Board of Library Commissioners
City of Los Angeles

November 12, 2015

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 11:08 a.m. on the above-written date.

Present: President Bich Ngoc Cao
Vice-President Gregory Bettinelli
Commissioner Mai Lassiter
Commissioner Josefa Salinas

Excused

Absent: Commissioner Rita Walters

Also Present: John F. Szabo, City Librarian; Kris Morita, Assistant General Manager; Arletta Maria Brimsey, Deputy City Attorney, General Counsel; Roy Stone, President, Librarians’ Guild; and staff.

Minutes for Approval: Regular Meeting – 10/22/15

Moved by Commissioner Salinas, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held November 12, 2015 be approved as submitted.

Public Comments on Matters Within the Board’s Jurisdiction: None.

City Librarian’s Comments and Announcements

1) On Tuesday, the Jefferson Branch Library celebrated its 100th Anniversary, which was very well attended by the community. Mr. Szabo thanked Commissioners Rita Walters and Salinas for attending. Commissioner Salinas was there also as the Book Princess, giving away free books to children. The Vernon-Leon H. Washington Jr. Memorial Branch Library and Vermont Square have also celebrated their 100th anniversaries this year.
2) This past week, 35 LAPL librarians participated in the California Library Association’s Annual Conference in Pasadena, and 16 of them made presentations on a variety of topics, including Coding, IDEAS Mini-Grant program, Instagram’s InstaLibrary, and LGBT services.

3) Mr. Szabo congratulated Young Adult Librarian Kevin Awakuni and Children’s Librarian Shirley Ashe from Pio Pico-Koreatown for receiving a $7,500 grant from the Association of Library Service to Children to build a science lab for year round science programming.

4) This week the Library hosted over 100 teacher librarians from LAUSD for a joint professional development meeting. LAPL librarians provided information on the Library’s programs and services for students. Mr. Szabo said the meeting was a great way to collaborate and learn from each other.

5) On Tuesday, the Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library hosted “Military Hat Day” in honor of Veterans’ Day. The Veterans Resource Center staff offered information on benefits, financial assistance, housing, job, education, and health care for Veterans. Food and giveaways were also offered to veterans and their families.

6) November is Native American Heritage Month and several libraries are offering programs and activities with Native American themes for children, teens, and adults.

7) The Mobile Technology Petting Zoo, which is used to help patrons learn how to download e-media content, has been rebranded the Tech TryOut Cart. The Tech Cart was started as a mini-grant project and it has been incredibly successful.


9) On Saturday, November 14 at 3:00 p.m. the Los Angeles Metropolitan Opera Company will present a free live performance of classical music at the Central Library Auditorium. Mr. Szabo welcomed everyone to attend.
SPECIAL APPEARANCE:

Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell, 13th District

Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell, Council District 13th, stated that one of his endeavors was to visit the various commissions that report to the Council Committee that he chairs to personally thank Board members for giving their time to serve their communities. He said good government is a participatory government and commissions play a critical role on that.

Councilmember O’Farrell highlighted the launching of the three Library delivery trucks last month. He said it was a very important moment for him to join City Librarian John F. Szabo and Board President Bich Ngoc Cao to launch the delivery trucks because those trucks have wonderful graphics that advertise to thousands of Angelenos everyday all the great things that are happening at the libraries and services such as downloadable books, music and films, citizenship, job and career assistance, high school diploma courses, health and wellness resources, free flu vaccines, etc.

Councilman O’Farrell commented that he was a product of the public library and the public school system and knowing the impact it made on him when he was growing up, he wants to make sure every Angeleno has the same opportunities and the same ability to discover the world of wonder that can be found in one tiny little book and how that can influence a lifetime of possibility just in one’s mind and how powerful that really is.

Councilman O’Farrell, referring to the Mr. Szabo’s announcement of Native American Heritage Month programs at the library, said that as a tribal member from the Wyandotte Tribe, every year he has the honor to kick-off Native American Heritage Month celebration at the City Council Meeting. He informed the Board that he has a big announcement to make at tomorrow’s City Council Meeting and invited everyone to tune in and participate. He pointed out that another resource that the Library offers to all Angelenos is the history of the diversity that makes up our city.

Councilman O’Farrell concluded by thanking the Board members for their service and asked them to let him know how he could be of assistance to the Library. He also thanked City Librarian John Szabo and called him, “a rock star in the library system.”

***

Board President Cao told Councilman O’Farrell that she has on her refrigerator door a picture of him and Mr. Szabo and a flyer with phone numbers of city services. Councilman O’Farrell stated that is all about information sharing and making resources accessible to everyone and libraries certainly do that.

