



San Francisco Public Library

MINUTES
Council of Neighborhood Libraries
April 22, 2021, 4:00 p.m.
CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Facilitator: Rebecca Alcala-Veraflor, Assistant Chief of Branches

Attendees: A.J. Cave (ANZ), Lena Yu (CHI), Penni Wisner (EVA), Marcia Parrot (EXC), Gail Seagraves (Main), Judy Blanchard (MER), Ruth Maginnis (NVA), Marcia Ehrlich (PAR), Diane Silver (PAR), Marcia Popper (PRE), Kaitlyn Tran (PRE), Deborah Oppenheim (SUN), Joan Walton (SUN), Michael-Vincent D'Anella-Mercanti (Friends), Rebecca Alcala-Veraflor (Assistant Chief of Branches), Regan Gong (NW District Manager), Darice Murray-McKay (Central District Manager), Anne Vannucchi (SE District Manager), Michael Roman (Junior Management Assistant), Florinda Battad (Library Technical Assistant II)

Excused: Larry Ware (BAY), Ruth Grabowski (EXC), Nora Dowley (GPA), Mailene Chew (Main), Tyrone (Ty) Robinson (NBE), Edna James (OVI), Kathleen McClay (NBE), Bessie Hahn (ORT), Elaine Cahn (RIC), Rochelle Fort (VVA), Maryam Roberts (WPO), Callen Taylor (WSA)

Library Administrators: Michael Lambert (City Librarian), Maureen Singleton (Chief Operating Officer)

HOUSEKEEPING

Upcoming Meetings

- The next **Library Commission Meeting in May** will be on **Thursday, May 20, 2021, 4:30 p.m., SFPL Virtual Library**
- The next **CNL Meeting in April** will be on **Thursday, May 27, 2021, 4:00 p.m., SFPL Virtual Library**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Potrero and West Portal Branches will reopen for SFPL To Go service on Tuesday, April 27th.
- The Chief of Branches office is happy to announce that the vacant District Manager positions have been filled by Genevieve Feldman (North East), Regan Gong (North West), Denise Sanderson (South West) and Darice Murray-McKay (Central). They had all been in an acting capacity before becoming the permanent District Managers.
- Marcia (PAR) – *According to the March meeting minutes, the book drops will be open during closed hours, but at the Park Branch, they are still open only during open hours.*

RAV – We are addressing some issues around air circulation in the book drops. At some branches, the book drop is open overnight on the days they are open for service. We are moving closer to having the book drops open overnight at all the branches where there are staff.

UPDATES

City Librarian's Report – Michael Lambert

- Michael congratulated the new District Managers, adding that the Chief of Branches office is fortunate to have an outstanding group be a part of that Team.
- Mayor's Press Conference
 - On Monday, April 19th, Mayor London Breed held a press conference announcing the reopening of the Main Library for in-person service.
 - The announcement was made on the Larkin Street steps of the Main Library with Michael Lambert, City Administrator, Carmen Chu, Department of Human Resources Director, Carol Isen, Executive Director of the Friends of the Library, Marie Ciepiela, and Library Commissioners present.
 - The Library's reopening is an important symbol of the City reopening and people were very happy to hear the good news.
 - The Library will offer a new express in-person service called Browse and Bounce where patrons can quickly browse in the stacks and use a computer by reservation.
- Reopening at the Main
 - The Main will reopen to the public on May 3rd.
 - In this first phase of reopening, the public will have access to the first floor and can browse popular titles and AV materials, get a library card, check out and return items, and use a computer.
 - The Fisher Children's Center will reopen on May 10th. The Mix is being renovated, so its reopening date has yet to be determined.
 - Restrooms will be available for library patrons.
- Reopening at the Branches
 - Mission Bay and Chinatown will reopen to the public the week of May 17th.
 - The full HVAC systems at the Mission Bay and Chinatown make them good choices to pilot in-person service at the branches.
 - Four additional branches will provide in-person service in June:
 - Ortega, Visitacion Valley, Richmond (June 21st) and Excelsior (June 22nd)
 - These four branches were chosen because of their location in equity zone neighborhoods – areas where there is a digital divide, a higher percentage of unemployment, youth, seniors, residents with less education and/or less income.
 - Also, in June, the branches that are currently Community Hubs will become SFPL To Go locations: Bernal Heights, Golden Gate Valley, Ingleside, North Beach, Sunset and Western Addition.
- Staffing
 - Most, if not all, of the 150 staff doing Disaster Service Work will be back by the end of June, which will allow the Library to provide more in-person service by late summer/early fall.
 - With the City in a hiring freeze and 15% of Library positions vacant, it will take some time to rebuild staffing in order to expand service.
 - The Library's target is to have all branches open in the fall, and all branches open at pre-pandemic hours by the next fiscal year.

