SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 6, 2020

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on February 6, 2020 in the Latino-Hispanic Room, Main Library.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm.

Commissioners present: Huang, Lee, Mall, and Wardell-Ghirarduzzi

Commissioners excused: Ono and Wolf

Commissioner Dunning is expected.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said several items are not on the agenda including a new Library webpage that is a mess. He said there are problems with Facebook and privacy and the Library continues to promote it. He said he is concerned that there are cookies on the opening page of the website. He said the Library continues to use an outside agency, in this case Eventbrite for ticketing to events and that is appalling. He said those with no access to computers have no way to obtain tickets to free events.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said he concurs with Mr. Warfield’s comments about the Library’s website. He said the corruption here at the SFPL is The Friends of the Library. He said it is a scam and pure corruption. He said former City Librarian Luis Herrera accepted thousands of dollars of gifts from the Friends and then perjured himself when filing his annual SEI’s. He said the person now fully responsible for this scam is City Librarian Michael Lambert and he said to be very ashamed.
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 members of the “City Hall family” continue to pretend how shocked they are regarding the disclosures of corruption at DPW, I know well how hypocritical their comments are! The corruption here at the SFPL is The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library! It's a SCAM and you all know it! Thomas Aquinas teaches “Willful ignorance of what one ought to know is a mortal sin.” The members of this board have chosen for years to be willfully ignorant of this corruption! Former City Librarian Luis Herrera accepted thousands of dollars of gifts from this group and perjured himself when filing his annual SEI’s. James Chafee, Peter Warfield, and I had to take him to the Fair Political Practices Commission in Sacramento because the Ethics Commission was as willfully blind as you are! The person now fully responsible for this SCAM is City Librarian Michael Lambert! BE VERY ASHAMED!

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 FYs 2021 and 2022 BUDGET

Maureen Singleton, Chief Operating Officer, gave the presentation on the FYs 21 and 22 budgets. She gave the budget background and climate and said the Library Commission would be asked to approve a budget at this meeting. She explained the budget options 1 and 2 and said the Commission had the option to modify these options. She said the budget is due to the Controller's Office on February 21, 2020. Explanatory documents: Budget FY 2021-22; Budget FY 2021-22: Attachment I

Commissioner Dunning entered the meeting at 4:41 pm.

Public Comment
Ray Hartz, Director, San Francisco Open Government, said in all the years he has been attending the Library Commission meetings the perfunctory blessing of the budget is the only serious thing he has seen you do. He said presentations from staff show the wonderful things staff do. He said it makes the Commission feel like you do something. He said the Commission is puppets of the Mayor who has appointed you.

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.

In all the years I have been attending Library Commission meetings, your perfunctory “blessing” of the budget is absolutely the only serious thing I’ve seen you do! Everything else that occurs in these meetings is no more than “a dog and pony show.” And, I believe, that’s just the way you like it! Presentations by members of the SFPL staff show clearly the wonderful work they
do. That work is reduced to nothing but “pretty pictures” to make it seem as if you, the Library Commission actually do something. He said often I feel as if the members of this commission have given barely a glance to anything prior to coming here. Other than “isn’t it wonderful!” your comments are generally uninformed and disinterested! I spend literally hours reviewing the packet and formalizing my comments. You just “check the boxes,” then “pat yourself on the back,” and leave feeling very smug.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said he is disappointed that the Commission will not be holding a meeting on February 20 to have one more discussion on the budget, which is one of the most important things the Commission does. He said the collections budget is very low. He said he is concerned about the major increase in eCollections. He said it is pay to play for people to need to use computers for access. He said he would like to see a speedier purchase of books especially popular books.

Edna James said she is concerned that Ocean View not be delayed, and she is concerned about the senior playground at Richmond and if that will delay the Ocean View project. She said the Commission is appreciated for their public service.

Mary Harris, President All my Neighbors in Action, said she hopes the budget moves forward and they are very appreciative for all the work being done on the Ocean View Branch library.

