



San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 17, 2012

(As amended and approved at the regular meeting of June 21, 2012)

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 17, 2012 in the Koret Auditorium Main Library.

The meeting was called to order at 4:36 pm.

Commissioners present: Breyer, Gomez, Kane, and Munson

Commissioners excused: Ono and Randlett

Commissioner Nguyen entered the meeting at 5:09 pm

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said he would like to recognize one of our senior managers, Kathy Lawhun, Chief of Main, who is retiring after 30 years of service. He said she began working for the Library in 1982 and has worked in various positions and has served as Chief of Main since 2002.

President Gomez presented Kathy Lawhun with a Certificate of Appreciation for the Commission.

Kathy Lawhun, Chief of Main, said the library world has changed over the last 30 years and she said it is bittersweet leaving. She said customer service and collections continue to be a mark of excellence for the San Francisco Public Library and she is sure her great staff will continue that work.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 PUBLIC COMMENT

An anonymous citizen said maybe we should do what we did 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. He said one more day and he would have missed the meeting because of a burst appendix. He said the Friends are completely exposed as scam artists. He said the Commission's only connection to the Friends is that you are addicted to

their flattery and in return for that flattery you ignore your duty. He said this is such a poisonous atmosphere that you almost choke. He said the Commissioners have decided that if you stick together nothing else matters. He said you ignore the public, the rules, the law, and morality because if you stick together reality itself has no meaning. He said the Commission has sociopath values, gang values and Jewelle Gomez is your shot caller. He said everything outside your gang is the enemy. He said the Friends are like drug dealers and everyone in the gang thinks they are special people. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

A man from the audience said he would like to commend the library and the fantastic resources this library has. He said dollar for dollar our library is the City's best education and a recession proof investment. He said thank you for this fantastic resource for the city of San Francisco.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, read the following statement: "This Library Commission has repeatedly and consistently chastised me and other members of the public for our comments. The criticism has been for numerous reasons, but, most often for the comments being 'negative.' The Commission members have not proven the comments wrong, but most often simply reacted to them in a negative manner. I, for one, am not at all surprised by the reactions! The most oft repeated reaction: that I, and others, focus only on the negative aspects of your performance. I submit that the reason that may be true is my observation that the Library Commission misses no opportunity to take credit for anything done well, but, avoids all responsibility for things done not so well. I can't help but wonder whether the members of this Commission have mistaken these meetings for social events as opposed to meetings to discuss and decide matters of public interest and public concern?" He said he has tolerated the attitudes of this body for members of the public. He said any citizen has a right to come here and say anything. He said the President filed a Police Report against me saying that I made threatening comments and they were mostly directed at her. He said when you are the person in charge you take the focus whether that be good or bad.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 BOND PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said the approved budget is \$196,259,350 as of February 16, 2012. She said there is one branch under construction, Bayview, and one branch in the bid and award stage which is North Beach.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the bond funds are restricted to construction costs only. He said they do not allow for Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E). He said the Friends have been a significant partner in providing the funding for the FF&E.

Maureen Singleton, Chief Financial Officer, said the Friends have made a commitment to provide the FF&E for the Branch Library Improvement

Program. She said to date the amount that has been spent is \$8,800,872 and of that \$3,629,904 has been spent by the City. She said the other \$5.1 Million is in-kind contributions from the Friends and that does not go through the City system.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, showed the project schedule for the last two projects. She said North Beach is in the bid and award stage and we are in the process of rebidding the project because there were only two bidders. She said Bayview is in construction. She showed photographs of the Bayview Branch construction. She showed design and site plans for the completed design for the North Beach branch. She said the Golden Gate Valley Branch Library received an honor award for preservation from the American Institute of Architects. She said the Visitacion Valley Branch Library received LEED gold certification. Explanatory documents: [Quarterly Report](#); [Manager's Report](#); [Current Budget Report](#).

