San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of DECEMBER 15, 2022

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on **DECEMBER 15, 2022,** virtually and at the Koret Auditorium, Main Library pursuant to Mayor Breed's 45th Supplement to her February 25, 2020 Proclamation of Local Emergency.

The regular meeting of the San Francisco Library Commission was called to order at **4:30 PM.**

Commissioners Present: Wolf, Huang, Mall, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, López, and Ono. Commissioner Lopez joined the meeting at 5:01 PM

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Warfield, Executive Director of Library Users Association, Libraryusers2004@yahoo.com said the minutes omitted matters people spoke about. Warfield said the Library rarely seems to be looking at the basics of Library performance and asked why it does not carry the Examiner, and USA Today.

Caller Francesca said she was calling to reschedule the Wall Exhibition without censorship. She said she identifies as an anti-Zionist Jewish Chicana and that by censoring this artwork you are upholding White Supremacy; Zionism is racism and a political ideology. She said she would never stop calling for the liberation of the Palestinian people.

Caller Christopher Staffeden read a statement from Artist and Organizer Art Hazlewood. The statement said the show set to be shown was censored by the Library and that undermined the community and independence of the Team who put it together, Joan Jasper has worked with outstanding community outreach the Library Management decided to censor the artwork, which is an insult to the Community that has worked with the Library over many years developing a relationship of trust and good will.

Caller Megan Wilson said she is the Co-Director of the Mural Project, which was cancelled after they would not give in to Library censorship because the phrase Zionism is Racism was considered antisemitic and the Library has falsely accused the group as antisemitic, which could not be further from the truth. Wilson said Zionism is the official ideology of Israeli Apartheid and Human Right Groups and the United Nations have determined that Israel is an apartheid state. The Library has received over 2000 letters from community members against the censorship and to demand the exhibition be reinstated in its entirety

The Caller said they were a poet and writer involved in the Mural Project with Megan Wilson. They identified as Moroccan, Columbian, Jewish and Muslim and urged the reschedule of the Wall Exhibition without censorship and said the Zionism is Racism slogan is a key phrase that will encourage discussions and research on the topic of Zionism.

Caller Basil said they were a San Francisco resident and there has been a big wrong that the Library can fix with the reschedule of the Wall exhibit without censorship. Basil said the decision to silence The Wall Exhibit is based on a mistaken belief, Zionism is not a race and does not belong to an ethnic or religious community it is a political ideology and urged its reinstatement without censorship.

Caller number 12 said they were the co-curator of the Wall and asked the exhibition to be reinstalled without censoring the Arab Liberation Mural art, which has the potential to create openings for conversation and censoring a Mural that calls for racial and economic justice contributes to the daily harm to the BIPOC community because of structural racism. The caller read a statement by poet Jenny Lamb, one of the feature poets in The Wall.

Caller Emily said they are a long-time Library Card holder and avid user of the Library and said she was stressed that they have not heard anything from the Library about reconsidering this and they are concerned that the Library isn't' answering their concerns. They urged the Library to make room for the voices of Palestinian Liberation.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 17, 2022

Peter Warfield said he was going to make no public comment about the minutes, which don't closely summarize his public comments and thought it be best not to say anything and perhaps go to the trouble of providing 150-word summaries and pointed out two of his public comments that were incorrect.

Motion: By Commissioner **LOMAX GHIRARDUZZI,** seconded by Vice President **HUANG** to approve the **NOVEMER 17, 2022**, Commission Minutes.

