



## *San Francisco Public Library*

### **SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION**

#### **Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 18, 2011**

(Approved as amended at the November 17, 2011 regular meeting).

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on Thursday, August 18, 2011, in the Koret Auditorium, Main Library.

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 pm.

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

Commissioner Nguyen was excused.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 PUBLIC COMMENT**

An anonymous citizen said as part of the post-occupancy evaluation (POE) of the Main Library there was pressure to incorporate the critics into the process. He said he received a handwritten note from Charles Higuera inviting him to participate. He said they hired a professor from UC Berkeley to oversee the process and at the public hearing, she asked to tape record the meeting then instantly fell into a deep sleep. He said he waited for 30 seconds, rattled his chair, then thanked her and left. He said that was not only the first time anyone said his input would be welcome, but the last. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said the library has installed its new policy for media which treats media items the same as books and it is a terrible idea. He said this will shrink the selection for members of the public and materials will be lost. He said the library hired an outside company to do a survey on the results of the new policy.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, quoted one of his favorite authors Frank Herbert who said "Any training school for free citizens must begin by teaching distrust not trust; it must teach questioning not acceptance of stock answers." He said the Library

Commission should take this under consideration when monitoring its fiduciary duties over the Friends of the Library. He said there are two more sunshine complaints going before the Sunshine Task Force next week. He said one relates to the 150 word statements in the Minutes and one that relates to a request from the City Librarian for information. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 BRANCH LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM BUDGET TRANSFERS**

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said there is a [memo](#) in your packet explaining the requested actions on this item. He said the first is to increase the BLIP Program Reserve by \$1.089 million from the Visitacion Valley Infrastructure Fund revenue appropriated by ordinance in January 2011 that is now available to the BLIP. He said the other action is to transfer \$1.7 million from the Program Reserve to the new Bayview Branch Library Project. He said Ordinance 4-11 approved by the Board of Supervisors and signed by the Mayor in January 2011 appropriated \$2.169 million from the Visitacion Valley Infrastructure Fund (VVIF) to the public library for the Visitacion Valley Branch Library Project. He said since January, the Controller has released an additional \$77,000 in fee revenue for the project. He said a total of \$1.089 million from the VVIF is now available to the Library to fund the project. He said the Commission previously approved \$2.0 million from the Library Preservation Fund (LPF) appropriated in FY 2008-09 as an advance against receipt of VVIF revenue for the Visitacion Valley Branch Project. With appropriation and receipt of \$1.089 million from the VVIF, we are requesting that \$1.089 million of the \$2.0 million advance from the LPF be transferred to the reserve. He said approval of this request will increase the reserve from \$2.404 million to \$3.493 million. He said additionally there has been an increase in the Bayview project and he gave the history of the project and the change from the traditional design/bid/build contracting approach to a Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) for the purpose of increasing local hire. He gave additional details on the project and said the project was divided into 27 trade packages. He said the groundbreaking was wonderful and provided a hopeful spirit in the community. He said the reality is that there are increased costs for the project.

### **Public Comment**

Willie Ratcliff said he owns Liberty Builders and he was awarded the Bayview Branch contract in November. He said the contract was rescinded before the November election and the library has to take some of the responsibility for adding \$1.7 million to the cost of the library. He said his bid was \$309,000 below the next highest bidder who does not live in the community. He said the Library Commission, DPW and Gavin Newsom actually discriminated against the businesses in the community. He said you should pay the contractor off, bring back Liberty Builders and

he guarantees that you won't have to pay an additional \$1.7 million. He said it was set up for failure.

An anonymous citizen said on November 18, 2010 you were told that this was an advance from the Library Preservation Fund. He said at that time you expected that the money wouldn't go back to the LPF because you would find some other use for that money. This seems to be the ratification of that. He said this is impossible to follow because there are many different reserves. He said there are two betrayals to the Board of Supervisors. He said this is not the accountability the public is entitled to. (See Addendum for a summary of this comment submitted by the speaker.)

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said the August 15 memo from the City Librarian is very difficult to understand. He said this looks like a naked raid on the Library Preservation Fund. He said it looks like you are taking the money from the VVIF and putting it into the Bayview Branch project instead of back into the LPF. He said the Bayview Branch project was originally estimated at \$3.8 million and has now skyrocketed to just a little bit less than \$10 million more, well over triple the original cost. He said the additional nearly \$2 million you are proposing now is a very hefty percentage of the very high previous budget. He said there are lots of questions about what is really going on with the Bayview Branch.

