

LOS ANGELES COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, February 17, 2016

TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

PLACE: Library Headquarters
7400 East Imperial Hwy.
Downey, CA. 90242

AGENDA

Welcome, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

1. Approval of Minutes of meeting
 - January 20, 2016
2. Announcements from Chair
 - Approve language to expanding the mission of the Library Commission based on AC audit findings.
3. Announcements from Library Director
 - Youth Fines/Fees/Amnesty (Debbie Anderson/Barbara Custen)
4. Commissioner Items/Comments
5. Public Comments (limited to 3 minutes per speaker)
6. Adjourn

NOTE: The March Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at Duarte Library.

April: LHQ Headquarters
May: HOA
June: LHQ Headquarters
July: Culver City
August: Dark
September: Compton
October: Huntington Park
November: La Crescenta
December: Dark



Library Commission February 17, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 10:12 a.m. Chairman Calaycay led the Pledge of Allegiance and all attendees participated.

Roll Call

Quorum was met.

Commissioners in attendance – 14: Chairman Corey Calaycay and Commissioners Vy Nguyen, Martha Arevalo, Revé Gipson, Velma Ashford, Laura Zahn Rosenthal, Robert Gonzales, Joy C. Williams, Lisa Cleri Reale, Sonny Santa Ines, David Lesser, Herb Hatanaka, Cynthia Sternquist and James P. Allen.

Commissioners absent – 5: Commissioners Bob Archuleta, Jose Luis Solache, Richard Colbary, David Spence and Waymon Roy.

Vacancy – 1: Second District (City Selection Committee)

Library staff in attendance – 5: Skye Patrick, County Librarian; Chris Deherrera, Executive Assistant to the County Librarian; Barbara Custen, Assistant Director of Public Services; Deborah Anderson, Youth Services Administrator; and Roxane Marquez, Special Assistant for Communications.

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

Commissioner Reale indicated she still felt the January 2016 meeting minutes weren't thorough enough. She and Chairman Calaycay specifically wanted minutes from the previous meeting amended to reflect that the Library disseminated "novelty" \$10 bills – not real \$10 bills – to celebrate the departure of retiring County Librarian Margaret Donnellan Todd. Minutes were approved as amended.

Retirement of Commissioner Velma Ashford

Chairman Calaycay announced that this would be Commissioner Ashford's last meeting as she is retiring from service due to health reasons. Commissioner Ashford originally was appointed by then-Sup. Yvonne B. Burke and served on the Commission for seven years. She was reappointed to the Commission by Sup. Mark Ridley-Thomas when he was elected to replace Sup. Burke, who was forced from office by term limits. In

recognition of her service, Commissioner Ashford received official proclamations from the City of Claremont via Chair Calaycay; from Temple City via Commissioner Sternquist, who noted Commissioner Ashford's "spunk"; and from the City of San Fernando via Commissioner Gonzales. Commissioner Ashford expressed deep appreciation to her colleagues and fondness for her years on the Commission.

Introduction of New County Librarian

Commissioners were introduced to our new County Librarian Skye Patrick and she was asked to share how she became interested in Libraries as a profession. She explained that she was working as a musician in Baltimore when the Library Director there asked her if she would be interested in doing programming at the library. At the time, it was African-American centered programming. Then she ventured into Libraries as a career when she realized she could do all she wished as a librarian. She has experience at the Queens and the San Francisco, Broward County, among other places. Patrick noted that she is "not the typical librarian" but believes deeply in the work we do.

Auditor-Controller Findings

Chairman Calaycay and Roxane Marquez, Special Assistant for Communications, summarized the findings of a Sunset Evaluation of the Commission that is currently being completed by the Auditor-Controller. The preliminary findings were positive except for two specific areas. The first area of concern was meeting attendance/quorum; Chairman Calaycay noted that letters to all Commissioners reminding them of their duties to attend Commission meetings already had been sent many weeks ago. The second area of concern was amending the Commission's list of official functions to be consistent with the Board of Supervisors' expectations of it, which had been slightly amended back in June of 2004; specifically, the Board expected the Commission to assist and collaborate more closely with the Friends of the Library groups as well as the Library Foundation. Chairman Calaycay noted that the Commission and Foundation already had started an ad-hoc committee. But a formal vote still needed to be taken to add this objective to the Commission's list of official functions.

Commissioner Rosenthal expressed concern that not all libraries had Friends of the Library groups. Commissioner Lesser asked, "What will we as Commissioners anticipate we will have to do upon adding this objective?" Chairman Calaycay replied that more collaboration between the Commission and the Foundation would be expected. Ultimately, the Commissioners approved amending their list of official functions to include the new objective.

Librarian's Announcements

Barbara Custen, Assistant Director of Public Services, made announcements on behalf of County Librarian Skye Patrick. First – she announced that the Culver City Julian Dixon Library opening would take place on Sat., Feb. 20 at 10 a.m. and that invitations already had been e-mailed to everyone, including all Commissioners. Second – she announced that the California Contract Cities Association would hold their February Board of Directors meeting tonight at 6 p.m. at West Hollywood Library. She noted that

this event is a collaboration between the City of West Hollywood, the Department of Animal Care & Control, and the County Public Library. Third – she announced that the recent hiring of a new Learning Coordinator, who hails from Las Vegas/Clark County.

Presentation on Fines and Fees

Debbie Anderson, Youth Services Administrator, made a formal presentation to the Commission about fines and fees. She said that fines for Children's Materials are 15 cents per day per item. After 14 days overdue, customers receive an overdue notice. After 28 days overdue, customers receive a bill. Notices are sent to the guardian who signed on the card. A \$10 processing fee is added to the cost of a lost or damaged item. Outstanding bills of \$50 or more are sent to a collection agency with a \$15 fee added for the cost of when sent to a collection agency. As for current practices for removing barriers for youth with fines and fees – staff have been trained in EXCEL customer service and have been consistently reminded that if a child has a fine, they should waive the fine and ensure that youth are able to access the materials they need.

