



San Francisco Public Library

DRAFT

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 7, 2019

The San Francisco Public Library Commission held a regular meeting on February 7, 2019 at the Koret Auditorium, Main Library.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm.

Commissioners present: Vice-President Mall, Huang, Dunning, and Wolf.

Commissioner expected: Lee

Commissioners excused: President Wardell-Ghirarduzzi and Commissioner Ono

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Ray Hartz, Director, San Francisco Open Government, said at the last Commission meeting, Commissioners were patting themselves on the back for eliminating fines. He said the Commission received a hypocritical letter from former City Librarian Luis Herrera in support of the removal of fines because the fines made limitations on library users, particularly those with lower income and people of color. He said it was hypocritical because Luis Herrera was City Librarian for 12 years and he could have taken action to remove those barriers at any time. He said Peter Warfield has been advocating for the elimination of fines and fees for many years. He said Mr. Warfield deserves recognition for that input.

The following written summary was provided by the speaker, Ray Hartz. The content is neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by the Library Commission.

At the last Library Commission meeting, the commission members were patting themselves on the back for eliminating fines. Then

we had what I considered to be truly hypocritical input from former City Librarian Luis Herrera. Mr. Herrera related in his letter that he had been restricted in his ability to access library services when younger. The reason I say “hypocritical,” is that the letter disclosed that his own circumstances made clear that the limitations that fines and fees place on library users, particularly those with lower income and people of color. As the City Librarian for 12 years, Luis Herrera could have taken action to remove those barriers at any time! Peter Warfield, of Library Users Association, had been advocating for the elimination of fines and fees for many years. His input and supporting arguments were routinely ignored by the SFPL and this Library Commission. He deserves recognition for that input!

Commissioner Lee entered the meeting at 4:33 pm.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said the Library Commission has broken many laws in the past and he wants to talk about the secrecy that was involved in the preparation of the report for the library to go fine fee. He said the Library Commission only saw the report three days before the meeting and then as usual rubber stamped it. He said the Commission should have eliminated fees at the same time.

Marie Ciepiela, Executive Director, Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, said she wanted to congratulate the Library on the incredible Night of Ideas. She said we saw the future of library users. She said the Friends were happy to underwrite it. She said there is a tween winter reading program and 837 students have participated over this winter break. She said Library Laureates is scheduled for March 8. She said she wanted to acknowledge Ellen Huppert who died in December. She said she was a long supporter of the Friends.

Michael-Vincent D'Anella-Mercanti, Friends of the Library, said he wanted to talk about the community book program. He said the Friends receive donated books from all over the community and then resell them. He said there will be a Books and Brews event at Anchor Brewery on February 28 from 5 – 8 pm and everyone is invited.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 CITY LIBRARIAN RECRUITMENT

Maureen Singleton, Acting Chief Operating Officer, said on the DHR Steps to Executive Recruitment we are currently on step 4: Recruitment and Outreach. She said the recruitment brochure is posted on numerous websites. She said the deadline for applicants is Friday, February 15. She said there will be a special Library Commission meeting on Thursday, February 28 for the Hawkins Company to present a pool of candidates for the Library Commission to review and to determine who to invite for an interview.

Explanatory document: [Steps to Executive Recruitment DHR](#)

Public Comment

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said he is awaiting any sign that this commission will give applicants notice regarding the scam that is the financial relationship between the SFPL and the Friends. He said the Friends raises millions of dollars a year to support the library but public records show that 10% or less of the funds are expended for that purpose. He said he hopes the Commission will continue to display knowing and willful ignorance regarding the facts and that it will be a surprise to the new City Librarian.

The following written summary was provided by the speaker, Ray Hartz. The content is neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by the Library Commission.

As the recruitment process moves forward, I am awaiting with eager anticipation any sign that this commission will give applicants notice regarding the scam that is the financial relationship between the SFPL and “The Friends!” Silence from both “The Friends” and this commission regarding these charges can be considered verification of their truth. Any reputable organization would have, by now, come forward with contradictory facts if they could. So, the question remains: What are you going to say to any potential candidate regarding that organization? What is there to say about an organization that raised millions of dollars a year to “support the library,” when public records disclose that 10% or less of the funds are expended for that purpose? To be frank, my hope is that you will continue to display your “knowing and willful ignorance” regarding the facts! Let it be a surprise for the new City Librarian!

