



San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 21, 2021

(As approved at the regular meeting of February 4, 2021.)

The [San Francisco Public Library Commission](#) held a regular meeting on January 21, 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 Officer 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 4:31 p.m.

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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Warfield, Executive Director of Library Users commented on asking for Commissioner email contact information to discuss issues with the Commissioners, including what the Library is sending to people in their newsletters and website. He said the public has a right to this information and requested Commissioners, as a public records request, send their email address to him at Libraryusers2004@yahoo.com.

Maurice Rivers, Executive Director of the O.M.I Cultural Project discussed the Book Mobile that is moving to 50 Broad Street at Catholic Charities and asked if SFPL would consider moving it permanently to Merced Heights Playground. A learning Hub with kids attending is located there presently.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 ELECTION OF COMMISSION OFFICERS 2021

President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi moved to the election of Commission Officers, President and Vice President, for 2021.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, libraryusers2004@yahoo.com, said in the past the Commission had made nominations and taken public comment and hoped the Commission would do that with this motion, to hear about Commissioners who are interested in the posts and what they would like to accomplish in the roles. Mr. Warfield expressed support of Vice President Mall as new Commission President.

Commission Discussion

President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi asked for nominations for the position of President of the Library Commission for 2021.

Commissioner Wolf thanked Commission current leadership President and Vice President, noting how fortunate the Commission has been with them serving in these leadership roles.

Motion: By Commissioner Wolf, seconded by Commissioner Lee to nominate and approve Commissioner Wardell-Ghirarduzzi an additional term as President of the Library Commission for 2021.

Action: Ayes 6-0 (Huang, Lee, López, Mall, Wardell-Ghirarduzzi and Wolf)

Note: Commissioner Ono was not present for the vote on Commission President 2021.

Commission Discussion

President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi thanked Commissioners for their support and said her goal would be to move the agenda forward and ensure the work the Commission does responds to the educational and racial equity needs of the Communities.

The Commission President asked for a motion for the position of Vice President of the Library Commission 2021.

Vice President Mall said she has enjoyed being Vice President of the Commission and taking over when Madam President has not been available. She said the role of officers should be moved around and shared. She expressed support for President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi to stay in the position to provide continuity and that she is ultimately qualified but also her work on diversity issues that the Library is facing now she is uniquely qualified.

Commissioner Huang thanked Commissioner Mall for her service on the Commission and hard work on behalf of the Library. He noted Commissioner Mall has stepped up in so many ways as Vice President of the Commission and as a Commissioner, this group really appreciates her hard work.

Commissioner Wolf added that she is thankful Commissioner Mall will continue to on the Commission and that Commissioner Huang brings a new voice and represents a new generation stepping forward.

Motion: By Commissioner Susan Mall, seconded by Commissioner Wolf to nominate Commissioner Pete Huang as Vice-President of the Library Commission 2021.

Action: Ayes 6-0 (Huang, Lee, López, Mall, Wardell-Ghirarduzzi and Wolf)

Note: Commissioner Ono was not present for the vote on Vice President of the Commission for 2021.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Roberto Lombardi, Director of Facilities, gave an overview of SFPL buildings and active priority capital projects outlining the facility needs and current year budget with revised estimates based on more detailed design. Strategies include maintaining facilities in a state of good repair to avoid larger capital projects in the future. Roberto noted that SFPL continues to look at partnering with the City on energy efficiency and climate resilience while also supporting programmatic priorities.

Explanatory document: [Capital Projects update presentation \(PDF\)](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, libraryusers2004@yahoo.com, said the thanked Roberto Lombardi for a very nice presentation and was sorry there were not interim reports about what's going on and what the objectives are so he can be aware of where the money is going before it is been committed. Mr. Warfield asked about what looked like tremendous cost overruns and why that was the case. He also brought up the issue of programming via Architecture, and he hoped it was not the architecture that sets the programing.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Ono joined the meeting at 5:14 PM.

Commissioner Lopez asked about the timeline for the Mission Branch Library. The Director of Facilities said the architects finished the design and construction documents are being finalized and anticipates bidding would happen in the first quarter of 2021 and construction could begin in the latter part of the year.