Monica Chinchilla, Supervisor Safai’s Office, said they are very happy to see the commitment in the budget for the Ocean View Branch Library. She thanked all the staff that worked on the Feasibility Report.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Huang asked about more clarification on Option 2.

Maureen Singleton, Chief Operating Officer, said staff looked at enhancing the financial coaching program to expand the service from 1 day to 3 days a week. She said this option would enhance the financial coaching program to 5 days a week. She said another part of option 2 was to establish a gender-neutral public restroom at the Main and expand the Main Library’s restroom monitoring program. She said the other part of this option would be to enhance the FY22 proposed $1 Million library roofing program allocation by $500 Thousand for a total allocation of $1.5 Million to address aging roofs.

Commissioner Huang asked if there were other themes discussed.

Maureen Singleton, Chief Operating Officer, said the focus was on the capital improvement program for the budget.
Commissioner Mall asked if the senior playground for the Richmond Branch was in the budget.

Maureen Singleton, Chief Operating Officer, said that is in option 1.

Commissioner Mall said the library needs to be aggressive about maintaining the roofing program.

Commissioner Dunning asked about the expansion of the financial coaching program.

Michelle Jeffers, Chief Community Programs and Partnerships, said the program went to three days a week last year because we had some extra grant money and it seems like there is demand to go to five days a week.

President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi said she does not think it is an option to not approve a gender-neutral restroom. She said she agrees with Commissioner Mall that the roofing needs to be a priority. She said she supports the financial coaching program.

Commission Discussion

Motion: By Commissioner Huang, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve FY’s 21 and 22 Budget Option 2.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Dunning, Huang, Lee, Mall, and Wardell-Ghirarduzzi).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3. CITY LIBRARIAN’S REPORT

Alice Chan, Technical Services Manager, Collections and Technical Services Division, gave a presentation on the Preservation Unit, preserving SFPL’s unique collection. She gave a brief history of the Preservation Unit, the typical treatments for book repair and conservation. She shared some photographs of before and after repairs.

Alejandro Gallegos, Community Engagement Manager, and Suzanne Beattie, Mobile Outreach and Redistribution Services Manager, gave a presentation on Mobile Outreach Services moving into the future. They highlighted service lines, STEM and STEAM programming, Library on Wheels, Children’s Routes, and Treasure Island. They recognized the team involved and described the vehicles that are used.

Michael Lambert, City Librarian, acknowledged Michelle Jeffers, Chief Community Programs and Partnerships and Tom Fortin, Chief of Main on all their work and coordination with the French Consulate, KQED and SFMOMA on the Night of Ideas, which was held on Saturday, February 1. Said the theme was Living on the Edge. He said it was a smashing success. He thanked the Library staff who worked into the early morning hours. He thanked the Commission for their attendance as well. Finally, he donned a Kansas City Chiefs cap and gave a shout out to the Mid-Continent Public Libraries and the Kansas City Public Library for the
friendly banter and congratulations to the Kansas City Chiefs on their Super Bowl victory over the 49ers. He said there is a book exhibit on the first floor honoring Kansas City and the State of Missouri with books set in and about the area.
Explanatory documents: Preservation Unit; Mobile Outreach; Night of Ideas

Public Comment
Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said the map for mobile outreach seems to show valuable information that could be used for other aspects of the library. He said the serious matter of the Preservation Unit looks like it has been resolved. He said the problem with Night of Ideas was that you had to have tickets in advance, and you had to use a computer to get them. He said it was an enormous barrier to access for the public.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said without the critical work of the Preservation Unit there would be a loss not only of the physical items but a literal loss of the history of San Francisco. He said the conservation and repair of the SFPL collection requires a lot of expertise, skill and hard work that deserves the deep admiration and appreciation of the citizens of San Francisco. He said many bemoan the digital divide and the staff members of the Mobile Outreach Services should take great pride in what they do. These librarians touch those who, but for the lack of their efforts, would be completely disenfranchised!

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.

