



San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 16, 2013

(Approved as amended at the regular meeting of June 20, 2013)

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 16, 2013 in the Koret Auditorium Main Library.

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 pm.

Commissioners present: Gomez, Lee, Mall, and Ono.

Commissioners excused: Munson and Randlett.

Commissioner Nguyen entered the meeting at 4:36 pm.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

An anonymous citizen said the last time the Commission held two meetings in a month was June, 2012. He said this is the twelfth meeting in the last 11 months. He said he assumes laughing at the speakers during public comment must not be as fun as it used to be. He said he hopes the new Commissioners know that official misconduct is just the tip of the iceberg. He said at the last meeting Commissioner Munson made excuses about ignoring the citizen's complaints. He said that Luis Herrera and Jewelle Gomez do not make excuses. He said the administration gets hostile because it is losing and public accountability is at stake. He said the Commission is not willing to accept that they live in a society that even makes the smallest gesture towards democracy. He said people tend to ridicule what they do not understand.

The following written summary was provided by the speaker, anonymous citizen. The content is neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by the Library Commission.

Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't accept money from the Friends of the Library. "Maybe what you should do is what they used to do in the old Roman Republic – elect Ms. Gomez for the position of dictator for life and then at least the rest of us would have the hope an assassination might result in a change of leadership." This is the twelfth meeting in eleven months. Laughing at the public is not so exciting. Official misconduct is the

tip of the iceberg. Commissioner Munson's attempt to excuse ignoring the citizen's concerns is contrary to the Library Administration, whose attitude is, "Sure we lie, steal and cheat; do something about it, punk." The administration gets hostile because it is losing. Despite its ferocious opposition, it was forced to allow public attendance, to follow the agenda, to provide documents, and allow public comment. The administration knew public accountability was at stake.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said as the previous speaker mentioned the Library Commission and administration have a sad history of failure to be open and comply with the letter of the law. He said one of the requirements is an agenda that is readily understandable. He said in the packet he saw a nice item that talks about the retirement of the Bond Program Manager and a Resolution honoring her. He said he couldn't find it on the agenda, but he finally found it buried in the Bond Program Manager's Report. He said he doesn't think a Resolution honoring the Bond Program Manager has anything to do with the ongoing progress of a Library construction program. He said if anyone looked for this in the future they would have a hard time finding it. He said you should honor the honoree appropriately on the agenda.

Ruth Bornstein said she is a regular patron of the library and said she is a very happy library patron. She said she has said thank you to members of the staff and the administration but has not, before today, had a chance to say it to the Commission. She said thank you for your service, your commitment and for making the system as great as it is.

AGENDA ITEM 2. RESOLUTION HONORING DEPUTY CITY LIBRARIAN JILL BOURNE

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said as he mentioned at the last Commission meeting that we are very proud that Jill Bourne will be the new City Librarian for the City of San Jose. He said she will do an amazing job. He said this is very bittersweet for him personally. He said he really appreciates the partnership and the Commission considering this Resolution in tribute to her wonderful work for the Library.

President Gomez read a resolution honoring Deputy City Librarian Jill Bourne.

Explanatory documents: [Resolution honoring Deputy City Librarian Jill Bourne](#)

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said he hadn't realized that Jill Bourne was tall for a number of years. He said he hopes that she dances because all tall women should dance. He said it has been obvious for many years that Jill Bourne has done the heavy lifting around here. He said there was one day at the Historical Preservation Commission where she carried the day. He said he supposes the administration will miss her more than he will but that is hard to believe. He said a hidden benefit of Jill Bourne's

departure is that perhaps he can go back to being smarter than the library staff. He said she made a dramatic contribution and he wishes he knew her better.

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Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't give money to, or accept money from the Friends of the Library. A hallmark of our world is that Jill Bourne was here for three years before I realized she was tall; you live on stage, and we live here in the pit. My first question was whether she danced, because all tall women should dance. We may find ourselves at a dance venue when hell freezes over, but hope springs eternal. It has been obvious that Ms. Bourne does the heavy lifting. There was a meeting of the Historical Preservation Commission where she carried the day. The administration will miss her more than I will. The hours modification report contained no mistakes and a hidden benefit of Jill Bourne's departure is perhaps I can go back to being smarter than the Library Administration. We wish her well and wish we had known her better.