Commissioner Wolf asked about the overages on some of the projects, like the Mission Branch Project. She asked if the Team is prepared to address overage up front.

Roberto Lombardi confirmed the Team is prepared. The Mission Branch scope is largely set and any overages they may see there would be from things discovered under construction. Some overages, like at Park, occur because project scope expanded.

Commissioner Lee followed up with a question on the Team's confidence level in the current budget projections, given the projects all exceeded cost by a significant amount.

Roberto outlined the unexpected costs that came up and do come up on large construction projects and scope can increase based on what they discover once they start digging into a project.

Heather Green, Chief Financial Officer added that the way the Library budgeted for these projects with place holder budgeting which is common, and we refine budgets after we get bids. Many of the large increases are driven by changes in scope and market conditions. Green said confidence in the budget grows as we move through design. Public Works is working on a refined scope and detailed cost estimate and we should have a better idea of costs early next month.

Commissioner Lee asked about Climate Resiliency as part of Capital Projects and what is the role of the Library Buildings in them.

Roberto said SFPL is required to consider its role in the changing climate in San Francisco and for its buildings, new and remodels, for people to take respite from heat or smoke events.

President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi asked the Team to think critically about the principals and demands of racial equity and how they show up in facilities and are considerations in the spaces we are creating for people.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 FYs 2022 AND 2023 BUDGET PRIORITIES

Heather Green, Chief Financial Officer gave the presentation on the FY 2022 and 2023 budget. She gave the budget background and Mayor's budget instructions. Heather said there is a city budget shortfall estimate driven by a decrease in property tax revenue and decreased property assessments in business and hotel industries. Heather highlighted the impact SFPL strategic budget priorities will have to build on our commitment to being a premier urban library, deliver excellence in services and imperatives to further racial equity and promote economic recovery. She said the goal is to act on SFPL Budget at the February 4, 2021 Commission Meeting and to the Controller and Mayor by February 22, 2021.

Explanatory document: [FYs 2022 and 2023 Budget Presentation \(PDF\)](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, libraryusers2004@yahoo.com, expressed concern about bigger cuts to the physical book collection than to the enormously increased electronic materials collection. He asked why there are cuts in the book budget and is concerned about the library's tendency to cut books or neglect the physical collections books. He expressed concerns about service standards and measurement. He said the Library is currently offering vastly reduced services. He thanked presenters for having page numbers.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Lee thanked Heather for including the impact budget priorities and decisions will have on SFPL services and in communities we serve. Lee asked if there is a way to measure success and return on investment for items like book vending machines.

Cathy Delneo, Chief of Branches responded to Commissioner Lee's questions about the vision for the full book vending machine over the reduced model. Cathy said with the larger vending model SFPL can offer a more diverse collection for patrons to choose from where we don't have a library branch.

Commissioner Lee asked Heather to clarify resilience investing and would those funds come from the General Fund instead of the Library. Heather responded SFPL is are expected to fund that.

Commissioner Lopez asked about the Home Scholar program, wanted to make sure the books offered in that program are in different languages and people that will be running this program are not only bilingual but bicultural.

Commissioner Wolf expressed her previous concern with the book vending machines but also recognized the opportunity we have to reach out to Communities that don't have branches nearby, and this vending machine option is a priority to make sure every citizen has equal access and ability to use the SFPL resources. Wolf said it is a lot of money for something we have not even tried. The cost versus the investment at the start, wants to be sure we're doing it well and in the best possible way, which she knows the Library does.

Commissioner Huang shared his perspective that the Library system investing in things like the Book Mobile program, the vending machines and e-collections shows that people's needs are changing and

how the Library serves the public is changing and evolving to meet those needs. The investment now to learn more about the concept is worth it.

City Librarian Michael Lambert offered additional context on the proposed investments. He said we have emerging communities and neighborhoods in San Francisco and SFPL is not able to build a brand-new branch library everywhere we would like, it is not sustainable.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Michael Lambert, City Librarian, gave a presentation and updates on recent Library activities and made announcements. The following topics were covered: SF Poet Laureate appointment of Tongo Eisen-Martin; More Than a Month – Black History, Culture & Heritage events and activities; Biblio Boutique: 5 More to Read service; and America's Star Libraries – Library Journal Index of Public Library Service 2020.

