

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

July 09, 2026

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Central Library starting at 11:06 a.m. on the above-written date.

1. Roll Call:

Present:	Commissioner Commissioner Commissioner	Kelly Besser Valerie Lynne Shaw Fabian R. Wesson
Absent:	President Vice President	Mayra Valadez Linda Blank

Also: City Librarian John F. Szabo, Assistant City Librarian Susan Broman, Deputy City Attorney Josh M. Templet, administrative staff, and members of the public.

Following advice from Deputy City Attorney Josh Templet due to the absence of a President and Vice President, Commissioner Shaw moved to nominate Commissioner Wesson as acting President for the purpose of chairing this meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Besser and passed unanimously: 3 Ayes (Besser/Shaw/Wesson); Noes: 0. Absent: 2 (Blank/Valadez).

2. Opening Remarks: None.

3. Approval of the Minutes:

a. Regular Meeting - June 25, 2026

It was moved by Commissioner Shaw and seconded by Commissioner Besser to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meetings held on June 25, 2026. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Besser/Shaw/Wesson); Noes: 0. Absent: 2 (Blank/Valadez).

4. Staff Recognition:

Assistant City Librarian Susan Broman welcomed Personnel Records Supervisor Kimberly Aviles, who was presented with a certificate of retirement. Ms. Aviles concluded a distinguished career of over 28 years with the City of Los Angeles, including 27 years of dedicated service to the Library Department.

Ms. Broman further recognized the Strategic Plan Staff Contributors for their essential roles in developing the Library's Strategic Plan. The following staff members were honored for their contributions: Emily Aaronson, Anna Avalos, Rachel Bindman, Maria Bonilla, Yvette Cabrera, Kimberly Creighton, Alejandra Di Fazio, Annette Dib, Marian Ekweogwu, Joanna Fabicon, Dominic Galvan, Kenneth Alan Garcia, Christine Godinez, Claudia Gonzalez, Liz

Goralka, Phoebe Guiot, Joann Im, Ashley Kagan, David Kelly, Keith Kesler, Ashley Kilian, Jennifer Kim, Steven Kirby, Anita Martinez, Sarah Moore, Ramin Naderi, Nathalie Neata, Lance Nguyen, Diane Olivo-Posner, Alicia Ramirez, Alison Reilly, Ebony Ross, Rudy Ruiz, Joshua Sanchez, Alice Schock, Ednita Seavers, Brooke Sheets, Loren Spector, Shawn Stamm, Coleen Stretten, Elizabeth Tseng, Anders Villalta, Katie Wright and Eileen Ybarra.

The Board presented certificates of recognition to the recipients in attendance, expressing gratitude for their commitment and service to the Library Department and the City.

5. Public Comments on Matters Within the Board's Jurisdiction:

The Board heard three public comments from the following community members: Vi Ha, Ben Eubanks and Derrick Blassingame.

6. City Librarian's Comments and Announcements: City Librarian John F. Szabo reported on past and upcoming events.

7. City Librarian's Reports:

Discussion Items

a. Approval of agreement with NewsBank, Inc. for the purchase of a perpetual license for the digitized collection of Los Angeles Herald Examiner 1873-1989.

City Librarian John F. Szabo recommended the approval of an agreement with Newsbank Incorporated for the purchase of a perpetual license for the digitized collection of the Los Angeles Herald Examiner, 1873-1989. Mr. Szabo noted that the collection comprises the Los Angeles Herald and Express (1870s–1962), the Los Angeles Examiner (1903–1962), and the merged Herald Examiner (1962–1989). Previously owned by the Hearst Corporation, these papers represent major historical resources for local news, often covering stories missed by the LA Times. Additionally, this purchase will help the library process its existing photo archives of the Herald and Herald-Examiner. With this purchase, LAPL would be the first institution to make the Herald Examiner widely available to the residents of Los Angeles.

Discussion

Commissioner Besser asked for clarification on what access to the collection staff and patrons previously had. Christina Rice, Senior Librarian of the Photo Collection stated that NewsBank granted the library access through a staff login. Staff use it for internal research, and to assist patrons with reference questions, however patrons have not had the capability to access the collection themselves. Notably, the digitized resource has helped staff locate specific events and people for patrons and cross-reference the Herald photo collection of over 2 million images. It also aids in processing other archives like the John Verzi collection. She concluded that having served previously as a history reference librarian, she knows firsthand the long-standing public demand for a digitized Herald Examiner.