Betty Williams said she is a Union Steward and in that capacity the labor meets with management on a monthly basis. She said it has been such a joy working with Jill. She said it is hard to hang onto the good ones. She said our loss is San Jose's gain. She said San Jose is getting a real gem.

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said he is wearing black in sadness about Jill Bourne's departure. He said he is very sorry to see her go. He said when she arrived she was a breath of fresh air and she actually looked at folks who spoke at this podium. He said there is a word for a good and decent human being and that is mensch and Jill Bourne has certainly been that. He said she will be missed and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Nguyen said this is emotionally difficult for him because there are not words to convey how profoundly Jill has impacted his experience at the Library. He said Jill has been a shining example in scholarship, leadership, caring and a brilliant mind and a kind spirit with the most marvelous smile. He said Jill is truly one of the most apt, eloquent, articulate, graceful people he has crossed paths with. He said Jill's son is extraordinary and a reflection on the extraordinary parent that she has been to him. He said this is a gain for San Jose and we will miss her.

Commissioner Ono said she cannot top the remarks by Commissioner Nguyen and Jill will be missed.

President Gomez said she agrees with the statement of Commissioner Nguyen.

Motion: By Commissioner Ono, seconded by Commissioner Lee to approve a resolution honoring Jill Bourne as an outstanding example of the high ideals of professional achievement, personal character and library leadership and dedicated hard work for the City and County of San Francisco.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Gomez, Lee, Mall, Nguyen, and Ono)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 BOND PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT

Lena Ch'en, Bond Program Manager, said 7 property acquisitions are complete, the Support Services Facility is in operation; 23 branches are complete and open and the North Beach Branch is under construction. She said this month's financial report is available at the back of the room. She said the North Beach Branch is approximately 44% complete. She said the grand opening for the new Bayview Branch was on Saturday, February 23, 2013. She shared some slides of the completed branch and the grand opening. She showed photographs of the North Beach branch construction. She also showed renderings of the completed project.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said this is a special presentation as part of the Bond Manager's Report because Lena Ch'en will be retiring and we want to make sure we acknowledge the wonderful contribution she has made to the BLIP program. He said Lena joined the BLIP team in 2008 and she came at a very critical juncture for the program. He said she has been a remarkable partner and he hopes the Resolution duly reflects her contributions to the program.

President Gomez read the Resolution honoring Bond Program Manager Lena Ch'en and said it has been a real honor working with her.
Explanatory document: [Quarterly Report: 1st Qtr. 2013](#);
[Budget Report](#); [Resolution](#) honoring Lena B. Ch'en.

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said this is the first Bond Program Manager's Report we have had in quite a while and he thinks it is to bury some of the controversies. He said Lena Ch'en's presence on this program was a watershed. He said since she is retiring let's give her all of the credit for basically turning the program around. He said to her credit she made the documentation comprehensive and readable. He said there are still controversies brewing but let's not go into them now. He said we thank Lena Ch'en for doing a tremendous job in what began in very trying circumstances. He said we wish her well in her future endeavors.

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Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't give money to, or accept money from the Friends of the Library. This is the first Bond Program Manager's Report in quite a while, and that may have been to bury some controversies. Yet I have no objection to this presentation primarily honoring Lena Ch'en. Lena Ch'en presence was a watershed. We will never know if all the mistakes had been made or whether she deserves all the credit, but since she is moving on let's give her the credit. When she arrived it looked like a thankless job and she basically turned it around and made the documentation comprehensive and readable. There are still controversies, we don't need to go into them now, and we wish Ms. Ch'en well in her future endeavors.

Samuel Chiu, Project Manager, Department of Public Works said he has had the pleasure of working for and with Lena. He said it has been a tremendous pleasure and she is an awesome mentor. He said from where he sat and what he saw Lena was instrumental in the success of the BLIP program and to the partnership we have with the Library. He said he didn't know that her middle initial was B. until today and he thinks it stands for BLIP.