Michael Lambert, City Librarian gave a presentation on the SF Poet Laureate Tongo Eisen-Martin. He noted Martin was born and raised in San Francisco and the Library will work with him to support his vision for serving San Francisco as the Poet Laureate, which includes organizing poetry circles in the Tenderloin, Bayview-Hunters Point and Sunnyside. Martin replaces outgoing Poet Laureate Kim Shuck.

Michelle Jeffers, Chief of Community Programs and Partnerships highlighted SFPL programming for Black History Month, known as More Than a Month. Jeffers outlined the robust program offerings and plans for the SFPL 2021 More Than a Month that bring a range of ideas and programs to the community. For Adults the theme is centered around Arts, Books and Authors. Programs will be offered every day through February and opportunities to participate in numerous book clubs. For young adult and Middle grade readers there is Elizabeth Azevedo in conversation with writer Mahogany L. Brown, they will share their perspective on becoming a writer, power of poetry and the power of one's voice. On Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend we hosted the Black and Brown Comic Arts Festival.

Shellie Cocking, Chief of Presenters and Technical Services presented about the Biblio Boutique services. She said the program was developed to fill in the void of in-person browsing experience and the ability to talk with a Librarian about what to read next. The program launched in early November and started fully functioning around Thanksgiving. Librarians help personally select five books based on a form patrons fill out with information about their reading, film and TV preferences. The requests are reviewed and given to a subject specialist who hand picks five titles from them. Biblio Boutique is service is currently available in Spanish, Chinese and English. To date the program has received 267 requests.

Michael Lambert, City Librarian, reported that the San Francisco Public Library received its first five-star rating from Library Journal in its annual rating of U.S. public libraries. San Francisco was one of only five large urban systems to receive this industry recognition. The L.J. Index rates U.S. public libraries on levels of service delivery relative to peer libraries nationally with a specific focus on per capita output measures, including physical circulation, circulation of electronic material, program attendance, public internet use and use of on-line databases.

Explanatory documents: [SF Poet Laureate presentation \(PDF\)](#); [SF Poet Laureate press release \(PDF\)](#); [More Than a Month 2021 \(PDF\)](#); [Biblio Boutique \(PDF\)](#); [America's Star Libraries press release \(PDF\)](#); [America's Star Libraries \(PDF\)](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, libraryusers2004@yahoo.com, offered congratulations to the new poet Laureate appointment. He asked where the Black History events could be found. He commented that the Biblio Boutique is a great concept but is disappointed that as a regular user of the TIP Line and Books to Go have not seen anything about the new service.

Commission Discussion

President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi expressed her support and excitement about Tongo Eisen serving as San Francisco new Poet Laureate. She also said the Commission is so proud of the five-star designation.

Commissioner Lopez asked for a list or calendar for the SFPL More Than a Month events.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2020

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, Libraryusers2004@yahoo.com, commented that the Minutes overall are refreshingly readable and make refreshing sense on the whole. Mr. Warfield said that with respect to public comment on item number 2, he said the new person, the Library Affairs Analyst, should report to the Commission and not to the City Librarian, and that's how it has been in the past.

Motion: By Commissioner Lopez, seconded by Commissioner Mall to approve the [Minutes of December 17, 2020](#) with one amendment requested by Commissioner Eurania Lopez

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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 ADJOURNMENT IN MEMORY OF TONY HUANG, LIBRARY CUSTODIAN, AND JUDY YOUNG, FORMER SFPL LIBRARIAN

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, libraryusers2004@yahoo.com, made a public records request the email addresses for each Commissioner. He expressed support for adjourning in honor of the two honorees, saying they are people who have served the library and have done good work.

Motion: By Commissioner Mall, seconded by Commissioner Wolf to adjourn the meeting of January 21, 2021 in memory of [Tony Huang](#) and [Judy Young](#).

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

The meeting ended at 7:01 p.m.

Margot Shaub
Library Commission Affairs Analyst

Explanatory documents: Copies of listed explanatory documents are available as follows: (1) from the Commission Affairs Analyst/Custodian of Records, 6th floor, Main Library; and (2), to the extent possible, on the Public Library Commission webpage: sfpl.org/library-commission/public-notices/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).