



San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of FEBRUARY 2, 2023

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on **FEBRUARY 2, 2023**, 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 **4:31 PM**.

Commissioners Present: Wolf, Bolander, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, López, and Mall.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Warfield, Executive Director Library Users Association, Libraryusers2004@yahoo.com said the Library should not be encouraging the use of social media because it has toxic qualities.

Public Commenter said before the Merced Extension Triangle Association can support the proposed Ocean View Public Library, they are waiting for a response from District 11 Supervisors Safai and Melgar about creating a joint resolution for the Board of Supervisors, which states that no further construction of any type of structures be built along Brotherhood Way Greenbelt Corridor.

Mark Christensen, President of the Merced Extension said the Sagamore Orizaba Brotherhood Alemany Intersection needs to be safely redesigned before building of the Library and Brotherhood Way must remain open to through traffic in both directions. METNA along with residents and business owners want to play an integral part of the Brotherhood Way Active Transportation and Open Space Plan to make positive safety features so pedestrians and motorists can navigate the area safely.

Glen Rogers, Landscape Architect, said Orizaba Street is too narrow for access to a library and this neighborhood has super blocks, which the book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs says super blocks hamper circulation to the Library, and if located at Orizaba and Brotherhood Way is an attractive nuisance bringing children into a deathtrap.

George Wooding with San Francisco Land Use Coalition said the Library would sit at the tip of Orizaba and come into Brotherhood Way. Brotherhood Way is a greenbelt currently and it should remain a greenbelt, however the Supervisor for District 11, which now only has one Library and District 4 has four libraries, decided to build this at the very last place in District 11, not where people could use it. Wooding said

because Safai is adamant to build on only this location, that something is clearly wrong.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 19, 2023

Explanatory Documents: [January 19, 2022 Draft Minutes](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield said the minutes are particularly political and the Library demonstrates its lack of ability to listen and report what people say, public comment on the Librarian’s Report is incomprehensible.

Commission Discussion

Motion: By Commissioner **MALL**, seconded by Commissioner **LOPEZ** to approve the January 19, 2023 Minutes.

Action: AYES 5-0 (Wolf, Bolander, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, López, and Mall)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE

City Librarian Lambert gave an overview of the Library strategic planning process to date. He said after pausing this activity for nearly a year and a half it is in a strong position to move forward and engage our community and staff about the aspirations for the future. Lambert introduced Gensler Project Manager Midori Mizuhara.

Midori Mizuhara, Laura Mittalof, Ally Holmes, Margaret Sullivan, and Susana Razo introduced themselves and explained their roles in the Strategic Planning process.

Margaret Sullivan, Margaret Sullivan Studios said the public library is the greatest instrument we created to demonstrate the best of America’s Democratic values and the San Francisco Public Library is already one of the, if not the best Library system in the Nation. This strategic work will enable an intentional deepening of who the Library needs to be for its diverse communities, why the Library exists and what it is able to do to lead the residents of San Francisco into the next era of Library stewardship.

Mizuhara gave an overview of the team structure, roles, timeline, and approach they’ll take, which will be an inclusive process that centers on the communities and empowers the staff, leading to a bold vision and strategic roadmap. She outlined the work plan and project schedule with the final phase of the project being complete in late 2023.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield said the lack of publicness about this whole process is troubling and you did have a general discussion about the strategic plan but left all the details, including the creation of the RFP, which would theoretically say what it is you are looking for and where is the Commission’s participation and it looks like the general public came last, after other stakeholders. He said he found some of the pictures frightening and asked where are the books.

Marie Ciepiela, Executive Director Friends of the San Francisco Public Library said she wanted to welcome Gensler and introduce who the Friends are. Ciepiela said the Friends have been here since 1961 and are the local library support organization. She said the phrase Go Big or Go Home is exactly what they are looking for and The Friends are ready for whatever is needed.

Caller Kate Lazarus said she is on the Board of the Friends of the Public Library and they are excited for this process to begin and the timing is great for this important work, as demonstrated by the overwhelming support for the Library Preservation Fund from San Francisco, the Friends will support this important work however they can.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Mall asked how many people were on the Gensler team, what the project budget total was and the deadline for a finished product.

Mizuhura said they have a core team from each firm; six from Gensler, four from MSS, two from CC&G and two from Contigo.

Maureen Singleton, Chief Operating Officer, said the contract is up to \$875,000 and the Library has allocated more funding than that amount to have the resources to draw on in the future as needed.

City Librarian Lambert said the plan is to hit the deadline and have a robust engagement plan that may require extending the timeline if needed.

Mall said it is important that we all understand the roles of Commissioners and The Friends as a support group.

Commissioner Lopez asked what the community engagement would look like, in particular reaching culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Mizuhura said they are drafting the plan and it should be done by the end of February and asked team member Susana Razo to provide more details.

Susana Razo, Co-Facilitator and Community Engagement for Contigo said they start and carry throughout the engagement process a strong equity lens and work with the Library to understand the priority populations and who in the community are the trusted community partners who are serving those populations.