Commissioner Salinas thanked Councilman O’Farrell for the great work he has done in his district and to call upon them if they can be of service to him.
CITY LIBRARIAN’S REPORTS:

Recommendation to Accept CLLS Grant
for the Adult Literacy Program for FY 2015-16

It was MOVED by Commissioner Salinas, seconded by Vice President Bettinelli, and unanimously carried that the following resolutions be adopted:

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2015-56 (C-45)

WHEREAS, On November 3, 2015, the California State Library announced that the Los Angeles Public Library Adult Literacy Services (CLLS) Program’s final payment of the total grant allocation for Fiscal Year 2015/16 is $178,222; 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) grant of $178,222 for the Los Angeles Public Library’s Adult Literacy Services for Fiscal Year 2015/2016; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the funds be deposited in Trust Fund 419, Account 322 (CLLS FY 2015-2016).

RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE
AMENDMENT TO LIBRARY STORE
LEASE AGREEMENT

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended approval of the proposed Amendment to the Library Store Lease Agreement (Contract No. 771) between the Library Department and the Library Foundation of Los Angeles. He said this amendment is necessary to include the newly added square footage approved for the Library Store and to extend the current term of the contract by five additional years, expiring on June 30, 2022.

Board Discussion

Thereafter, it was MOVED by Commissioner Salinas, seconded by Vice President Bettinelli, and unanimously carried that the following resolution be adopted:
LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2015-57 (C-46)

WHEREAS, On October 22, 2015 the Board of Library Commissioners approved the remodel of the Library Store, including an additional 235 square feet of floor space to bring the Library Store into full ADA compliance, and to better feature merchandise and physically accommodate all customers; and

WHEREAS, The three-year Lease Agreement (Contract No.771) between the City and the Library Foundation of Los Angeles for Use of Floor Space in the Central Library for the Library Store, which became effective on July 1, 2014, requires an amendment for the additional space being added to the Store;

WHEREAS, The Amendment also extends the (3) three-year term of the Lease Agreement to an additional (5) five years, for a total of (8) eight years (ending June 30, 2022) and a second (5) five-year term to be extended by mutual agreement (ending June 30, 2027).

RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners approve Amendment to the Lease Agreement (Contract No. 771) between the City and the Library Foundation of Los Angeles for Use of Floor Space in the Central Library for the Library Store; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Librarian and Deputy City Attorney be authorized to make technical changes; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board President is authorized to execute this Agreement, subject to the receipt of the required approvals.

RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE LIBRARY DEPARTMENT PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016-17

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended that the Library’s Proposed Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2016-17, totaling $162,259,299, 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 2016-17 will increase by $10,285,522. He noted that an estimated $61,281,153 (37.7 %) of the total budget would go to direct and indirect costs (facilities maintenance, utilities, security services, fleet services, and employee benefits). He reviewed each of the budget packages, among them were the following requests:

- Request of 46 new FTE positions to enhance library public services, outreach and marketing, and support staff.

- Increase Library Materials budget by $1.6 million for print and e-content materials.
- Funds for security to enhance public safety – 20 contract security officers.
- Funds for alterations and improvements for the Central Library and branch libraries.
- Funds for three new positions in Public Relations & Marketing and funds to execute strategic plan and marketing plan, for promotional items and outreach activities.
- Funds for the virtualization of public computers and to add IT staff to support the Library’s growing information technology infrastructure and to enhance client support.
- Support staff to address the growth of personnel responsibilities, accounting duties, training needs, and materials processing to ensure compliance with City financial and personnel requirements.

Mr. Szabo stated that the budget also supports the Library’s new strategic plan goals and Mayor’s Garcetti’s “Back to Basics” programs. He extended special thanks to Assistant General Manager Kris Morita, Business Manager Madeleine Rackley, Sr. Management Analyst Robert Morales and Assistant Business Manager Eloisa Sarao and the entire staff who had been engaged in the budget process.

**Board Discussion**

Board President Cao asked on behalf of Commissioner Walters if the new positions would be open to the public or would they only be offered through promotional ladders. Michael Bolokowicz, Director, Human Resources, replied that some positions are entry level and are hired from certified lists and other positions are on transfer and promotional basis within the city.

Commissioner Lassiter stated that the city jobs opportunities seem very insular and that she and Commissioner Salinas are trying to figure out how the wider community can be part of those job opportunities. She asked whether the Library offers programs that help residents prepare for city exams, since the Library is already working with veterans and helps people find jobs through its job and career centers. Mr. Bolokowicz stated that the City Personnel Department includes information on their job bulletins and on its website, but the Library does not provide preparation programs for city exams. The Library does provide books to the public to help study for exams.