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said never mind selling a bridge, He said if this is the City's standards for purchasing he could sell a bridge to Angel Island and charge anything he wanted. He said when the budget was laid out for the BLIP \$16 million was supposed to be accounted for and now there is some process by which it won't be accounted for. So he said that \$16 million is a phantom number. He said "In-kind contributions" has no meaning at all. He said "In-kind contributions" could include anything including Donna Bero attending branch openings at \$1,000 per hour. He said the furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) in our libraries was presumed to be vetted, controlled, analyzed by the Commission and the library staff as well as the Department of Public Works and the Bureau of Architecture. He said now we are learning that the FF&E did not go through that process. He said the Chief Financial Officer cannot even justify that figure and why was that figure not accounted for before? He said if it were true, it is still barely 55% of the Friends' commitment. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Ray Hartz, Executive Director San Francisco Open Government, read the following statement: "In a May 1, 2012 email to me, Maureen Singleton, the SFPL CIO wrote 'Mr. Hartz, I will work with the Friends to provide you with the information on the expenditures that they made directly for BLIP on a rolling basis.' Since that date I have received nothing! So, I must repeat: Why are the Library Commission and the public being presented with numbers for which the CFO admits there is no supporting documentation? Why is the Library Commission publishing a document which contains unsubstantiated amounts as if they were factual? Where did the figure of \$5,170,967 come from? Did someone just make it up? If so, who did it, and, more importantly, at whose direction? At best this is a misrepresentation, at worst outright deception! Further, while you may not like being asked these questions, that changes in no way your responsibility to ask them and to demand answers." He said this is a

financial document and there must be back up for this information. He said the \$5 million has no basis in reality.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Kane said he was disappointed there were only two bidders for the North Beach Branch. He wanted to know why there was a lack of bidders.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said there are over 100 plan holders and she said her best guess is that the economy is getting better and not as many contractors are interested in bidding on public works projects. She said the litigation may be an issue as well.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the hearing for the North Beach Branch is scheduled for June 7. He said we will provide an update as soon as we know more.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said the bids will be going out this week and they are due June 6.

Commissioner Kane asked if the judge in the case issued a preliminary determination. He said if contractors have a choice they would probably want to take one without litigation. He said if we are not happy again with the new bidders, we would go out for bid again.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said until we know where we stand we will not be able to determine what the bid process will be.

Lena Chen said the parking concession has left the site at North Beach.

Luis Herrera said the permits have been pulled so everything is moving along.

Commissioner Kane asked about the schedule for Bayview and if there have been any further delays.

Lena Chen said that things are going well and on schedule for the Bayview Branch.

Commissioner Kane said the number for the in-kind contributions from the Friends was added into the budget report at the direction of the Commission. He said his understanding is that there has been no FF&E that has been included that has not been approved by the Library and DPW

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the Library provides the list of the things that are needed for each of the branch projects so that what comes in is a combination of the in-kind from the Friends and the purchases that the City makes.

President Gomez said nothing in that process has changed since the beginning of the program.

Commissioner Kane said we transferred \$1 million from the Library Preservation Fund for FF&E. He said that is the number he would like to see paid back by the Friends.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the initiation estimate for FF&E was per branch and that was \$500,000 so that would be about \$12 million plus associate costs, which was the \$16 million that was originally out there. He said there have been some efficiencies in some of the costs and some of the branches have been less than \$500,000 per branch.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said we have received the FF&E for each of the branches.

Commissioner Munson said the Library cannot spend bond money on FF&E; the Friends fill a very important role in the program.

There was a discussion on the budget for each branch for FF&E.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said we are continuing to work with the Friends to recreate the exact budget for each branch.

Commissioner Munson said he is concerned about the bid process for the North Beach Branch and wondered if it would be better to wait until there is a judgment on the court case.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said it would have to come back to the Commission for action.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said the notice to go out to bid has been approved by the Director of the Department of Public Works.

There was a conversation about possibly amending the bids for the North Beach Branch.

Commissioner Breyer said he hopes there will be further outreach to encourage more bids.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said there would be contact with the existing plan holders to encourage more bids.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said some of the small contractors may be afraid to compete with the larger ones.

Commissioner Kane asked about the Program Reserve.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said there is no Program Reserve at this time but we are still closing additional projects.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said the second bidder was almost on target but there was a mistake made and they have worked on other projects so they may bid again.

President Gomez said the bidder who had the mistakes could resubmit the bid.

Commissioner Breyer wondered if the backup information from the Friends in kind contribution is available to the public.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the Friends have not provided that information to the Library. He said we know they have provided all of the FF&E and total amounts spent for each branch.