Edgar Lopez, City Architect and Deputy Director for the Department of Public Works, said thank you to the Commission for honoring Lena and Jill. He said Lena came to the BLIP program at a very critical point when many of the libraries were going out to bid. He said she spent a great deal of time insuring that the design documents met the highest standards and during construction she has spent endless hours managing the construction and negotiating very difficult issues. He said she did that with a great deal of passion and dedication.

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said he is wearing black today, because the Library hasn't properly honored Lena Che'n with her name on an agenda item. He said she deserves that and deserves your commendation as well. He said the report today didn't mention the Branch Library Improvement Quarterly Report, which is in the back of the room and not sent to us in the packet. He said that is very important and should be mentioned every time. He said there was no mention of the view blockages that the North Beach Branch is going to be creating as well as the unfortunate demise that looks like it may happen of the old building. He said Lena Che'n came to the Library at a difficult time with the bond program reporting somewhat chaotic and brought a level of dignity and professionalism to it that was excellent. He said he thinks the Library and the public will miss her presence. He said we wish her the best for her future endeavors.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Nguyen said today feels like graduation or something. He said honoring the milestone of Lena's success and simultaneously knowing that it is a crossroads and that people make different turns so this is also emotional for him. He said with Lena there is definitely a

familial feeling. He said there is something so distinctive about Lena's hair that he always notices and there is great comfort when I see that hair. He said the first time he met Lena he said there was something so familiar about her and they discovered that they are both Vietnamese American and they discovered that both of their families on the Vietnamese side have roots in Northern Viet Nam. He said there was something kindred in that moment and that has carried with him ever since.

Commissioner Ono said this is one of the saddest meetings she has ever been to. She said it has been a pleasure working with Lena. She said when she first met Lena she thought Lena was part of the library staff because she was so integral to the whole process. She said she agrees the B. in Lena's name must stand for BLIP. She said she is glad that Lena will be getting some rest because she has worked very, very hard on this project for so many years and she hopes that Lena will come back to help us celebrate the opening of North Beach. She said thank you to Lena for all her hard work and effort.

President Gomez said thank you to Lena for helping the Commission to understand all of the facts and figures around the construction and the changes. She said it is very difficult to convey that to lay people and she thinks Lena did a wonderful job. She said she wanted to thank Lena very much and said we will look forward to seeing her at the North Beach Branch party.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said he wanted to add the appreciation of the staff and he said so many wonderful sentiments have been mentioned and when Commissioner Ono mentioned that Lena was such an integral part of the team that says it all. He said Lena has been such a joy to work with and she has such a wonderful legacy in the projects in the BLIP program.

Motion: By Commissioner Ono, seconded by Commissioner Mall to approve a resolution honoring Lena Ch'en as an outstanding example of the high ideals of professional achievement, personal character and civic leadership and dedicated hard work for the City and County of San Francisco.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Gomez, Lee, Mall, Nguyen, and Ono)

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 ASSESSMENT AND PROPOSED
MODIFICATION OF LIBRARY SERVICE HOURS**

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said over the past year we have conducted a very thorough process to assess the library's operating hours and to assess the modification of service hours. He said we have presented updates to the Commission on the findings of the survey from the consultant. He said the other piece is we took part of the initial recommendations and incorporated that into the budget process. He said the Library Commission forwarded the budget to the Mayor's Office with recommendations that included \$1 Million in next year's budget for

additional hours. He said tonight's discussion will be about getting the Commission's input and come back at a future date to approve the modifications.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said they will be discussing the background, methodology, data and analysis used and recommendations. She explained the hours assessment is required by the City Charter and requirements of the Library Preservation Fund. She said one of the requirements is that the library offer no fewer than 27 branches and the Main Library and a Library for the Blind. She said public hearings must be held at least every 5 years. She said the Charter requires that the library annual service hours be at least 1,211 hours per week. She said our current hours are 1,314, which is 8.5% above the Charter mandate. She said we have expanded hours within the last five years by adding more days of service at more branch libraries. She said the previous changes did not involve any modification to the service hours they only involved adding days of service. She went over the FY 13/14 budget process and said the Library Commission recommended a budget for increasing 56 hours a week. She said the Commission approved an additional 10 Full Time Equivalents (FTE) for approximately \$1M annually. She said we are now going to discuss the methodology for the assessment that began approximately one year ago. She went over the goals for adding open hours. She explained the Public Engagement process, which included hearings, intercept surveys, online surveys and telephone surveys. She said we worked closely with the Controller's Office on a study of current library usage by location and by hour. She explained the data collected.

