



San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 18, 2015

(Approved as amended at the July 16, 2015 regular meeting)

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on Thursday, June 18, 2015 in the Koret Auditorium Main Library.

The meeting was called to order at 4:33 pm.

Commissioners present: Dunning, Lee, Mall, Ono and Wardell-Ghirarduzzi.

Commissioner Nguyen arrived at 4:40 pm.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said the President of the Library Commission Teresa Ono has assumed what he can only describe as the powers of a “dictator.” He said President Ono simply decides to silence critics. He said at the last meeting she read the Mayor’s Policy on Harassment and he said there was nothing he said to the staff that was harassment. He said staff should be told to keep their comments to themselves.

The following written summary was provided by the speaker, Ray Hartz. The content is neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by the Library Commission.

Since becoming President of the Library Commission, Teresa Ono has assumed what I can only describe as the powers of a “dictator.” It seems to be her perception that as the presiding official at meetings she can unilaterally silence members of the public. There is no discussion, not even between members of the commission, before Pres. Ono simply decides to silence critics. At the last meeting Pres. Ono read, upon advice from a DCA, the Mayor’s Policy on Harassment. Reading from that policy: “Harassment is unwelcome visual, verbal, or physical conduct engaged in on account of a person’s actual or perceived membership in a protected category.” This “fabricated” attempt to characterize my comments as harassment is truly ludicrous! It fits in the ongoing pattern of the Commission, particularly its

President, to silence public criticism which is lawful under both the Sunshine Ordinance, Sec. 67.15 Public Testimony, and the Brown Act.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said he agreed with the statements of the previous speaker with regards to how the previous meeting was run. He said the library is attempting to politicize and criminalize dissent and it is very inappropriate. He said BiblioCommons which was installed in March continues to make a mockery of cataloging. He said the magazine section here is a scandal.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 FACILITIES UPDATE

Roberto Lombardi, Facilities Director, gave a presentation on the Main Library improvements and branch post-occupancy investments. He said the Main Library Maintenance Improvements includes a lighting retrofit project with the latest LED technology; public art conservation; replaced Grove, Larkin and Fulton entrance doors; new signage throughout the building; and extensive repainting in public and staff areas. The Capital Projects include the Mix, the Bridge and staff office improvements. The Branch Post-Occupancy Investments have included public art conservation at the Chinatown, Eureka Valley Harvey Milk and Potrero Branches. He said we have also repaired and replaced furnishings at the Potrero, Eureka Valley Harvey Milk, West Portal, Excelsior, and Chinatown Branches. Branch repainting has been done at the Marina Branch. Other investments include the Potrero program room air conditioning, painting at 14 locations, and flooring repairs or installation at 8 locations. He went over the FY 15 Post Occupancy Improvement budget, the FY 15 Capital Budget, and the FY 15 Facilities Budget. He explained upcoming projects for FY 15-16.

Explanatory document: [Facilities Update Presentation](#).

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said he didn't realize the Facilities Budget was almost \$16 Million. He said this library's budget is more than three times that of other libraries in the same category. He said the library was closed because of serious plumbing problems and the lower bathroom even today is still closed. He said the Commission should follow up on this. He said the basics are not being done in the restrooms and there is no checklist to show what has been done.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said the staff normally gives fairly cogent reports. He said the lower level bathrooms are filthy. He said we were told there would be sign in sheets for the custodians to show when they had cleaned the bathrooms and what had been done. He said these projects all need to be done and he wanted to thank Mr. Lombardi and his staff for their work on this. He asked about the Community Benefit District and what exactly the Library is getting for being a part of it.

Charles Higuera said he wanted to applaud the Commission's investment in the library's facilities and Mr. Lombardi's stewardship of those investments. He said the library's facilities are very precious to the community. He said it only take a few minutes for a restroom to go from clean to not so clean.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Mall asked about the arrangement with the Arts Commission on maintaining the public art.

Roberto Lombardi, Facilities Director, said it differs on whether the Arts Commission or the Library pays for the maintenance.

Commissioner Mall said she loves the public art in the library and thinks that it should be promoted even more. She asked about the status of the sign in sheets in the bathrooms.

Roberto Lombardi, Facilities Director, said the restrooms are a work in progress. He said it is a big challenge and we need to do more on accountability.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the sign in sheets are being used to some extent. He said last month we reported fully on the Custodian Task Force and the progress that has been made working with the team to look at equipment inventory and staffing needs. He said the restroom quality and cleanliness have improved significantly. He said we have also had a serial vandal and that is why the lower restrooms have been closed.

President Ono said thank you to Roberto and the team for all of their hard work.