Commissioner Breyer said he wanted to express his appreciation of Kathy Lawhun and said she would be missed.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 TEEN COMPUTER CORPS

Toni Bernardi, Chief of Children and Youth Services, said the Teen Computer Corps is actually a program for seniors where teens assist seniors. She gave a presentation on the program. She said there are four sites testing the program and they are Chinatown, Excelsior, Richmond and the Main. She said it is a program where volunteer teens assist seniors with instruction on technological issues such as how to use Facebook. She said it is an unstructured drop-in instruction where seniors get help with specific issues or questions. She said there were 36 programs, 423 attendees and 20 teen volunteers who provided 377.5 teen volunteer hours. She said the evaluations of the program came back with a very positive result. She said the most common complaint from the seniors was that they wanted more time with the teen.

Explanatory document: [Teen Computer Corps](#) presentation

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said this is a very nice program, full of comic possibilities. He said it is something of a legend that teenagers are hooked in as the rest of us are not. He said there was a New York Times article that said the average teenager sends or receives about 2800 text messages per month. He said until recently more than half of the text messages he received were from the Verizon Company. He said perhaps he should sign up and maybe have a teenager sit on his lap and explain it all to him. He said apparently we are getting a lot of work out of very few volunteers. It said it sounds marvelous and maybe he will enjoy it himself someday. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said this is a good program. He said when he goes home to visit his mother he invariably spends a good deal of time cleaning up her computer and teaching her how to program her dvr and buy a new TV. He said most young people

want to do emails and twitter and unfortunately the grandparents and great-grandparents are used to hand writing letters. He said this program does allow seniors to help them get the help they need in order to help them communicate and not withdraw from society. He said that one of the things he gets critiqued for is being negative; he said on the staff programs he usually finds ways to seriously say they are great programs. He said his criticism is generally for the Commission and the Administration of the Library. He said if you bought that last song and dance on the last agenda item he pities the Commission.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Kane said this is a great program and wanted to know more about the grant.

Toni Bernardi, Chief of Children and Youth Services said the program received an OSHER grant for \$17,500. She said the money has been used to buy some equipment and some t-shirts for the teens to identify them. She said the library will be looking at continuing the program through the next year. She said parents go to the library looking for opportunities for their teens to help out.

Commissioner Nguyen asked about the marketing of the program and how to determine who is suited to be involved in the program.

Toni Bernardi, Chief of Children and Youth Services said there is an application process and a technology quiz and guidelines.

Commissioner Breyer said he wondered if there was an opportunity for teens to help those with disabilities.

Toni Bernardi, Chief of Children and Youth Services, said that was a very interesting idea and she would be happy to look at ADA possibilities and work.

President Gomez asked if there was any evaluation of the teens involved in the program.

Toni Bernardi, Chief of Children and Youth Services said the evaluations have been positive from the teens and they need a little direction on how to cut off the time with the seniors.

Commissioner Breyer asked if we could do additional outreach to the senior population.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said we work closely with the Department of Aging on getting the word out on all our programs.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, wanted to thank Kathy Lawhun for helping to get the grant and Toni Bernardi for moving it forward as a teen program.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF
APRIL 19, 2012**

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said on page one he said that the point he was building up to was that Commissioner Breyer was laughing at him because he thought he was not willing to kill him. He said below that “a man from the audience” should be anonymous citizen number two. He said the man told a story of a friend visiting from Florida who tried to mount a complaint. He said the man said it took months to get to the City Librarian’s office, and then he was deflected to someone else for another month. He said the point that the man was unable to make a complaint to the library administration is completely obliterated. He said on page 3 he apologized for being on flu medication and that was omitted because it makes him look human. He said on pages 5-6 the President tried to prevent people from speaking twice and any mention of that is omitted. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, read the following statement: “While the Library and/or the Library Commission have tried to act like King Solomon, with a ‘split the baby decision,’ this just won’t pass muster! You have included my written summaries ‘in the minutes’ as ordered by the SOTF, but failed to do so with the statements submitted by another member of the public. The Compliance & Amendments Committee has again recommended to the full Task Force that you be found in violation for failing to follow the Orders of Determination in additional sets of minutes and for failing to send anyone to the hearing. I remarked on the effort to both meet and not meet the clear wordings of the Sunshine Ordinance and the Orders of Determination. I also stated my confusion as to what this ‘change’ actually means. At this point, the Library/Library Commission seems to have one foot in the boat and the other on the dock!” He said if the Commission cannot defend its own actions personally he considers that cowardice.