The SFPL has one of the greatest collections of books, photos, and documents in the nation. Without the critical work of the Preservation Unit, there would be a loss not only of the physical items, but a literal loss of the history of San Francisco, of California, and of the United States of America! The conservation and repair of the SFPL collection requires a level of expertise, skill and hard work that deserves the deep admiration and appreciation of every citizen of San Francisco! While many bemoan the “digital divide,” and other conditions which lead to the unequal and unfair treatment of many of our citizens, the staff members of the Mobile Outreach Services should take great pride in what they do. While most can access library services in myriad ways, these librarians touch those who, but for the lack of their efforts, would be partially or completely disenfranchised!

Andrea Grimes, President of the Librarians Guild and Program Manager of Book Arts and Collections, said thank you to Michael for stepping up and making sure the Preservation Unit is fully recognized and compensated.

Commission Discussion
Commissioner Lee asked if the Preservation Unit will be part of the digitization group.

Alice Chan, Technical Services Manager, Collections and Technical Services Division, said her understanding is that the Preservation Unit is primarily to conserve the collection. She said there is a separate division that is working on digitizing material.

Commissioner Lee asked about the mobile outreach to our senior patrons.

Alejandro Gallegos, Community Engagement Manager, said one of the assisted living spaces in the Tenderloin no longer wanted the vehicle in front of their building so we are thinking of bringing the collections into the building. He said they are looking at things like this to be able to reach out to various sectors of the community.

Commissioner Mall said the City Librarian’s report was very positive. She asked if the small white bookmobile could be painted to look like the other bookmobiles.

Suzanne Beattie, Mobile Outreach and Redistribution Services Manager, said the small white vehicles are not owned by the Library they are part of the regular City fleet.

Commissioner Mall said she attended the Night of Ideas with her husband and he has not stopped telling people about it. She said she hopes that the library does this every year. She said everything went very smoothly and it was safe.

President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi said it was a very good City Librarian’s report and she thanked staff for all their work on these programs.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 19, 2019**

Public Comment

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said for more than a decade he battled with former City Librarian Luis Herrera to protect the right of free speech and the preservation of that free speech in the public record. The City Librarian and the Commission have failed to disprove any of his public comments and it is particularly true regarding the crime perpetrated on this institution by its support of the dishonesty that is the Friends of the Library. He said the Friends take in millions of dollars a year and use 10% or less of that money to the library.

*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.*
For more than a decade I battled with former City Librarian Luis Herrera to protect the right of free speech and the preservation of that free speech on the public record! Were someone to study the history of this Library Commission, I hope they will note not only my comments but the complete and absolute lack of any meaningful response! The City Librarian and the Library Commissioners, despite their years of harassment, have failed to diminish or disprove any of my public comment! This is particularly true regarding the crime perpetrated on this institution by its support of the dishonesty that is “The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library.” They take in millions of dollars a year, use 10% or less of that money to actually support the library, and do so with the dishonest and corrupt participation of the members of this Library Commission, both past and present!

Motion: By Commissioner Huang, seconded by Commissioner Mall, to approve the Minutes of December 19, 2019.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Dunning, Huang, Lee, Mall, and Wardell-Ghirarduzzi)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 ADJOURNMENT

Public Comment

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said in one of the past meetings there was an adjournment of the meeting in memory of someone and there was absolutely no information about that person in the packet. He said once again the Commission has chosen to honor a person but not to share any information about who that person was. He said that is dishonest and disrespectful.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said he does not think the Commission should end without discussing new business. He said he appreciates when the Commission has questions about the presentations and would like to give the Commissioners an opportunity to ask for more information on certain items.

Motion: By Commissioner Lee, seconded by Commissioner Dunning, to adjourn the meeting of February 6, 2020.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Dunning, Huang, Lee, Mall, and Wardell-Ghirarduzzi)

The meeting adjourned at 5:53 pm.

Sue Blackman
Commission Secretary
Please note: These are draft minutes subject to revision by the Public Library Commission. Copies of commission minutes and handouts are available in the office of the secretary of the San Francisco Public Library Commission, 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 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).