Randy McClure, City Controller's Office, explained some of the technical assistance they have given to the Library over the past year and some of the highlights from the usage data.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said the Library did a staffing assessment and the recommendations you will be hearing next include the efficient use of staff resources to cover the hours and ensuring appropriate baseline staffing standards needed to open and operate a branch library.

Commissioner Mall asked how these numbers compare to other systems as far as usage.

Randy McClure, Controller's Office, said we have not done a benchmarking study.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said we could pull that information easily for the next meeting.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said usage varies per capita with other systems and we will come back with more information. He said our system is one of the few systems that have seven day service.

Karen Strauss, Acting Chief of Main, explained increasing access to Main Library Centers. She said most Main Library service points (14 of 17) are open 60 hours per week. She said the centers that will have increased hours will be the Deaf Services Center, the Library for the Blind and Print Disabled and the San Francisco History and Book Arts and Special Collections.

Commissioner Lee said that it would be helpful if the matrix included not only the hours but the number of visitors in each hour.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said one of the graphics will show the peak hours during the course of a day.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said this is very helpful because we are also looking at what we should be counting all of the time not just every five years.

President Gomez asked how staff will be distributed.

Karen Strauss, Acting Chief of Main, said it will be accomplished by filling vacancies, adding staff and shifting staff as necessary.

Commissioner Mall wanted to clarify that this recommendation is for 56 additional hours at the branches.

Karen Strauss, Acting Chief of Main, said the Main Library will have 51 additional hours for the Centers within the 60 hours the Main is already open.

Edward Melton, Chief of Branches, explained the additional hours proposed for the branches. He said hours will be expanded to meet a baseline of 45, 50 and 55 hours per week. He said we want to modify the operating hours to better meet the public service needs and establish more consistency in operating hours. He said the 6 day 45 hours per week branches will be Anza, Bernal Heights, Eureka Valley, Golden Gate Valley, North Beach, Ocean View, Parkside, Potrero, and Presidio. He said the 7 day 45 hours branches will be Glen Park, Ingleside, Mission Bay, Noe Valley, Portola, and Visitacion Valley. He said the 7 day 50 hours per week branches are Bayview, Marina, Ortega, Park and Western Addition. He said the 7 day 55 hours per week branches are Chinatown, Excelsior, Merced Mission, Richmond, Sunset and West Portal.

Commissioner Lee asked about the number of people who show up at different hours.

Edward Melton, Chief of Branches, said they made the assumption that if the library opened an hour earlier in the morning that people at those branches would come in an hour earlier. He said the recommendation tried to be as consistent with the current hours as possible. He said they are recommending an increase of 56 hours per week, which is an

increase in public service hours at 18 branch libraries, establishing a minimum of 100 hours per week in Supervisorial Districts with 3 branch libraries, expanding the total annual service hours to 1370 hours per week and standardizing evening hours.

Commissioner Lee left the meeting at 6:06 pm.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said we will come back at the next Commission meeting for action on this item and we will continue to do outreach to the staff and the public. He said he wants to emphasize the baseline and service equity across our neighborhoods. He said the plan is based on the data that we have received. He said the recommendations represent the increase in the budget that the Commission has already approved. He said he wanted to thank the staff for their wonderful work in putting all of this together.

Explanatory document: [Assessment and Proposed Modification](#) of Library Service Hours Presentation.

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said there is no actual resolution in front of you so when this comes up in June it will be the first time that you actually see a resolution you are expected to approve. He said it is overdue to have the increase in services in the Main. He said the flaw in the report is that there is no recognition of the current hours. He said he did his own survey and the current hours are 1,314 and if you add 56 hours to that it is 1370. He said it is good that you found your own mistake. He said the motivation of this is supervisorial districts. He said the patron needs should be addressed without reference to supervisors. He said the only statistic in which San Francisco excels is expenditures per capita and in many of the other areas we are less than below average based on capital spent.

