

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 17, 2026 · 4:30 p.m.

Main Library, Koret Auditorium | Toll-free: 1-877-853-5247

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m.. Margot Shaub, Commission Affairs Analyst, opened the meeting and announced the Zoom dial-in information.

Commissioners Present: President Sean Calhoun; Vice President Jones (arrived 4:48 PM); Commissioner Lopez; Commissioner Bolander; Commissioner Menon and Commissioner Kenaston.

Staff Present (partial list): Michael Lambert, City Librarian; Margot Shaub, Commission Affairs Analyst; Dolly Goyal, Chief of Public Services; Mike Fernandez, Acting COO; Randy McClure, Chief RSA; Ileana Pulu, Youth Services Manager; Richard Le, North Beach Branch Manager and others.

The Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement was read into the record.

AGENDA

- Item 1 — General Public Comment
 - Item 2 — Libraries of the Future – Gensler Project
 - Item 3 — Vision 2030 Implementation
 - Item 4 — City Librarian's Report
 - Item 5 — Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the August 20, 2026 Commission Meeting Minutes
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ITEM 1 — GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Anonymous Citizen said don't take or give money to the Friends of the Library. They spoke about and raised concerns about speaking times and procedural changes, specifically referencing the San Francisco Administrative code grants three minutes for public comment and after a year the Commission returned to three-minute limit without public acknowledgement.

Kate Lazarus, Vice President of Friends of the Public Library Board, provided Friends updates including a new cohort of the Lisa Brown and Daniel Handly residency, a yearlong program that offers free studio space in the city for emerging writers and have welcomed five new writers to the residency. Friends will have a book sale on October 2nd and successful Summer Stride, which was successful and Friends are proud to support and have merchandise for sale on their website.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association. Libraryusers2004@protonmail.com. PO Box 170544, San Francisco California 94117-0544 agreed with earlier concerns about the library discouraging public participation and criticized the Library for promoting technology, including social media and AI, without adequate scrutiny. They referenced broader issues with tech prioritizing profit over safety, highlighted privacy concerns, and noted that tech-based requirements, such as mandatory QR code RSVPs, exclude individuals without access, widening the digital divide.

ITEM 2 — LIBRARIES OF THE FUTURE: GENSLER PROJECT

President Calhoun turned the meeting over to City Librarian Lambert who introduced the Gensler Team to present on Libraries of the Future, a project completed by their summer interns.

Paris Yuan and Chris Ford, with Gensler gave an overview of the intern project, which one of the main drivers of this exercise is connecting back with the community including three Conceptual Design Pillars; of Visibility, make people, services and activity visible; Accessibility, remove barriers between people and resources and Transparency, create openness, clarity and trust. The presentation included views and graphics of a newly designed Main Library, which goes beyond books and information by including amenities like a food bank or other social services.

Public Comment

Anonymous Citizen spoke about four hypotheses of AI omitting Commissioner remarks and mistakenly identifying the Commissioners speaking and the Library Commission has made it clear that learning from history is something they do not want to do.

Peter Warfield criticized the focus on architectural projects for the library, suggesting it prioritizes design over genuine access to books, newspapers, and community engagement. They noted the absence of books and reading activities in the conceptual plans, highlighting concerns about inaccessibility and disconnect from traditional library functions.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Menon said she liked how the Library was organized by programs and thought that was creative use case for how to leverage the offerings of the Library. Menon asked did they see anything that surprised them or stood out from the intern interviews.

Allison Scholz with Gensler responded that a lot of the interns were not from this city and getting to interface with the Library, which is progressive and front facing, was a shock to them and were inspired by the social services program.

Vice President Jones said the language of path to discoveries is what the Library as a service is, and the way the people are discovering through books and in the project they expanded what discovery looks like in this modern day lifestyle that brings these institutions beyond just what they have always been, and it services lives fully and this challenges the Library to think about what this institution looks like over time where discovery is at the center.

Commissioner Kenaston said he had the privilege of sitting in the audience when the interns presented with Michael Lambert and Dolly, and after the presentation he asked the Gensler team what are the

small steps a more traditional institution can take in the spirit of getting to those big leaps in design work, and understand that things have to move slowly because they serve such a broad audience in San Francisco.