Mr. Carpenter said he was a lifetime resident of the Bayview. He said the building of a library complements the community but the residents that reside there are being forced out economically. He said when you upgrade a community and you don't give the residents an opportunity to upgrade their standing that is what brings about gentrification. He said he is here in support of Liberty Builders and they are a legitimate contractor in the community. He said we need jobs because our businesses are our economic base.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said in 2008 he was the field election deputy in the Bayview/Hunters Point area for both the primary and general election. He said he was in charge of nine of the polling places. He said he has followed with interest the lack of relationship between City government and the African American community. He said they came to the wrong group and it is a group that basically rubber stamps what the City Librarian puts in front of it. He said none of the Commissioners are anything but puppets to Ms. Gomez. He said what you have here is a dictatorship.

#### Commission Discussion

Commissioner Munson asked for a little bit more background on the issue with Liberty Builders.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian said there was a process through the Office of Contract Management. He said Liberty Builders was awarded the

contract and the process began to finalize the bid. He said he understood that the obligation was not met by Liberty Builders so the decision was made to go to the next qualified bidder in the process. He said there are legal requirements that govern the awarding of contracts. He said he understands that the process was adhered to.

Commissioner Kane said he was fearful of this circumstance when we switched from competitive bid to this Construction Manager/General Contractor process. He said this money could go back into our Library Preservation Fund to help our long term operations so we are making a tradeoff between library hours and long term service and getting the project done. He said he would like more information on possible increases to the budget of the project.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian said that the contract management process was not intended to reduce costs but rather to maximize the opportunity for local hiring. He said we knew there would be some potential consequences to that including possible cost increases and delay. He said we are working closely with DPW to contain costs.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager said out of the \$1.7 million we are requesting, \$1.6 million is for construction costs and the rest is soft costs. He said originally construction costs were at \$4.5 million and currently we are at \$5.7 million.

Luis Herrera said this is approximately a 35% increase.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said we have bid out 27 different trade packages. She said the only package for which there were no bids was for landscaping. She said there are several packages we are getting ready to reward, but basically we have a bid on 26 packages.

Commissioner Kane said there seems to be a disconnect in the information coming to the Commission and he would like to know where we are in this project.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said with this increase that should take care of the construction costs for the project.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian said there are additional projects that need to be closed out that will provide additional funds to go into the reserve. He said we will need to go to the balance of the Library Preservation Fund for anticipated increases in the North Beach project. He said we are confident that we will be able to complete the BLIP project and still maintain a healthy operation budget.

Commissioner Kane asked when the project is expected to be completed.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said the project is expected to be completed the end of 2012.

Edgar Lopez, Department of Public Works, said DPW has done everything possible to maximize bidding on the project. He said some of the contractors feel that there is going to be work stoppages, and that they might not make money. He said we have gone above and beyond what we have done on any other project. He said the awards are based on low bid. He said there are controls on the contractor for delays.

Commissioner Randlett said the Commission made a choice to do smaller bids. She said it appears even though we have done that the contractors have expressed concern about work stoppages. She asked about the percentage of packages that will be done by local firms.

Lena Chen said 10 out of the 26 packages are local.

Commissioner Randlett said she is sensitive and concerned about ballooning costs, but it appears that a year ago there was a commitment made to the community that some of the work would be done by members of the community. She said she is committed that a new library be built in the Bayview area.

Commissioner Ono had a question about KCK Builders and whether they are truly a local firm.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said they have met with KCK Builders and consider them to be a local firm.

Commissioner Breyer said his perception is that \$1.7 million is due to higher construction costs. He said 10 of the bid packages are local and of the 16 remaining there may be additional local companies.

Lena Chen said we have exceeded the goal of 30% set by the HRC and have already reached 46%. She said the electrical bid came in very high. She said other bids came in high as well. She said they are allowed to negotiate with the bidders. She said several have been rebid more than once.

Commissioner Kane said we need to have a first class library as quickly as possible for the citizens of Bayview. He said he will want to have an audit at the end of the project, so that there will be lessons learned for other city projects.

President Gomez said that the legacy of oppression is quite costly and we will ultimately be proud of the process and the outcome.

Motion: By Commissioner Munson, seconded by Commissioner Randlett to approve the budget transfer from the Visitacion Valley Infrastructure Fee revenue of \$1,089,489 to the BLIP program reserve; and to approve the transfer of \$1,736,448 funds from the BLIP program reserve to increase the Bayview Branch Library project budget.