President Wolf thanked Randle McClure and the staff who have committed to being part of this process and making sure it is as impactful as possible, she hopes the process is efficient and impactful, otherwise it could go on forever. With approval of the Library Preservation Fund, we have the opportunity to make a difference, push the industry forward and do something bold.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 FY 24-25 BUDGET UPDATE

Mike Fernandez, Chief Financial Officer, outlined the FY24 & FY25 Budget Calendar process, reviewed the budget environment, including the city's projected budget deficit at \$728M, and provided updates from previous budget presentations to the Commission. Fernandez outlined three budget options for the Commission to consider and select one to approve. Budget Option 1 is the proposal presented to the Commission at the January 19, 2023 meeting; Budget Option 2 would defer Position investments; Budget Option 3 proposed to increase available funding for State of Good Repair from \$100,000 to \$250,000 in FY24 and increase it to \$2,000,000 in FY25. Fernandez said the budget selected by the Commission will be submitted to Controller and Mayor by February 21, 2023.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield said the budget priorities are obscure, what priority is there and what does literacy in learning mean. He asked where are the discussions about collections and service the Library is providing to the public. He said the Library's slogan is Free and Equal Access so where is the free and equal if a poor person has to come in with earphones or has to have a DVD/CD Player why can't the Library provide access.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Mall asked about the idea of providing earphones to the public.

Mike Fernandez said that is a budget question and there would potentially be sufficient budget within the proposals to address that.

Commissioner Bolander asked about the positions in the budget and are they required for the Library to meet its service requirements.

City Librarian Lambert said we are meeting the obligations within the Charter with the current FTE, however the positions included in the proposed budget are necessary to enhance the level of service and deliver the high level of service the community expects. We highlighted bookmobile team for more capacity, the Security unit to address gaps in coverage in some of our branches, investment of moving contract workers to be part of our social services team and an increase in human resources capacity, which will help with expediting hiring.

Commissioner Lopez asked about the equipment proposals, which stay the same through each option.

Fernandez said on an annual basis they look at either new equipment investments they might make or look at current conditions of the equipment and what is in line to be replaced. Within the three options there was not a difference in what needed to be replaced, so that is why the equipment stays the same in all three options.

Motion: By Commissioner **LOMAX GHIRARDUZZI** **seconded** by Commissioner **BOLANDER** to approve Budget Option One.

Action: AYES 5-0 (Wolf, Bolander, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, López, and Mall)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Leah Esguerra, Library Social Service Team Supervisor, gave a report on the Library Social Worker's program. Esguerra said when the program began it was as a work order partnership between SFPL and the Department of Public Health and as of July 1, 2022 the role is now an official Library position. San Francisco Public Library was the first urban Library in the country to have a social worker as part of the team. The role has evolved from providing direct service work to patrons to supervision of the Health and Safety Association, HaSAs, which are peer outreach workers who many have experienced similar challenges that Library patrons are dealing with when they come to the library, for many of them this is their first entry into the workforce. Esguerra said the total number of outreach contacts by the program was 5907 in 2020-2021 and 8850 in 2021-2022 and since 2009 the program has received national and international attention in the Library Community and has proved to be a model for other libraries who have created similar programs.

Kate Eppler, Digital Equity Manager, provided an update of activities at The Bridge at Main, which opened in 2015 with the idea that when you put a number of helping programs together you can leverage strengths and have cross-over opportunities. Eppler reviewed the programs offered at The Bridge, like Project Read, an adult literacy program; Online High School Scholarships, which gives people the chance to earn a fully accredited high school Diploma online with 75 graduates to date; ESL tutoring program; Fog Readers, which works with students in grades 1-4 to help them improve their reading and writing skills; and Digital Literacy, providing technology classes, computer classes and one-on-one help.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield said there was an upgrade for the workers in HaSA to get benefits and be Library employees and he is bothered that a lot of it seems to be like a secret program when you enter the building you have no idea there exists such a program or a social worker, there is no real ability to go and find the Social Worker if you want to find the Social Worker on your own you have to ask Library staff.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Mall said the program is amazing and she is proud of the work the Library provides to the City and asked how many HaSAs are on staff, if they are difficult to recruit and if there is any training for them.

Esguerra said the Library currently has four HaSAs which will increase to nine and there are challenges in hiring but the program has been around for thirteen years and the Library has always had them. The program likes to respect the enjoyment of the patrons regardless of their housing situation and we have HaSAs who have had their own personal experience. The outreach model is based on the street outreach model, which starts with providing a friendly face and see where it goes from there with patrons.

Commissioner Mall asked how people find out about the fabulous programs provided by The Bridge.

Kate Eppler said great SEO is part of it and they rely on partners and partner organizations, like City College, to help spread the word about what they are doing. They work with local adult school organizations, job development and

workforce development partners to talk about career online high school and for Fog Readers they talk to parent networks.

Commissioner Lopez asked if the Social Worker program has interns or future social workers and when you establish an interaction with a client do you do referrals and follow-up on any referrals.

Esguerra said they provide referrals give out resource addresses in San Francisco where many will be assessed by the entry system. Although they are not able to follow up on a referral, they ask people to come back if they want more coordination.

Lopez asked if there are assessments and evaluations for Bridge Literacy programs clients and what is the commitment to the program they have to make.

Eppler said Assessment is different for all of the programs. They ask all tutor programs for an hour a week and it is a yearlong commitment. The Online High School participants have 18 months to complete the requirements. With ESL and Fog Readers, they ask for 6-month commitment.

President Wolf said both Leah and Kate bring a level of kindness to making sure the services are accessible and the impact they and their teams make is inspiring.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 ADJOURNMENT OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2023 COMMISSION MEETING

Public Comment

Peter Warfield said the Commission should insist there is an agenda item where you get to say what you would like to see on future agenda items and with respect to all of the programs and all of the materials the Library boasts it has in multiple languages what about publicity for the programs or translations.

Commission Discussion

Motion: By Commissioner **MALL**, seconded by Commissioner **LOPEZ** to adjourn.

Action: AYES 5-0 (Wolf, Bolander, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, López, and Mall)

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 PM

Margot Shaub - Commission Affairs Analyst

To access Commission Meeting recordings please visit: [Library Commission Meeting 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).