



# *San Francisco Public Library*

## **SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION**

### **Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 18, 2021**

**(As approved at the regular meeting of April 15, 2021)**

The [San Francisco Public Library Commission](#) held a regular meeting on March 18, 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 4:30 p.m.

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

Library Commission Affairs Analyst: Margot Shaub

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, [libraryusers2004@yahoo.com](mailto:libraryusers2004@yahoo.com), said he was concerned that your 25th annual Effie Lee Morris lecture with the author had no access whatsoever for people that don't have a computer. He said that would eliminate of over 100,000 people who don't have internet access or easy internet access. He said they don't have computer access to learn of programs that exist and of new things happening at the library like another branch opening for curb service and so on. He said there is a program that you require registration for, they don't know that you can do it. He said, regarding looking at current Library statistics, that we should be looking at is what are you doing compared with our past performance.

An anonymous caller said they were calling because they are wondering whether the library van for the trucks that comes around, whether that can't be more useful. There is a box in their lobby with no way of barely any way of knowing that is there, they guessed you return books. They called and said they did not see why the library van can't come around once a month and allow people to pick up books there, because it's difficult to move around the city and their local library hasn't even been open

as a place to go, so they have to go to the main library which without the bus service is quite awkward. The caller said they would like sooner rather than later to have visiting possible into the library.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 SFPL TO GO UPDATE**

Michael Lambert, City Librarian said this past Saturday marked one year since the library was forced to close our doors due to the shelter in place order. He said this past year tested library staff in so many ways as they have stretched, adapted, innovated and risen to the occasion to continue meeting the needs of our residences for library services and respond as disaster service workers. He said he is proud of their resilience and commitment to public service and created a new service model carrying us through this pandemic.

Michael Lambert introduced Catherine Delneo, Chief of Branches, to give a presentation on SFPL To Go operations.

Catherine Delneo gave a presentation on SFPL To Go operations since the library first began providing SFPL service to the public. She gave an overview of the program and practices and services implemented and improved upon over time. She highlighted that the team has developed a better process for check out and ceased the pre-check out of material on February 16th. She said they've implemented another concept called DVD grab and go, which the data shows this new service is a hit. She said we're currently in the process of implementing another service improvement that we expect will please our patrons. She said they are in the process of implementing another service improvement by April 6, a reduction in the amount of quarantine time from 96 hours to 24 hours when materials are returned library. She said the library currently provide services to 11 branches plus the main library. She reported out on SFPL To Go data at the Main Library and in the branches, SFPL To Go locations, noting there is a rise in usage as we add locations. She said while the current public health order does not allow for in-person library service inside of our buildings, they're developing plans to move quickly and safely to implement inside library services when they have the green light to do so. The library has formed a staff reopening committee which meets weekly to provide feedback and provide plans to safely reopen our libraries.

City Librarian Michael Lambert said he anticipated with the city moving into the orange tier next week, that at the April library commission meeting he should have a clearer picture of what level of service will be allowable under future updates to the public health order. Lambert said the library still has 23 percent of its workforce deployed as disaster service workers and those folks were recently extended through the end of April.

Explanatory documents: [SFPL To Go Presentation](#).

### Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, [libraryusers2004@yahoo.com](mailto:libraryusers2004@yahoo.com), said If this were a live meeting, he wouldn't be giving all of the contact information because anybody could walk up and say hi, I like what you said, agreed with what you said or maybe let's get a cup of coffee. He was thankful for some statistics presented. He said, regarding the library SFPL to go update, it is extraordinarily lacking in perspective and in need of a more comprehensive view of what the library used to provide and has provided versus what it's providing now. He said the only non-work hour times that the library is available is on Saturdays for the branches for most of the branches that are open.

He said of course, something is better than nothing, but there is so much less than there has been. He shared his experience of going to the main library, where you get to shout into a microphone, and you must ask for a bag for your books.