It was moved by Commissioner Shaw and seconded by Commissioner Besser to approve the following resolution. The motion passed with 3 Ayes (Besser/Shaw/Wesson); Noes: 0. Absent: 2 (Blank/Valadez).

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2026-30 (C-29)

WHEREAS, The Library entered a trial access period with NewsBank, Inc. for access to the digitized Los Angeles Herald Examiner 1873-1989 collection in May 2025; and

WHEREAS, The Library, satisfied with the quality of and breadth of content, now wishes to purchase a perpetual license for permanent access to the collection;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board approves the execution of the perpetual license agreement between the Library and NewsBank, Inc.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board hereby authorizes the City Librarian and the City Attorney to make technical and clerical corrections as deemed necessary.

8. Presentation: Central Library Centennial Festival

Central 100 Co-Chairs Madeline Peña, Director of the Engagement and Learning Division and Christina Rice, Senior Librarian of the Photo Collection provided a detailed overview of the Central Library Centennial Festival. The highly anticipated celebration will take place Saturday, July 11, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to celebrate the library's July 1926 opening. The high-demand event has completely sold out all 10,000 available tickets on Eventbrite. Festival highlights include author programs featuring Susan Orlean (in conversation with John Szabo), Stephen Gee, Alexander Vidal and Susan Lendroth, as well as a reading by Poet Laureate Brian Sonia-Wallace. The Rotunda will feature the Library Foundation's *Luceros y Penumbras*, the world's largest pop-up book. Patrons can enjoy puppet shows, special collection tours, photo booths, Octavia Lab workshops, and crafts like custom Lego towers and zine making. The Maguire Gardens will host 23 community partners—including Mattel with book and toy giveaways—and six musical acts, such as the Bob Baker Marionette Theater and Mariachi Lindas Mexicanas. A wide array of food will be available, including empanadas, tacos, and French pastries. Featured performances in the Taper Auditorium include Lucy Kalantari & the Jazz Cats and a closing concert by punk band The Linda Lindas. Event freebies include a custom poster by Loris Lora, a Central 100 tote bag and commemorative letterhead for a time capsule prompt. System-wide branch engagement featured puzzles by artist Aracely Munoz. The celebration will include a sphinx-shaped cake, a mariachi performance of Happy Birthday, and a giveaway of the "people's poster". The massive operation is supported by over 140 system-wide staff members and volunteers. The Co-Chairs concluded their presentation by thanking all staff, Library Administration, the Facilities and the Public Relations & Marketing Divisions for making the Centennial Festival possible.

Discussion

Commissioner Shaw asked how parking will be accommodated for the 10,000 attendees. Ms. Peña noted that staff have made arrangements to maximize parking at Central Library and attendees are encouraged to take public transportation. An email will be sent out to attendees which will include information on parking alternatives.

Commissioner Wesson inquired if walk-ins are welcome without an RSVP. Ms. Rice clarified that the library is open to all and registrations were only for logistics. No proof of registration is required, everyone is welcome, and the library will remain open for regular operations.

Commissioner Besser inquired about event management for the Taper Auditorium and Maguire Gardens. Ms. Rice explained that logistics are managed on a first-come, first-served basis by dedicated staff, and attendees are encouraged to arrive early due to limited capacity. She stated that The Linda Lindas' performance will include 200 overflow seats and a YouTube livestream, noting that staff are doing what they can to accommodate high demand and mitigate potential disappointment.

9. Commissioners' Announcements and Comments

- Commissioner Besser attended a Kick It in the Park event last week and was glad to see presence from the library staff providing outreach at a table.
- Commissioner Shaw commended Commissioner Wesson for chairing the day's proceedings, a sentiment echoed by Commissioner Besser.
- Commissioner Wesson attended a tie-dyeing program with her grandson and his class at the Little Tokyo Branch Library and gave a shout out to Children's Librarian Cynthia Mitchem for a wonderful program. She remarked on the children's excitement to take home a book to keep from the library.

Next Board Meeting Notice: The next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, July 23, 2026, at 11:00 a.m., and will be held at the Central Library.

10. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

ATTEST:

Mayra Valadez
President

Lynda Achi
Secretary to the Board