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said Step 4 states: upon approval Firm begins recruitment and outreach, providing progress reports. He asked who in the Library is getting these progress reports and where do we stand in respect to the whole process. He said the previous speaker has raised some important points. He said he has looked into the Friends and they are giving less than 10% of what they raise to the library. He said meanwhile the Friends use all sorts of library facilities for free. He said they have a store in the Main Library. He said there is undue influence by the Friends.

Commission Discussion

Vice-President Mall asked if there is a hard copy version of the brochure.

Maureen Singleton, Acting Chief Operating Officer, said yes a hard copy of the brochure was made available to the Commission at the last meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3. FYs 2020 AND 21 BUDGET

Maureen Singleton, Acting Chief Operating Officer, gave the presentation on the FYs 2020 & 2021 budget presentation. She explained the budget

calendar and the strategic and budget priorities. She gave the summary of proposed investments and explained the budget options presented to the Commission. She said the next steps are for the Commission to approve a budget proposal option or a variation of these options. She said the budget is due to the Controller's Office on February 21, 2019. Explanatory documents: [Budget FY 2020-21](#) ; [Attachment I](#)

Public Comment

Ray Hartz, Director San Francisco Open Government, said approval of the budget is probably the most important function of this commission. He said he would like to note the absence from the budget detailing the financial contributions of the Friends. The numbers presented to the Commission were designed to deceive the public based on the claims of the Friends. He said the public record clearly shows that 10% or less of the millions raised each year by the Friends actually goes to support library activities. He said the misrepresentation has finally been brought to a halt.

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Approval of the budget for the SFPL is probably the most important function of this commission. Approval of the budget provides the resources needed to move forward all of the goals of the SFPL. I would like to note, specifically, the absence from the budget presented in Attachment #1 of something I have always found particularly abhorrent! That was the presentation, as a fact, detailing the financial contributions of "The Friends." The numbers presented to this commission, and by extension the public, were designed to deceive the public with unsubstantiated claims made by "The Friends" and their supporters. The public record clearly shows that 10% or less of the millions raised each year by "The Friends" actually goes to support library activities! The misrepresentations and lies made for years by this group, members of this commission, and the SFPL administration in years past has finally been brought to a halt!

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said Mr. Hartz comments were particularly relevant and he said it is important to note that there is no approved MOU between the Library and the Friends. He said the Friends have also been called out on their contributions to the Branch Library Improvement Program. He said in-kind donations were never clear. He said he is troubled there is not more in the budget for books. He asked about the budget for books and other collections. He said the number of HASAs should be increased.

Commissioner Huang asked about page 4 of the presentation and what is included in Option 2.

Maureen Singleton, Acting Chief Operating Officer, said each of the capital project budgets include a contingency built into them.

Commissioner Huang said he supports the strategic priority categories and wanted to make sure adding the HASAs would not add any FTEs. He asked about security and what is being done about the branches.

Michael Lambert, Acting City Librarian, said we have designated three FTEs to security for fixed posts in the branches. He said we are currently in the process of hiring three part time security members.

Commissioner Huang asked about the Mayor's request for a 2% reduction in all of the department budgets.

Maureen Singleton, Acting Chief Operating Officer, said the Mayor's request is to the General Fund Departments and is not applicable to the Library.

Commissioner Dunning asked about the current contingency for the capital projects.

Roberto Lombardi, Facilities Directors, said we are different places in the construction process so it varies.

Commissioner Dunning said she is hesitant to dip into the LPF for marketing. She said the things we are spending money on are long term.

Commissioner Wolf said she wants to make sure that the contingency is used as a contingency and not just extra money in the budget. She said she is very much in favor of the HASAs. She said she is a big advocate of marketing for the Library. She said she is not a huge fan of outdoor advertising and banners. She supports an increase in the Marketing budget as a one time and she would like staff to come back with a full Marketing and outreach plan.

Commissioner Lee said he is also concerned about the contingency. He asked for more information on the cost of Chromebook. He said he likes option 2 as discussed.

Michael Liang, Chief of Information Technology said the \$600 for the Chromebooks is a high number and is an estimate. He said the costs may go down.

Vice-President Mall asked what the Library would like to see in the best possible world for the Library Preservation Fund.

Maureen Singleton, Acting Chief Operating Officer said she would like to see it in the 10 – 15 Million Dollar range. She said it was first approved by voters in 1994.