Action: AYES 6-0 (Wolf, Huang, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, Mall, López, and Ono)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 FY 24-25 BUDGET UPDATE

Mike Fernandez, Chief Financial Officer outlined the FY 24 & FY 25 Budget Calendar process. Fernandez said the budget process is similar to last year and expected to get budget instructions the following day. He said the Mayor and Controller will issue a few things, which will determine the amount of the Library Preservation Fund the Library will have available in the cycle for the next two years. Fernandez went over the budget process calendar and said this is the second of four-budget discussions before the Commission and expects to ask for approval at the February 2, 2023 Commission meeting.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield said the budget is short on details and he expressed concern with the debookification and other access as well as equity in not access. He said, in his using of the Library it seems that there are books that are available or not so available in print form and they have multiple versions of the electronic version in many cases. Warfield said there is no indication or publicity about Library programs and their availability by telephone.

Caller Glen said they were a Landscape Architect and lives across the street from the proposed location of the Ocean View branch, they said the location is not ideal and there is a church across the street that is no longer being used at 3435 Alemany and this location is safer than the Brotherhood Way location because the traffic is much calmer.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Lomax Ghirarduzzi asked about the Reserve of $3.95 Million and is there a percentage that the Library targets to keep that reserve at 2%.

Fernandez responded that the 2% reserve is the planned contribution to the reserve but would come back with additional information about the reserve percentage threshold.

Lomax Ghirarduzzi asked what he meant when he called the budget a status quo budget.

Fernandez said a status quo budget doesn't contemplate major shifts or changes.

Commissioner Lopez asked about the computer kiosk and how many computers are already operating within the Main Campus.

Chief of Main, Katrin Reimuller answered there are about 300 public computers and the Main is asking for the kiosk because they removed the computers from the first floor and wanted to have a few computers there for people who come in and need to get something quickly, like get into their emails or print something and it is a way to try out the model of service for the Main Library.

Lopez asked Fernandez to elaborate on what the IT refresh would include.

Fernandez said the server equipment is like a bank of computers where we store data and backup information, it is a large bank of equipment and it is not for public or staff use, it is how the Library moves massive amounts of data through the system.

Commissioner Mall asked Fernandez to review the $4 Million Main Library Safety Enhancement Project.

Fernandez said it is a series of projects to improve safety.

Mall asked if it was interior or exterior.

Chief Operating Officer, Maureen Singleton, responded the work is all interior and the work done in the past was putting in plexiglass on the stairwell and continuing that effort throughout the third and fourth floors of the Main and it was aligned with the architecture of the building and rather than having netting in the light wells to transition t glass to allow for the flow of light and help maintain a safe environment.

Mall asked if Public Works does all the work or the Library contracts out.

Singleton said the Library works with the Department of Public Works, which has first right of refusal.

Vice President Huang asked about the refresh of server equipment and if we expected the cost of maintaining IT assets and services to go up every year.

Fernandez said IT may fluctuate but does not anticipate it will go up, but they review it every cycle.

Commissioner Ono asked about budget priorities there are six of them but in the breakdown Partnership for Excellence is not mentioned and asked for confirmation that it is built into the budget.

City Librarian Michael Lambert said the budget is conservative and a status quo budget and contains ongoing investments in programs and services, which are still reflected in our strategic priorities.

Ono asked if the Mayor gave budget instructions at the same time every year.

Fernandez said it is relatively the same time.

Commissioner Lopez asked about the scanner and if it was a service or equipment we will obtain.

Fernandez said the proposal is to own the scanner.

President Wolf asked why the cost for each of the two bookmobile positions was different.

Fernandez said the two positions are different classifications, one is a tech and the other is a Librarian.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Naomi Jelks, Racial Equity Manager, gave an update on the Library Racial Equity Action Plan, its implementation process in the seven sections of the REAP and the progress made in each section. Jelks said the REAP progress report was submitted to the Office of Racial Equity (ORE) in May 2022 and the Library was waiting on feedback from ORE on it.

Michael Lambert said Jelks is a leader at the Library on racial equity and is an Ambassador for the work we are doing at SFPL.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield asked what the budget for professional development is for folks working at the Library and said he was astonished that the Library's entire training and learning budget was $50,000 for more than 600 full time equivalents. He said if you walk into a Branch and did not see publicity about Library programs and author talks, how would you know to inquire further about it if you don't have easy access to a computer. He said all vulnerable folks have disproportionally less access.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Lomax Ghirarduzzi asked what PPARS were.

