Appendix A

The Public Comment Summary Statements included in these Minutes are authorized by San Francisco Administrative Code Section 67.16..

These summary statements are provided by the speaker. Their contents are neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by, the San Francisco Public Library Commission.

The number of members of the public who spoke anonymously at this meeting. 1

Public Comment of An Anonymous Citizen
San Francisco Public Library Commission Meeting, May 7, 2002

Item 2:
City Librarian's Report

"We have a report on procedures for public records requests that is a two-page document. It was reported this document was prepared in extensive consultation with the City Attorney's office but this was not known about in time to list an explanatory document on the agenda so that one might have had a chance to review this in advance.

I don't make too many document requests because I have to be prepared to go court if the request is refused and my capacity to go to court is relatively limited.

This document is a series of hoops that a member of the public must surmount which is not consistent with the openness and the preference for disclosure that is the essence of public document laws. Ease of access is the mandate of the various statues.

In my recent attempt to see a public document I found the arrangements very constricting."

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Item 3:
Branch Library Naming Policy

"There are very few things on which you can't be overruled, but that does not mean you don't have primary responsibility for providing leadership for this institution.

Mr. Higueras commented that we would not charge people who suggested naming a branch. He and I were surprised by the negative reaction.

A policy should be universal, that means it applies equally to everyone. The limit case would be if all of the municipalities that named something for Martin Luther King, Jr. had sent Mrs. King the bill. We would be aghast at that precisely because the honorific nature of the naming requires that it be freely given and not a function of money changing hands.

Since I am against naming branches for people perhaps it will never come up, but it sends the wrong message to suggest that somehow we will be looking for donations from people and that will be a factor."

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Item 4:
Library 2002/2003 Budget Update

"The meeting of the Neighborhood Services Committee was interesting. The nominal agenda item was to consider a report from the Controller. That report was some completely buried by your administration that it was actually difficult to obtain from the clerk of the board. I regret that the committee heard a report from your administration instead. The meeting began at 2:00 and the public comment did not come up until 6:00.

The meeting of the Budget Committee featured some astute questions from Supervisor Maxwell and Supervisor Peskin who wanted to have some information about the priorities of this library and got some very interesting answers.

Supervisor Peskin found some lack of documentation from the library regarding previous years which would enable him to spot trends and see what was happening. Your administration promised that would be corrected and further reporting would include previous years."

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Item 5:
BALIS - SAB Report

"Parenthetically, it is the Neighborhood Services and Recreation Committee and it is one of the ironies of what we call Jarvis-Gann that property values can go down and property taxes can go up if there are sufficient numbers of transfers.

I am gratified to hear this report. The enabling legislation was in 1975 and I been interested ever since. In the mid-80's someone said to me, 'You're Walter Jebe.' He thought that because the representative Commissioner Jebe had never been to a meeting.

The administration has attempted to bury this system advisory board and this may be only the second report.

It is a quiet board, but not insignificant for being so. It is a vehicle for various jurisdictions to share information and opportunities.

If you want to attend the dinner meeting what was mentioned, it is open to the public and you will be welcomed as I was."

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Item 8:
New Business

"As you have been informed, that has been an unstated quid pro quo between allowing public comment at special meetings even though it is not required and limiting public comment here in a manner that is not legal. The way this was introduced emphasizes your awareness of the shift.

It is very important that the issues that were left hanging in the Prop. 14 application be carefully reported to you. The full application arrived on my doorstep today. You did not consider or hear public comment on the full detailed report. It has precedent setting power, but because of haste many issues were not considered."

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Item 9:
Public Comment

"At the special meeting we adjourned in honor of Annette McNear. My use of euphemisms was a disservice to Ms. McNear.

Ms. McNear was a grass-roots librarian who tried to bring the issue of the first great book dumping to this library commission that was later addressed by Nicholson Baker's New Yorker article. She was serious abused because of that attempt at communication. The Commission president embarrassed her so bad she had to leave, at which the president said, 'That's a shame, I enjoy a good fight.'

When the Librarian's Guild officially protested the treatment of one of its members, the Commission president said, 'That's tough.' She was subjected to a punitive transfer, and filed a grievance that she eventually won.

In those situations, what is being defended is not a vision, or aristocracy, but rather your ignorance. A great premium is placed on controlling you by limiting what you hear."