Motion: By Commissioner Wolf, seconded by Commissioner Dunning, to approve Option 2 of the Budget adding back in the \$1.5 Million branch capital project contingency proposal for Mission and Ocean View projects and making the increase in the \$35K for marketing as a one-time expense.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Dunning, Huang, Lee, Mall, and Wolf).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4. CITY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Michael Lambert, Acting City Librarian, said in recent years Black History Month has begun on Martin Luther King's birthday January 15 and continued through the month of February. He said we are now calling this More than a Month.

Shawna Sherman, African American Center Librarian, gave a presentation on More than a Month Black History, Culture and Heritage. She said there will be more than 50 programs and explained some of the programs to be presented. She said the 5th Annual Black and Brown Comix Arts Festival was held January 19 – 21. She explained the exhibits being shown as well.

Michael Lambert, Acting City Librarian, said he wanted to point out that Shawna Sherman is also the Co-chair of our internal Racial Equity Task Force.

Cathy Delneo, Chief of Branches, gave a presentation on Take Part with the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA). She said they are working with an artist collective from the Netherlands, who are working on the model that was completed in the 1930s. She said the model is very detailed. She said there will be more than 100 exhibition events January 25 and March 25, 2019, including a printed program and map. She said the exhibition website is takepartSF.net.

Michael Lambert, Acting City Librarian said this past Saturday was another event in partnership with SFMOA. He said Night of Ideas drew nearly 6,000 attendees

Michelle Jeffers, Chief of Community Programs and Partnerships, gave the presentation on the Night of Ideas showing photographs from the event. She said the event was organized by the French government in 150 cities around the world. She said there was also library time during the event.

Kate Epler, Manager of the Bridge at Main, gave the presentation on the Career Online High School Third graduation celebration. She said there are currently 58 students in the program. She said we have had 24 graduates in the program so far. She said her favorite part of the program is the speeches from the students about their experiences.

Explanatory documents: [More Than A Month: Black History](#); [Take Part: San Francisco](#); [Night of Ideas 2019](#); [Career Online High School Graduation](#)

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said he would love to hear a report about the people who are selecting the books and not just the special programs. He said he attended the Night of Ideas but it is problematic with respect to library programs. He said there was no discussion at the Library Commission about Night of ideas and the tremendous effort involved and the cost. He asked about the costs to keep the building open and personnel costs. He said you needed to get a ticket and it was sold out. He said he had to give his name and email address to get into the event and he was concerned about privacy.

Ray Hartz, Director, San Francisco Open Government, said he agrees with most of what the previous speaker had to say and that we always hear about these events after the fact and it is too late to attend. He said he is gratified that the explanatory documents had no notation regarding the Friends. He said it has always been questionable about what the Friends actually contribute. He said the Friends committed to raise up to \$16 million for the Branch Library Improvement Program while numbers presented to the public show they at best contributed half that amount.

The following written summary was provided by the speaker, Ray Hartz. The content is neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by the Library Commission.

I will have to admit that I am particularly gratified, on perusing the explanatory documents, by the absence of any notation regarding "The Friends." I've always found it particularly egregious when presentations to the public regarding SFPL programs had their logo "slapped" onto every document. I have no problem with giving credit where credit is due, but in the case of "The Friends," it's always been questionable as regards what the contribution really was! The SFPL and the Library Commission have always been very liberal in their praise of the group, but when pressed for facts supporting such praise, have always come up short. One example was their commitment to raise "up to \$16 million" for the Branch Library Improvement (BLIP), while numbers presented to the public show they at best contributed half that amount. Then their commitment for a substantial contribution to "The Mix," was what in reality?

Marie Ciepiela, Executive Director, Friends of the Library, said marketing is incredibly important and the library is trying to find the hardest to find people with the least amount to spend.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Wolf said each person matters and she thanks all of the staff for their hard work. She said she was fortunate to be able to attend the online graduation. She said she is inspired by the partnership with SFMOMA and asked if there is a timeframe on the partnership.

Michelle Jeffers, Chief of Community Programs and Partnerships, said it originally was to end this summer, but because of the popularity we hope that it will move along as a continuous partnership.

Commissioner Dunning said she is grateful that we have all of this going on and is thrilled that Black History Month is more than a month.

Commissioner Lee said he enjoys the richness of the Black History Month. He asked about the model and why it was hidden for so many years.