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 construction stage and continuing with award of trade packages and the North Beach Branch is in the construction document phase. She said the Ortega Branch is scheduled to open on September 10, 2011 and the Golden Gate Valley Branch is scheduled to open in October. She said 20 projects are completed and open to the public. She showed photographs and gave [reports on projects](#) in construction including: Ortega and Golden Gate Valley.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said they have brought in more resources for the Ortega Branch in order to meet the schedule. And there have been conversations with the contractor about costs and having to change the scope of work to insure that the project is finished on time.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said that the mini Ortega branch that has been serving the community during the construction will be closing on August 22 and there will be bookmobile service on Monday, Wednesday and Friday until the new branch opens on September 10.

Lena Chen, Bond Program Manager, said there was a groundbreaking for the new Bayview Branch Library on Friday, July 22. She showed photographs from the [groundbreaking and construction](#) work at the site. She said the design team is working on construction documents for the North Beach Branch Library and the public art selection process has been started. She gave a summary of public outreach and awards won for the Bernal Heights renovation and the Ingleside Branch Library. She showed photographs from the opening of the Visitacion Valley Branch Library.

#### **Public Comment**

An anonymous citizen said he assumes you are probably asking yourselves why the revenue bonds did not meet the goals we thought they were going to meet. He said we will soon be back to the full staffing demands that the voters approved under the Library Preservation Fund. He said those demands are going to be drawing on the same reserve that the BLIP will be needed for, as well as the interest payments. He said the holes are all too obvious, but we will save the specifics for another day. (See addendum for a 150 word statement submitted by the speaker.)

President Gomez left the meeting at 5:57 pm and Vice-President Munson took over as chair of the meeting.

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said North Beach is going to cost well over double what was originally planned for, Ortega will be

approximately triple and Bayview is continuing to rise and will be around triple the cost. He said those costs will come out of available operating funds in what was the Library Preservation Fund with the original mandate to be spent on the operation of the library and not on structures. He said that is no longer the mandate. He said two items had been discussed and there has been no response. He said at the Bayview Branch there was a sculpture and he wondered what the final outcome was for that sculpture. He said he had mentioned a structurally beautiful very old urinal at the Golden Gate Valley Branch and he wondered what happened.

#### Commission Discussion

There was no Commission discussion on this item.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4. CITY LIBRARIANS'S REPORT**

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said he would like to introduce our new Chief of Collections and Technical Services, Laura Lent. He said she has been with the library for a number of years and we are very proud to make this appointment. He said the Commission approved the funding for the [Chinatown Him Mark Lai Branch Library Exterior Maintenance Project](#) several years ago and we are moving forward with the project.

Roberto Lombardi, Facilities Director, said the contractor for the work on the Chinatown Him Mark Lai Branch Library is on board and the building will remain completely open and accessible to the public. He said the exterior will be cleaned and the terracotta decoration will be repaired and replaced. He said they expect the work to be done by September of this year.

Kathy Lawhun, Chief of Main, gave a little background on the Library's virtual reference services. She said virtual reference started with our email service in 1996. It started with over 100 questions a month and is now up to 650 questions a month. She said in 2000 the Library started its online chat service. She said there are librarians across the world answering questions. She said in 2007 the Library started its online tutoring sessions. She said a year and a half ago we started our instant messaging services with our third floor staff. She said this is real time, text based questions and this has been updated to Ref Chatter which is both text and chat. She said it is a popup on our website. She said you can add this number to your mobile device 871.4294 and you will be able to get your answer immediately. She said the original virtual reference was the telephone and we have been doing that for over 100 years.

Lisa Vestal, Chief Curator, gave an update on [exhibitions](#) including American Sabor, a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian, She said it features Latinos in U.S. Popular Music and will be in the Skylight Gallery from August 27 – November 13. She said the opening program will be held Saturday, August 27 at 3:00 pm in the Koret Auditorium with the five time Grammy award winning John Santos Sextet. She said the Library

will also be hosting “Music for a City, Music for the World 100 years with the San Francisco Symphony” in the Jewett Gallery from September 8, 2011, through January 9, 2012. She said the exhibit shows the impact of the San Francisco Symphony from its formative years to its present position as one of the Country’s foremost respected orchestras. She said for more information on all exhibitions you can go to:

[www.sfpl.org/exhibitions](http://www.sfpl.org/exhibitions).

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said thank you to Lisa Vestal and the Exhibition team. He said these are two wonderful examples of the diverse programs that the library offers.

### Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said he is happy to see that we are spending money to preserve the historical features of our branches. He said preserving the historical nature of our branches is very important. He said he is also gratified to hear that we are going to have a program on the Latino musical contribution.

