

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 17, 2011

(As approved and amended at the May 5, 2011 regular meeting).

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on Thursday, February 17, 2011, in the Koret Auditorium, Main Library

The meeting was called to order at 4:37 pm.

Commissioners present: Breyer, Gomez, Kane, Munson, Ono and Randlett.

Commissioner excused: Nguyen

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 PUBLIC COMMENT

An anonymous citizen said the Friends of the Library are required by the California Attorney General to file a financial report within four and ½ months after the end of the organization's accounting period. He said the period ending June 2010 is not filed yet after 243 days and the one for 2009 was filed after 364 days. He said the report shows over \$4 Million for program purposes of stewarding and supporting the public library. He said \$1.3 Million is for Friends' salaries and wages. He said the City Librarian only found \$373,000 benefitting the library. He said the fact that Commissioners allow themselves to be photographed with a \$4 Million check is beyond outrageous. (See addendum for a 150 word statement submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said the Sunday New York Times had an article about search engines such as Google and how those search engines are driven by profit motive. He said when a person comes to the Library we expect that those searches are not driven by commercial interest or a profit motive.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said he knows that the Commission does not like criticism. He said the relationship the Commission has with the Friends is that the Commission is morally and legally responsible to oversee them. He said it is a mutual admiration society where they present meaningless slides and present a check

which is not good for the money. He said if this goes to a court, the Commission will have no idea of how much the Friends actually bring in.

Tom King said the attendance at meetings could be enhanced if there was an announcement in the library about the meeting an hour or so before the meeting. He said he uses the Sunset Branch and no longer brings his son because he does not want to see all the homeless people in the branch. He said it is not just about being homeless, but bringing dogs and being belligerent. He said he would appreciate it if this could be looked into.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2. FISCAL YEAR 2011/12 BUDGET

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said there have been a series of discussions about the budget before the Commission. He said they have brought back additional information on some of the issues which the Commission had expressed concerns.

John Doidge, Chief Financial Officer, explained the budget calendar and said they would be requesting Commission action on the budget at this meeting. He said the Commission had requested additional information on the Library Preservation Fund (LPF). He said the current fund balance is \$11.9 Million and the anticipated fund balance as of June 30, 2011 will be \$14.1 Million. He explained the LPF history and projection. He gave additional information on work orders in the proposed budget. He explained funding for the [FY 11-12 budget](#) priorities. He explained the savings proposed to fund priorities. He gave a summary of proposed changes to the budget.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, explained Proposal #1 to utilize the LPF Reserve to cover debt payment of \$2.5 Million.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, explained Proposal #2 which includes a reduction in proposed increases in priority spending and service level reductions. She said this would not require using any of the LPF Reserve.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, explained Proposal #3, which is a modified version of the previous two proposals. He said this proposal would include no service level reductions. He said this would utilize the LPF Reserve to cover the debt payment of \$2.5 Million. He said it would reduce the proposed increases in priority spending by \$.3 Million and would add back to the Books and Materials allocation \$.3 Million.

John Doidge, Chief Financial Officer, briefly reviewed the three proposals and said the Library's recommendation is Proposal #3.

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said it would be nice if the documents had version control with the version number on the document so that members of the

public knew that they were looking at the appropriate document. He said the reserve is crucial. He said the quoted charter language was changed in 2007 to conform to what you actually do rather than the intention. To retain the reserve you should spend it on something that might not be exhausted. He said reducing service hours is misleading because full-service hours include the branches closed for remodeling. (See addendum for a 150 word statement submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said we are getting book cuts. He said the so-called add backs to books and materials under proposal number 3 does not show what had previously been cut to the books and materials budget. He said this is not a budget that puts a priority on books.

Ted Bamberger, Chair of the Library Citizens Advisory Committee (LCAC), said John Doidge attended the LCAC meeting last night and the Committee unanimously adopted a resolution. He said the resolution stated that the LCAC is concerned about the library budget priorities. He said the LCAC urged the Board of Supervisors to review closely the Library's budget to insure that books, materials and open hours are the Library's highest priority.

Cathy Bremer, Chief Steward, SEIU 1021, said they do not want to see service cuts. She said right now our book budget is very healthy. She said cutting back on the book budget for one year will not be devastating.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said his understanding of the Sunshine Ordinance is that everything must be available 72 hours in advance of the meeting and it must be complete. He said he supports LCAC's position that books and open hours be the number one priority.

