MINUTES
BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

April 12, 2018

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 11:05 a.m. on the above-written date.

PRESENT:  PRESIDENT          BICH NGOC CAO
             VICE-PRESIDENT    KATHRYN EIDMANN
             COMMISSIONER     DALE FRANZEN
             COMMISSIONER     MAI LASSITER

EXCUSED
ABSENT:    COMMISSIONER      JOSEFA SALINAS

ALSO PRESENT:  John F. Szabo, City Librarian; Susan Broman, Acting Asst. City Librarian; Arletta Maria Brimsey, Deputy City Attorney; Henry Gambill, President, Librarian’s Guild; and staff.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:  Regular Meeting – March 8, 2018:

It was MOVED by Commissioner Franzen, seconded by Vice President Eidmann, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held March 8, 2018 be approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:  Regular Meeting – March 22, 2018:

It was MOVED by Vice President Eidmann, seconded by Commissioner Lassiter, and unanimously carried that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held March 22, 2018 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:
National Library Week

Mr. Szabo wished everyone a Happy National Library Week! He said he had the great pleasure of speaking to 40 first graders visiting this morning from Brentwood Elementary. The Children’s Literature Department staff has prepared a special storytime on fairy tales for them, because that is what they are learning about at school. Mr. Szabo reported that Library staff is doing a great job in celebrating and promoting National Library Week on social media platforms, highlighting the diversity of services the Library offers and sharing stories about how libraries have transformed people’s lives. He said Mayor Garcetti has been promoting the Library through various social media platforms.

National Volunteer Month

On April 17, Library volunteers will be recognized by Los Angeles City Council and Library Staff and volunteers will present to City Council a symbolic check for $4,788,913.83, which represents the 168,268 hours in donated time in 2017 by 6,166 volunteers. These are individuals of all ages in every neighborhood in the city. Volunteers from all parts of the city are invited to come to City Council to be recognized and it is a great opportunity to remind elected officials that of all city departments, the Library is incredibly well supported and that people love libraries so much that over 6,100 of their constituents volunteer their time to support the Library.

“For All the World to See: Visual Culture and Struggle for Civil Rights” Exhibit

This exhibit generated a lot of press interest on April 4, the 50th Anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The exhibit examines the major role imagery played in the fight for racial and social equality from the 1940’s through the 1970’s, and includes photos of Dr. King in Los Angeles. Mr. Szabo reported that Gayle Anderson from KTLA had interviewed him and had filmed segments that aired early in the morning. Those segments inspired additional media coverage from KFI Radio and CBS-KCAL, as well as more visitors on Wednesday specifically asking for this exhibit. He noted that a visitor had recognized a woman in one of the photos in the exhibit. The person in the photo is 92 years old now and plans to visit the exhibit and Gayle Anderson wants to interview her during the visit.

Neighborhood Council Partnership with Vermont Square

The Vermont Square Branch has a wonderful partnership with the Neighborhood Council, named Voices of 90037 Neighborhood Council. They partnered with the library to host more 180 people at their second annual Spring Festival dedicated to literacy and reading in South Los Angeles. The festival featured activities, games, prizes, books, carnival style games, an Easter bunny and a live bunny as well. Mr. Szabo noted that the Vermont Square Branch, celebrated its 100th Anniversary a couple of years ago, is a gorgeous library and it is one of three remaining Carnegie Libraries in the system.
Boost Reading Skills with BARK

The Library has partnered with BARK (Beach Animals Reading with Kids) to bring certified therapy dogs to libraries where young children across the city can read to the dogs in an effort to build self-confidence and improve reading skills. Currently, a dozen branch libraries offer the BARK program. Mr. Szabo reported that according to a study on reading to dogs programs conducted by the University of California, Davis, 75% of parents reported that their children read aloud more frequently and with greater confidence after participating in the program.

The Big Read

The Library, in partnership with the Department of Cultural Affairs, launched the Big Read Program yesterday at City Hall with Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell. This year’s book is “Citizen: An American Lyric” by Claudia Rankine. Mr. Szabo said this is an incredible multi-genre book – It is poetry, pose, some film script material, photographs; and it is a great platform to have conversations about race and equity. He said 50 libraries will offer programming from film screenings to poetry slams to discussion groups about the book. The Library will be distributing 1,200 copies of the book and circulating copies in print, e-book and e-book audio formats.