- San Francisco's 8th Poet Laureate, Tongo Eisen-Martin, gave his inaugural address titled, Unity and Struggle: A collective inaugural address. The virtual program is archived on SFPL's YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nijB9_rchNE. SFPL is excited to have more programs planned with Tongo.
- Q&A
 - Ruth (NVA) – *Some people have a hard time using the To Go branches because parking is not available. Is it possible to have a space reserved in front of the branches for people to pickup and drop off items?*
ML – That issue is on Cathy and Rebecca's radar. We will check with the Municipal Transit Agency to see what we can do.
 - Penni (EVA) – *How have borrowing habits changed and have they influenced collection decisions?*
ML – The increase in digital resource usage has been the industry trend pre-COVID. Since closing back in March 2020, the use of electronic resources has increased 63%, with some platforms increasing 100%. The physical collection has seen an overall drop of 15%. Physical books for younger children remain popular, however, patrons have shifted away from physical books when consuming adult, non-fiction information. We expect some of these changes to stick and are using analytical tools to optimize our collection development budget.
 - Diane (PAR) – *I believe the newspaper article said that visitors can spend 60 minutes in library. Did I read that correctly and if so, how can time be tracked?*
ML – We don't think that there will be an issue with patrons staying in the library for more than sixty minutes since browsing and computer sessions will be limited, and no seating will be available. Staff won't police patrons, but it will be easy to notice if someone has been in the library too long and get support from Security staff.

Library Commission Report – Michael Lambert & Rebecca Alcalá-Veraflor

- Highlights include:
 - San Francisco Poet Laureate Inaugural Address
 - *Work It* programs focusing on help for job seekers, personal finance needs and small business owners. The program has grown, and attendance numbers have more than doubled.
 - The Library's new internet management and printing software that patrons will use to make copies, release print jobs, scan and send faxes.

Open Discussion: Challenges and Thought on Reopening – All

- CNL members were asked what challenges existed in their neighborhoods and what issues should the Library address.
- Lena (CHI) – *Are there any updates on the Chinatown Renovation Survey?*
MS – There were 179 respondents.
RAV – We are still compiling the results.
FB – After the results are translated into Chinese, they will be posted on SFPL's website: [Chinatown / Him Mark Lai Renovation \(sfpl.org\)](http://Chinatown/HimMarkLaiRenovation(sfpl.org))

- Marcia (PRE) – *There will probably be a lot of people coming to the Library who need help with their resumes and job searches. Will you post the services that will be available to the public?*
RAV – Our Public Affairs Department is developing signs for the public to help guide them while inside the library. Patrons needing in-depth reference help will be able to set up virtual appointments with a librarian. Patrons can also get help by enrolling in one of the many *Work It* virtual programs supporting job seekers.
- Marcia (EXC) – *Will the Library’s social services staff be available?*
RAV – Yes, there will be a health and safety associate (HASA) at the Mission Bay Branch.
- Diane (PAR) - *How much of staff is or will be fully vaccinated by time of reopening?*
ML - All our staff have had priority access to the vaccine since March 11. We cannot ask them or require them to get vaccinated, but my sense is that the overwhelming majority of staff have been fully vaccinated now.
- Lena (CHI) – *When will the Library have children’s story time again?*
ML – In-person programs will be contingent upon the local health order. The current health order doesn’t allow for programs in the meeting rooms. Outdoor programs might be possible. We are hoping that indoor public programs will be allowed in the fall.
RAV – Seating will not be available to the public in the first phase of reopening, and much of that furniture is being stored in the meeting rooms.
- Diane (PAR) - *How is word getting spread about reopening, especially to those who don’t have internet access?*
ML - Our Public Affairs team will be pushing out a direct mail piece to individuals without email addresses on file.
- Michael shared links to news articles about reopening the Library:
 - SF Chronicle: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/local/article/Here-s-when-S-F-plans-to-reopen-some-libraries-16115371.php>
 - NBC Bay Area: <https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/coronavirus/some-sf-public-libraries-to-resume-indoor-service-starting-next-month/2523799/>
 - <https://patch.com/california/san-francisco/mayor-london-breed-announces-public-library-reopening-timeline>
- Michael expressed his appreciation to the Friends of San Francisco Public Library for their help in purchasing sneeze guards, air purifiers, and fleece jackets for staff working outdoors as Disaster Service Workers.
- Ruth (NVA) – *Will patrons be able to donate their books?*
Michael Vincent (Friends) – Patrons can make an appointment to drop off book donations at the Friends’ Donation Center in Potrero Hill: <https://www.friendssfpl.org/donatebooks.html>.
Other updates from the Friends:
 - Since the pandemic, the Friends moved their book selling programs and bookstore online, and sales are their highest ever: <https://www.friendssfpl.org/shop.html>
 - In honor of the Friends’ 60th Anniversary, a special series on the group’s history called *The Making of the San Francisco Library Movement* can be found in their newsletter and in the June edition of the SFPL newsletter, *At the Library*.

Adjournment: 5:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Florinda Battad