AGENDA ITEM 3 CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said today is definitely a day of celebration. He said we opened the Mix at 11:00 am this morning, with the Mayor, Commissioners, Friends of the Library and the public in attendance. He showed some photographs from the event. He said we will be hosting the American Library Association Conference next week. He gave a presentation on what is to be expected at the conference and some of the events that will be held at SFPL.

Michelle Jeffers, Chief of Communications, Programs and Partnerships, gave a presentation on Summer Stride: Read. Make. Learn. the Library's summer reading Program. She said Friends of the Library is our major sponsor for summer reading. She gave a quick overview of the program. Explanatory documents: [Summer Stride 2015](#) presentation; [ALA 2015](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said he went to the opening of The Mix and said the opening was appreciated by

everybody. He said he is a little bit bothered that The Mix at SFPL is not open to everyone and only to teenagers.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said there has not been an evaluation of the effectiveness or the efficacy of the program. He said the teens can do much of the same work on their own equipment. He wanted to know what metrics will be used to evaluate whether this expenditure is worthwhile and asked if the Library Commission will simply spend a lot of time and energy praising itself while doing absolutely nothing to ensure a fair and balanced evaluation. He asked how the tens of millions of dollars raised by the Friends has been spent.

The following written summary was provided by the speaker, Ray Hartz. The content is neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by the Library Commission.

While we are repeatedly given updates on the multimillion dollar expenditure of public funds known as “the mix,” we have yet to see one word regarding the evaluation of the effectiveness or efficacy of the program. As I’ve stated before, the age group at which this facility is targeted can do much if not all of the same things on their home computers, laptops, and/or tablets. What metrics will be used to evaluate whether this expenditure was worthwhile? Will the LC, and the public be kept informed as to whether or not this facility is utilized and to what extent? Or, will the LC simply spend a lot of time and energy praising itself while doing absolutely nothing to ensure a fair and balanced evaluation of the program and the expenditure? If the LC follows its usual pattern, self aggrandizement will be the sole focus of all discussions going forward.

Charles Higuera said the Mix is an extraordinary facility and is one of probably a dozen in the United States. He said it is taking the youth population by storm. He said the teen areas in the branches are not separate and that makes this space unique. He said he does see this as a harbinger of things to come throughout the library in the future.

Deborah Doyle, Acting Executive Director of the Friends, echoed Mr. Higuera’s comments. She said she hopes some of the Commissioners will be able to take part in the American Library Association next week. She thanked the Commission for a wonderful opening of the Mix.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Mall said she is blown away by the space including the light and the colors. She said it is a tremendous asset for teens especially in this neighborhood.

Commissioner Dunning said she wanted to commend everyone who has been involved in the design and buildout of the Mix. She said the

technology is state of the art and she is wondering how we will keep it fresh and how the technology is kept up to date.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said we do need to make a committed investment to sustain the existing technology. He said we need to work both within the Library's budget and with our partners to have an ongoing sustained relationship. He said the second part is the training component. He said not only does the technology change but we have to make sure that staff has the skills to keep up with the changes.

Commissioner Lee said he was not at the last meeting but when he was out of town he visited other libraries. He said he went to the library in Washington, D.C. and they have something similar to this. He said in order to be sustainably successful it takes a couple of things besides just investing in the hardware. He said one part is the investment on new technology and the other thing is having a mentoring program.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said one of the strengths in our model is that we have at least 12 different community organizations involved in the Mix.

Commissioner Lee said another part he learned from visiting Washington, D.C. is that safety is an important issue.

Commissioner Nguyen said he loves the theme for summer reading and he thinks the art work is very whimsical and nice.

President Ono said that the teens really appreciated that they were heard and that their input was considered in the design. She thanked all the staff involved in the opening of the Mix and all the staff working on the upcoming ALA conference.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 LABOR UNION REPORT

Vanessa Hardy said she works in the Preservation Unit in the Library and is a Union Officer. She said the BLIP program has enlarged many of the branches and has converted some one story to two story branches. She said we also have expanded hours, so staffing has been a concern and discussion with management for quite some time. She said she wanted to commend the Management Team and HR for hustling to get positions filled. She said it is not clear what the exact staffing needs will be for the expanded hours. She said we have heard from workers that they sometimes work through their lunch hours, staff putting in extra hours without getting overtime, staff being alone in buildings, staff being alone on the upper floors at night, staff not being able to leave the building, and injury rates because the staff is doing more work. She said there is a staff shortage particularly on weekends and it is a very busy time. She said we have great teen librarians but when new librarians get rotated in, they don't have the relationship with the teens. She said they are looking forward to having the Controller's Office do a full study of staffing for the librarians. She said they are thrilled about the Mix but they have some concern about the staffing of the Mix and that there will be regular staff

there. She said as they understand it there will be two staff every hour and they do not think that is adequate.