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association, said he wishes Mr. Lombardi would give a report about the sanitation and the smells that one can find in the Library’s bathrooms. He said the basics are not being taken care of. He said he is always glad to hear about the exhibits, but he is very concerned about a book de-emphasis. He said with respect to the virtual reference he is glad to hear that all these accommodations are being made to people who are looking for this type of access to information but he would like to see more attention paid to the actual librarians who work serving patrons in the library.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said access to the graphics is the same as the 150 word statement in that it stifles public participation. He said there is no viable reason to not have the 150 word statement in the body of the minutes, which the Brown Act requires. He said the same thing goes with the graphics. He said 90% of the people at the meeting are staff. He said very few people come to the meetings because of the attitude of the Commission.

### Commission Discussion

Commissioner Breyer said he appreciates the Instant Chat feature the Library has initiated. He said one feature that he is not impressed with is the email reminders that go out. He said that the wording is not very good and there is a lot you could do as far as marketing and getting the word out about library programs and information. He said this is a significant way in which lots of library users will see the library. He said he would like to hear the other Commissioner’s thoughts about this.

Commissioner Kane said it is a fantastic idea to promote branch activities and other programs through email notifications. He asked about late fees



and fines since we are no longer doing paper notices. He asked about the cost and usage of the tutoring.

Kathy Lawhun, Chief of Main said over the last three or four years there have been over 10,000 uses per year for the tutoring services. She said it is on the kid page and the teen page on the website. She said it is marketed to the schools and the subscription is based on the usage and right now it costs about \$160,000. She said it has gone up in the past and it has now leveled out. She said there is a monthly report that we can provide to the Commission.

Commissioner Kane said the American Sabor exhibit is fantastic and hopefully the teacher lessons will be pushed out to the schools.

Jill Bourne, Deputy City Librarian, said after the last Commission discussion on the print notices, the library has decided to phase out the print noticing more slowly so the changeover to email notices has not yet been done.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said the potential savings from the print notices could offset other services like the tutoring costs. He said the amazing thing about the American Sabor exhibit is the number of partners involved in the program.

Brian Bannon, Chief of Information Technology responded to Commissioner Randlett's question about the email reminders. He said staff is looking at the overall digital strategy and a variety of different areas. He said one is greater customization for users and allowing users to have a more personalized approach. He said they will be looking at a more robust marketing plan for print notices. He said they will report back at a future meeting.

Commissioner Randlett would like to see Commissioner Breyer more involved in the process.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said he will give some consideration to the issue of Commissioner Breyer's involvement in the process.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 5. THE LABOR UNION REPORT**

Cathy Bremer, third floor reference librarian and the Chief Steward of the Librarian's Guild of SEIU 1021, said that cities and counties are struggling economically and because of that some entities are looking at the privatization of libraries by a company named Library Systems and Services, Inc (LSSI). She said after a brief popularity people started to look at the services being provided by this company. She said LSSI runs 35 branches of the Riverside County Library. She said there is an immediate threat to Sonoma County. She said LSSI fires everyone on staff and then brings some back at much lower wages. She said State Assemblyman Das Williams put forth a bill AB438, which would provide taxpayers the right to important information about any proposal to

privatize local free libraries. She said she would like the Commission to consider having a resolution in support of this Assembly Bill. She said she would appreciate it if this could come back to the Commission at the next meeting as an action item.

#### Public Comment

An anonymous citizen said the idea that this Library Commission will take a stand in favor of public values and against privatization is when hell will freeze over next week. He said this brings so many ideas from this meeting together. He said the idea that the public could use the graphics as a gesture of equal treatment and citizen empowerment, ignores the reality that public attendance, public comment and access to documents was a struggle for decades, and those advances are endorsed in California statutes. He said a private company claims that if you don't take their deal of private fund-raising and private influence peddling. He said you recognize that from the Friends and Foundation. He said the Commission has already endorsed privatization with its support of privatization in the Civic Center Community Benefit District.

Commissioner Randlett left the meeting at 6:48 pm.

Peter Warfield, Library Users Association said he is very glad the union representative has talked about privatization and LSSI, which has a long and unfortunate history. He said this issue is worth learning about. He said he would like to see the information as soon as possible. He said he is concerned about some things about the legislation. He said you are still losing the public in public library. He said patron privacy and information independence is one of the most important things that public libraries can offer. He said those things will be lost when a corporation takes over. He said this Commission is not anti-privatization as it has shown in several instances.