Commissioner Lopez said the design pillars reflect what the library stands for, aiming to be visible not only in San Francisco but worldwide. She said she appreciated how the interns emphasized accessibility in various forms, making learning and resources more inclusive. Their vision for open, inviting space, points to a welcoming future for libraries.

President Calhoun highlighted the importance of offering young people opportunities for civic engagement, allowing them to both learn from and influence a vital community institution and referenced that one of the intern quotes was that no civic building is ever finished and asked what that means to say that the building is not finished.

Paris Yuan, Gensler, responded that the quote is that the building could be done but their work is not finished. To constantly re-examine the current situation and look in our history to learn from it and see what they can do in the future.

Chris Ford, Gensler said when they say a building is never truly done, they mean its about the people who pass through the doors that affect change and how a building is perceived by others.

ITEM 3 — VISION 2030 IMPLEMENTATION

City Librarian Lambert, Chief of RSA Randy McClure and Chief of Public Services Dolly Goyal gave an update on the Vision 2030 Strategic Plan, in which they outlined the background to the effort, the implementation and North Star Metrics Framework and how it aligns with City Priorities and Initiatives.

Public Comment

Anonymous Citizen expressed concern that predicted negative outcomes are becoming reality, highlighting the importance of public discussion and participation in shaping the future of the Library. They referenced the Dunning-Kruger effect and cautioned that overconfidence among those less informed can hinder progress.

Unidentified speaker emphasized the importance of addressing homelessness, mental illness, drug addiction, and trauma, noting the challenges in treating these interconnected issues. They suggested that the Library acquire more academic and professional titles, especially those published by Guilford, to support practitioners and front-line workers. The speaker recommended collaborating with the Department of Public Health to align library resources with training.

Peter Warfield criticized the Library's claim of extensive community participation, stating they were excluded from involvement. They noted missing metrics in the report, such as book and newspaper circulation, and argued that print circulation surged after COVID, surpassing electronic circulation despite limited outreach. The speaker highlighted unfair comparisons between print and electronic materials, pointing out issues with accessibility, measurement, and catalogue listings.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Bolander praised the improved quality of the presentation and noted significant progress since the plan's adoption. They highlighted the challenges of organizational change and commended staff and leadership for developing a concrete, actionable plan. Reflecting on the institution's history, they mentioned past controversies such as security measures and the removal of the card catalog, emphasizing the need to adapt to changing circumstances while preserving key elements. Bolander acknowledged ongoing demands for technology and literacy programs and recognized that upcoming challenges will require uncomfortable choices but expressed confidence in the NorthStar Framework's ability to organize and guide future projects, supporting the library's mission.

Vice President Jones reflected on the importance of setting clear metrics and North Star goals for Vision 2030, noting these help organizations focus and build unity and cautioned, that success measurement should balance both quantitative metrics and qualitative insights, emphasizing the need for flexibility and ongoing engagement with patrons. Jones urged the group to consider whether set targets are realistic and not to become overly fixated on frameworks or numbers, highlighting the value of listening to community feedback and adjusting goals as needed. Jones asked how the Library will define these North Star metrics.

City Librarian Lambert stated their goal is to have 100% of the community actively using library services. Currently, 45% of residents are engaged, with annual growth since the pandemic. The Library aims for a 60% participation rate as a stretch goal and is working with staff to develop additional metrics for measuring progress.

Randy McClure, Chief RSA, said the Executive Leadership Team reviewed the strategic plan, set goals and priorities, and initially generated 600 project ideas before narrowing them down. In April and May, division chiefs participated in workshops with City Performance and Controller's Office staff to identify key metrics for each division, resulting in two metrics per division. The team is working with subject matter experts to clarify definitions, establish baselines, and develop reasonable targets for these metrics, aiming to balance ambition with available resources and track progress over time.

Dolly Goyal, Chief of Public Services said the team used the exercise to better understand metrics and target-setting, factoring in operational improvements, staff capacity, transitions, and external dependencies. They adjusted targets based on realistic expectations, ongoing staffing changes, and agency timelines, emphasizing continuous evaluation and conversation throughout the process.

Jones asked if there is a way to capture missed opportunities within programming to help inform shifting resources and goals.

