



San Francisco Public Library

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 19, 2011

(As approved at the July 21, 2011 regular meeting)

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 19, 2011, in the Koret Auditorium, Main Library.

The meeting was called to order at 4:38 pm.

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

Commissioners excused: Kane, and Nguyen.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said that Luis Herrera, City Librarian, is not present because he flew to Santa Monica to appear before the State Historical Resources Commission to oppose the nomination of the North Beach Branch Library to the National Register of Historic Places.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 PUBLIC COMMENT

An anonymous citizen said this is the meeting you will approve the Minutes of April 7. He said the history of the human mind is an attempt to be free from the tyranny of injustice. He said the idea of a public library is that knowledge should not be limited to wealth and power. He said the President of the Commission makes a big display of not listening, and then accuses the public of not listening. He said this is a cheap trick to enforce the barriers of exclusion, called the "Veranda Factor." (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said he appreciates the explanation of why the City Librarian is not at the meeting but he is disappointed in the fact that he will be opposing the nomination of the Historic designation for the North Beach Branch. He said the San Francisco Weekly says the best place to get drunk is at the San Francisco Public Library at the Friends' Imbibe event. He said you are not able to save a word document on a library computer.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said that he would like the following statement to be entered into the Minutes. “Sunshine Ordinance of 1999, Section 67.16 Minutes. Any person speaking during the public comment period may supply a brief written summary of their comments, which shall, if not more than 150 words, be included in the minutes.” He said there are serious deficiencies in the way the Commission goes about its business. He said the primary purpose of the Commission is to oversee the operations of the Library and other bodies such as Friends to ensure that the operations benefit the library with maximum effect. He said the Commission should become a body focused on its fiduciary responsibility to oversee matters within its area of oversight. He said this Commission provides little real oversight, acting as a rubber stamp for recommendations placed before it and this is far distant from what most members of the public would expect. He said the Commission does not talk about the money in the BLIP program or how much the Friends take in and how much they contribute to the Library. He said it is rude to the public when the Commissioners do not look the speaker in the eye. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Mindy Linetzky, Public Affairs, Department of Public Works (DPW), said as part of DPW work week they opened up the Visitacion Valley branch for a tour while the branch is still in construction. She said the feedback was fantastic and she wanted to thank the Commission for its partnership with DPW.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2. BOND PROGRAM MANAGER’S REPORT

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said this month there will be a special report on the State of California Department of Finance Reports on the [Ingleside Branch Library Grant Audit](#) and the [Richmond Branch Library Expansion](#) and Renovation Audit.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said the State of California has completed its audit of the Ingleside Branch Library Grant and the Richmond Branch Library Expansion and Renovation Grant under the Proposition 14 Bond Program. She said both projects have been successfully completed. She said the audit findings determined that the projects met all their fiscal requirements and that there were no observations or questioned costs identified.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said the approved budget is \$188,910,119. She said there are copies of the [budget report](#) and the Quarterly Report in the back of the room. 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 [four branches](#) are in [construction](#). She said 18 branches are complete and open. She showed photographs and gave reports on [projects in construction](#) including: the Anza Branch scheduled to reopen on June 18; Visitacion Valley; Ortega; and Golden Gate Valley. She said the Planning

Commission has certified the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the North Beach Branch Library.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said in addition to the Planning Commission approving the EIR, we had the joint Library Commission/Recreation and Park Commission meeting on April 25 where each unanimously approved the North Beach Branch project. She said later that day the Land use Committee of the Board of Supervisors forwarded a Street Vacation to the full Board with a recommendation to approve. She said the EIR has been appealed and we expect the appeal to be heard at the Board of Supervisors in June. She said on May 2 the Land Use Committee held a separate hearing on the historic designation process and how it affects other city priorities mainly, libraries, parks, transit and affordable housing. She said the City Librarian was asked to testify about the experience of the library in the past year and the impacts of the historic preservation processes on our projects. She said the North Beach Library was nominated to be listed on the national register. She said the Historic Preservation Commission discussed this issue and was not able to reach consensus and forwarded a resolution reflecting the lack of consensus to the California State Historic Preservation Commission. She said unfortunately the State HPC did vote to forward that nomination so we will continue to track that and report back when we get more information. She said to clarify the State Commission's role; this is not a landmark issue since the Board of Supervisors has already voted that it will not be landmarked.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, gave a summary of public outreach activities. She said the Mission Bay and Richmond Branches received an Honorable Mention as a new Landmark Library by the Library Journal. She showed slides of the reopening of the Merced Branch Library. She said she looks forward to seeing everyone at the reopening of the Anza Branch on Saturday, June 18.