Tom King said he is a member of LCAC but is not speaking for that committee. He said he would like to see just the budget at this point. He said it is an \$85 million dollar budget that needs to be broken down more. He said anything over \$250,000 or more should have much more detail.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Kane said the Commission has seen more detailed budgets in prior meetings. He said his priorities are the core functions of the library of hours, service and computer access. He said he is concerned about the work orders with the other Departments.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the work order with the Recreation and Park Department was partly in lieu of looking at any other charges not in keeping with our core functions.

Commissioner Kane said it is obvious that we are subsidizing Recreation and Park in order not to pay rent. He said he would like to see us stick to our core functions.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said Writers Corp is a great program and meets our core functions by serving the at risk population.

John Doidge, Chief Financial Officer, explained some of the work orders with other City Departments.

Commissioner Kane had questions about labor efficiencies and the attrition rate. He said he is concerned about decreasing the Information Technology (IT) budget by \$200,000.

Brian Bannon, Chief of IT, said they are recommending not fully increasing data and storage areas and digital services for accessing our collections.

Commissioner Kane said at the last meeting there was a presentation on the five year projection and worries about dipping into the reserve. He said he is hopeful that there will be adjustments in the future. He said he is comfortable with dipping into the reserve this year.

Commissioner Ono asked if the representative from the Mayor's Office could speak a little bit about future projections on the budget.

Manish Goyle, Mayor's Budget Office, said there will be an increase in salaries and benefits for next year based on the current labor contracts. He said it does look like there will be better revenues but that is difficult to forecast. He said there will be a joint report from the Controller and Mayor's office coming out this spring.

Commissioner Kane said he was concerned with spending money on digital storage.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said that the City is working on a long term strategy to consolidate storage and the Library will be part of that long term strategy.

Brian Bannon, Chief of IT, said he would be happy to come back to the Commission with a report on IT and data consolidation.

Commissioner Breyer said he is concerned about the five year projection and what steps that can be taken to maintain this level of service.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said this is a labor intensive organization and we are doing what we can to build in some efficiencies. He said labor issues will have to be dealt with city wide.

Commissioner Randlett said that yes there is a problem, but this is an economic downturn throughout the world. She said we may need additional expertise to provide best practices on economic decisions and choices. She said we do need to look towards the future.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said that we will monitor the revenues and continue to examine the budget scenario. He said they will also follow closely the pension and retirement issues. He said this is one of the larger reserves that the library has had. He said this will be a small draw from the fund.

Commissioner Munson said he is aware that the Commission needs to make a decision at this meeting. He said he would like to see the library maintain some flexibility. He said next year he would like to see the complete budget.

Motion: By Commissioner Kane, seconded by Commissioner Ono to approve [proposal # 3](#) adding back in the \$200,000 book and material allocation and the \$50,000 for IT services and utilize the LPF Reserve to cover debt payment of \$2.75 million.

President Gomez said it would be a good idea to bring in a consultant to look at the five year plan.

Commissioner Breyer said it is important to remember we do not want to issue future debt. He said he is disappointed that we are offering a budget with a \$2.75 million deficit. He said he will be supporting the motion but that he does not support adding the \$200,000 back for books and materials and the \$50,000 for IT services.

Action: AYES 6-0: (Breyer, Gomez, Kane, Munson, Ono and Randlett).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3. BOND PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said the approved [budget](#) is \$188,910,119. She said the Bayview Branch is in the pre-construction stage and the North Beach Branch is in the EIR/Design Development phase. She said [seven branches are in construction](#). She said 15 branches are complete and open. She showed photographs and gave [reports on projects in construction](#) including: Park Branch which will open on February 26; Presidio Branch scheduled to open March 26; Merced; Anza; Visitacion Valley; Ortega; and Golden Gate Valley. She said the Bayview Branch Library is in the preconstruction phase. She said Planning Department staff is compiling a response to the comments made on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the North Beach Branch Library. She said the Planning Commission will hold a hearing in April to certify the EIR. She gave a summary of public outreach activities. She said both Eureka Valley and Bernal Heights branch libraries were chosen for the American Public Works Association project of the year award in the historical renovation category. She said they hope to see everyone at the Park Branch Grand Reopening next Saturday, February 26, 2011 at 1:00 and at the Presidio Branch Grand Reopening on March 26, 2011.

