

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 18, 2026

Meeting Information

- Date: June 18, 2026
- Time: Meeting called to order at 4:30 p.m.
- Location: Main Library Koret Auditorium, held in person, with remote public observation available via Zoom
- Commissioners Present: President Calhoun, Vice President Jones, Commissioner Huang, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Bolander, Commissioner Kenaston
- Staff Present: City Librarian Michael Lambert; Ileana Pulu, Youth Services Manager; Dolly Goyle, Chief of Public Services; Michelle Jeffers, Chief of Community Programs and Partnerships; Maricela Leon Barrera, Digital Equity Manager; Margot Shaub, Commission Affairs Analyst
- The meeting opened with a Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement

Agenda

- Item 1: General Public Comment
- Item 2: Discussion of Summer Stride
- Item 3: Discussion of the City Librarian's Report
- Item 4: Discussion and Possible Action to Approve May 21, 2026, Commission Meeting Minutes

Item 1: General Public Comment

Anonymous Speaker

An anonymous speaker urged the Commission not to give or accept funding from the Friends of the Library. The speaker used an extended fictional narrative about a commissioner named "Josiah Bartlett" to allege that the Commission had been illegally limiting public comment for over a year and to argue that someone should be held accountable.

Concerned Whistleblower

A speaker identifying himself as a "Concerned Whistleblower" alleged what he called "constitutional racketeering" tied to "No Trespassing" signage posted at library branches, including the Haight branch, which labeled public library property as "private property." He described being arrested and injured after sitting on a library sidewalk and stated he is planning to file lawsuits.

Christy Esperanza, Friends of the San Francisco Public Library

Christy Esperanza, a board member of the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, thanked library staff and leadership, including City Librarian Michael Lambert, for advancing the Chinatown branch renovation funding request to the Board of Supervisors. She reported that this authorization enables the Friends to contribute \$1.5 million toward the renovation project and described a well-attended

Chinatown branch open house and a record-breaking book sale block party. She said the Friends have new merchandise created by artist Angela Chu.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director of the Library Users Association
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Peter Warfield said he has repeatedly urged the library not to uncritically promote social media use, citing recent UK restrictions on social media access for minors. He argued the library should reconsider its "free and equal access" principle, asking the Commission to address barriers such as the need for personal headphones to listen to meetings in the library or to access e-books.

Jason Gibbs, Retired Librarian

Jason Gibbs, a retired librarian, criticized the current Commission's role, contrasting it with a more substantive commission he said existed thirty years ago, and characterized current meetings as focused on presenting a positive image rather than addressing problems. He referenced a May 2026 staff-appreciation presentation and said staff he later spoke with contradicted the positive picture presented at that meeting. He also criticized the library's strategic-planning process involving outside consultant Gensler, stating that staff "ambassadors" felt their input was not reflected in the final plan.

Ruben Juarez, Union Officer and Frontline Worker

Ruben, identifying himself as a union officer and frontline library worker, asked why draft minutes had been moved to the end of the meeting agenda. He asked the Commission to provide an update on the status of the Ocean View branch location discussed in a prior capital project presentation. He also asked for clarification on how the use of a slur, raised by multiple public commenters in a prior meeting, would be addressed in future meetings.

Item 2: Discussion of Summer Stride

City Librarian Michael Lambert introduced Ileana Pulu, Youth Services Manager, who presented an overview of the library's 2026 Summer Stride program, including its 20-hour reading/learning goal, activity trackers, incentive prizes, the SFUSD reading list and scholar card partnership, the Youth Engaged at Library Leadership program. Current sign-ups was at 10,875 as of the meeting date.

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association

Peter Warfield said he welcomes hearing about library programs that encourage reading but expressed concern about the program's growing emphasis on merchandise, tote bags, and prizes rather than the intrinsic value of books and reading. He stated that most library users he knows do not visit the library for merchandise.

Unidentified Speaker

Anonymous speaker said they liked the program's tote bag because its "Read" message was clear, but said they were puzzled that the program tracks a broader "learning goal" rather than a specific "reading goal." The speaker stated that the program currently counts a combination of activities, including listening and library time, toward the goal. The speaker said they believed the program should focus specifically on reading.

