



San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of AUGUST 21, 2025

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting AUGUST 21, 2025, at the Koret Auditorium, Main Library and virtually on Zoom.

The SFPL Commission meeting was called to order at **4:30 PM**.

Commissioners Present: Wolf, Huang, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, Lopez, Jones and Calhoun.

President Wolf presented the ancestral homeland acknowledgement of the Ramaytush Ohlone.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment

Emily Garvie, Executive Director, Friends of the Library, gave Friends updates, including the capital campaign for Mission and Chinatown Branches and the annual Friends book sale will be held on September 6, 2025, from 12-5 PM.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director of Library Users Association Libraryusers2004@yahoo.com, PO Box 170544, San Francisco California 94117-0544, said the Library continues to tout and use privacy breaking technology including Zoom meetings and social media is dangerous.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 15, 2025

Peter Warfield said the minutes are brief and general, and a distortion of what he has said.

Ruben Juarez asked for the minutes to be amended to spell his name Ruben.

Commission Discussion

Motion: Motion by Commissioner **LOPEZ** to approve the minutes with an amendment seconded by Commissioner **CALHOUN** to approve the **MAY 15, 2025**, Commission Minutes.

Action: AYES 6-0 (Wolf, Huang, Lomax Ghirarduzzi, Lopez, Jones and Calhoun)

AGENDA ITEM NO.3 COLLECTION UTILIZATION TRENDS

Shellie Cocking, Chief of Collections and Technical Services and Alice Chan, Collections and Cataloging Manager gave an overview of Library Collection trends, including recent popular titles, changes in patrons use of books and media and circulation by age, category and format from FY19 to FY25. Cocking said print remains a popular format, and overall

circulation is down since FY19 but up 2% from last year and as resource providers they have new projects to support literacy and learning.

Public Comment

Ruben Juarez said there was an article in the Guardian that the number of Americans who read for pleasure has fallen by 40% and asked how the Library keeps its vendors accountable.

Peter Warfield said the Library likes to say how everything electronic is wonderful, but it is neglecting books and publicity about books. There is a tremendous increase in book usage and printed book usage, they are more popular than electronic.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Calhoun asked how patrons navigate and discover all the electronic content.

Cocking said they do a lot of marketing to Library patrons and on the website, training staff to remind them what is available and how to access it.

Commissioner Jones said she was excited by all the work the team is doing around Cutting and experiencing the books in the Library in a more intuitive way. She asked if Calhoun's question was around how these new formats encourage curiosity and the interaction or how the platforms connect to each other,

Calhoun said at the heart of his question is the Library is making all these investments and how do people find them.

Commissioner Lomax Ghirarduzzi said Shellie and Alice were veterans in the work of advancing literacy and asked about the business model of the platforms the Library uses, in terms of data privacy.

Cocking said they are all different.

Jones said this information is telling them who is coming into the Library and who is using the resources they provide. She said it is interesting that there has been a ten-point shift into juvenile and teen since 2019, the composition of their Library user is changing and how does the Library continue to meet that opportunity. Jones asked as part of the strategic priorities and projects how do some of these insights dovetail into the projects they want to prioritize.

Cocking said one project they are thinking of is to make it easier for people who are having a challenge reading to make it easier to access and to grow that usage by making the collection more inviting.

Commissioner Lopez asked about patron access to Boundless, if they don't have a Library card.

Cocking said they have full access to Boundless with their Library card and the Library has a QR code to access the webpage, which is not the full Boundless experience.

Vice President Huang said that this presentation was different than the same one given 5 years ago and asked what the Library does with the insight and identification of trends, is the Library making decisions now that it has all this data capability how it will unify it into one overarching discussion, so they don't repeat the same discussion through the lens of Collections and then two months later through Community Partnerships. What is the next evolution of the strong foundation the Library spent the last few years building. How do they make use of all of this.

City Librarian, Michael Lambert said there is a higher order conversation thinking about what Library customers and community and aligning all Library service to be more customer focused. They have increased the cross functional partnership from Collections to Technical Services with support from the Research and Analytics Unit and in

partnership with the Marketing and Communications Unit.

Huang said synthesis is the next stage, to collect the data points, identify the trends and come up with insights, how to bring it all together as an organization into one coherent thing that gets everyone on board. The synthesis will be the critical next stage of evolution.

Wolf said they have been so focused over the last 5 years of how to get out of the pandemic and get to a new understanding of what the baseline is, the Library is no longer in recovery mode but in advancement mode.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Mike Fernandez, Chief Financial Officer, gave an overview of the FY 26 & 27 budget calendar and summary of investments and changes that have happened since the February Commission meeting. Currently they are at the end of the budget cycle and have started the process for the next cycle. He said the Library has a rolling 2-year budget that starts in July and ends in June, which they take revenue assumptions from the prior cycle and adjust key components. Two-thirds of the budget covers the salary and benefits of employees and 12 percent is dedicated to collections and services provided by other departments. Building repair and utilities is 9%. Fernandez reported the Board of Supervisors approved the annual Friends Grant, which amounts to 1,000,700 and supports programs like One City One Book, Summer Stride and cultural programming throughout the year.

Hai-Qing Chen, Program Manager of Chinese Center at the Main Library presented about the Taipei Economic Cultural Office (TECO) Partnership, which started after former City Librarian Luis Herrera visited Taiwan and established a sister library agreement. Three interns with different background are selected annually to learn and share experiences, by visiting, observing and participating in programs and events at SFPL branches. In 2018, in partnership with TECO, the Library offered an 8-week summer mandarin class at the Main, which has expanded to include 10 branches.

Michelle Jeffers, Chief Community Programs & Partnerships shared that this was the 9th year of SFPL participating in the Junior Giants Festival, where the Library provided 8,000 books and more than 5,000 Junior Giants participated, with a total reading time of more than 5,000,000 minutes plus and had 125 new Library card signups

Public Comment

Peter Warfield said there was a time when the catalog was the key to finding things, but the Library does not provide very much info about many of its assets and how to find them.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Jones asked if the Friends Grant was included in the budget or outside of it.

Fernandez said it was separate.

Commissioner Lomax Ghirarduzzi applauded Michelle Jeffers and works with San Junior Giants, as the scope of service delivery from SFPL throughout Norther California is broad.

Commissioner Calhoun asked how the strategic plan is reflected in the budget.

CL Lambert said that as part of the budget planning and instructions for FY 27 & FY 28 staff will need to justify and align with the strategic priorities to address Vision 2030.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED at 6:30 PM

Margot Shaub, Commission Affairs Analyst
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To access **Commission Meeting recordings** please visit: [SFPL Commission Meeting AUGUST 21, 2025](#)

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).