***

Commissioner Franzen asked how books are selected for the Big Read. Mr. Szabo replied that there is a local committee that the Department of Cultural Affairs works with to select the book for Los Angeles from a relatively short list that is prepared nationally through the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

Vice President Eidmann commented that this is one of her favorite books she has read in the past few years and it is an excellent choice both in its literary style and thought-provoking conversation about equity across the city. Mr. Szabo said that there is a tremendous amount of agreement with that sentiment because it is a book that lends itself incredibly well for being a platform for conversation, which is very much what the Big Read is all about.

Commissioner Lassiter asked if the Big Read books were promoted to book clubs and whether book clubs participate in it. Ms. Szabo replied that book clubs meeting at our libraries are made aware of it. There are many book clubs that gather at Central Library, some sponsored by the Library, some official book clubs, and some not listed anywhere that use the Library as a place to gather.

Commissioner Lassiter also asked if independent book stores and larger chain book stores are made aware of the book. Mr. Szabo answered that when the NEA selects the books, they make sure that they are available in hard copy, paper back, reasonably affordable, and that they appeal to a wide range of age groups and that are available, because you don’t want to pick a book from a press that can’t meet the demand, and that is important to the Library as well.
CITY LIBRARIAN’S REPORTS:

City Librarian John F. Szabo reviewed the Consent Calendar and recommended its approval.

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

Approved Acceptance of Gifts

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2018-17

RESOLVED, That the gift consisting of a Baldwin Mobile Slatwall Hanging Bag Display, valued at $1,395.55, received from the Friends of the Northridge Library for the benefit of the Northridge Branch Library be accepted; and

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

Approved an agreement with Christine Adolph to provide professional photo archival services for the Los Angeles Public Library’s Photo Collection

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2018-18 (C-11)

WHEREAS, on April 12, 2018, Library staff recommended the awarding of a contract to Christine Adolph to provide photo collection archival services needed to organize and prepare the Los Angeles Public Library’s Institutional Photo Collection for digitization and archiving; and

WHEREAS, on April 12, 2018, the Board of Library Commissioners found, in accordance with Charter Section 371(e)(2) and Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 10.15(a)(2) that the photo archival services to be provided are professional and special and are of a temporary and occasional character for which a competitive bidding is not practicable or advantageous; and

WHEREAS, on April 12, 2018, the Board of Library Commissioners found, in accordance with Charter Sections 371(e)(2), 1022 and Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 10.15(a)(2) that the use of competitive bidding would be undesirable or impractical because the work can be performed more economically by an independent contractor than by City employees; and

WHEREAS, Christine Adolph has based on past experience demonstrated the desired skills and expertise necessary to successfully perform the requested services and meet the expectations of the LAPL:
Library Resolution

THEREFORE, RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners award a contract to Christine Adolph, a sole proprietor, to provide photo collection archival services; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Librarian and City Attorney be authorized to make technical changes if needed to the contract; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Librarian is authorized to execute the contract.

ADOPTED REVISED LIBRARY RULES OF CONDUCT

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended adoption of the Library’s revised Rules of Conduct. He noted that the proposed revisions are based from input received from staff, the Librarians’ Guild, the Department on Disability, the Los Angeles Police Department Security Services Division, and the Office of the City Attorney. Staff also reviewed Rules of Conduct from public library systems throughout the country, including New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and San Diego. He stated that the Rules are relevant to the situations library staff and patrons currently experience.

Mr. Szabo pointed out that the most significant updates to the Rules include bag size limit, prohibits smoking any type of tobacco products, vapor, and e-cigarettes in the Library and Library property; not leaving children or adults requiring supervision unattended in the Library; explains when adults patrons may use areas designated for children or teens, and expands the appeal process on suspension of Library privileges.

Mr. Szabo reported that the City Council is considering an Ordinance to protect and maintain city properties by strengthening the enforcement of use and access rules; and if adopted, new language regarding the Ordinance would be proposed for consideration by the Board for inclusion in the Library’s Rules of Conduct.