Jelks said it is the staff Performant Plan and Appraisal Reports that happen annually.

Lomax Ghirarduzzi asked about antiracist discipline practices in the Action Plan.

Jelks said they are trying to look at both DHR and other companies the Library contracts with for learning antiracist discipline, one is Learn It, which has a cohort of classes.

Commissioner Lopez asked about the Affinity Groups, how do they get representation and how are people participating in the Affinity Groups. Many times, people who would like to participate in these groups don't have access.

Jelks said in restarting the Affinity Groups they will pull forward learned best practices, implementing Monthly meetings during paid hours, and creating a 6-month calendar, which is shared with all divisions and ask that employees who have expressed interest are able to attend. Anyone who identifies as BIPOC is welcomed to attend.

Commissioner Ono said she was glad to hear the Library is a leader on racial equity.

President Wolf thanked Naomi for taking the issue on and leading in a way with much grace ad integrity and looks forward to hearing more updates.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Denise Schmidt, Collections & Cataloging Manager and Christy Estrovitz, Youth Services Manager gave an overview of Library Holiday Book giveaways such as, Great Hauntway Halloween Block Party, SFUSD School Enrollment Fair and Teacher Book Club, Boys & Girls Club Book and Toy Giveaway and Mission Promise Neighborhood Holiday Book Giveaway. Through the hundred plus events the Library gave away 1,600 Scholars@Home Kits and 28,000 Individual Books.

City Librarian Lambert said he is proud of the Team and of the work they are doing, this program is what Racial Equity looks like from a public service standpoint, Librarians and staff are getting out into the most underserved communities and making sure books are getting into the hands of the most underserved populations and youth and families that need these resources the most.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield said it is always good to hear about books and asked to see the Kit so he could comment better. He said it is not clear how it's decided about which kid gets what selection and how the selection is made. He asked if the Library is touting itself or publicizing itself where there is a vastly larger collection of books than anything you can put on a table.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Mall asked how much this program costs the Library and does the Commission approve the budget.

Schmidt says there is a $1.3 Million set-aside for this program and the Commission approves it.

Mall asked if this was approved last year for this year and this year will approve for next year.

Singleton said the Commission approved it last year as a continuing and is part of the Collections budget.

Commissioner Lopez asked when going into the community to give out books if there is an incentive to give out Library cards.

Schmidt says they would like to put QR codes in the book packages that would lead to a Library application form which they could track.

Shellie Cocking, Chief of Collections and Technical Services, said they are working with IT closely on this concept.

Estrovitz said all SFUSD students have Library cards and at events with SFUSD they emphasize there are more books available at the Library.

Vice President Huang said it is interesting that we're seeing an expansion into lighter asset models for delivery, the book kits do not have a heavy capital investments and by leveraging the rest of the city to help deliver these and could see a shift in the collections budget.

Lomax Ghirarduzzi said that more books, whether you get them from the Library or a table at your Community Center, begets more success, one thing does not take away from the other you just give more access points.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 ADJOURNMENT OF THE DECEMBER 15, 2022

Public Comment
Peter Warfield said the Library should not adjourn until they add an item for Commission discussion on what agenda items they would like to see at a future Library Commission meeting.

Commission Discussion

Motion: By Commissioner **MALL,** seconded by Vice President **HUANG** to adjourn.

Action: AYES 6-0 (Wolf, Huang, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, Mall, López, and Ono)

The meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM
Margot Shaub - Commission Affairs
Analyst

To view a recording of the Commission Meeting please visit YouTube: Library Commission Recording

Explanatory documents: Copies of listed explanatory documents are available as follows: (1) from the Commission Liaison Affairs Analyst/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 Commission webpage: 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).