Mr. Szabo stated that the Library would be happy to spread the word about city job opportunities and if the Personnel Department would like to do a program or a series of programs the Library would be happy to assist with that as well.
Commissioner Salinas commented that she had recently attended the L.A. County Board of Supervisor meeting where they discussed concerns about boards, commissions, and staff who work there not being necessary reflective of the city. She asked whether there was any consideration to diversifying staff when hiring and if the numbers were available on the ethnicity of staff.

Mr. Szabo stated that the data on diversity is available and is reviewed, and the City’s Personnel Department does conduct outreach and recruitment to have a diverse pool of employees.

Commissioner Salinas, referring to the Financial Data Sheet, asked about the source of funds included under “Other Revenue.” Mr. Szabo replied that it includes fines and fees, revenue from lease agreements and from unused funds from the previous fiscal year.

Commissioner Salinas asked if the Library receives rental fees from the Central Library cafe. Mr. Szabo replied that it does and those funds are in a special fund and are used for staff training.

Board President Cao inquired about funding for the marketing plan. Mr. Szabo stated that some of the graphic design funds would be used for the marketing plan and for printing and promotional materials and that there is also funding in the current budget for that purpose.

Vice President Bettinelli asked about the current total employee head count versus full time open positions. Mr. Bolokowicz responded that at the beginning of FY 2015-2016, the Library had 1,013 authorized Full Time Equivalent positions; of those, 914 were filled as of October 2015.

Vice President Bettinelli asked if the Library was currently running effectively with 914 people then why were they asking for another 46 positions when they haven’t even filled all the currently vacant positions. He said those funds could instead be spent on collections, facility maintenance or placed in a rainy day fund. He said that the Library has been lean historically and there is nothing wrong with being lean. To him it feels like the Library already has a big team. He would like people to get the services rather than staff. He noted that once staff is hired for a job, they can’t get rid of those positions.

Mr. Bolokowicz replied that the Library has been hiring but it depends on the City Personnel Department to certify the lists to hire from, which had delayed the hiring. He noted that there were still a significant number of vacancies for librarians, messenger clerks and administrative clerks, which they expect to fill within a month or two.

Vice President Bettinelli asked if the positions being requested would be mainly librarians to provide services directly to the public or if they would to provide administrative support, because bringing in another 46 employees felt heavy on staff and light on programs.
Mr. Szabo replied that 30 of the 46 positions were for direct public service. He said the Library is currently hiring from a new librarian list and that an upcoming administrative clerk (formerly clerk typist) exam that would be limited to city employees only, will create a critical gap that could not be easily or immediately filled in a short amount of time. He there would always be attrition in the system. He indicated that the positions being requested are very much needed to respond to the growth of services being offered.

Vice President Bettinelli said that in 2010 Library personnel was down to 828, and the proposed budget would bring the total to 1,060. He asked how the number of employees go from highest to lowest. Mr. Szabo replied that the Library is not back to the number staff it had prior to 2010.

Vice President Bettinelli stated that he would like to know how the budget has been distributed incrementally over the years on staff, programs, and infrastructure maintenance.

Mr. Szabo responded that all of the Measure L promises made to voters were being fulfilled, and that included staff to restore library hours and services, but still it had not filled all the positions that were cut nor met the total of Full Time Equivalent positions. He pointed out that the Library has also added many new services and it has made capital improvements with Measure L funds and addressed areas not core to Measure L.

Vice President Bettinelli also had questions about technology infrastructure and the IT staff package; specifically, the upgrade and virtualization of 2,000 public computers and the utilization of IT staff time.

Andy Vuong, Manager, Emerging Technologies, replied that the current public computers are 8-9 years old, which they are going to upgrade by replacing the software and employing Citrix client technology; doing that would save money and staff time. With the time saved, they would be setting up new media labs and assist with new technology services such as the 3-D printing. Mr. Szabo added that a significant number of services related to technology demand staff time.

Commissioner Salinas asked whether the addition of services and programs, have added participation from the public and increased the number of library card holders. Mr. Szabo replied that those numbers could be provided.

Vice President Bettinelli asked what was being done this year that would not be done next year because it wasn’t successful because it seemed to him that more of the same would be done. Mr. Szabo responded that every service has an audience and a constituency and tough decisions have to be made because it is certainly hard to pull back.

It was MOVED by Commissioner Salinas, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter, and unanimously carried that the following resolution be adopted:
RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners approve for transmittal to the Mayor’s Office the Proposed Library Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2016/2017 in the amount of $162,259,299, 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.

VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS: None.

COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS & REVIEW OF MATTERS PENDING: None.

ADJOURNMENT

Board President Cao wished staff a Happy Thanksgiving celebration. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

ATTEST: ______________

________________________________
Bich Ngoc Cao
President

________________________________
Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant

Approved: December 12, 2015