Debbie Anderson then specified that there are two current Library card programs for disadvantaged youth. First – there are fine-free cards for Foster Youth. In this case, youth or foster parents who self-identify as Foster Youth to circulation staff can receive a fine free card. Second – there are Library Cards for Probation Youth. In this case, when entering the Los Angeles County Probation system, youth are issued a library card which is kept in their intake file. When they are released, Probation officers meet with the youth and review library services, they then give the card to the youth. She also said that Library and Probation Department staff are pairing up to have trained Probation staff – including Probation Officers as a Task Force – also assist children with fines and fees.

Debbie Anderson then shared findings from a County Public Library 2005 Task Force – formed at the direction of the County Librarian. The task force examined fines and fees for youth and generated recommendations on reducing barriers to youth in regards to fines and fees. Ultimately, the task force produced the following statement: "Children are a major component of our customer base. Our policies, procedures, and guidelines are based on the philosophy that every child should leave the library with their educational, informational, and recreational needs met." The taskforce was unanimous in their desire to eliminate barriers to children yet require children to assume responsibility. The taskforce recommended that, "The County of Los Angeles Public Library will charge no overdue fines for library books circulated to children ages 0-12. However if books are not returned within 28 days after the due date and are assumed lost, the child (parent/guardian) will be responsible for replacement charges and fees." Deborah Anderson noted that this statement could well provide the basis for the formation of a new task force to move forward with creating either a child-friendly library card or more embedded practices for removing barriers to youth. And she added that a handful of libraries in the U.S. have fine-free cards for youth and these programs could serve as a model for the County of Los Angeles Public Library.

Barbara Custen said that the Library tries to be as lenient as possible since we want the Library to be a positive place. She indicated that in Fiscal Year 2014-15, the Library amassed \$1.75 million in fines and fees. Skye Patrick asked how much of that amount came from youth who had cards for patrons up to age 16. Deborah Anderson did not have exact figures but said she would provide them but that once the fee reaches \$50, the matter goes to a collection agency. Commissioner Nguyen said that \$50 seemed low. Barbara Custen indicated that we could raise this threshold. Skye Patrick replied that, at this time, the Library needs the income: "It will be a balancing act." Barbara Custen added that even with this outstanding fine, patrons can still use materials in-house. Commissioner Sternquist said that people need to be responsible and that \$50 takes about two months to amass. Skye Patrick said that the first step we need to take is to investigate the viability of a "Read Down Your Fine" program. Commissioner Nguyen agreed that this program was a great idea and also that she felt the Library needed a marketing plan to "Rebuild and Come Back to the Libraries". Barbara Custen replied that the Library is currently in the process of interviewing for a new Marketing Director so that they could work on this campaign. Commissioner Hatanaka expressed concern that the Commission was treating this source of money as actual income when, in fact, it's mostly uncollectable. Skye Patrick added that it's income that will dwindle even further since e-content is growing – and e-content expires on time, so it is not going to be an income generator in the future. Commissioner Allen asked when material is considered lost. Barbara Custen replied that the answer is 25 days. Commissioner Rosenthal expressed that, in her experience, patrons want both hard copies plus e-content.

Chairman's Announcements

Chairman Calaycay asked that Library staff make sure the Duarte Mayor, City Council and Friends of the Library of both Duarte Library and Live Oak Library were invited to the next Commission meeting.

Chairman Calaycay asked that we agendize the April meeting to take place in San Fernando. A suggestion was made that future meetings be on "Skype" for those Commissioners who could not make the meeting due to distance.

Chairman Calaycay also asked that proper refreshments be supplied for Commissioners at future meetings.

Commissioner Items/Comments

Commissioner Lesser asked Skye Patrick whether the library system in Broward County, Florida – which she previously oversaw – also had a Library Commission. Skye Patrick replied that they had an advisory board and that this would be a learning curve.

Commissioner Lesser asked Skye Patrick how the Commissioners could best serve her. Skye Patrick answered that she wants to hear from them about what the community wants: "Help me understand what's needed from your city."

Commissioner Lesser said that Commissioners get briefed on issues but that, at the core, since the County Librarian decides, the Commission must advise and he asked her to advise him on what her priorities were at this point in time. Skye Patrick replied that she is most interested in access – that new technology crosses the socioeconomic spectrum. She felt concerned that the County Public Library did not have enough content to fully participate: "My dedication to technology is my dedication to access."

Chairman Calaycay asked Commissioners for suggestions for future topics. Commissioner Reale suggested marketing be one of the main topics of the next Commission meeting. Commissioner Lesser suggested a comparison of what other big library systems are doing.

Commissioner Reale asked the Commissioners if, like her, they had received a survey about their Commission experience. Response was varied. Commissioner Reale said that she believed the Chief Executive Office most likely sent the survey. She felt it was important that all Commissioners fill it out.

Commissioner Nguyen suggested that Skye Patrick host a reception for non-profit organizations.

Commissioner Calaycay directed Roxane Marquez to ensure that on all future agendas, two specific line items appeared: "Ad-Hoc Commission/Foundation Committee" and "Budget".

Public Comments

No public comments were made at this Commission meeting. However, Commissioner Gonzales' grandmother – Maria Gonzales – was present and said that she has been a County Public Library cardholder for over 60 years.

Adjournment

The Commission meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Minutes Approved: _____ as submitted Date: _____

_____ as amended Date: _____

Cynthia Sternquist, Secretary
Commission