MINUTES
BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

June 25, 2015

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Central Library, Room A, 630 West 5th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071, convening at 11:12 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; Basia Jankowski, Deputy City Attorney; Arletta Maria Brimsey, Deputy City Attorney; The Honorable Tom LaBonge, Councilmember, Fourth District; and staff.

There were no Minutes for approval.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION (Taken out order)

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

CITY LIBRARIAN’S REPORTS:

By unanimous consent Exhibit A was called Special and considered upon arrival of Councilmember LaBonge.

BRIEFING BY BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS’ AD HOC COMMITTEE AND LIBRARY STAFF RE: PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY MARKETING CLASS PROJECT

Board President Salinas stated that in January she appointed Board members Bich Ngoc Cao and Mai Lassiter to a Marketing Ad Hoc Committee to review the PR staff’s development of a marketing plan Request For Proposals (RFP) and various public relations and marketing opportunities. She said she was looking forward to hearing about the committee’s progress.
City Librarian John F. Szabo introduced Peter Persic, Director of Public Relations and Marketing, to provide an update on the Ad Hoc Committee and activities of the Public Relations and Marketing Office.

Presentation

Mr. Persic stated that PR staff is in the final stages of preparing the RFP and that the Ad Hoc Committee has reviewed and contributed to the draft. Staff is now in the process of including the format and general conditions required of all city department-issued RFPs.

Mr. Persic provided an update on the accomplishments of the Public Relations and Marketing division since his last report to the Commission, including hiring a second bilingual social media librarian, increasing the library’s profile in social media, developing an annual marketing calendar to prioritize and strategize marketing and PR initiatives, and filling a new position that will move the responsibility for film coordination from PR to the Business Office.

Mr. Persic reported that through the efforts of Commissioner Lassiter, Pepperdine University selected the library as the subject for a class of 25 students learning about marketing. Library staff assisted the students in their assignments, which was to create marketing plans for either doubling the number of students with library cards or increasing the use of the library’s e-video and e-magazine by 20 percent.

Mr. Persic stated that Commissioner Lassiter, City Librarian Szabo, PR staff and Mr. Persic met with the class and were impressed with the dedication and commitment of the students.

Commissioner Lassiter stated that students come from all backgrounds and professional levels. They brought their experience to the table and had a good sense of where the library is and what is needed from their perspective. She said each group did extensive research and provided helpful information.

Mr. Szabo stated that the students are now incredible ambassadors for the Los Angeles Public Library. They all learned something about the Library that they didn’t know before and the professor was also fantastic. He thanked Commissioner Lassiter for making that connection for the Library.

Board President Salinas asked if the raw research information could be made available to all the commissioners. Commissioner Lassiter replied that it could.
Discussion

Board President Salinas stated that the work on the RFP is great as well as the Pepperdine Class Project, and would like to also hear about what the PR division will be doing for the next two years and when the new marketing plan is in place. Board President Salinas had questions about the RFP process and timeline.

Mr. Persic stated that a final RFP should be ready within the next two months. Assistant General Manager Kris Morita stated that RFP responses will be received 30-45 days from its release, then a firm would be selected two to three weeks after. Mr. Szabo stated that the Board will approve the RFP before it is issued.

Board President Salinas also had questions about the implementation of the marketing plan. Mr. Persic said that one of the requests in the RFP is to provide the Library with a timeline for the research, development of the plan and its implementation. He anticipates it wouldn’t be more than three months from the time they are hired to the time they have the actual plan.

Board President Salinas asked if the Library would provide any of the information from the Pepperdine research project to the vendor. Mr. Persic replied that he would provide that information in addition to primary research that Library has already collected, including the customer service surveys and the ongoing online surveys.

Board President Salinas asked if the Board might see a marketing plan by January 2016; she said she is trying to get an idea about the timeline and what they might envision.

Commissioner Bettinelli stated that funds for the plan development was included in the 2015-16 Budget but most likely not funding for the implementation. Mr. Szabo replied that funding was allocated in the 2015-16 budget for the marketing plan itself and that there are some funds for the implementation, and that there would be recommendations for funding in future budget requests.

Commissioner Lassiter asked Mr. Persic to provide a document from his department that has a timeline and what they are doing for the next six months. Mr. Persic said he would provide it.

Commissioner Lassiter asked whether the Library would be doing anything with the Special Olympics. Mr. Szabo replied there are some activities staff is involved in.

Board President Salinas said she is involved with the events of Special Olympics, including the torch run and she could provide information to the Library. She also said that this weekend there is a multicultural parade and festival in Hollywood that will end at Hollywood and Highland with vendor booths but it might be too late to sign up. She said
those are the kinds of events where thousands of people show and it would be great to start branding the Library at events like that.