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Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't give money to, or accept money from the Friends of the Library. Wouldn't it be nice if the citizens had access to the graphics? An actual resolution will be provided when you are expected to approve it. Presumably there will be insufficient time to identify issues. The opening of departments in the Main on the same schedule is overdue. The flaw is the lack of recognition of the current hours. I did my own statistics and the current hours are 1,314, with 56 added is 1,370. This is motivated by kowtowing to the supervisorial districts. A benefit of the Library Preservation Fund is that patron needs can be addressed without reference to supervisors. Commissioner Mall is being introduced to the flim-flam. San Francisco only excels in expenditures per capita and is below average in most others. The Controller rejected performance measures for political reasons.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said he is wearing black today and this report is as sleazy and dishonest as they get. He said the report has lots and lots of questionable statistics and a summary page that standardizes evening hours. He said this plan without any prior discussion with you or the public hacks out evening hours on a massive scale. He said for years the public has told you that the most wanted and desirable times are evening hours. He said he counted at least 25 evening hours that will be cut from 9 pm to 8 pm. He said there is nothing in writing about this. He said you have to look into the detail. He said the headline here should be massive cuts to the libraries' evening hours. He said hours are not the same as other hours. He said there is no correlation between what is requested in the survey by the public and what the branch is providing.

Betty Williams, library user, worker and union rep, said the union has been aware of the process since the beginning. She said for the most part we are favor of the additional hours with the caveat being there be adequate staffing to put these hours into effect. She said they are concerned about the workload with the additional hours. She said there are many vacancies that need to be filled.

Melissa Riley said she works at the West Portal Branch and she wants to reinforce what Betty just said, the basic grid looks good, but this may cause a lot of stress and disruption for the staff. She said she would like the Commission to be patient on the timeline for implementing all of this. She said it may take a long time for implementation. She said it would not be good to have more hours but less service

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Ono asked about the timeline for implementation of new hours.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian said they will look at probably the first quarter before we begin to implement the hours. He said they will probably roll out the hours through the year.

Commissioner Ono asked about a marketing plan on getting the word out about the new hours.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said yes we will be rolling out the plan and making it public and getting some feedback on the hours. He said we will have further conversations about how to get the word out.

Commissioner Ono wanted to know if there will be a survey or how we will get feedback on this.

Commissioner Mall asked for more information on the yoga classes.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said there was a wonderful write up in the Chronicle about the yoga classes that go on in the Library for the Blind. He said we have an instructor that comes in. Commissioner Mall said she requests that the Commissioners be sent the articles related to the library. She asked if there are more transactions being done without using librarians.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the Commission Secretary will continue to send the Commissioners articles related to the library. He said 85% of the material checked out in the library is done through self checkout. He said that frees the librarians to have a more one on one opportunity for reference questions and public service.

President Gomez said the question keeps coming up about how the staff will manage and not have the quality of the work decline. She said she thinks it will be better if we roll out the new hours slowly to insure that the quality of the work does not decline.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the conversations that have occurred have been very inclusive with staff and Edward and Karen have done a wonderful job in making sure we get the input from the staff. He said we will also continue to entertain those conversations with Labor.

President Gomez asked for more information on how this impacts our budget process.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the next step is for the Commission to approve the modification of hours and in the meantime the Mayor will roll out his recommended budget and then there will be hearings before the Board of Supervisors of the actual budget.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 ADJOURNMENT

There was no public comment on this item.

Motion: By Commissioner Ono, seconded by Commissioner Mall, to adjourn the regular meeting of May 16, 2013.

Action: AYES 4-0: (Gomez, Mall, Nguyen, and Ono)

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm.

Sue Blackman
Commission Secretary

Explanatory documents: Copies of listed explanatory documents are available as follows: (1) from the commission secretary/custodian of records, 6th floor, Main Library; (2) in the rear of Koret Auditorium immediately prior to, and during, the meeting; and (3), to the extent possible, on the Public Library's website <http://sfpl.org>. Additional materials not listed as explanatory documents on this agenda, if any, that are distributed to library commissioners prior to or during the meeting in connection with any agenda item will be available to the public for inspection and copying in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.1 and Sunshine Ordinance Sections 67.9, 67.28(b), and 67.28(d).