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said he supports the bill and it is designed to insure that public libraries do remain public and that is important for one critical reason and that is if it becomes a private entity there is no ability or willingness to respond to the public. He said the biggest savings will be employees and if you cut down the services they can discourage people from coming to the library. He said one of things that is always being discussed is outreach. He said he has never seen the Commission encourage people to come to these meetings.

#### Commission Discussion

Commissioner Breyer thanked the labor representative for her presentation and said he would like to consider action on the item at an upcoming meeting.

Commissioner Kane said he agrees and would like to see this scheduled for an upcoming meeting.

Luis Herrera, City Librarian, said he would be working with the City Attorney's office to look at the issue.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 6. ADJOURNMENT**

There was no public comment on this item.

Motion: By Commissioner Kane, seconded by Commissioner Ono to adjourn the regular meeting of August 18, 2011.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 pm.

Sue Blackman  
Commission Secretary

Explanatory documents: Copies of listed explanatory documents are available as follows: (1) from the commission secretary/custodian of records, 6<sup>th</sup> 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.**

Item 1: General Public Comment

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

You must be already laughing at the public before they start for the momentum of ridicule.

This intersection of many forces in society is sometimes so emblematic that it resonates with a poetic power, as if the gods themselves were manipulating events to reveal the underlying reality.

During the post-occupancy evaluation there was pressure to incorporate the critics into the process.

I got a handwritten note from Charles Higuera inviting me to participate. They hired a professor from UC Berkeley. She was a handicapped individual which I support, but they failed to provide accommodation. Her handicap was narcolepsy.

At the public hearing, she asked to tape record, then instantly fell into a deep sleep. I waited over thirty seconds, then thanked her and left.

That was not only the first time anyone said my input would be welcome, but the last.

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*Item 1: General Public Comment*

*Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government: In accordance with the San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance of 1999, section 67.16 Minutes, I ask the following statement be entered in the minutes of this meeting. From the above listed section: "Any person speaking during the public comment period may supply a brief written summary of their comments, which shall, if no more than 150 words, be included in the minutes."*

*One of my favorite authors, Frank Herbert, wrote the following:*

*"Any training school for free citizens must begin by teaching distrust, not trust. It must teach questioning, no acceptance of stock answers."*

*I believe the Library Commission should keep this thought in mind when carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities in monitoring the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library!*

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**Item 2: Branch Library Improvement Program Budget Transfers**

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

You were told at the Commission meeting of November 18, 2010, this was an advance from the Library Preservation Fund. I pointed out at that time that your administration told the Capital Planning Committee that the money would not go back because you would find other uses for that money. This seems to be ratified.

The memorandum is impossible to follow because when you use the term “return to the reserve,” the BLIP, the Library Preservation Fund and the Visitacion Valley Infrastructure Fund all have reserves.

You did not ask the Board of Supervisors for \$1.2 million for Bayview. Each fund should be accountable. Transferring money, just because you need it, is a betrayal of public consideration and of library priorities committed to under the Library Preservation Fund.

This is not the accountability the public is entitled to.

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### 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.

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

Presumably you have all used your magnifying glass, gone over that spreadsheet and know where the holes are.

You have probably asked yourself why the revenue bonds did not meet the goals we thought it was going to meet. Where is the staff impact? We are soon going to be back to the full staffing demands that the voters approved under the Library Preservation Fund.

Those demands are going to be drawing on the same reserve that the BLIP will be needed for, as well as the interest payments. Ask yourself what the impact would be if we didn’t find ourselves in the midst of a recession.

The holes are all too obvious, but we will save the specifics for another day.

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### Item 4: City Librarian’s Report

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

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

I notice that the graphic has been advanced to the next item while I am still commenting on this one.

I am always happy to see that we are maintaining the historical features of our branches. There was no mention of how much it will cost. Still it is important to preserve the historical nature of our libraries.

I am also gratified to hear that we are going to have programs on the Latino musical contribution. Assistant City Librarian Jill Bourne claims she knows how to dance. Perhaps she will come to one of these programs and we can show off our Salsa.

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Item 5: Labor Union Report

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

This Library Commission will take a stand in favor of public values and against privatization; and hell is going to freeze over.

The idea that the public could use the graphics as a gesture of equal treatment and citizen empowerment, ignores the reality that public attendance, public comment and access to documents was a struggle of decades, and those advances are endorsed in California statutes.

The beast rears its ugly head, indeed. A private company claims that if you don't take their deal of private fund-raising and private influence peddling, you can have no libraries at all. You recognize that from the Friends & Foundation here. Its abuse and contempt that has prevented this institution from being accountable to the public.

You endorsed the privatization in the Civic Center Community Benefit District, so their goons can haul us away.