Commissioner Lassiter asked if events like that are in the event marketing calendar. Mr. Persic stated that events are done both in a centralized and decentralized way. The Library attends annual city events and community events. His office provides support materials to branch librarians for small community events.

Board President Salinas thanked Mr. Persic for his presentation and summarized the discussion as follows: events should be advertised system wide, start branding the library at large public events, when they know of events they will give the info to Public Relations; and lastly, they will get a calendar of events coming up at all libraries.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Certificate of Appreciation to Councilmember Tom LaBonge

Board President Salinas welcomed Councilmember Tom LaBonge and she stated that the Library would like to thank him for his love of the city and the Library, and that all the support he had given to the Library will last for decades to come.

_The Board presented Councilman LaBonge with a certificate of appreciation._

RECESSED AT 11:35 A.M. AND READJOURNED AT 11:45 A.M.

(Councilman LaBonge presentation of a check to the Library and photo with Commissioners and staff were conducted outside the meeting room during the recess.)

Special Guest

Councilmember Tom LaBonge said it is always an honor to be in the Library and that visiting all the libraries in his districts before leaving office had been so fulfilling and enriching.

Councilmember LaBonge said he believes history is very important. For example, one day he took City Librarian John F. Szabo out to a surplus yard where a magnificent stone library sign that used to be on the corner of Fifth and Grand was just laying at the yard and they found a home for the monument sign at the Memorial Branch.

Councilmember LaBonge stated that community resource centers are very important because so many people need to be retrained due to the changing way of our industries, so many industries such as aviation, the Chevy plant, and tire plants are now gone. Even after the Berlin Wall fell 200,000 jobs were gone between San Diego and Santa Barbara because all that sophistication needed to protect it was
not needed any more. He said all of this is education and the library is the beacon. He asked to just keep telling people to use their library card.

Councilmember LaBonge mentioned that he had sent a lot of his archives to the Atwater Village, Silver Lake, Los Feliz and Hollywood Branch libraries because there were images and information from those neighborhoods. He also gave his photo books to the Library Department for the Photo Collection.

Councilmember LaBonge closed his remarks by stating that it all has been special and thanked the Board for being members of Mayor Garcetti’s administration as commissioners and that Libraries are key to us. He acknowledged several Library staff members present.

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Commissioner Walters extended her appreciation to Councilmember LaBonge for being the councilman for the whole city. She said she doesn’t know if there is council district he is not familiar with. His whole attitude, that accepting and enveloping attitude he has toward all the people in the city is most appreciated. She told Councilmember LaBonge that she appreciates the interest he had always taken in her son, David. She told him he and his family are all amazing.

Councilman LaBonge said his mother was very special, taking him and his seven brothers to the Cahuenga Library, since the Los Feliz was a shoe box library back then. He said he had a great mother and father and a great library system.

Commissioner Walters recalled that when the councilman’s mother passed away the services were very well attended and so many people were there to honor her. She remembered some of the stories that he shared about growing up here and what his family meant to him. She said she hopes the Library can get the oral history from him so that it can stand as an example of what one person can do.

Board President Salinas told Councilmember LaBonge that we are an amazing city much because of the leadership of a councilman like him. She said the Board will do its part to make sure everyone in Los Angeles know that the library is not just a place to get a book but a place to prosper.

City Librarian John F. Szabo stated that it is hard to imagine anyone else who is more passionate and an incredible supporter of the Los Angeles Public Library than Tom LaBonge. In addition to being an advocate for this institution, Councilman LaBonge has been an advocate for staff. He said he had never been in an event with the Councilman where he did not acknowledge the hard work of Library staff. He thanked Councilman LaBonge on behalf of staff and for being personally supportive of him and for helping him learn about this amazing city. He told Councilman LaBonge, “You are Mr. Los Angeles.”
Recommendation to Accept Funds
From the Fourth Council District: (Exhibit A called Special)

It was MOVED by Vice President Cao, seconded by Commissioner Walters, and unanimously carried that the following resolution be adopted:

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2015-31 (C-26)**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners accept the transfer of funds in the amount of $25,000 from Council District 4 for the benefit of the Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the funds be deposited into Trust Fund 831, Account No. 050 – Photo Collection; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a letter of thanks be sent to the Honorable Tom LaBonge, Councilmember, Fourth District, expressing the grateful appreciation of the Board and staff for the generous donation.

**Discussion**

Councilman LaBonge mentioned the Photo Collection, specifically the National Security Pacific Bank’s Photo Collection and the “Shades of L.A.” Collection. He stated that Senior Librarian Christina Rice is so special and she is the champion and keeper of all that.

**DISCUSSION RE: ONLINE POSTING OF AUDIO AND VIDEO OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS’ MEETINGS**

Board President Salinas started the discussion on online posting of audio and video of the Board of Library Commissioners’ meetings by asking if anybody had any questions. She noted that Matthew Matson (webmaster) and Russell Pyle (audiovisual consultant) were available to answer questions.

