city staff within the recreation and parks department. He said he had provided them with the responses via e-mail.

Mr. Szabo said that a lot happens between the time departments receive instructions from the Mayor’s budget team and CAO’s office to the time that the Board ultimately gives final approval of the budget in June.

Board Discussion

Vice President Cao asked when, in terms of the budget timeline would Board members have an opportunity to discuss the budget with the Mayor’s staff.

Mr. Szabo responded that they could and encouraged them to do that at any time. He said the Mayor’s Budget Director is Matt Crawford.

Mr. Szabo stated that per the timeline this proposed budget had already been sent to the Mayor’s Office in draft form but with the understanding that it is not final until this Board gives its approval. He noted that staff will be attending budget hearings likely in February. The Mayor’s budget is released in April and then it goes to City Council for discussion and approval. The Library may be asked to present to City Council and take questions from them.

Commissioner Lassiter said that for next year’s budget, as a matter of timing, it would be great for the Board to go through and discuss the strategic plan and marketing plan prior to approving the budget.

Mr. Szabo replied that as they begin the budget process for next year, the strategic plan and marketing plan would be in place, which will help put the budget together and make certain the resources are in the budget to accomplish those goals in the strategic plan and to execute the marketing plan. He recommended that the Board approve the proposed budget today.

It was MOVED by Commissioner Lassiter and seconded by Commissioner Walters, and unanimously carried that the following resolution be adopted:
LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2014-54 (C-45)

RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners approve for transmittal to the Mayor’s Office the attached Proposed Library Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2015/2016 in the amount of $151,973,777, for funding library services and programs; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board authorize the City Librarian to make minor technical revisions to the budget, if necessary.

LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY
STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-20
(Continued from 10/9/14 Board Meeting)

City Librarian John F. Szabo stated at the October 9th Board meeting, the Board provided input and guidance on the strategic plan. He said staff set about incorporating those into the plan along with supplemental information.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Walters stated that some of the suggestions she had made and concerns she had expressed about the strategic plan at the last meeting had been addressed in the document received today, but not all and it still needs a lot of work. Further, she said she would like the plan to be presented in a way that is enjoyable to read, because as is, it is not a page turner.

City Librarian John F. Szabo apologized for the inconsistency in the narrative, noting that the document had traveled a long road and went across many desks and certainly as a result it has many voices. He said they will go back and look at that.

Commissioner Lassiter asked if the plan needed to be approved today because the key points that the commissioners laid out about the strategic plan on October 9 were not addressed on this document. Also she would like to have more discussion on it and in a different setting where the Board members can speak to each other.

Mr. Szabo replied that it was not critical to approve the plan today. He stated that a bulleted list sent to them by e-mail on October 23 had a summary of the revisions recommended at the October 9th meeting, but if their recommendations were not addressed or if they have any kind of input in detail, in addition to their comments from today’s meeting, to please send them to him in an e-mail because he wants to make certain to release a document that reflects their comments and input. He said he will certainly try to address it in a better way.

Vice President Cao stated that she request a motion to continue the strategic for further discussion.
BOARD ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter and approved by unanimous consent that the “Creating Opportunity, Building Community, Inspiring Innovation: Los Angeles Public Library’s Strategic Plan 2015-2020” be continued for further discussion.

ORAL DISCUSSION ON MARKETING PLAN FOR THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

City Librarian John F. Szabo stated that to lay a foundation for discussion of the Marketing Plan, Peter Persic, Director of Public Relations and Marketing, would make a presentation about the resources that are currently being invested in that area, to paint a picture of where the Library is now and talk about next year’s budget. He noted that the presentation is 15-20 minutes. It is an overview of all the things being done now, so they could have that information prior to the conversation about the marketing plan.

Vice President Cao stated that she would like to have the discussion on the marketing plan continued to a meeting next year, possibly in January, when all Board members are present.

Commissioner Lassiter asked if it would be possible to schedule a meeting where both the strategic and marketing plan are solely discussed.

Mr. Szabo asked the City Attorney to offer comment in terms of having a meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners where it did not follow the traditional agenda to address Commissioner Lassiter’s request to simply discuss those two items.

Alois Phillips, Deputy City Attorney, stated that the Board is able to have that type of meeting. The language on the agenda should include what it is expected to be presented or who will be presenting on the agenda and notice that it is a special meeting.

Commissioner Lassiter stated that she would like to have more of a conversation versus a lengthy presentation, because then it would be more like the regular meeting format. She asked if the special meeting could be held in a different room/location to allow for a roundtable setting where Board members can face and speak to each other. She also asked that it be noted on the agenda that it is a special meeting for the purpose to discussion those two items.

Mr. Szabo replied that emphasis would be on the discussion and input from them to staff.

Commissioner Lassiter requested that the marketing Power Point presentation be sent to them prior to the meeting to allow them time to review the information.
BOARD ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Lassiter, seconded by Commissioner Walters and approved by unanimous consent that the oral discussion on the Marketing Plan for the Los Angeles Public Library be continued and set for discussion to a meeting when all members are present.

BOARD DIRECTIVE

By unanimous consent, the Board directed that a Special Meeting be held wherein the Los Angeles Public Library’s Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and Marketing Plan be solely discussed.

VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS: None.

COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS & REVIEW OF MATTERS PENDING:

Vice President Cao, on behalf of the Board, thanked the City Librarian and all library staff for their hard work throughout the year. She said the Board is truly dedicated and committed to LAPL and they are very excited about the upcoming year. She wished everyone Happy Holidays.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

ATTEST: ________________

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Bich Ngoc Cao               Raquel M. Borden
Vice President              Board Executive Assistant

Approved: January 22, 2015