



San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of AUGUST 19, 2021

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on **AUGUST 19, 2021** virtually and telephonically pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 and the Sixteenth Supplement to Mayoral Proclamation Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency dated February 25, 2020. The purpose of the orders is to provide the safest environment for all persons consistent with San Francisco Department of Public Health Order of the Health Order No. C19-07e and current public health recommendations, while allowing the public to observe and address the Commission.

The regular meeting of the San Francisco Library Commission was called to order at **4:30 p.m.**

Commissioners Present: Huang, Lee, López, Mall, Ono, Wardell-Ghirarduzzi and Wolf.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Warfield, Executive Director Library Users Association, libraryusers2004@yahoo.com, said all the libraries finally became open for in the building service and that is a good landmark. He said the downside is that there are no evening hours and service, in certain respects, is partial. He said there have been technical problems with phones and computers and no 11 x 17 paper in the copiers.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 SFPL PATRON BORROWING TRENDS

Chief of Collections, Shellie Cocking gave an update on SFPL borrowing trends and meeting the needs of library patrons during the pandemic. The Chief of Collections said she and her staff focused on how to serve patrons in a continually changing way, they focused on increasing access to e-collections, lowered hold ratios and reduced the waiting time for eBooks and other media. They increased ordering frequency and offered digital access cards so San Francisco residents who didn't currently have library cards could apply and get access to the collections. A total of 58,000 youth digital access cards were distributed. The Chief of Collections gave an overview of the at home learning programs and serving youth during SFUSD distance learning. The team purchased new books, to date having given away more than 100,000 books and craft kits to San Francisco youth all over the city. The circulation trends they saw over the past 24 months showed a

large drop with the shelter in place, but as libraries reopen across the city the physical circulation continues to grow as different services are again offered.

Explanatory Documents: [SFPL Patron Borrowing Trends Presentation](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said there is no data on the report and no page numbers. He said the report focused on e-materials and books and it seems to him that there's a very strong showing for published materials and real books have been exceeding e-materials all along. He said the stats were biased by forced e-borrowing.

Anonymous caller commended the library staff for their hard work in resuming library services and labor should be highlighted as staff work to adapt back to the pre-COVID public service models. The caller acknowledged the departments that stepped up to help each other and step in from circulation to delivery services to mobile outreach, the staff has come through time and time again for patrons.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Ono said the staff of the Library should be commended for what they are doing in the pandemic but also to get all the branches open. Ono said she was proud to report, when she was asked by the general public, that all branches were now open.

Vice President Huang said it has been a long journey to have gotten our branches reopened and thanked everyone for making that happen. Huang said the Brain Fuse usage chart might be misleading because the definition of database usage is one count in the database line refers to a page view. He asked what the main use of Brain Fuse was. The Chief of Collections, Shellie Cocking responded that the main use is for live tutor homework help. Huang asked about the circulation, looking at the 10-year circulation trend the overall trend clearly shows e-circulation is as important as physical circulation and shows the library can provide access to services and material, even during a pandemic. He said the only thing keeping circulation up is e-circulation because of the downward trend in the physical circulation, and that means they are investing in the right places and providing what the public wants in terms of accessing material.

Commissioner Mall congratulated the staff for reopening. Mall asked if there was any access to the Library's lending laptops during the shutdown. Chief of Collections responded that the only access to laptops were the 50 laptops normally in library vending machines they loaned out to help students in the Hubs, other city agencies were getting laptops out to kids so they could attend school. Mall said she is grateful the library, along with other agencies, stepped up to help with kids who were distant learning. Mall asked for clarification on what Udemy was and if it was free. The Chief of Collection said Udemy is an on-line Academy and free to anyone with an SFPL Library card.

Commissioner Lopez said as a bilingual person and advocate she appreciated the data that was shown in terms of the language that people have been able to access and thanked staff for everything they have been doing.