Public Comment

Henry Gambill, President, Librarian’s Guild, stated that the Guild endorses the approval of the updated Rules of Conduct.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Franzen said that Rule No. 16 is not very clear on what is acceptable dressing and asked how staff would determine that because there are teenagers and other people who don’t cover completely their upper torsos.
Madeleine Rackley, Business Manager, replied that Rule 16 is intended to prevent people from not wearing anything at the library; tank tops, shorts and sandals are acceptable. She said Library staff has been using this language for many years and they know how to apply it.

Commissioner Lassiter had questions on the bag size limit and whether it would affect homeless people the most. Mr. Szabo replied that the Rule was not to deter anyone from coming into the Library but to address a safety factor. He said Library staff looked at various policies from libraries across the country and many of them have policies like this that limit bag size and some libraries limit the number and size of bags. He said libraries regularly review their Rules of Conduct and amend them to respond to current issues.

Vice President Eidmann asked if there was any studies/data available from other libraries that have implemented bag size limit and whether it deters usage of the library. She also asked how the Library could make sure that the rules are implemented in a non-discriminatory manner. Mr. Szabo replied that input could be requested from security and staff on how the rules are working out because they are dealing with this issues. He said it would be valuable to determine if the rules are solving the problems that they are looking to solve.

Arletta Maria Brimsey, Deputy City Attorney, stated that the City of Los Angeles has existing regulations that limit the bag size people can bring into city facilities and the Rules of Conduct are consisting with those requirements.

Commissioner Lassiter pointed out that the Library is used differently than a lot of other city facilities. Mr. Szabo stated that if staff finds that any of this rules are keeping people from using the library for something unreasonable, they would want to fix that.

Board President Cao asked when could the Board expect a report on the impact of these new Rules. Mr. Szabo replied that staff could get an anecdotal input after three months, but after six months to a year, they could provide a more thorough analysis.

Commissioner Franzen asked if someone comes to the Library with all their belongings, does the Library have a place to store it before the person goes into the Library or if they are asked to leave them outside.

Ms. Rackley stated that the Library doesn’t have lockers to store patrons’ belongings. She said that prior to implementing the new Rules of Conduct, they will be advertised well in advance so people are not surprised. She said that this is a health and safety issue because people block doors and hallways with their bags.

Vice President Eidmann recommended that an item for consideration in the future should be adding lockers for patrons to checking in bags to deal with the health and safety concerns. She said there might be branch libraries that are disproportionally serving more homeless patrons, so those libraries should be selected to add storage for their patrons.
Vice President Eidmann thanked the City Librarian for mentioning the pending Ordinance that if adopted it would be incorporated in the Rules of Conduct. She stated that there could be consequences to incorporating the Ordinance into the Rules of Conduct, due to the potential to adding criminal liability to some of the Library Rules for minor violations. She offered the services of the Board in communicating with the City Council on the consequences of the Ordinance.

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

**LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2018-19 (C-12)**

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) Rules of Conduct (Rules) establish standards and courses of action to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all library patrons and staff; and

WHEREAS, the LAPL periodically updates and refines its Rules to align with changes in local laws and law enforcement operations and to respond to issues that arise in LAPL facilities; and

WHEREAS, the LAPL Rules were last updated and adopted by the Board of Library Commissioners on July 11, 2013; and

WHEREAS, LAPL staff recommends updating the Rules at this time to provide a more comprehensive description of behavior that is appropriate for the LAPD; and

WHEREAS, revisions to the Rules were made based on input from staff, the Librarian’s Guild, the Department on Disability, the Los Angeles Police Department Security Services Division, and the Office of the City Attorney; and staff also reviewed Rules of Conduct from library systems throughout the country:

THEREFORE, RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners adopt the revised Los Angeles Public Library Rules of Conduct (Rules), Board Policy Section 1:382; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners authorize the City Librarian to amend the revised Rules as needed for technical corrections; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners authorize the City Librarian to determine a reasonable implementation date for the revised Rules of Conduct once they are adopted.
LIBRARY SECURITY UPDATE

John F. Szabo, City Librarian, provided an update on Library security staffing, security equipment, security budgeting, incident reporting, and staff training. He stated that the safety of patrons and staff has always been a top priority for the Library and that some of the issues that the Library deals with are societal issues.