Motion: By Commissioner Munson, seconded by Commissioner Kane to approve the [Minutes of April 19, 2012.](#)

Action: AYES 5-0: (Breyer, Gomez, Kane, Nguyen, and Munson).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5. ADJOURNMENT

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said he would like to recommend that the Commission adjourn in the memory of Jack Coll. He said Mr. Coll was a librarian in our system for 35 years and he passed away on May 6, at the age of 78. He said Mr. Coll was a legendary librarian and he was so serious that he made friends with active citizens who cared about the

library. He said Mr. Coll was active in the library even after he retired in 1992. He said one of Mr. Coll's areas of expertise is called retrospective acquisition. He said Mr. Coll felt very strongly that the collection is selected with intellectual goals in mind, and if we didn't fill in our losses we were undermining the historical preservation that justifies the collection. He was Mr. Coll was a strong advocate for keeping up the collection and was a friend to many of us. He said Mr. Coll said the Library Commissioners are the library's worst enemies, but he wasn't even talking about this Commission. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Motion: By Commissioner Kane, seconded by Commissioner Munson to adjourn the regular meeting May 17, 2012 in honor of Jack Coll.

Action: AYES 4-0: (Breyer, Gomez, Kane, Nguyen, and Munson)

The meeting adjourned at 5:52 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).

ADDENDUM

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.

Item 1: General Public Comment

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Hate & Ignorance – Don't give or accept money from the Friends of the Library.

It is a shame the announcement didn't include public comment.

“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.”

One more day and I would have missed this meeting because of a burst appendix.

The commissioners decided that by sticking together nothing else matters. You ignore the public, the rules, the law, morality. Reality itself has no meaning.

But these are sociopath values, gang values. Jewelle Gomez is your shot caller. You owe your loyalty to the gang. The gang thinks they are special people.

This immorality will raise you to the top. We didn't develop democracy for this.

Item 2: Bond Program Manager's Report

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't give or accept money from the Friends of the Library

Never mind selling a bridge. If this is the standard, we could sell a bridge to Angel Island.

BLIP started with \$16 million from the Friends to be accounted for. Now there is some process by which it won't be accounted for. So that \$16 million is a phantom number.

"In-kind contributions" could include anything, including Donna Bero attending branch openings at \$1,000 per hour.

The furniture, fixtures and equipment was presumed to be approved by you, the staff, the Department of Public Works, etc. Now we learn our libraries are full of stuff that didn't go through that process.

The Chief Financial Officer cannot even justify that figure. Why was that figure not accounted for before? If it were true, it is still barely 55% of the Friends' commitment.

Item 3: Teen Computer Corps

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Hate & Ignorance – Don't give money to, or accept money from the Friends of the Library.

This is a nice program, full of comic possibilities. There must be any number of New Yorker cartoons on the model of a group of bewildered businessmen and engineers saying, “Maybe we should send out for a teenager.”

It is something of a legend that the teenagers are hooked in as the rest of us are not. The New York Times contained a statistic the average teenager sends or received 2,800 text messages a month. Until recently half the messages I received were from the Verizon company.

Perhaps I should sign up and a teenager will sit on my lap and explain it all to me. Apparently we are getting a lot of work out of very few volunteers.

It sounds marvelous and maybe I will enjoy it myself someday.

Item 4: Approval of the Minutes (April 19, 2012)

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Hate & Ignorance – Don’t give money to, or accept money from the Friends of the Library.

On page 1, Commissioner Breyer was laughing at me because he thinks I am not willing to kill him, the point I was building up to.

Below that, “a man from the audience” should be anonymous citizen number two. He told a story of a friend visiting from Florida who tried to mount a complaint. It took months to get to the City Librarian’s office, then he was deflected to someone else for another month. The point that he was unable to make a complaint to the library administration is completely obliterated.

On page 3, I apologized for being on flu medication – omitted because it makes me look human.

On pages 5-6, your president tried to prevent people from speaking twice, and any mention is omitted.

Item 5: Adjournment

Anonymous Citizen: I would like to recommend that we adjourn the meeting in memory of Jack Coll.

Mr. Coll was a librarian in our system for 35 years. He passed away on May 6, at the age of 78.

A legendary librarian; he was so serious that he ended up making friends with active citizens who cared about the library, including myself.

He was active in the library even after he retired in 1992. One of his areas of concern was retrospective acquisition. He felt very strongly that the collection is selected with intellectual goals in mind, and if we didn't fill in our losses we were undermining the historical preservation that justifies the collection. He was a strong advocate for keeping up the collection.

He was a friend to many of us. He said Library Commissioners are the library's worst enemies. You will be happy to learn he wasn't even talking about you.