Commissioner Wolf said she was a firm believer in e-Books, and it has been wonderful to have these statistics and thanked the staff for their leadership and for pivoting so quickly with the different pressures applied to them from the pandemic.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 STRATEGIC PLANNING SERVICES

City Librarian Michael Lambert and Heather Green, Chief Operating Officer gave an overview of the Strategic Planning Services. The City Librarian outlined the steps that were taken to get to an updated strategic

planning process initiated to carry the library forward. He said the library is one of the longest continuously running institutions in the city, founded in 1879. The mission of the library states we're dedicated to free and equal access to information and reading and learning and servicing our diverse community. The City Librarian said the fundamental role of the library will remain constant, but the strategic planning process is an opportunity to reflect, engage staff and community to audit the mission. Heather Green gave an overview of the Strategic Planning & As-Needed Consulting RFP, what the general scope of the strategic planning work will include and the anticipated content to prepare SFPL for service-driven equity-minded programming and capital investments to meet future needs. Green said the highest scoring proposal was from a local business, DTUI and they have received notice of intent to award. The target for completion of strategic planning work is June 2022.

Explanatory Documents: [City Librarian's Memo dated August 16, 2021](#); [DTUI Strategic Planning Proposal](#); [SFPL 5-Year Strategic Plan \(2016-2021\)](#); [SFPL FY22 Strategic Priorities](#); and [Strategic Planning Services Presentation](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said he was not sure why the system interrupted him to say that the raised hand status has been lowered, all the messages are inaudible and invisible to anybody other than the person making public comment. He said he was disappointed that the process seemed to have been so closed and did not recall discussion about the preparation of the RFP, what the library was looking for, what the commission was looking for, what do librarians think or want in a strategic plan.

Michael Orrick asked a question to Michael Lambert about building off other city departments. President Wardell Ghirarduzzi said this time is reserved for public comment only not a response period.

Marciel said she is excited to participate in this effort; she is hoping that this strategic plan can address some of the issues that were brought up. She said the library, especially staff, want to move towards what our patrons want and is thankful for the opportunity.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Wolf said the presentation was informative and helpful and appreciates all the effort that went into this from staff to make sure it was a fair and equitable process. She said the library has a history of being a leader, taking risks, of being bold and we should embrace that. Wolf said she would like to know more about what role Commissioner will play and how they can support this effort.

City Librarian, Michael Lambert said the Library Commission is in a unique position to support the effort. As officers of the city they serve in an internal stakeholder and as constituents they will bring external stakeholder perspective. He said the Commissioners will engage throughout the process and provide feedback.

Commissioner Lee said the Strategic Planning package was done well and asked of the three entities who will be awarded the contract, which is the accountable lead, for the work.

The CFO responded the contract goes to DTUI as the prime entity from a contract accountability perspective.

President Wardell Ghirarduzzi said San Francisco Public Library is recognized as a leader in library services, many have adapted policies that San Francisco launched and implemented. She said the North American Libraries look to San Francisco for leadership, and the city and library step out on key issues and expects that legacy to continue.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Maureen Singleton, Chief Operating Officer gave an overview on the Main Library Elevator Modernization project. The COO reported that the elevators are more than 25-years old and the purpose of the project was

to increase the reliability of the Main's public and staff elevators. Within the project is upgrading the fire alarm control panels since the two systems need to be able to speak to each other in the event of an emergency. The total budget for the program is \$5.5 Million

Chief of Main Tom Fortin gave an update of the reopening of the Main Library. The Chief of Main said the Main will be resuming regular service hours on Tuesday, September 7th including evening hours. The Main is also planning to make meeting rooms available again in September. He said the Friends Book Store is now reopened for service.

Assistant Chief of Branches, Rebecca Alcala, gave an update on the reopening of branch libraries. The Assistant Chief of Branches gave an update on the recruitment for branch staff vacancies, which are all open with full service, except Mission which is still undergoing renovations and shared reopening photos of a few of the branch reopening's with their staff.