Public Comment

Chris said she is a teacher and she asked why there was never a pay phone in any of the branches

An anonymous citizen said there will be five new branches opening up in the next several months. He said the mandated hours will not be phantom hours any more. He said it is an illusion that new systems are covered by warranty contracts, but very soon those expenses will have to be incorporated into the budget. (See addendum for a 150 word statement submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, asked about the impact to the operating budget of the new branches. He said it would be helpful to know how much the bond payments will be for the North Beach Branch. He said there was no mention of any individuals who had reviewed and provided input into the Park Branch and that was unfortunate. He said with respect to the Golden Gate Valley Branch he had suggested that an historic ceramic fixture in the men's room be retained and he wondered if that was being kept.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said reproducing these large reports which are mostly pictures is a waste of paper. He said several of the reports in the back of the room had not been discussed. He said it has been two years since we went into a recession so there is no reason to be surprised that the money is going away.

Tom King said he thinks the bid process should be expanded and much more pronounced. He said he would like to see the branch managers more active in the budget process.

Commission Discussion

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said payphones have been taken out of the branches and the Main by the phone companies, but the library has fought to keep one pay phone in the Main. She said the urinal that Mr. Warfield referred to in the Golden Gate Valley Branch did not comply with ADA standards so it was removed.

President Gomez had questions regarding the Bayview Branch Library.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said we are moving forward on the Bayview Branch Library with a second construction/management firm. He said additional outreach has been done to subcontractors for the project. He said library services will be maintained at the YMCA while the new building is being built.

Commissioner Randlett left the meeting at 6:47 pm.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 6, 2011

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said a citizen took the Commission to the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force for the failure of the minutes to comply with the law regarding citizen summaries. The Task Force voted unanimously to find the minutes unacceptable. He said these are the first minutes before the Commission since the decision. He said the only difference is that there seems to be an even greater demarcation between the minutes and the statements that are supposed to be included. (See addendum for a 150 word statement submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said since the Commission refuses to obey the law and include the 150 word statement in the body of the minutes it might be good to add a statement that says "The statements might even be complete nonsense just as the preceding minutes reflect statements that might also be complete nonsense and unverifiable." He said on the bottom of page one the last statement of his comments could be clarified. He said his statement on page two were not reflected accurately regarding the kiosks and sorting machines.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said the Sunshine Task Force has not yet issued its Order of Determination, but it was a unanimous vote in his favor. He said having the summary statements at the end of the minutes is disregarding what the speaker has to say. He said the Commission thinks that its viewpoints are more important than the public.

A woman from the audience said she still had concerns about not having pay phones in the branches.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Breyer clarified that the Sunshine Task Force has not issued an Order of Determination. He said he would like to emphasize that these statements are included in the Minutes.

President Gomez said they will continue to follow the direction from the City Attorney regarding the Minutes.

Motion: By Commissioner Munson, seconded by Commissioner Kane to approve the [Minutes of January 6, 2011](#).

Action: AYES 5-0: (Breyer, Gomez, Kane, Munson, and Ono.)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5. ADJOURNMENT

President Gomez said she would like to adjourn this meeting in honor of Carolene Marks, widow of former State Senator Milton Marks. She said Mrs. Marks often said that one of her most important victories was getting the Richmond Branch named in honor of her husband. She said she was a great library supporter.

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said Carlene Marks was a great friend to the Library. He said the approval of the naming of the Richmond Branch in her husband's honor was in 2004 and there are no Commissioners left from that vote. He said that was very important at the time. He said he first met Carolene Marks at a public ceremony honoring the anniversary of Stonewall in the early 70s. He said it is entirely appropriate that the Commission adjourn in her honor.

Peter Warfield said yes Carolene Marks was married to Milton Marks, who for decades served in the State legislature. He said he had recommended, with her consent, that the name of the branch be the Richmond Uncle Milty Branch Library, which was how Senator Marks was affectionately known. He said the last time he saw Mrs. Marks was at the reopening of the Richmond Branch where she was kind enough to mention him in her remarks.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said he would like to adjourn in memory of the arrogance of the President of the Commission who said we haven't seen what the Sunshine Task Force said yet; we are going to go ahead and do what we want. He said she made a misstatement that it is not the law. He said the Sunshine Ordinance is the law and is enforced by the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force. He said you are saying you are above the law and you are not, you are just so arrogant that you think you are.

