

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

February 10, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held via teleconference at 11:05 a.m. on the above-written date.

1. Roll Call:

Present:	President	Bích Ngọc Cao
	Vice-President	Kathryn Eidmann
	Commissioner	Arianne Edmonds
	Commissioner	Dale Franzen
	Commissioner	Josefa Salinas

Absent: None

Also present via teleconference: City Librarian John F. Szabo; Asst. City Librarian Susan Broman; Deputy City Attorney Basia Jankowski; Library staff and members of the public.

2. Opening Remarks: Commissioner Franzen opened the meeting with the poem “For Earth’s Grandson” by Joy Harjo.

3. Approval of the Minutes: Special Meeting - November 18, 2021

It was moved by Commissioner Edmonds and seconded by Commissioner Franzen to approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting held on November 18, 2021. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Cao/Edmonds/Franzen). Noes: 0. Absent during vote: 2 (Eidmann/Salinas).

4. Public Comments on Matters

Within the Board’s Jurisdiction: None.

5. City Librarian’s Comments

and Announcements: City Librarian John F. Szabo reported the following:

African American History Month Celebration: February is African American History Month and the Library is celebrating with programs, displays and activities throughout the city. Mr. Szabo noted that this month was an opportunity to recognize Miriam Matthews - a legend in Los Angeles Public Library history. She was the first African American Librarian at the Los Angeles Public Library, hired in 1927, worked at the Robert Louis Stevenson Branch Library in Boyle Heights, and retired in 1960. She was an intellectual freedom advocate and a preservationist, a collector of books about contributions of African Americans to California, and an art collector, collecting works by Charles White and Elizabeth Catlet. Miriam passed away at the age of 98 in 2003.

(Commissioner Salinas joined at 11:10 a.m.)

LA Made Cultural Program Series is highlighting African American History Month with programs such as Ethiopian Cultural Dance and Cuisine, the History of Black Dance in America, book clubs focusing on African American authors, film discussions, and an online presentation on Online African American History Resources for Teens, and more. On February 18, the Library will feature Misty Copeland in an online program. Ms. Copeland is from San Pedro and she used the Library as a child.

Los Angeles Public Library Creators in Residence Program: This a new initiative launched by the Library will have artists and other creators to interact with staff, collections, services and spaces to create a project and offer programming for the community. The two artists selected are photographer Kwasi Boyd-Bouldin and interdisciplinary visual artist River Tikwi Garza. Both artists explore community and identity through their work. Patrons would be able to interact with the project in multiple forms, from public programming to exhibitions. This new program is being funded by the Library Foundation of Los Angeles and through an endowment established by Eleanor and Bernard Greenberg.

New Americans Initiative - Afghan Refugees: Through the New Americans Initiative, the Los Angeles Public Library has been able to offer programming to help Afghan refugees adjust to life in Los Angeles. Two librarians, West Los Angeles Regional Adult Librarian Ramin Naderi and Woodland Hills Young Adult Librarian Toktam Gholami, recently shared their personal immigration stories with Afghan families being resettled through the International Rescue Committee (IRC), a longstanding New Americans Initiative partner. They focused on general information about the library and the amazing things the families can do with their library card, telling attendees how public libraries helped them overcome some of their own early challenges in America and how Library resources and services can benefit library card holders.

(Vice President Eidmann joined at 11:25 a.m.)

Super Bowl Book Spine Poetry Battle: The Super Bowl is on Sunday and to support the Rams, the Library has engaged in a book spine poetry battle with the Cincinnati Public Library. This friendly but heated battle has gotten the attention of national and local media. Keith Kessler does a very clever job of interacting with other libraries and communities and he has come from behind the scenes to be in recent interviews to recognize his great work.

Memory Cafés: This new innovative program offers virtual social gatherings of small groups of older adults from all over the U.S. to talk about books, music and more. The themed six-week sessions are on Thursdays at 10 a.m., are bilingual (English/Spanish) and are designed to stir memories and create connections.

Secrets of the Library: *The New York Times* called on the Library to suggest ways for kids to unlock the “Secrets of the Library.” Senior Librarian Tina Princenthal from the Central Library Children’s Literary Department was included in the piece. Los Angeles Public Library was also mentioned as one of the major libraries to make things more accessible for young people by eliminating overdue fines.