The City Librarian responded that one of the projects around services prioritization and a subset of the staff ambassadors is focused on thinking about how the Library can free up more capacity to do the things that we know delight our patrons.

McClure said it is not impossible but difficult to capture at scale.

Goyal said they have an internal system to log into programs with a notes field to make comments, like if a program was popular and how do we do it again.

Commissioner Kenaston asked who sees the Dashboard.

McClure responded they are just introducing that currently and the Executive Leadership team on stage and the management team will start to see that once a month. They are starting the process of when they can share that with deputies and their staff.

Commissioner Lopez reflected on past skepticism regarding strategic plans, noting that the current plan was embraced by staff and commissioners alike. It has fostered a shared understanding and common language, making it easier to align with the library's vision and direction.

President Calhoun said he sees a lot of curiosity and a lot of trying to figure what we are doing and why and this as an extension of the work that everyone is trying to do to make the Library a better place for patrons and for those who work here.

ITEM 4 — DISCUSSION CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Scholar Card

Ileana Pulu, Youth Services Manager gave an overview and background of the Library Scholar Card, which provides a Library card for every student in SFUSD and participating private and charter schools.

Genealogy & Family History 2026 Symposium

Richard Le, North Beach Branch Manager presented the history of the Genealogy Symposium and outlined the 2026 partners and programs.

Public Comment

Anonymous speaker highlighted the profound significance of genealogy, recounting an early experience in the library where concerns about racial bias were addressed and ultimately dispelled.

Peter Warfield recalled a meaningful connection with Effie Lee Morris, who emphasized the importance of children having a direct, personal relationship with the Library rather than through group-issued cards tied to institutions. He said he valued as a student the Library's independence, seeing it as a place for individual learning. Regarding genealogy, they raised concerns about privacy.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Menon asked for further details on the Scholar Card.

Pulu responded that the Scholar Card program works by transferring updated student data through a newly agreed MOU with SFUSD, which IT integrates into the library system while eliminating duplicate

accounts. Communication about card activation and usage is coordinated with teacher librarians and rolled out to students via multilingual emails. Librarians are prepared with advance notice, and students are guided on how to access and use their Scholar Card, enabling access to Library resources like Hoopla and book checkouts.

Menon asked if anything that stood out or did the Genealogy team have any ideas for next year that they will include.

Le said they always have ideas to make it bigger or more robust, inviting different partner from the Bay Area, possibly do it virtually.

President Calhoun asked if the Scholar Card project is available to every TK- 12 student regardless of the school they go to.

Pulu said it was.

Commissioner Lopez asked what if they know about students after they graduate from this program and what happens to the card, do they need to get a new one.

Pulu said from talking with the teachers and counselors they find it valuable that students can easily access their library cards and resources digitally, especially for job applications and lifelong learning. Colleagues report that database access is beneficial, and educators want students to use public library databases, preparing them for adulthood. Graduates do not have to get a new card unless they want to replace it.

ITEM 5 — DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 20, 2026 COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Public Comment

Anonymous Speaker expressed concern over recent changes to the meeting minutes, stating that the alterations do not constitute improvements and suggested uneven treatment between speakers. They noted that public comments, especially those addressing themes like the dangers of social media and material bias, are summarized, omitting key points. The speaker said their own remarks are distorted and misattributed, while important discussions are oversimplified in the minutes.

Peter Warfield urged the commission to provide fair and accurate summaries of public comments and criticized omissions and distortions in the meeting minutes. Concerns include the Library's uncritical promotion of social media, lack of acknowledgement of potential internet and social media dangers.

Commission Discussion and Action

Motion: Commissioner **LOPEZ** moved to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2026, Commission meeting, Commissioner **BOLANDER** seconded the motion.

AYES: President Calhoun; Vice President Jones; Commissioner Lopez; Commissioner Bolander; Commissioner Menon

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Kenaston

The August 2026 Commission meeting minutes were approved.

6:45 PM the meeting was adjourned.

Please use the following link to access the Commission Recording on [YouTube](#)

ADDENDUM FOLLOWS

Minutes prepared from the official audio recording transcript (WEBVTT format). Where a speaker's name and role were not stated in the transcript, the speaker is described as "Unidentified Commissioner" or "Unidentified Staff Member." The minutes reflect only information that is expressly stated or clearly identifiable in the transcript. Where the transcript was unclear or a word was unintelligible, the relevant passage is omitted.