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said he regrets that he missed the tour of Visitacion Valley. He said regarding the nomination of the North Beach Branch on the National Registry, the City Librarian testified at a hearing before the Board of Supervisors that he found it a waste of time and resources to oppose concerns about historical preservation. He said this undermines his credibility on the historical preservation issue. He said maybe some concern at the national level will wake us up to the historical value of the building. He said he attending the Merced Branch opening. (See addendum for a 150 word statement submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said he attended the Merced Branch opening. He said he is disappointed the agenda today does not specifically mention the Merced Branch opening. He said the Quarterly Report is referenced by the Bond Manager's Report. He said this particular item is never listed as an explanatory document on the agenda. He said there are very big questions regarding the budget. He said the

North Beach Branch has been praised by many as being landmark worthy.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said he got a package and the Quarterly Report was not in there and the Bond Manager's Report was not in it. He said the issue is what the public was told when the bond was passed about the costs of these projects. He asked what the long term problems for the library are going to be because of these over expenditures.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Breyer said the Quarterly Report says that we do not expect an additional sale of revenue bonds and that is terrific news. He asked about the impact if the North Beach Branch is listed on the National Register.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said the listing would have no legal impact and that the local decision would take precedence.

Commissioner Breyer asked about the Friends contributions to the BLIP.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said the amount listed as Friends' contributions does not include money the Friends have spent directly on Furniture and Fixtures.

Mindy Linetzky, DPW, said that the public tour of the Visitacion Valley Branch was done through DPW and was part of tours of five buildings DPW is involved with.

Commissioner Randlett said it appears that some of the projects remaining have been the most difficult to execute and therefore significant funds may be in reserve to use on those projects. She said it sounds like the team was prudent in making sure that there were funds in reserve. She said she is not surprised with the size of the projects and the number of change orders there has been. She said it looks like Visitacion Valley and Ortega seem to have many more than the others.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said these amounts reflect pending change orders that are coming. She said Visitacion Valley is one of the largest and complex of the branches. She said the contractor did not have as much experience with these types of projects.

Commissioner Randlett said the City has an obligation to the public to meet the highest quality and this may have been a challenge to the construction team that was awarded the bid.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said all of these changes are within the project contingencies so we are not anticipating any budget change.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said they have had difficulty in working with the contractor on the Ortega Branch.

President Gomez said we are getting near to the end of the process and there have been a number of lessons learned. The new Commissioners are seeing the benefits of the process.

Commissioner Breyer said the Auditor's Report encouraged the Library to look at the contracts with the contractors and get compensation from contractors who cause delays.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said it is an ongoing process and that DPW works closely with the contractors.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 7, 2011

Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said during the item on the naming of the Him Mark Lai Branch on page 4 he had asked about what sort of funding would be done and said that the library would have responsibility for the funding. He said the President later made comments and said she hoped members of the audience would not take offense by any members of the public's comments about the fundraising. He said his comment contained no offense to the people in the community. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said on page 4 his comments are summarized but it left out his comments about what arrangements were being made with respect to the way the money was raised and his concern about the financial issues. He said on page 1 the Minutes state that he said the Friends have contributed less than \$1 Million to BLIP and he did not say that and would like to have that corrected.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said some of the questions not asked by this Commission would cause you to be fired in the private sector. He said his complaint regarding the Minutes will be going back again to the full Sunshine Task Force referred back by the Education and Outreach Committee. He said the issue of the 150 word summary being included in the body of the Minutes has never been on the agenda for the Commission to discuss.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Breyer said he thought we were following what the Sunshine Task Force suggested for the Minutes.