Commissioner Lassiter asked who had requested it.

Board President Salinas stated that she did because there are several commissions who are already posting the video of their commission meetings as mandated by City Council. The Library Board meetings could be posted on YouTube or wherever they are going to be posted because not everybody can make it to these meetings and for people to see what’s happening that affects all 73 libraries in this great city.
Commissioner Lassiter stated that her preference was not to do it.

Board President Salinas stated that for some people transportation is an issue and that it is a public meeting.

Commissioner Bettinelli asked if he or someone in the audience wanted to live cast this meeting, if there was anything that would preclude them from doing that.

Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankoswki said public meetings can be videotaped by members of the public. In terms of them uploading it to a website, she didn’t see that there was anything precluding them from doing that, and since the meetings are public, staff cannot interfere how the tape is used afterwards.

Commissioner Walters stated that as someone who has served on two government bodies whose proceedings were televised, the Library doesn’t have sufficient substantive items that warrant being televised. She said that to do this, it should be planned in advance for some of the great presentations that staff makes. She would not like the meetings to become something that will be used as a target of derision.

Commissioner Bettinelli said that to avoid divisiveness, they have to make sure to do it for the right reasons such as to maintain transparency, which is separate to what is driving content. He said all council meetings are done live and then archived, and asked if any other city entities are doing that.

Board President Salinas asked the Board Secretary to respond on who is doing the online posting.

Board Executive Assistant Raquel Borden stated that she had called various city departments to find out what they are doing in terms of uploading their meetings online. She said that the departments that are videotaping their meeting and uploading them are the proprietary departments (Airports, Water & Power, Harbor), and the Police Department because they were mandated by the City Council. Other departments are posting audio of their board meetings but they are not being mandated to do it.

Ms. Borden stated that in speaking with staff from the Information Technology Agency, they said they are currently outfitting the City Council’s committee rooms with video recording equipment and those meeting rooms are available for departments to use it for their commission meetings. Except for the proprietary departments, Police and Fire Commissions, none of the other departments posting audio have transcription or closed-caption included. In the future, transcription and closed-captioning may be mandated citywide.
Commissioner Salinas stated that she looks at online posting as a way to further brand what the Library is doing. She said every time the Board meets they hear about the great things that are going on at the Library, even if it was only the audio portion so they can hear what is happening here. She said there are amazing things that are going on at various libraries all over the city and she wants to showcase that.

Commissioner Lassiter said that Commissioner Walters’ point was that it would need to be curated and she wouldn’t mind doing it if they were to select five (meetings) to videotape and put them together where it could be used to brand the library and people can see what’s happening. She said she would prefer to keep it the way it is until the Board receives a mandate to have the meetings videotaped.

Commissioner Bettinelli stated that implementation of new policies from the Mayor or City should all be done at the same time with other city commissions. In regards to publicizing the content of the meetings or third party presentations, he doesn’t think broadcasting live is going to drive more people to the Library. He said he was not sure if city policy and the use of content for promotion should be coupled together.

Board President Salinas asked about doing audio postings only.

Commissioner Lassiter said they needed to give some thought to it.

Board President Salinas stated that further investigation was needed about what’s coming. She said, personally, she believes that they would be missing out on an opportunity to showcase more of what is going on here and presenting it in a way to really showcase the Library. She noted that the Library saw 400% increase when it started putting videos up on YouTube; clearly, people are interested. She said that if information is there, people will come. It is all how it is presented.

**VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

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

Certificate of Appreciation presented to Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankowski

Board President Salinas announced that this was Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankowski’s last meeting with the Library Commission due to her reassignment to the City’s new Wage Enforcement Division. She thanked Ms. Jankowski for being a great source of information and helping her understand procedures and the manner in which things should be done.
Commissioner Walters expressed her appreciation to Ms. Jankowski for always being very prepared and making certain that everyone was well informed. Her depth of knowledge and state of preparedness was always top notch. She told Ms. Jankowski she was very special.

(The Board presented Ms. Jankowski a certificate of appreciation.)

Basia Jankowski stated that she loves working with Library and she would miss everyone, but will be attending these meetings when Ms. Brimsey is absent.

Welcoming of New Deputy City Attorney Arletta Maria Brimsey

The Board President formally welcomed new Deputy City Attorney Arletta Maria Brimsey to the Library Department.

Ms. Brimsey stated that she was eager to get to know and work with this Board and Library staff. She said she had been reassigned from the Department of Recreation and Parks and in addition to advising the Library, she also advises the Department of General Services. She said she is excited about this new challenge

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

ATTEST: ________________

Josefa Salinas
President

Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant

Approved: August 27, 2015