Mr. Szabo stated that thanks to the voters of LA who passed Measure L, the Library not only has been able to purchase more books, e-content, increase service hours, but also has been able to provide more security. He pointed out that major investments have been done in the security budget, which has gone from $1.2 million in Fiscal 2013-14 to $5.4 million in the current fiscal year. For Fiscal Year 2018, the proposed budget and amendment for security would be $6.8 million.

Mr. Szabo stated that despite the large number of people that come the Library, there are 82 incidents for every 1 million visitors. These are incidents staff identified and filed incident reports. The vast majority are minor and include people using restrooms to bathe, disturbing the peace, and petty theft. In recent years, the Library has taken bold steps and developed a very comprehensive strategy to enhance safety and security of the Library. Currently, it has a force of 77 Police Department employees assigned to the Library; 8 Senior Lead Police Officers assigned throughout the library system. Library staff meets formally on a monthly basis with LAPD to discuss specific incidents, policies, and trends to determine where security resources can be of greater benefit. Furthermore, an LAPD Overtime Patrol Program has been implemented for LAPD officers to patrol libraries at night; and making sure that LAPD Security Services positions that remain unfilled are covered by LAPD overtime sworn officers or contract security workers.

Mr. Szabo reported that new recording camera systems have been installed at all branch libraries; at the Central Library, the recording security camera system is currently being upgraded. He said four years ago, only nine libraries had camera systems. The Library’s Incident Reporting System that staff uses to report incidents has been automated and replaced the paper based system. This is very important for collecting data on issues and trends and providing that information to LAPD. Numerous training sessions have been provided for staff by LAPD and LA County Department of Mental Health workers have come to address library staff on how to best provide customer service to people who may have mental health issues. LAPD Security Services Deputy Chief Beatrice Girmala has personally addressed staff. The Library also works very closely with the City Attorney’s Neighborhood Prosecutors Office on various issues affecting libraries. The Rules of Conduct are also part of the strategy.

Mr. Szabo said that internally, a safety and security team have been established with Library staff to make certain that frontline issues are being addressed; panic buttons have been installed in all libraries at the checkout desks. He said he wants to formalize the protocols of responsibilities for security officers, evaluate placement of security cameras, and look at staff work areas and how to best secure those areas.
Mr. Szabo said he had also discussed with LAPD that the Library has an expectation that its libraries will benefit from the normal patrolling and LAPD services as a community member.

**Board Discussion**

Commissioner Lassiter asked if cyber security falls within the $6.8 million security budget or if it is separate. Mr. Szabo replied that Internet security is separate from the general security budget.

Commissioner Franzen asked if funding for security would increase every year. Mr. Szabo replied that looking back five years ago, the Library didn’t have the resources to invest in security. As Measure L funds have increased, so has investment in security.

Commissioner Lassiter asked if the $6.8 million for security funding was solely from the Library’s budget or if LAPD contributed to it. Mr. Szabo replied that the entire $6.8 million comes from the Library’s budget. He said there are certain resources that LAPD brings in when responding to calls, but he doesn’t have a dollar amount to quantify that.

Vice President Eidmann asked if there were non-LAPD security guards working at the Library. Mr. Szabo replied that LAPD has contracts with private security companies to provide security services for the Library and other city facilities.

Commissioner Franzen asked if there was a chart showing the areas with the most need for security or if it was widespread issue. Mr. Szabo stated that every library has security issues from time to time to various degrees, and the kinds of security issues at each library vary by geography and from branch to branch. He said that one of the benefits of the online Incident Reporting System is that it assists in determining where the most incidents are occurring and work with LAPD on how best to deploy resources.

**VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

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

Board President Cao reviewed the Matters Pending list and announced that the next Regular Board Meeting would be held on Thursday, April 26, 2018, at the Central Library.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

___________________________  ______________________________
Bich Ngoc Cao                               Raquel M. Borden
President                                                  Board Executive Assistant

Approved: June 14, 2018