Public Comment

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said he has raised questions about this agenda item in that the description on the agenda did not meet the requirements of the Sunshine Ordinance. He said when there was no report he felt it was illogical to think that labor had no concerns. He said there has been an improvement in the last two or three months. He said there have been a lot of staffing concerns raised and if those issues are not resolved, nothing in the library will work.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said there are issues that the union has brought up that evidently have not been handled. He said any kind of a change needs to have a consideration of staffing. He thought that there was a rule that you had two staff members available at all times in the branches. He said there was a mention of teens needing regularity. He said he would like to see more connectivity between the Mix and the rest of the library.

Andrea Grimes said she is one of the officers of the Librarian's Guild. She said the Librarians at SFPL are the connectors and the vital heart of SFPL that makes this place run. She said it is imperative that the Mix, the branches and the Main all have the appropriate amount of staffing.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Dunning asked about how we determine the level of staffing.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said we are very deliberate in making sure we have the staff for the Mix and one of the reasons we are only open 30 hours a week before we make a further assessment of the staffing needs. He said he welcomes the dialog with labor and he said safety is a primary concern.

Commissioner Mall asked about opportunities for interns in the Mix.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said his understanding is that there will be four internships at 15 hours a week for the Mix.

Karen Strauss, Chief of Main, said they are in the process of rolling out the internship program for the Mix.

President Ono said she was interested in when the Controller's Study of staffing might be taking place.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said he hopes it will start in the fall with results in approximately 6 months.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES MAY 21, 2015

Public Comment

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said his comments are related to page four of these Minutes. He said the interaction between the secretary and himself is misrepresented. He said he was surprised the Deputy City Attorney got involved and had the President read the Mayor's Policy on Discriminatory or Harassing Remarks Made at Public Meetings as if he had violated the policy which he said he did not. He said the incident is misrepresented in the Minutes because it was instigated by the Library Commission Secretary and he simply responded. He told the Commission to tell the Secretary not to provoke a reaction.

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“Pretty words not are always true. True words are not always pretty, but, are in the end still true.” These minutes are a blatant attempt to mischaracterize and/or misrepresent an exchange that occurred at the meeting. Section 67.17 of the Sunshine Ordinance relates to “Public Comment by Members of Policy Bodies.” After completing my public comment, when handing my written summary to the secretary, she stated that my prior public comment was inappropriate. In response, I simply remarked “drop dead!” Now, here in the minutes, the interaction is misrepresented as a violation of City policy. The key element here: “Pres. Ono stated that if a member of the public becomes disruptive again we will ask to remove him.” The interaction was instigated by the LC Secretary, not me! I simply responded to her inappropriate comment, as she is not a member of this Commission under section 67.17. Back to SOTF!

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said on the top of page four there are problems with the reporting of what happened in the Minutes. He said the first sentence should include the words “when he brought his 150 word statement to her.” He said he doesn't remember the President saying that “if a member of the public becomes disruptive again we will ask to remove him.” He said the Minutes do not include that the Deputy City Attorney asked that the Mayor's statement be read. He said while the Commission was on recess a policeman came down and talked to Mr. Hartz and that should be included in the Minutes. He said his comments on page three should include the word “shelving” when he was discussing the destruction of the entire west wing.

Commissioner Dunning asked that she be allowed to abstain on voting on these Minutes because she was not present.

Motion: By Commissioner Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, seconded by Commissioner Mall, to excuse Commissioner Dunning from the vote on these Minutes.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Lee, Mall, Nguyen, Ono and Wardell-Ghirarduzzi).

President Ono said now we will have a motion on the approval of the Minutes.

Motion: By Commissioner Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, seconded by Commissioner Mall, to approve the [Minutes of May 21, 2015](#) with the exclusion of Commissioner Dunning.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Lee, Mall, Nguyen, Ono and Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, with Dunning excused).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 ADJOURNMENT

Public Comment

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said we now have four complaints with the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force and I am in the process of putting in five more. He said one of which will be the minutes you just approved. He said to have it inaccurately represented knowingly and willfully by this Commission is an ongoing pattern. He said he has to submit 150 word summaries just to make sure what he said is accurate. He said the Minutes read like he caused the problem. He said the Commission Secretary caused the problem. He said the Commission wants to only talk about how wonderful everything is and when issues are raised by the public the Commission does not address them.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said that the Commission might consider putting items that are raised on a future agenda item. He said the Commission should have "New Business" on the agenda. He said he would like to see on the agenda an evaluation of BiblioCommons. He said it has a number of problems and they should be addressed. He said there are other problems with magazines in the Library.

Motion: By Commissioner Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, seconded by Commissioner Dunning to adjourn the regular meeting of May 21, 2015.

Action: AYES 6-0: (Dunning, Lee, Mall, Nguyen Ono and Wardell-Ghirarduzzi)

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 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).