Sue Blackman, Commission Secretary, said the Sunshine Task Force issued an Order of Determination finding the Library Commission not in compliance with the Sunshine Ordinance, but they sent the issue to the

Education and Outreach Committee. She said the two members of the Committee who were in attendance referred the issue back to the Task Force for further review.

President Gomez said we are continuing to do the Minutes in the way in which we have been and within our legal rights.

Sue Blackman, Commission Secretary, said the City Attorney is preparing a memo to address the issue.

Commissioner Breyer said his suggestion is to follow what the Sunshine Task Force suggests.

President Gomez asked the Secretary to check the tape for the statement by Peter Warfield on page 1 and to correct that statement if necessary.

Commissioner Randlett said she appreciated the statement from President Gomez trying to clarify the comments regarding the Him Mark Lai fundraising.

Motion: By Commissioner Munson, seconded by Commissioner Randlett to approve the [Minutes of April 7, 2011](#) with a correction to page 3 to read "Jill Bourne responded to a question from Commissioner Breyer." Also with a clarification as needed to Peter Warfield's remarks on page 1.

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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4. ADJOURNMENT

Public Comment

There was no public comment on this item.

Motion: By Commissioner Ono, seconded by Commissioner Munson to adjourn the regular meeting of May 19, 2011.

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:48 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 Public Library's website <http://sfpl.org>. 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 May 19, 2011

Item 1: General Public Comment

Anonymous Citizen: Stop the Corporate Rape of the Library – Don't give or accept money from the Friends & Foundation

The history of the human mind is an attempt to be free from the tyranny of injustice.

Essential to that freedom is mankind is equal before the truth. Religions teach that we are all equal before God, and laws and literature teach us that knowledge belongs even to the poor.

Some people were not born to be our masters. The idea of the public library is that knowledge should not be limited to wealth and power.

Your president makes a big display of not listening, then accuses the public of not listening, a cheap trick to enforce the barriers of exclusion, called the "Veranda Factor."

You maintain the fiction that our access to the truth doesn't merit your attention, when this commission was created as a public forum.

"The lies cost more than the money."

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government: Having attended most of the Library Commission meetings over the last year, I have come to the conclusion that there are serious deficiencies in the way the commission goes about its business. The primary purpose of this commission is to oversee the operations of the library and other bodies such as Friends of the Library, to ensure not only that the operations benefit the library, but, that they do so to maximum effect. To perform their function in an appropriate manner this commission needs to modify its behavior. The move needs to be from what it is, a mutual admiration society, toward becoming a body focused on its fiduciary responsibility to oversee matters within its area of oversight. At the present time,

the commission provides little real oversight, acting primarily as a rubber stamp for recommendations placed before it. This is far, far distant from what most members of the public would expect.

Item 2: Bond Program Manager's Report

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

It would be nice if the citizens had access to the graphics. I have some nice shots of branch openings which you might enjoy.

I regret that I missed the tour of Visitacion Valley. I guess I missed the announcement.

Regarding North Beach Branch on the National Registry, the City Librarian testified before the Board of Supervisors that he found it a waste of resources to be required to oppose concerns about historical preservation. This undermines his credibility on historical preservation issues.

The North Beach Branch is not resolved and national recognition might wake us up to the significance of that branch.

I was at the Merced Branch Opening and missed the band that had played at Presidio and Park Branches, which I hesitate to mention that because it was probably paid for by the Friends.

Item 3: Approval of the Minutes (April 7, 2011)

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

Regarding naming opportunities for the Him Mark Lei Branch, I questioned the library's responsibility if people hung out on street corners raising thousands of dollars, which was answered by selling names on the plaque.

Eight and one-half minutes later, your president said, "I hope you will not take offense at any members of the public's implication that people from the Chinatown community would be raising funds in an alley. I hope you will not take offense at that."

My comment contained no offense and didn't mention alleys.

Mr. Coulter would misquote and mischaracterize me, then impute some motive to me to expose me to general obloquy and ridicule – a week later.

This sleazy game to prevent discussion shows no obligation to recognize a non-donor's right to decency and truth.

You're attempting to fill Steve Coulter's shoes? "I knew Steve Coulter. You're no Steve Coulter."