The City Librarian thanked the staff, Commission, Labor, the library patrons and Foundation friends for all the efforts and support to reach the critical milestone of reopening all library locations for in-person service.

Michelle Jeffers, Chief of Programs and Partnerships gave a presentation on this year's VIVA Latinx Heritage Month. The Chief of Programs discussed the different events, in-person programming, authors and how to participate. She gave an overview about the name change from Hispanic Heritage Month to VIVA, saying Library Colleagues who identify as Latinx deliberated about the program name and the controversy of the term Hispanic, wanting to change it to something that would be representative and inclusive.

Explanatory Documents: [Main Elevator Replacement Presentation](#), [SFPL Reopening Plan Presentation](#), [iVIVA!: Latinx Heritage Month Presentation](#) and [At The Library Article](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said it is wrong to put so many things on a single item and especially the reopening plan as though it is a particular program. He said five and a half million dollars for seven elevators seems expensive, but he hadn't priced this sort of thing. He said it is misleading to say there is full service in all locations when there is only five days service and there are not evening hours.

Commission Discussion

President Wardell said the Librarian's Report was very robust and the content was thoughtful and a great level of detail for the library reopening.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 APPROVAL OF MINUTES JULY 15, 2021

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said the minutes are less informative than others he has seen. He said they don't do justice to a fair summary of certainly what he has said in the previous meetings of July 15th and there was vagueness where he was very specific.

Commission Discussion

Motion: By Commissioner **Wolf**, seconded by Commission **Mall** to approve the [Minutes of the July 15, 2021 Commission Meeting](#)

Action: AYES 7-0 (Huang, Lee, Lopez, Mall, Ono, Wardell-Ghirarduzzi and Wolf)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 ADJOURNMENT IN HONOR OF JANICE MIRIKITANI

The City Librarian paid tribute to former [San Francisco Poet Laureate Janice Mirikitani](#), who was a third generation Japanese American and co-founder of San Francisco Glide Memorial Church and Foundation, she worked extensively with youth and teens and produced workshops at the Library for them.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said Janice Mirikitani gave her inauguration speech as Poet Laureate for the City in the Auditorium. He said he did not want to omit what he usually said at this point and hope the Library Commissioners might consider an agenda item where you get to say what you would like on future agenda items.

Commissioner Discussion

Commissioner Lopez said she was able to participate in the beautiful Saturday Memorial and she respects and honors Janice Mirikitani's legacy.

Commission Ono said Janice was a force to be reckoned with in San Francisco and throughout the literary world, she was an inspiration, beautiful on the inside and out. She is a great loss and it is an honor to adjourn in her memory.

President Wardell Ghirarduzzi said she spoke with Janice in June. She brought Janice on as a visiting scholar to the University of San Francisco while she was there, and she spent a year teaching poetry and transforming students through her incredible life. She said she impacted her very deeply and it is hard to believe what San Francisco, California and the United States are like without Janice Mirikitani. She said she was mighty in spirit and wants to adjourn the meeting of the San Francisco Public Library in honor and in memory of the legacy of Janice Mirikitani, social justice activist and profound poet.

Motion: By Commissioner **Ono**, seconded by Commission **Lopez** to adjourn the Meeting of **AUGUST 19, 2021**.

Action: AYES 7-0 (Huang, Lee, Lopez, Mall, Ono, Wardell-Ghirarduzzi and Wolf)

The meeting adjourned at **7:04 p.m.**

Margot Shaub

Library Commission Affairs Analyst

Please note: These are draft minutes subject to revision by the San Francisco Public Library Commission. Copies of the minutes and handouts are available in the office of the Library Commission Affairs Analyst, 6th floor, Main Library, 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102-4733

Explanatory documents: Copies of listed explanatory documents are available as follows: (1) from the Commission Liaison Affairs Analyst/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 Commission webpage: sfpl.org/library-commission/public-notice/agendas. 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)