Motion: By Commissioner Munson, seconded by Commissioner Breyer to adjourn the regular meeting of February 17, 2011 in honor of Carlone Marks.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Breyer, Gomez, Kane, Munson, and Ono.

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm.

Sue Blackman
Commission Secretary

Explanatory documents: Copies of listed explanatory documents are available as follows: (1) from the commission secretary/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 Library Commission's website <http://sfpl.org/librarycommission>. 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).

ADDENDUM

These summary statements are provided by the speaker: Their contents are neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by, the San Francisco Public Library Commission.

Library Commission Meeting of February 17, 2011

Item 1: General Public Comment

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't give or accept money from the Friends & Foundation

Make sure to laugh at me while I am talking. It always worked before.

This is the financial report from the Friends that the California Attorney General requires be filed. It must be filed within four and one-half months under Government Code §12586.1. The period ending June 2010 is not filed yet after 243 days. This one for 2009 was filed after 364 days.

It does show over \$4 Million for the “program purposes” of stewarding and supporting the public library.

This is accomplished by program purposes which include \$276,000 compensation for the Friends' director and controller. Another \$1.3 Million is Friends' salaries and wages. Yet, your City Librarian only found \$373,000 benefitting the library.

The fact that commissioners allow themselves to be photographed with a \$4 Million check is beyond outrageous.

The lies cost more than the money.

Item 2: Fiscal Year 2011/12 Budget

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't give or accept money from the Friends & Foundation.

Make sure to laugh at me while I am talking. It always worked before.

Citizens should have access to the graphics? Version control would provide clear notice that a document has changed.

The reserve is crucial. You were not told that the quoted charter language was changed in 2007 to conform to what you actually do rather than the intention.

The original intention was to track the property tax set-aside separately so that it could be retained in a reserve.

To retain the reserve, you should spend it on something that might not be exhausted, rather than the debt service. The controller will tell you the truth, they don't track the allocation side, so you can't tell where the money came from.

Reducing service hours is misleading because full-service hours include the branches closed for remodeling.

Item 3: Bond Program Manager's Report

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't give or accept money from the Friends & Foundation.

Make sure to laugh at me while I am talking. It always worked before.

Wouldn't it be nice if the citizens had access to the graphics.

You are wise to note the relationship to the previous agenda item. When the budget year you just approved is complete all but two of the branches will be opened with real staff and real operating dollars.

The Branch Library Improvement Program was sold with the idea that new branches would be more efficient and cheaper to operate. It is never true and partly it is the illusion that new systems are covered by warranty contracts and very soon those expenses have to be incorporated into the budget.

It was a huge problem with the building we are in now, because everyone thought the operating budget was covered.

Item 4: Approval of the Minutes (January 6, 2011)

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Hate, Stop the Ignorance – Don't give or accept money from the Friends & Foundation.

This is a wonderful microcosm of the way this commission operates.

A citizen took you to the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force for the failure of your minutes to comply with the law regarding citizen summaries. It was unanimous that your minutes were unacceptable.

These are the first minutes since that decision. The only change is that the text after the signature of the secretary and the boilerplate describing citizen summaries as separate is now in bold, with a bigger typeface and wider margins. This serves to create an even greater demarcation between the minutes and the statements that are supposed to be included.

Whenever there is an advance in decency and democracy, it is emblematic for you to repeatedly take back whatever may have been gained.

Commissioner Munson's motion was carried out.

Item 5: Adjournment

Anonymous Citizen: The president has anticipated me. I was also going to proposed an in memoriam for Carolene Marks.

She passed away this Monday and was a great friend to the Library. I remember very well her campaign to name the Richmond Branch for her husband. It was a statewide campaign that lasted almost a year.

The naming took place on January 6, 2004 and there is not a single commissioner left who took part in that action.

Almost everyone in the library has a Carolene Marks story. I remember that before I ever attended a library commission meeting, I was leaving the library one day and there was a small group of people commemorating the anniversary of Stonewall that later became the Gay Freedom Day parade. The only public official there was Carolene Marks with her daughter.

I think it is very appropriate that we adjourn in memory of Carolene Marks.