ADDENDUM

Under Administrative Code section 67.16 of the Sunshine Ordinance, any person who spoke during public comment at a meeting of a Charter board or commission may supply a brief written summary of the comments to be included in the minutes if it is 150 words or less. The summary is not part of the Commission's official minutes, and the Commission does not vouch for its accuracy.

Anonymous Public Comment Submission

Item 1: General Public Comment

Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance - Don't give money to the Friends of the Library. Don't accept money from the Friends of the Library. You have families, positions and connections to the Mayor, yet you present yourselves as despicable people. You limited public comment to two minutes although the Administrative Code clearly grants three minutes. More despicably, you reverted to three minutes without acknowledgment or responsibility. Outrageously, the Affairs Analyst invents a story that my summaries are more than 150 words. Then you suppressed summaries completely for three months. Not a single commissioner exhibited any knowledge or concern. Your Affairs Analyst states, "California law does not allow commissioners to respond to comments or attempt to answer questions during public comment." Preposterously implying that legality is a factor for you. At institutions you care about, others sneer at the traditions and break the rules? In the public library, that is you

Item 2: Libraries of the Future: Gensler Summer Intern Project

Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance - Don't give money to, or accept money from, the Friends of the Library. We can appreciate the broad context of Commission discussion by drawing an analogy with the recent discussion of Social Services. Commissioner Jeremy Bolander expressed a concern about the availability and frequency of use of Narcan that was omitted completely from the minutes. Four hypotheses; 1) Artificial Intelligence can't tell the difference between Commissioner Bolander's voice and Commissioner Menon's. 2) AI was told Bolander was a jerk and ignore him. 3) AI was told to ignore white males 4) AI was told to ignore white male His statement fits the model of what has been omitted in the past. Will Commissioners adapt to what the Artificial Intelligence wants to hear and doesn't want to hear? To learn from history you need a history. The Library Commission has made it clear that learning from history is what you don't want.

Item 3: Vision 2030 Update

Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance - Don't give money to, or accept money from, the Friends of the Library. The nightmare we have predicted is coming to pass. The Dunning-Kruger effect is simply that you don't know what you don't know, and those who know the least are most likely to be confident. True experts recognize how much more that there is to learn. It is a hoax. To prepare for the future, you would want public participation. Your mandate to destroy Western Civilization, fits destroying the library for the library of the future. Wrong; the value

is human society and the institutions of knowledge that we have managed to develop. Destroying them is just ignorance and chaos. Connecting communities and transparency of data would be beautiful, but you are closed off and secretive. Regarding "it is illegal to listen to the public"; maybe they want you to believe it.

Item 4: City Librarian's Report

Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance - Don't give money to, or accept money from, the Friends of the Library .An early and profound insight for me at a San Francisco Library Commission meeting was an occasion when City Librarian Dr. Kevin Starr arranged for a Harvard graduate student to upgrade the genealogy collection. A representative from the Congress of Racial Equality came to a meeting to object that genealogy was "inherently racist." Dr. Starr made an impassioned defense of genealogy, as Dr. Starr could do, stating that he had directed special attention be paid to minority genealogy. Later that year the television series, Alex Haley's Roots, dramatized the prominence that genealogy could play for the Black community. Genealogy emphasizes the importance of actually preserving, organizing and making accessible the records. It also showed that the Black community had full participation in the scholarly and intellectual heritage of the whole society.

Item 5: Approval of Minutes of August 20, 2016

Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance - Don't give money to, or accept money from, the Friends of the Library.Two regular speakers are treated remarkably differently. The minutes contain Library Users Association's statements' first half and then stops. He begins laying out a foundation, but the point he builds to is always omitted. For this speaker, the minutes are actively distorted. Commissioner's statements were not "scrambled." The fact that four commissioners were attached to someone else's comments or not credited with speaking at all, and then the minutes were approved anyway, should go down in history. Not commenting on the addendum, I made extensive points about the perverse inattention and incompetence of this Library Commission, a gross distortion. On page 3, an entire discussion regarding challenges related to the Baker & Taylor closure was summarized with the word "difficult" on a separate paragraph. No human being looked at these minutes.