Unidentified Speaker

Anonymous speaker praised the Summer Stride presentation and the work of library staff, referencing the "summer dip" in literacy that occurs when school ends. The speaker said one of the program's central challenges is staffing levels relative to patron demand and asked the Commission to consider the need for additional staffing hours to support the program and related services.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Lopez

Commissioner Lopez thanked staff for the report and praised Summer Stride as an inspiring, accessible program that consistently considers second-language learners. She noted that the program complements what students are learning in San Francisco Unified School District classrooms rather than operating independently of it. She said the program and its offerings were excellent, and she commended library staff for their work on it.

Commissioner Kenaston

Commissioner Kenaston said Summer Stride is one of their favorite programs because of the partnership work involved with organizations such as the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library and the Presidio Trust, and asked how participants learn about the 40-hour Secret Super Reader Prize.

Vice President Jones

Commissioner Jones asked how the program measures success, if the team sets specific numeric goals each year and whether collateral materials such as printed trackers and bookmarks are used strategically to drive program awareness.

Commissioner Jones asked about the goals of the library's partnership with the SFUSD.

Pulu highlighted the scholar library card program, teacher-librarian collaboration, and direct book and bookmark distribution to SFUSD students.

President Calhoun

President Calhoun asked about list of books if they were giveaway books or a curated recommended reading list.

Pulu said they were a curated list rather than giveaway items.

Commissioner Kenaston

Commissioner Kenaston asked a follow-up question noting that the printed reading list materials did not include a column for adults, despite reported adult interest in participating in Summer Stride alongside children. The commissioner asked how adult patrons can become aware of recommended reading lists curated for them.

Staff said adult participants could access curated reading lists via a QR code on the Library's adult activity tracker and that library staff share these lists in a variety of ways at branch locations.

Item 3: Discussion of the City Librarian's Report

City Librarian Michael Lambert introduced three staff presentations: Dolly Goyle, Chief of Public Services, reported on the library's events for its first Bruce Lee Day and the new Bruce Lee library card; Michelle Jeffers, Chief of Community Programs and Partnerships, reported on the upcoming One City Day of service on July 11; and Maricela Leon Barrera, Digital Equity Manager, reported on the library's annual Tech Week program and its 2026 outcomes.

Public Comment

Anonymous Speaker

An anonymous speaker said the Tech Week program he attended was split roughly evenly between password-security instruction and outside-organization self-promotion. He referenced a New York Times article on the United Kingdom's restriction of social media access for children under 16 and noted that, according to the article, 85% of British citizens supported the law.

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association

Peter Warfield said the Tech Week presentation did not address the downsides or dangers of digital and social media use. He cited a U.K. government polling in which 85% of respondents expressed concern about social media's negative effects and recommended several authors who write about "surveillance capitalism".

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Huang

Commissioner Huang said the inclusion of a password-security session in Tech Week programming is a valid and worthwhile topic, that commonly used passwords remain very weak (e.g., "123456" and "password") even among people experienced with technology.

Commissioner Calhoun

Commissioner Calhoun asked Barrera to elaborate, on what is the "digital divide."

Barrera explained that the divide includes disparities in reliable Wi-Fi access, working devices, and digital skills, citing examples such as older adults who must now apply online for government services.

Commissioner Lopez

Commissioner Lopez shared an anecdote about an older woman she met at a store who was being pressured to buy a smartphone she did not want. The commissioner referred her to the library for help; The woman visited the main library and received hands-on assistance learning to use her phone. The commissioner described the experience as life-changing for the patron and suggested that the library's digital literacy services be promoted through senior centers and senior groups, since older adults are particularly vulnerable to being taken advantage of with technology.

Lopez asked if the library offers any program related to e-waste disposal.

Staff responded that the library partners with organizations such as Tech Exchange and Dev/Mission, which accept donated devices, refurbish them through youth workforce-development programs, and redistribute them, including the Chromebooks given away during Tech Week.

Item 4: Discussion and Possible Action to Approve May 21, 2026 Commission Meeting Minutes

Public Comment

Anonymous

Anonymous speaker said the minutes were distorted and did not reflect what the public comments were at the meeting.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association

Peter Warfield raised objections to the draft May 2026 minutes, stating that his comments were distorted, that the order of speakers listed was inaccurate, and his points were edited. He also stated that the new minutes format appeared to be AI-generated and that no prior commission discussion had addressed this format change.

Commission Discussion/Action: Commissioner **Huang** moved to approve the May 2026 Commission meeting minutes, and Commissioner **Jones** seconded the motion.

Action: Approved unanimously: Ayes Calhoun, Jones, Huang, Lopez, Bolander, and Kenaston

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned 6:09 PM.