Cathy Delneo, Chief of Branches, said she will look into that and get back with the Commission. She said she does believe that security was the cause.

Commissioner Lee asked if Nextdoor Neighbor is used to advertise our events. He asked about the success rate for Career On-Line.

Kate Epler, Manager of the Bridge at Main, said we have had 26 people who have had to drop out for various reasons and challenges.

Michael Lambert, Acting City Librarian, said the difference from other online studies is the amount of support that comes from Kate and her team. He said this is building community and a network.

Commissioner Huang said this was a fantastic report. He said he is so excited about the Career On-line and the Night of Ideas. He said he did not see a single problem at the very successful Night of Ideas.

Vice-President Mall said she was happy to hear about the Night of Ideas and was wondering if there will be a chance for another one.

Michael Lambert, Acting City Librarian, said yes he hopes there will be another one and gave Michelle Jeffers kudos for the event.

Vice-President Mall asked what will happen to the model after March 25.

Cathy Delneo, Chief of Branches, said she does not have a solid answer to that.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES DECEMBER 13, 2018

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said the comments by the anonymous citizen in the Minutes were interrupted by the Chair and he was chastised for verbiage he had used. He said this was the polite way the anonymous citizen was explaining what a former Commissioner used to say. He said that is not mentioned in the Minutes. He said his comment following that comment should say interrupting a member of the public not a person, which the minutes say. He said under his comments on Item No. 3 the Minutes say "he said the newspaper section is a mess" and that should read "the Library's newspaper section is a mess." He said under the City Librarian's report he said evening hours were cut which is the exact opposite of what the public wanted to see in the library's own survey.

Ray Hartz, Director, San Francisco Open Government, said when the Commission approved the Minutes at the last meeting the Commission made a change that Commissioner Huang had suggested but did not make a change that Mr. Warfield had suggested. He said that shows how little respect this Commission has for the public. He said he fought for years to get his 150 word statements in the minutes. He said the public should be aware that if your opinion is one this commission does not like, you best put it in writing!

The following written summary was provided by the speaker, Ray Hartz. The content is neither generated by, nor subject to approval or verification of accuracy by the Library Commission.

At last month's LC meeting, when approving minutes, Commissioner Huang noted a need to change one number and Peter Warfield requested a minor change to more accurately express his public comment. Of course, when the motion was made to approve the minutes the commissioner's input was included and Mr. Warfield's was excluded! It never ceases to amaze me how little respect this commission and its members have for free speech! How little respect for the rule of law! Commission Sec., Sue Blackman, has repeatedly made oral statements and written comments disparaging my use of the Sunshine Ordinance to protect free speech and access to public records. This commission refuses to acknowledge in any way the 10 Orders of Determination issued by the SOTF against it and/or the SFPL. The public should be aware that if your opinion is one this commission does not like, you best put it in writing!

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Dunning said she had a minor correction that Reese Isbelle's last name is spelled incorrectly on page 2. She said it should be Isbell.

Motion: By Commissioner Huang, seconded by Commissioner Wolf, to approve the [Minutes of December 13, 2018](#) as amended to correct the spelling of Reese Isbell's name

Action: AYES 5-0: (Dunning, Huang, Lee, Mall, and Wolf.)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 ADJOURNMENT

Public Comment

Peter Warfield, Executive Director, Library Users Association, said Commissioner Wolf had a good suggestion about wanting to hear more about marketing. He said he would like to ask you to not adjourn until you have added an item entitled New Business. He said he did not think that the Night of Ideas was very diverse and he would like to know more about the marketing of the program. He said the library has never asked the public if they would like the library to be open on a Saturday night.

Ray Hartz, Director, San Francisco Open Government, said he agrees with Mr. Warfield and said New Business should be added to the agenda. He said the public would be able to know how the agendas are developed and have a public record of what the Commissioners would like to see on the agenda.

Motion: By Commissioner Huang, seconded by Commissioner Dunning, to adjourn the meeting of February 7, 2019.

Action: AYES 5-0: (Dunning, Huang, Lee, Mall, and Wolf)

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 pm.

Sue Blackman
Commission Secretary

Please note: These are draft minutes subject to revision by the Public Library Commission. Copies of commission minutes and handouts are available in the office of the secretary of the San Francisco Public Library Commission, 6th floor, Main Library, 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102-4733.

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).