Consul General of Mexico visit Central Library: Recently, we hosted a visit from Embajadora Marcela Celorio and Cónsul Luis Ángel Castañeda Flores from the Consulate General of Mexico. Madeline Peña, Principal Librarian, Community Outreach

and Engagement, provided a warm welcome and gave a tour of the Central Library. The Library has a long-standing relationship with the Consulate of Mexico, including exhibits and outreach.

Consul General of Hungary visit to Central Library: Yesterday, the Consul General of Hungary visited the Central Library. Mr. Szabo, who is of Hungarian descent, provided a tour including a visit to the International Language Department to show the Hungarian Language Collection and they exchanged books, one about the Library and about St. Stephen's Crown of Hungary.

ALA Executive Director visits the Watts Branch Library: Tracie Hall, Executive Director of the American Library Association, recently tweeted that on a recent visit to our city she popped in to visit the Watts Branch Library which was her very first library from when she grew up in Los Angeles, and she wrote on Twitter, "This library made me a librarian."

6. City Librarian's Reports:

Consent Item(s)

It was moved by Commissioner Salinas and seconded by Vice President Eidmann to approve the following resolutions. The motion passed with 5 Ayes (Cao/Edmonds/Eidmann/Franzen/Salinas). Noes: 0. Absent: 0.

a. **Approval of Findings to Continue**

Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to AB 361: APPROVED.

(Public Hearing was held at the Regular Meeting of October 14, 2021.)

Determination in accordance with AB 361 Section 3 (e)(3) that, while the state of emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as originally proclaimed by the Governor on March 4, 2020, remains active and/or state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing, this legislative body has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency and that the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person and/or state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.

b. Exhibit B

Recommendation to accept gift, consisting of furniture valued at \$6,677.39, received from the Friends of the Chatsworth Library to be utilized by the Chatsworth Branch Library.

7. **Presentation: Outreach Team & Street Fleet**

Madeline Peña, Principal Librarian, Community Outreach and Engagement Division, provided an overview of the services provided in 2021. She reported that staff provided 148 in person programs and 40 virtual programs; combined they had over 20,000 patron interactions throughout the City of Los Angeles; 40% were bilingual Spanish interactions. She said 85 of the programs included the Street Fleet Mobile Outreach vehicles (Ginger, Lime and Raspberry); 6 of the programs were targeted to older adults.

Ms. Peña reported that in 2021, they piloted the Community Wi-Fi program between March and September by equipping the Street Fleet with W-Fi to provide Wi-Fi to the public at the following locations: Watts, Wilmington, San Pedro, Venice and Crenshaw neighborhoods. She said the plan is to continue this service as part of other offerings through the mobile outreach units.

Ms. Peña gave examples of partnerships with branch libraries, including the 2020 San Fernando Valley Pride Parade, Chatsworth Holiday Parade, and CicLAvia DTLA and CicLAvia South LA, for which included the Book Bike, and Los Angeles Poet Laureate Lynne Thompson producing poetry on the spot with a typewriter. They participated in the Welcoming Fair for Unaccompanied Children and Their Families at East Los Angeles Community College where they provided hotspots and free books; participated in Dodger Days/Summer Reading, Back to School events, and many more.

Ms. Peña said that they offer programs for older adults, such as the Postcard Project, in partnership with the Department of Aging, for which the LAPL provides handwritten postcards featuring Los Angeles. Over 15,000 postcards have been delivered with meals to older Angelenos throughout the city. Over 270 staff members have participated in writing uplifting messages and sometimes drawings. Memory Cafe recently launched as a series of programs offered virtually and in person and they plan to expand with some type of hybrid activities with to go kits for seniors especially designed to engage and spark memories. This project is grant funded with a shared vision grant from the California State Library.

Ms. Peña concluded her presentation by stating that the Engagement and Outreach Division plans to continue bringing the Library to everyone outside the library walls. For the remainder of the fiscal year, they will be working on the following areas: Pop Up Libraries at parks, public housing locations, beaches and at L.A. landmarks; begin including a small circulating collection of books for outreach; visit the Mexican Consulate; provide a mobile public library to serve the Boyle Heights community while Benjamin Franklin Branch is being remodeled; and offer after school programs, expand programs for older adults, teens and teen mothers, families and parents.

8. Commissioners' Comments and Announcements

Board President Cao announced that the next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, February 24, 2022, at 11:00 a.m., via Teleconference.

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

ATTEST:

Bích Ngọc Cao
President

Raquel M. Borden
Board Executive Assistant