An anonymous caller agreed that better service could be desirable, especially considering that the effect of this Pandemonium has been to throw people that are in any kind of communication at all with their culture on to computers and it's a time when the availability of books should be paid very close attention to in order that people not be pulled away from the habit of using books and stuck on computer screens. The caller said they did not see why the library van can't be available at all its regular positions.

Caller Marciel said as a library worker, it's been heartbreaking not to service our community during this pandemic, however, a number of them have been disaster service workers for almost one year now and Marciel thanked the library for letting them have the opportunity in another way to serve San Francisco. She said she was really impressed with the SFPL To Go presentation, working with limited staff, that SFPL To Go has been outstanding in what services we could provide at that time. She thanked her colleagues who have been serving the city in another way.

#### Commission Discussion

Commissioner Ono thanked the San Francisco public library staff that has been working on SFPL To Go, and the individuals who have been disaster service workers. Ono said they have done outstanding jobs and make everybody proud of everything that they've done and do to continue servicing San Francisco so well.

Commissioner Wolf echoed Commissioner Ono's comments. She said they are proud of the workers for serving this community during the time of need. Commissioner Wolf said she was a proud user of SFPL To Go and thanked the staff, noting that it is run so wonderfully. She said San Francisco has done a great job of being healthy and appreciated the City Librarian's leadership making sure that the staff remains healthy and safe.

Commissioner Lee agreed with his fellow Commissioners. Lee said the organization was able to attack and address this while meeting the needs of the community. He asked about the attendance count of the virtual programs. He cited this has been a great learning and it is really about library leadership, dedication, agility, flexibility.

The City Librarian said you cannot compare our current reality with the previous operation due to several factors.

Commissioner Mall echoed what her fellow Commissioners and Michael Lambert have said, the complaints are unjustifiable during this time. Mall said this is an unprecedented time and the Library has had to do the best they can. She said their position as a Commission and as a community is to support whatever the Library staff is doing.

Commissioner Lopez thanked the staff for their work and asked about the reopening committee, what was the selection process and who's participating in terms of representing the multiple libraries.

City Librarian Lambert said the origin of the reopening committee dates to work with the library's joint labor management committee. The reopening committee membership was formed based on the recommendations of our labor partners. They provided a list of staff that they wanted to see involved.

And library management embraced that wholeheartedly. The committee has management representation from our Chief of Main Tom Fortin and Chief of Branches Cathy Delneo.

Cathy Delneo said the group has many different library classifications; from public service divisions, from collections and technical services. She said they meet weekly.

Tom Fortin, Chief of Main said he asked for staff across the main and they have several different people representing the floors at the main library and it was partly who is available at the time. He said a lot of the staff aren't available because of DSW work.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 CITY LIBRARIANS REPORT**

Michael Lambert, City Librarian, gave a presentation and updates on recent Library activities and made announcements. The following topics were covered: One City One Book: SF Reads; and HERStory, the Library's celebration of Women's History Month.

Michelle Jeffers, Chief of Community Programs and Partnerships responded to Commissioner Lee's comment about our programming efforts. She said there has had about 500 virtual programs since we closed that have been attended by about 43,000 people.

Jeffers highlighted the One City One Book "Know My Name," by Chanel Miller explaining they wanted to tie the book to women's history month and sexual assault awareness month in April. She said this is our 16th one city one book. She said the book was a candid memoir about art and this week we had many folks joining with us and the author in conversation with journal a journalist. 1,950 people watched this one time only live eye vent on Zoom and YouTube, which was an increase from the 250 seats that the auditorium holds. Attendees from around the world, from Australia and Japan participated. Jeffers highlighted Library activities and programs tied to women's history month, including Know Your Name series every Monday in March and April; HERstory virtual programs exploring how women have contributed to our local national parks; upcoming panel discussion with the gorilla girls in celebration of their new book and a presentation with Career Girls, which brings successful career women in front of young women to talk about their paths to success. Explanatory documents: [One City One Book presentation](#); and [HERStory: Women's History Month press release and presentation](#).

#### Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, [libraryusers2004@yahoo.com](mailto:libraryusers2004@yahoo.com), expressed thanks for the reports. He said these reports are always interesting and informative. He said he asked for prior year comparison because prior years might give a clue as to what's missing and where the library might be headed. He said when you have a program that's only visible as a remote program accessible by computer only, and you have to sign in for it and must have an email for it, now there's a barrier to access. He said he was glad to hear about printing, which is one of the functions that the library performs that is gone when the place is closed.

Naima said as a person who works at a library and who serves on the reopening committee and has served in the city in many capacities over the past year, this week for the first time she had a moment in her life to stop and enjoy a couple of the programs that were presented. She said the Chanel Miller program was amazing and would not have been able to see if it was in the Koret. She said she was able to witness the presentation yesterday with the new poet laureate and these amazing women. She said in relation to the programming and the virtual programming she is a strong supporter of

equitable services and reaching out to the public being a black woman that does this for my life work. She said she is thankful that we have virtual programming available.

Caller with the name of Detipo, said they were interested to learn a lot of things now from the comments about working with the labor union because they wondered what they might have had to say about reassignment in general. The caller said they think the library van should be working, going to all the places. They said it is difficult to witness all the virtual programs that one might want to be making recordings of that and make programs available after the initial presentation.

### Commission Discussion

President Wardell Ghirarduzzi commented that the Chanel Miller event was wonderful and was grateful to have that quality of engagement that's open to all. She thanked Michelle Jeffers and her team who worked to make sure the event went well.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FEBRUARY 4, 2021**

### Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, [libraryusers2004@yahoo.com](mailto:libraryusers2004@yahoo.com), said if somebody asks you whether you can hear them you ought to be able to answer and then let them speak and not have to deduct the time for them to have the burden of trying to straighten out a confusing and confused mechanism that you have set up to replace the usual mechanism. Including by the way that you used to have a non-stop timer so they could at any point tell where they were. He said it isn't a matter of having trouble with the technology, although certainly he sometimes does.

**Motion:** By Commissioner Wolf, seconded by Commissioner Mall to approve the [Minutes of February 4, 2021](#) Commission meeting.

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

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 ADJOURNMENT IN MEMORY OF LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI, SF POET LAUREATE AND ROSALYNN KOO, PHILANTHROPIST**

Michael Lambert, City Librarian, said San Francisco lost a literary giant on February 22nd. Laurence Ferlinghetti was a poet who co-founded and owned the local City Lights bookstore in San Francisco and championed beat poets including Alan Ginsburg. He became an icon in the 50s. Through City Lights he published works by beat writers - Jack Kerouac, Charles Bukowski and Norman Mailer. He was named the first Poet Laureate of San Francisco in 1988. The City Librarian highlighted another individual who had a consider impact in our local community, Rosalyn Koo. She was a philanthropist described as a member of a wealthy Shanghai family who helped older people in California and organized a program to educate girls in China. She was the force behind the Lady Shaw Senior Center, serving Chinatown and North Beach neighborhoods. He said she funded the expansion of the Chinatown branch of the public library. Explanatory documents: New York Times Obituaries for [Lawrence Ferlinghetti](#) and [Rosalyn Koo](#).

### Public Comment

The caller asked that the commission consider adjournment next month in memory of Paul Robeson whose birthday is on April the ninth 1898.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, [libraryusers2004@yahoo.com](mailto:libraryusers2004@yahoo.com), urged the library not to adjourn until they insist that future items they want to talk about or take action on is on the agenda.

**Motion:** By Commissioner Lopez, seconded by Commissioner Lee to adjourn the meeting in honor of Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Rosalyn Koo.

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

Margot Shaub  
Library Commission Affairs Analyst

Explanatory documents: Copies of listed explanatory documents are available as follows: (1) from the Commission Liaison Affairs Analyst/Custodian of Records, 6<sup>th</sup> 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-notices/agendas](http://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).